

# **REVIEW AND HERALD**

## **VOLUME 1**

**Ellen G. White**



April 7, 1851

**Eli Curtis**

Eli Curtis, I wish to say to the brethren and sisters, that I have been much grieved with the strange course pursued by this man, in republishing my views, and sending them about in connection with worthless and foolish matter, such as the Dixboro Ghost, notwithstanding I have earnestly entreated him not to do so. I consider him void of judgment in spiritual things, blinded by the deceptions of the Enemy. I did my duty to him faithfully when I hoped he would turn from his singular course.

July 21, 1851

## **Experience and Views**

By the request of dear friends I have consented to give a brief sketch of my experience and views, with the hope that it will cheer and strengthen the humble, trusting children of the Lord.

At the age of eleven years I was converted, and when twelve years old was baptized, and joined the Methodist Church. At the age of thirteen I heard Bro. Miller deliver his second course of lectures in Portland, Me. I then felt that I was not holy, not ready to see Jesus. And when the invitation was given for church members and sinners to come forward for prayers, I embraced the first opportunity, for I knew that I must have a great work done for me to fit me for Heaven. My soul was thirsting for full and free salvation, but knew not how to obtain it.

In 1842 I constantly attended the Second Advent meetings in Portland, Me., and fully believed the Lord was coming. I was hungering and thirsting for full salvation, and an entire conformity to the will of God. Day and night I was struggling to obtain this priceless treasure, that all the riches of earth could not purchase. As I was bowed before God praying for this blessing the duty to go and pray in a public prayer-meeting was presented before me. I had never prayed vocally in meeting, and drew back from the duty, fearing that if I should attempt to pray I should be confounded. Every time I went before the Lord in secret prayer this unfulfilled duty presented itself, until I ceased to pray, and settled down in a melancholy state, and finally in deep despair.

In this state of mind I remained for three weeks, with not one ray of light to pierce the thick clouds of darkness around me. I then had two dreams which gave me a faint ray of light and hope. After that I opened my mind to my devoted mother. She told me that I was not lost, and advised me to go and see Bro. Stockman, who then preached to the Advent people in Portland. I had great confidence in him, for he was a devoted and beloved servant of Christ. His words affected me and led me to hope. I returned home, and again went before the Lord, and promised that I would do and suffer any thing if I could have the smiles of Jesus. The same duty was presented. There was to be a prayer meeting that evening which I attended, and when others knelt to pray I bowed

with them trembling, and after two or three had prayed, I opened my mouth in prayer before I was aware of it, and the promises of God looked to me like so many precious pearls that were to be received by only asking for them. As I prayed the burden and agony of soul that I had so long felt left me, and the blessing of God came upon me like the gentle dew, and I gave glory to God for what I felt, but I longed for more. I could not be satisfied till I was filled with the fullness of God. Inexpressible love for Jesus filled my soul. Wave after wave of glory rolled over me until my body grew stiff. Everything was shut out from me but Jesus and glory, and I knew nothing of what was passing around me.

I remained in this state of body and mind a long time, and when I realized what was around me, everything seemed changed. Every thing looked glorious and new, as if smiling and praising God. I was then willing to confess Jesus everywhere. For six months not a cloud of darkness passed over my mind. My soul was daily drinking rich draughts of salvation. I thought that those who loved Jesus would love His coming, so went to the class-meeting and told them what Jesus had done for me, and what a fullness I enjoyed through believing that the Lord was coming. The class-leader interrupted me saying, "Through Methodism," but I could not give the glory to Methodism, when it was Christ and the hope of His soon coming that had made me free.

My father's family were most all full believers in the Advent, and for bearing testimony to this glorious doctrine, seven of us were at one time cast out of the Methodist Church. At this time the words of the Prophet were exceedingly precious to us.

"Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my names's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified; but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." Isaiah 66:5.

From this time, up to December, 1844, my joys, trials and disappointments were like those of my dear Advent friends around me. At this time I visited one of our Advent sisters, and in the morning we bowed around the family altar. It was not an exciting occasion, and there were but five of us present, all females. While praying the power of God came upon me as I never had felt it before, and I was wrapt up in a vision of God's glory, and seemed to be rising higher and higher from the earth, and was shown something of the travels of the Advent people to the Holy City, as will be seen in the

vision hereafter.

After I came out of vision everything looked changed, a gloom was spread over all that I beheld. O, how dark this world looked to me. I wept when I found myself here, and felt homesick. I had seen a better world, and it had spoiled this for me. I told the view to our little band in Portland, who then fully believed it to be of God. It was a powerful time. The solemnity of eternity rested upon us. About one week after this the Lord gave me another view, and shewed me the trials I must pass through, and that I must go and relate to others what He had revealed to me, and that I should meet with great opposition, and suffer anguish of spirit by going. But said the angel "The grace of God is sufficient for you: He will hold you up."

After I came out of this vision I was exceedingly troubled. My health was very poor, and I was but seventeen years old. I knew that many had fallen through exaltation, and I knew that if I in any way became exalted that God would leave me, and I should surely be lost. I went to the Lord in prayer and begged Him to lay the burden on some one else. It seemed to me that I could not bear it. I lay upon my face a long time, and all the light I could get was "Make known to others what I have revealed to you."

In my next vision I earnestly begged of the Lord, that if I must go and relate what He had shown me, to keep me from exaltation. Then He shewed me that my prayer was answered, and if I should be in danger of exaltation His hand should be laid upon me, and I should be afflicted with sickness. Said the angel, If you deliver the messages faithfully, and endure unto the end, you shall eat of the fruit of the tree of life, and drink of the water of the river of life.

Soon it was reported all around that the visions were the result of mesmerism, and many Adventists were ready to believe, and circulate the report. A physician, who was a celebrated mesmerizer, told me that my views were mesmerism, and that I was a very easy subject, and that he could mesmerize me and give me a vision. I told him that the Lord had shown me in vision that mesmerism was from the Devil, from the bottomless pit, and that it would soon go there, with those who continued to use it. I then gave him liberty to mesmerize me if he could. He tried for more than half an hour, resorting to different operations, and then gave it up. By faith in God I was able to resist his influence, so that it did no affect me in the least.

If I had a vision in meeting many would say that it was excitement, and that some one mesmerized me. Then I would go away alone in the woods, where no eye could see, or ear hear but God's, and pray to Him, and He would sometimes give me a vision there. I then rejoiced, and told them what God had revealed to me alone, where no mortal could influence me. But I was told by some that I mesmerized myself. O, thought I, has it come to this that those who honestly go to God alone to plead His promises, and to claim His salvation, are to be charged with being under the foul and soul-damning influence of mesmerism? Do we ask our kind Father in Heaven for "bread," only to receive a "stone," or a "scorpion?" These things wounded my spirit, and wrung my soul in keen anguish, well nigh to despair, while many would have me believe that there was no Holy Ghost, and that all the exercises that holy men of God have experienced were only mesmerism, or the deceptions of Satan.

At this time there was fanaticism in Maine. Some refrained wholly from labor, and disfellowshipped all those who would not receive their views on this point, and some other things which they held to be religious duties. God revealed these errors to me in vision, and sent me to His erring children to declare them; but many of them wholly rejected the message, and charged me with conforming to the world. On the other hand, the Nominal Adventists charged me with fanaticism, and I was falsely, and by some wickedly represented as being the leader of the fanaticism that I was actually laboring to do away. Different times were repeatedly set for the Lord to come, and were urged upon the brethren.--But the Lord shewed me that they would all pass by, for the time of trouble must come before the coming of Christ, and that every time that was set, and passed by, would only weaken the faith of God's people. For this I was charged with being with the evil servant, that said in his heart, "My Lord delayeth his coming."

All these things weighed heavily upon my spirits, and in the confusion I was sometimes tempted to doubt my own experience. And while at family prayers one morning, the power of God began to rest upon me, and the thought rushed into my mind that it was mesmerism, and I resisted it. Immediately I was struck dumb, and for a few moments was lost to everything around me. I then saw my sin in doubting the power of God, and that for so doing I was struck dumb, and that my tongue should be loosed in less than twenty-four hours. A card was held up before me, on which was written in gold letters the chapter and verse of fifty texts of Scripture. After I came out of vision, I beckoned for the slate, and wrote upon it that I was dumb, also what I had seen, and that I wished the large Bible. I took the Bible and readily turned to all the texts that I had

seen upon the card. I was unable to speak all day. Early the next morning my soul was filled with joy, and my tongue was loosed to shout the high praises of God. After that I dared not doubt, or for a moment resist the power of God, however others might think of me.

In 1846, while at Fairhaven, Mass., my sister, (who usually accompanied me at that time,) sister A. and brother G. and myself started in a sail-boat to visit a family on West's Island. It was almost night when we started. We had gone but a short distance when a sudden storm arose. It was so dark that we could see nothing around us. It thundered and lightened and the rain came in torrents upon us. Brother G. had more than he could well attend to, to manage the boat. He tried to anchor, but the anchor dragged. Our little boat was tossed upon the waves, and driven by the wind, while it was so dark that we could not see from one end of the boat to the other. It seemed plain that we must be lost, unless God should deliver. Soon the anchor held.

I knelt down in the boat, and began to cry to God to deliver us. And there upon the tossing billows, while the water washed over the top of the boat upon us, the rain descended as I never saw it before, the lightnings flashed and the thunders rolled. I was taken off in vision, and saw that sooner would every drop of water in the ocean be dried up than we should perish, for I saw that my work had but just begun. After I came out of the vision all my fears were gone, and we sung and praised God, and our little boat was to us a floating Bethel. The editor of the "Advent Herald" has said that my visions were known to be "the result of mesmeric operations." But I ask, what chance was there for mesmeric operations in such a time as that?

Brother G. at last called for help. There were but two houses on the Island, and it proved that we were near one of them, but not the one where we wished to go. All the family had retired to rest except a little child, who providentially heard the call for help upon the water. Her father soon came to our relief, and in a small boat, took us to the shore. We spent the most of that night in thanksgiving and praise to God, for His wonderful goodness unto us.

Here I will give the view that was first published in 1846. In this view I saw only a very few of the events of the future. More recent views have been more full. I shall therefore leave out a portion and prevent repetition.

July 21, 1851

### **To the Remnant Scattered Abroad**

As God has shown me the travels of the Advent people to the Holy City, and the rich reward to be given those who wait the return of their Lord from the wedding, it may be my duty to give you a short sketch of what God has revealed to me. The dear saints have got many trials to pass through. But our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory--while we look not at the things which are seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. I have tried to bring back a good report, and a few grapes from the heavenly Canaan, for which many would stone me, as the congregation bade stone Caleb and Joshua for their report, (Numbers 14:10.) But I declare to you, my brethren and sisters in the Lord, it is a goodly land, and we are well able to go up and possess it.

While praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell upon me, and I seemed to be rising higher and higher, far above the dark world. I turned to look for the Advent people in the world, but could not find them--when a voice said to me, "Look again, and look a little higher." At this I raised my eyes and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the Advent people were traveling to the City, which was at the farther end of the path. They had a bright light set up behind them at the first end of the path, which an angel told me was the Midnight Cry. This light shone all along the path, and gave light for their feet so they might not stumble. And if they kept their eyes fixed on Jesus, who was just before them, leading them to the City, they were safe. But soon some grew weary, and they said the City was a great way off, and they expected to have entered it before. Then Jesus would encourage them by raising His glorious right arm, and from His arm came a glorious light which waved over the Advent band, and they shouted Hallelujah! Others rashly denied the light behind them, and said that it was not God that had led them out so far. The light behind them went out leaving their feet in perfect darkness, and they stumbled and got their eyes off the mark, and lost sight of Jesus, and fell off the path down in the dark and wicked world below. Soon we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and hour of Jesus' coming. The living saints, 144,000, in number, knew and understood the voice, while the wicked thought it was thunder and an earthquake. When God spake the



time, He poured on us the Holy Ghost, and our faces began to light up and shine with the glory of God as Moses' did when he came down from Mount Sinai.

The 144,000 were all sealed and perfectly united. On their foreheads was written, God, New Jerusalem, and a glorious Star containing Jesus' new name. At our happy, holy state the wicked were enraged, and would rush violently up to lay hands on us to thrust us in prison, when we would stretch forth the hand in the name of the Lord, and the wicked would fall helpless to the ground. Then it was that the synagogue of Satan knew that God had loved us who could wash one another's feet, and salute the holy brethren with a holy kiss, and they worshipped at our feet. Soon our eyes were drawn to the East, for a small black cloud had appeared about half as large as a man's hand, which we all knew was the Sign of the Son of Man. We all in solemn silence gazed on the cloud as it drew nearer, and became lighter, glorious, and still more glorious, till it was a great white cloud. The bottom appeared like fire, a rainbow was over it, around the cloud were ten thousand angels singing a most lovely song. And on it sat the Son of Man, on His head were crowns, His hair was white and curly and lay on His shoulders. His feet had the appearance of fire, in His right hand was a sharp sickle, in His left a silver trumpet. His eyes were as a flame of fire, which searched His children through and through. Then all faces gathered paleness, and those that God had rejected gathered blackness. Then we all cried out, who shall be able to stand? Is my robe spotless? Then the angels ceased to sing, and there was some time of awful silence, when Jesus spoke. Those who have clean hands and a pure heart shall be able to stand, My grace is sufficient for you. At this, our faces lighted up, and joy filled every heart. And the angels struck a note higher and sung again while the cloud drew still nearer the earth. Then Jesus' silver trumpet sounded, as He descended on the cloud, wrapped in flames of fire. He gazed on the graves of the sleeping saints, then raised his eyes and hands to heaven and cried, Awake! Awake! Awake! ye that sleep in the dust and arise. Then there was a mighty earthquake. The graves opened, and the dead came up clothed with immortality. The 144,000 shouted, Hallelujah! as they recognized their friends who had been torn from them by death, and in the same moment we were changed and caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air. We all entered the cloud together, and were seven days ascending to the sea of glass, when Jesus brought along the crowns and with His own right hand placed them on our heads. He gave us harps of gold and palms of victory. Here on the sea of glass the 144,000 stood in a perfect square. Some of them had very bright crowns, others not so bright. Some crowns appeared heavy with stars, while others had but few. All were perfectly satisfied with their crowns. And they were

all clothed with a glorious white mantle from their shoulders to their feet. Angels were all about us as we marched over the sea of glass to the gate of the City. Jesus raised His mighty glorious arm, laid hold of the pearly gate and swung it back on its glittering hinges, and said to us, You have washed your robes in My blood, stood stiffly for My truth, enter in. We all marched in and felt we had a perfect right in the City. Here we saw the tree of life and the throne of God. Out of the throne came a pure river of water, and on either side of the river was the tree of life. On one side of the river was a trunk of a tree, and a trunk on the other side of the river, both of pure transparent gold.

At first I thought I saw two trees. I looked again and saw they were united at the top in one tree.--So it was the tree of life, on either side of the river of life. Its branches bowed to the place where we stood; and the fruit was glorious, which looked like gold mixed with silver. We all went under the tree, and sat down to look at the glory of the place, when brothers Fitch and Stockman, who had preached the gospel of the kingdom, and whom God had laid in the grave to save them, came up to us and asked us what we had passed through while they were sleeping. We tried to call up our greatest trials, but they looked so small compared with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that surrounded us, that we could not speak them out, and we all cried out Alleluia, heaven is cheap enough, and we touched our glorious harps and made heaven's arches ring.

With Jesus at our head we all descended from the City down to this earth, on a great and mighty mountain, which could not bear Jesus up, and it parted asunder, and there was a mighty plain. Then we looked up and saw the Great City, with twelve foundations, twelve gates, three on each side, and an angel at each gate. We all cried out "The City, the Great City, it's coming, it's coming down from God out of heaven;" and it came and settled on the place where we stood. Then we began to look at the glorious things outside of the City. There I saw most glorious houses, that had the appearance of silver, supported by four pillars, set with pearls, most glorious to behold, which were to be inhabited by the saints, and in them was a golden shelf. I saw many of the saints go into the houses, take off their glittering crowns and lay them on the shelf, then go out into the field by the houses to do something with the earth; not as we have to do with the earth here; no, no. A glorious light shone all about their heads and they were continually shouting and offering praises to God.

And I saw another field full of all kinds of flowers, and as I plucked them, I cried

out, They will never fade. Next I saw a field of tall grass, most glorious to behold; it was living green, and had a reflection of silver and gold, as it waved proudly to the glory of King Jesus. Then we entered a field full of all kinds of beasts--the lion, the lamb, the leopard and the wolf, altogether in perfect union. We passed through the midst of them, and they followed on peaceably after. Then we entered a wood, not like the dark woods we have here, no, no; but light, and all over glorious; the branches of the trees waved to and fro, and we all cried out, "We will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods." We passed through the woods, for we were on our way to Mount Zion. As we were traveling along, we met a company who were also gazing at the glories of the place. I noticed red as a border on their garments; their crowns were brilliant; their robes were pure white. As we greeted them, I asked Jesus who they were. He said they were martyrs that had been slain for him. With them was an innumerable company of little ones; they had a hem of red on their garments also. Mount Zion was just before us, and on the Mount was a glorious temple, and about it were seven other mountains, on which grew roses and lilies. And I saw the little ones climb, or if they chose, use their little wings and fly to the top of the mountains, and pluck the never fading flowers.--There were all kinds of trees around the temple to beautify the place; the box, the pine, the fir, the oil, the myrtle, the pomegranate and the fig tree bowed down with the weight of its timely figs, that made the place all over glorious. And as we were about to enter the holy temple, Jesus raised his lovely voice and said, Only the 144,000 enter this place, and we shouted Alleluia.

This temple was supported by seven pillars, all of transparent gold, set with pearls most glorious. The glorious things I saw there, I cannot describe. Oh, that I could talk in the language of Canaan, then could I tell a little of the glory of the better world. I saw there tables of stone in which the names of the 144,000 were engraved in letters of gold. After we beheld the glory of the temple, we went out, and Jesus left us, and went to the City. Soon we heard his lovely voice again, saying, "Come, my people, you have come out of great tribulation, and done my will; suffered for me; come in to supper, for I will gird myself, and serve you." We shouted Alleluia, glory, and entered into the City. And I saw a table of pure silver, it was many miles in length, yet our eyes could extend over it. I saw the fruit of the tree of life, the manna, almonds, figs, pomegranates, grapes, and many other kinds of fruit. I asked Jesus to let me eat of the fruit. He said, Not now. Those who eat of the fruit of this land, go back to earth no more. But in a little while, if faithful, you shall both eat of the fruit of the tree of life, and drink of the water of the fountain. And he said, You must go back to the earth again, and relate to others what I

have revealed to you. Then an angel bore me gently down to this dark world. Sometimes I think I can stay here no longer, all things of earth look so dreary. I feel very lonely here, for I have seen a better land. Oh, that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest.

The Lord gave me the following view in 1847, while at Topsham, Me. The brethren were assembled on the Sabbath.

We felt an unusual spirit of prayer. And as we prayed, the Holy Ghost fell upon us. We were very happy. Soon I was lost to earthly things, and was wrapped up in a vision of God's glory. I saw an angel swiftly flying to me. He quickly carried me from the earth to the Holy City. In the City I saw a temple, which I entered. I passed through a door before I came to the first veil. This veil was raised, and I passed into the Holy Place. Here I saw the altar of incense, the candlestick with seven lamps, and the table on which was the shew-bread. After viewing the glory of the Holy, Jesus raised the second veil, and I passed into the Holy of Holies.

In the Holiest I saw an ark; on the top and sides of it was purest gold. On each end of the ark was a lovely cherub, with their wings spread out over it. Their faces were turned towards each other, and they looked downwards. Between the angels was a golden censer. Above the ark, where the angels stood, was an exceeding bright glory, that appeared like a throne where God dwelt. Jesus stood by the ark. And as the saints' prayers came up to Jesus, the incense in the censer would smoke, and he offered up the prayers of the saints with the smoke of the incense to his Father. In the ark, was the golden pot of manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of stone which folded together like a book. Jesus opened them, and I saw the ten commandments written on them with the finger of God. On one table was four, and on the other six. The four on the first table shone brighter than the other six. But the fourth (the Sabbath commandment,) shone above them all; for the Sabbath was set apart to be kept in honor of God's holy name. The Holy Sabbath looked glorious--a halo of glory was all around it. I saw that the Sabbath was not nailed to the cross. If it was, the other nine commandments were; and we are at liberty to go forth and break them all, as well as to break the fourth. I saw that God had not changed the Sabbath, for he never changes. But the Pope had changed it from the seventh to the first day of the week; for he was to change times and laws.

And I saw that if God had changed the Sabbath; from the seventh to the first day, he would have changed the writing of the Sabbath commandment, written on the tables of stone, which are now in the ark, in the Most Holy Place of the Temple in heaven; and it would read thus: The first day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. But I saw that it read the same as when written on the tables of stone by the finger of God, and delivered to Moses in Sinai, "But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." I saw that the Holy Sabbath is, and will be, the separating wall between the true Israel of God and unbelievers; and that the Sabbath is the great question, to unite the hearts of God's dear waiting saints.

I saw that God had children, who do not see and keep the Sabbath. They had not rejected the light on it. And at the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully. This enraged the churches, and nominal Adventists, as they could not refute the Sabbath truth. And at this time God's chosen all saw clearly that we had the truth, and they came out and endured the persecution with us. And I saw the sword, famine, pestilence and great confusion in the land. The wicked thought that we had brought the judgments down on them. They rose up and took counsel to rid the earth of us, thinking that then the evil would be stayed.

In the time of trouble, we all fled from the cities and villages, but were pursued by the wicked, who entered the houses of the saints with the sword. They raised the sword to kill us, but it broke, and fell as powerless as a straw. Then we all cried day and night for deliverance, and the cry came up before God. The sun came up, and the moon stood still. The streams ceased to flow. Dark heavy clouds came up, and clashed against each other. But there was one clear place of settled glory, from whence came the voice of God like many waters, which shook the heavens, and the earth. The sky opened and shut, and was in commotion. The mountains shook like a reed in the wind, and cast out ragged rocks all around. The sea boiled like a pot, and cast out stones upon the land. And as God spake the day and hour of Jesus' coming, and delivered the everlasting covenant to his people, he spake one sentence, and then paused, while the words were rolling through the earth. The Israel of God stood with their eyes fixed upwards, listening to the words as they came from the mouth of Jehovah, and rolled through the earth like peals of loudest thunder. It was awfully solemn. At the end of every sentence, the saints shouted, Glory! Hallelujah! Their countenances were lighted up with the glory of God; and they shone with the glory as Moses' face did when he came down from

Sinai. The wicked could not look on them for the glory. And when the never-ending blessing was pronounced on those who had honored God, in keeping his Sabbath holy, there was a mighty shout of victory over the Beast, and over his Image.

Then commenced the jubilee, when the land should rest. I saw the pious slave rise in triumph and victory, and shake off the chains that bound him, while his wicked master was in confusion, and knew not what to do; for the wicked could not understand the words of the voice of God. Soon appeared the great white cloud. It looked more lovely than ever before. On it sat the Son of Man. At first we did not see Jesus on the cloud, but as it drew near the earth, we could behold his lovely person. This cloud, when it first appeared, was the Sign of the Son of Man in heaven. The voice of the Son of God called forth the sleeping saints, clothed with a glorious immortality. The living saints were changed in a moment, and were caught up with them in the cloudy chariot. It looked all over glorious as it rolled upwards. On either side of the chariot were wings, and beneath it wheels. And as the chariot rolled upwards, the wheels cried Holy, and the wings, as they moved, cried Holy, and the retinue of Holy Angels around the cloud cried Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty. And the saints in the cloud cried, Glory, Alleluia. And the chariot rolled upwards to the Holy City. Jesus threw open the gates of the Golden City, and led us in. Here we were made welcome, for we had kept the "commandments of God," and had a "right to the tree of life."

July 21, 1851

**Dear Brethren**

The Lord has shown me that the message of the third angel must go, and be proclaimed to the scattered children of the Lord, and that it should not be hung on time; for time never will be a test again. I saw that some were getting a false excitement arising from preaching time; that the third angel's message was stronger than time can be. I saw that this message can stand on its own foundation, and that it needs not time to strengthen it, and that it will go in mighty power, and do its work, and will be cut short in righteousness.

I saw that some were making every thing bend to the time of this next fall--that is, making their calculations in reference to that time. I saw that this was wrong, for this reason: Instead of going to God daily to know their present duty, they look ahead, and make their calculations as though they knew the work would end this fall, without inquiring their duty of God daily.

In hope.

June 10, 1852

### **To the Brethren and Sisters**

As I have of late looked around to find the humble followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, my mind has been much exercised.

Many who profess to be looking for the speedy coming of Christ, are becoming conformed to this world, and seek more earnestly the applause of those around them, than the approbation of God. They are cold and formal, like the nominal church, that they but a short time since separated from. The words addressed to the Laodicean Church, describe their present condition perfectly. See Revelation 3:14-20. They are "neither cold nor hot," but "lukewarm." And unless they heed the counsel of the "faithful and True Witness," and zealously repent, and obtain "gold tried in the fire," "white raiment," and "eye-salve," he will spue them out of his mouth.

The time has come when a large portion of those who once rejoiced, and shouted aloud for joy, in view of the immediate coming of the Lord, are on the ground of the churches and world who once scoffed at, and derided them for believing that Jesus was coming, and circulated all manner of falsehoods to raise prejudice against them, and destroy their influence.--If any one longs after the living God, and hungers and thirsts for righteousness, and God gives them to feel his power, and satisfies their longing soul, by shedding abroad his love in their hearts, and if they glorify God by praising him, they are, by these professed believers in the soon coming of the Lord, often considered deluded, and charged with having mesmerism or some wicked spirit.

Many of these professed Christians dress, talk and act like the world, and the only thing by which they may be known, is their profession. Though they profess to be looking for Christ, their conversation is not in heaven, but on worldly things.

"What manner of persons" ought those to be "in all holy conversation and godliness," who profess to be "looking for, and hasting unto the day of God?" 2 Peter 3:11. "Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure." 1 John 3:3. But it is evident that many who bear the advent name, study more to decorate their bodies, and appear well in the eyes of the world, than they do the word of God, to



learn how they may be approved of him.

What if the lovely Jesus, our pattern, should make his appearance among them, and the professors of religion generally, as at his first advent? He was born in a manger. Follow him along through his life and ministry. He was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. These professed Christians would be ashamed of the meek and lowly Saviour who wore a plain, seamless coat, and had not where to lay his head. His spotless, self-denying life would condemn them; his holy solemnity would be a painful restraint upon their lightness and vain laughter; his guileless conversation would be a check to their worldly and covetous conversation; his declaring the unvarnished, cutting truth would manifest their real character, and they would wish to get the meek Pattern, the lovely Jesus, out of the way as soon as possible. They would be among the first to try to catch him in his words, and raise the cry, Crucify him! Crucify him!

Let us follow Jesus as he so meekly rode into Jerusalem, when "the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice, (. . .) Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. Some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.--And he answered and said unto them, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace the stones would immediately cry out." A large portion of those who profess to be looking for Christ would be as forward as the Pharisees were, to have the disciples silenced, and they would doubtless raise the cry, Fanaticism! Mesmerism! Mesmerism! And the disciples spreading their garments and branches of palm-trees in the way would be thought extravagant and wild.

But God will have a people on the earth that will not be so cold and dead but that they can praise and glorify him. He will receive glory from some people, and if his chosen people, who keep his commandments should hold their peace the very stones would cry out.

Jesus is coming, but not as at his first advent, a babe in Bethlehem, not as he rode into Jerusalem, when the disciples praised God with a loud voice and cried, Hosannah; but in the glory of the Father, and with all the retinue of holy angels with him, to escort him on his way to earth. All heaven will be emptied of the angels. While the waiting saints will be looking for him, and gazing into heaven, as were the "men of Galilee" when he ascended from the Mount of Olivet.--Then, those only who are holy, those who

have followed fully the meek Pattern will, with rapturous joy, exclaim as they behold him, "Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us." And they will be changed "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump," that wakes the sleeping saints, and calls them forth from their dusty beds, clothed with glorious immortality, shouting, Victory! Victory! over death and the grave. The changed saints are caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air, never more to be separated from the object of their love.

With such a prospect as this before us, such a glorious hope, such a redemption that Christ has purchased for us by his own blood, shall we hold our peace? Shall we not praise God, even with a loud voice, as the disciples did when Jesus rode into Jerusalem? Is not our prospect far more glorious than theirs was? Who dare then forbid us glorifying God, even with a loud voice, when we have such a hope, big with immortality and full of glory? We have tasted of the powers of the world to come, and long for more. My whole being cries out after the living God, and I shall not be satisfied until I am filled with all his fullness.

The way to heaven is rugged. Briers and thorns are in the way; but we can with cheerfulness tread the rough pathway, knowing that Jesus, the King of glory, once trod it before us.

We will rejoice that we can follow in his footsteps, and be partakers with him of his sufferings, that we may finally partake of his glory.

What if reproaches are heaped upon me, even by those who profess to be looking for the Lord? What if falsehoods are kept in circulation by "whosoever loveth a lie" made ready to their hand? All this I can bear cheerfully. Why should I repine? My Master, the King of Glory, was treated a thousand times worse than I have been, and can I, a poor, unworthy creature, expect any better treatment in following Jesus, than he received? Shall I complain, when Jesus bore the scoffs and derision of his own people, the Jews, and was finally rejected and crucified by them for me? For my sins he bore all this. No, I will not complain; I will rather rejoice and be exceeding glad that I am accounted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake, that my reward may be in heaven. Only let me have an inheritance in glory, and it will be enough. For that, I can endure anything and everything. Heaven, sweet heaven.

"I long to be there, and the thought that 'tis near, Makes me almost impatient for Christ to appear, And fit up that dwelling of glory so rare--The earth robed in beauty--I long to be there."

Let us, dear brethren and sisters, crave the suffering, crucifying part of religion. For we are to be purified and fitted for the kingdom through suffering. We must keep separate from the world, if we would have the love of God abide with us. As soon as we begin to be conformed to this world, just so soon God's Spirit begins to depart from us. But if we keep humble, live holy, harmless and separate from sinners, we shall see of the salvation of God. Let us strive to be Christians (Christ-like) in every sense of the word, and let our dress, conversation and actions preach that Christ is formed within, the hope of glory, and that we are looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of Jesus. Let us show to those around us, that this world is not our home, that we are pilgrims and strangers here.

My affections, interest, treasure, all, is in the bright world to come. I long to see the King in his beauty, whom angels adore, and as they bow, cast their glittering crowns before him, and then touch their golden harps, and fill all heaven with their rich music.

Let those who break God's law and teach others to do so, denounce us as fallen from grace because we keep all ten of his immutable precepts, it will not harm us. We have the satisfaction of knowing, that while they curse, Jesus has pronounced a blessing. Says the true Witness, the only Begotten of the Father, "Blessed are they that do his [the Father's] commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the City." Revelation 22:14.

Think ye that the commandment-keepers will be sorry, and mourn when the pearly gates of the Golden City of God are swung back upon their glittering hinges, and they are welcomed in? No, never. They will then rejoice, that they are not under the bondage of the law, but that they have kept God's law, and therefore are free from it. They will have right to the tree of life, a right to its healing leaves. They will hear the lovely voice of Jesus, richer than any music that ever fell on mortal ear, saying, There will be no more sorrow, pain or death; sighing and crying have fled away.

"Our eyes shall then, with rapture, The Saviour's face behold, Our feet, no more

diverted, Shall walk the streets of gold; Our ears shall hear with transport The hosts  
celestial sing, Our tongues shall chant the glory Of our Immortal King."

February 17, 1853

### **To the Saints Scattered Abroad**

Dear Brethren and Sisters, Do we believe with all the heart that Christ is soon coming? And that we are now having the last message of mercy that is ever to be given to a guilty world? Is our example what it should be? And do we show to those around us, by our lives and holy conversation, that we are looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to change these vile bodies and fashion them like his most glorious body? I fear that we do not believe, and realize these things as we should. Those who believe the important truths that we profess to believe, should act out their faith, in the immediate coming of Christ. There is too much seeking amusements, and things to take up the mind here in this world; the mind is left too much to run upon pride of dress; and the tongue is engaged too often in light and trifling conversation, which gives the lie to our profession, for the conversation is not in heaven from whence we look for the Saviour.

Angels are watching over us, to guard us; and we often grieve these angels by indulging in trifling conversation, jesting and joking, and also by sinking down in a careless, stupid state. And although we may make an effort now and then for the victory, and obtain it, yet if we do not keep it, but sink down in the same careless, indifferent state, unable to endure temptations, and to resist the enemy, it is not enduring the trial of our faith, that is more precious than gold. It is not suffering for Christ's sake, and glorifying in tribulation.

There is a great lack of christian fortitude, and serving God from principle. We should not seek to please and gratify self; but to honor and glorify God, and in all we do and say, have a single eye to his glory.--If we would let our hearts be impressed with the following important words, and ever bear them in mind, we should not so easily fall into temptation; but our words would be few, and well chosen.

"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."--"Thou God seest me."

We could not think of these important words, and call to mind the sufferings of Jesus for us sinners, that we might receive pardon from our sins, and be redeemed unto God by his most precious blood, without feeling a holy restraint upon us, and an earnest desire to suffer for him, who suffered and endured so much for us.

If we dwell on these things, dear self, with its dignity, will be humbled; a child-like simplicity will take its place, which will bear reproof from others, and will not be easily provoked, and suffer a self-willed spirit to come in and rule the soul. The true christian's joys, amusements and consolation, must and will be in heaven.

"Upward to God be the heart's adoration, Where ever is flowing pure streams of salvation."

The longing souls of those who have tasted of the powers of the world to come, and have feasted on heavenly joys, will not be satisfied, or amused, with things of earth. Such will find enough to do in their leisure moments. Their souls will be drawn out after God. Where the treasure is, there will be their heart, holding sweet communion with the God they love and worship. Their amusements will be in contemplating their treasure--the holy city--the earth made new--their eternal home. And while they dwell upon these things, which are lofty, pure and holy, heaven will be brought near, and they will feel the power of the Holy Spirit, which will tend to wean them from the world more and more, and cause their consolation and chief joy to be in the things of heaven, their sweet home.--The power of attraction to God and heaven will be so great, that nothing can draw their mind from the great object of securing their soul's salvation, and honoring and glorifying God.

"Brighter joys than earth can give, win me away, Pleasures that for ever live--I cannot stay."

As I realize how much has been done for us, to keep us right, I am led to exclaim, O, what love! What wondrous love hath the Son of God for us poor sinners! Should we be stupid and careless, while every thing is being done for our salvation that can be done? All heaven is interested for us. We should be alive and awake, to honor, glorify and adore the High and Lofty One. Our hearts should flow out in love and gratitude to him who has been so full of love and compassion to us. With our lives we should honor

him, and with pure and holy conversation show that we are born from above; that this world is not our home, but that we are pilgrims and strangers here, traveling to a better country.

Many who profess the name of Christ, and profess to be looking for his speedy coming, know not what it is to suffer for Christ's sake. Their hearts are not subdued by grace, and they are not dead to self; but it often appears in various ways; and, at the same time, they are talking of having trials. But the principal cause of their trials, is an unsubdued heart, which makes self so sensitive, that it is often crossed. If such could realize what it is to be an humble follower of Christ, a true christian, they would begin to work in good earnest, and begin right. They would first die to self, then be instant in prayer, and check every passion of the heart. Give up your self-confidency, and self-sufficiency, and follow the meek pattern.--Ever keep Jesus in your mind, that he is your example, and you must tread in his footsteps. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despised the shame. He endured the contradiction of sinners against himself.

Is not the reward, at the end of the race, great and rich enough? What greater inducements could be held up before us, than has been held up to encourage us to be bold and valiant soldiers, to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil? Eternal life is ours, if we endure the trial of our faith. Is it not enough? Will any complain of the roughness of the way?--Would you enter heaven if you could without suffering, and dwell in the presence of that Jesus, who suffered so much for us, whose loveliness and glory is unspeakable? He for your sins, was once the meek slain lamb, wounded, bruised, smitten and afflicted. O, it would be no place for you. Any other place would be far preferable. You would feel that you had no right there.

Let us, then, cheerfully suffer something for Jesus' sake, crucify self daily, be a partaker of Christ's sufferings here, that we may be made partakers with him of his glory, and be crowned with glory, honor, immortality and eternal life.

April 14, 1853

### **Dear Brethren and Sisters**

It may be my duty to briefly notice the article from A. N. Seymour, in the Advent Harbinger for March 26th. Mr. S. thinks there is a contradiction on the forty-third page of my little pamphlet, entitled Christian Experience and Views.--I there stated that a cloud of glorious light covered the Father, and that his person could not be seen. I also stated that I saw the Father rise from the throne, &c. Here Mr. S. finds a glaring contradiction. But it seems to me that a child may understand this. The Father was enshrouded with a body of light and glory, so that his person could not be seen, yet I knew that it was the Father, and that from his person, emanated this light and glory. When I saw this body of light and glory rise from the throne, I knew that the Father moved, which was the cause of the body of light and glory rising, therefore said, I saw the Father rise. The glory, or excellency of his form, I never saw--no one could behold it; yet the body of light and glory that enshrouded his person, could be seen. I really think that Mr. S. has manifested a disposition to catch at words, and will leave it for others to judge whether such a course becomes a minister of Christ.

Mr. S. then asserts that I stated that I saw "Satan by the throne that the Father had left." Here I will give my own words. "Satan appeared to be by the throne, trying to carry on the work of God." I will give another sentence from the same page. "Then I turned to look at the company who were still bowed before the throne." Now, this praying company was in this mortal state, on the earth, yet represented to me as bowed before the throne. I never had the idea that these individuals were actually in the New Jerusalem. Neither did I ever think that any mortal could suppose that I thought that Satan was actually in the New Jerusalem. This Mr. S. is disposed to put in the worst light, and then goes on to ridicule the idea of Satan being in the New Jerusalem.

But did not John see the great red dragon in heaven?--Certainly. "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns." Revelation 12:3. Here seems to be as good a chance for Mr. S. to ridicule, as that which he has taken. What a monster to be in heaven!

But let this view that Mr. S. ridicules be compared with Hosea 5:6, 7. "They shall



go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the Lord; but they shall not find him; he hath withdrawn himself from them. They have dealt treacherously against the Lord; for they have begotten strange children; now shall a moth devour them with their portions." This certainly shows that the Lord changes his position in some way, and presents good reasons to believe that Satan would at some period get up counterfeit conversions.

August 11, 1853

### **To the Brethren**

Dear Brethren and Sisters, As error is fast progressing, we should seek to be awake in the cause of God, and realize the time in which we live. Darkness is to cover the earth, and gross darkness the people. And as nearly all around us are being enveloped in the thick darkness of error and delusion, it becomes us to shake off stupidity, and live near to God, where we can draw the divine rays of light and glory from the countenance of Jesus. As darkness thickens, and error increases, we should obtain a more thorough knowledge of the truth, and be prepared to maintain from the scriptures the truth of our position.

We must be sanctified through the truth, be wholly consecrated to God, and live out our holy profession, so that he can shed increasing light upon us, that we may have light in his light, and be strengthened with his strength. Every moment that we are not on our watch, we are liable to be beset by the enemy, and in great danger of being overcome by the powers of darkness. Satan has his angels, who are commissioned by him to be vigilant, and overthrow all he can; to find out the waywardness and besetting sins of those who profess the truth, and throw darkness around them, that they may cease to be watchful, and take a course that will dishonor the cause they profess to love, bring sorrow upon the church, while daily the misguided, unwatchful souls are growing darker, and the light of heaven is fading from them. They cannot discover their besetting sins, and Satan weaves his net about them, until they are taken in the snare.

God is our strength. We must look to him for wisdom and guidance, and with his glory in view, and the good of the church, and the salvation of our own souls, overcome our besetting sins. Each individual should seek to obtain new victory every day. We must learn to stand alone, and depend wholly upon God. The sooner we learn this, the better. Let each one find out where he fails, and then faithfully watch, that his sins may not overcome him, but get the victory over his sins. Then can we have confidence towards God, and great trouble will be saved the church.

The messengers of God, as they leave their homes, to labor for the salvation of souls, spend much of their time in getting those right, and free from temptation, who

have been in the truth for years, and still are weak, because they needlessly let loose the reins, cease watching over themselves, and, I sometimes think, tempt the enemy to tempt them. They get into some petty difficulty and trial, and the time of the servants of the Lord is spent to visit them. They are held hours and even days, and their souls grieved and wounded, to hear little difficulties and trials talked over. Each magnifying his own grievances to make them look as serious as possible, for fear the servants of God will think them too small an affair for them to notice. Instead of depending on the Lord's servants to help them out of these trials, they should break down before God, and fast and pray till the trials are removed.

Some seem to think that all God has called messengers into the field for, is to go at their bidding, and carry them in their arms. And that the most important part of their work is to settle their petty trials and difficulties, which they have brought upon themselves by injudicious moves, and by giving way to the enemy, and having an unyielding, fault-finding spirit with those around them, to ease their conscience.

But where are the hungry sheep at this time?--Starving for the bread of life. Those who know the truth and have been established in it, but obey it not, (if they did they would be saved many of these trials,) are holding the messengers, and the very object for which God has called his servants into the field, is not accomplished. The servants of God are grieved, and their courage taken away by such things in the church, when all should strive not to add a feather's weight to their burden; but by cheering words and the prayer of faith, should help them. How much more free would they be if all who profess the truth, would be looking about them and trying to help others, instead of claiming so much help themselves.--And as the servants of God enter the dark places, where the truth has not yet been proclaimed, they have a wounded spirit caused by the needless trials of their Brethren. In addition to all this, they have to meet the unbelief and prejudice of opposers and be trampled upon by some.

How much easier it would be for the servant of God to affect the heart, and how much more would God be glorified, if his servants were free from discouragement and trial, that they might labor for him more effectually, and with a free spirit, present the truth in its beauty.

Those who have been guilty of requiring so much labor of God's servants, and burdening them with trials, which belonged to themselves to settle, will have to give an

account to God for all the time and means that has been spent to gratify themselves, and thereby satisfying the enemy. They should be in a situation to help their brethren. They should never defer their trials and difficulties to burden a whole meeting, or wait until some of the messengers come to settle them. But get right before God, have the trials all out of the way, and be prepared to hold up the hands of the laborers, instead of weakening them.

July 25, 1854

## To the Young

You must be in earnest to secure your soul's salvation. You must begin the work of overcoming now. Don't put it off. It will soon be for ever too late, and the lamentation upon every side will be "The harvest is past, the summer is ended and my soul is not saved." Let not the opinions of your young companions affect you. You may think you have a great sacrifice to make, but to look at the matter in its true light, you have none to make. You only change bad for good, sin and evil for righteousness, death for life. If you cannot give all for heaven, you cannot have it. Will you give up every idol? If there is one thing that you cannot give up, that is your idol. That will shut you out of Heaven.

There is one that has made a sacrifice; one who is high and lofty. One who left the glory that he had with his Father before the world was, and came into the world and bore all the slight of man, suffered every indignity, and opened not his mouth, who, at the same time, could have had legions of angels by asking his Father. Yet he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Why was all this? O, the sacrifice had to be made to save lost man. Christ was nailed to Calvary's cross, to make a way of escape for you. He for your sakes became poor. He died that you might live. O What a sacrifice was this! The tongue of an angel cannot tell the "matchless depths of a Saviour's love." Jesus is your pattern. He is your example; and if you come short of the true pattern, you will have no excuse. Do not measure yourself by others; but Jesus, Jesus is your pattern. Strive to pattern closely after him. Encourage your soul to be a partaker of his divine character. Pray and cherish in your heart a hungering and thirsting after righteousness. O, will you be a sufferer with Christ, that you may be a partaker with him of his glory.

Be a living devoted Christian. You must give up pride of dress and appearance, and pride of opinion. You must be decided about it. Half-hearted work will never avail anything. You must come right down with God's humble people. God is purifying unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. This people are peculiar. They do not dress or act like the world. Their conversation is in Heaven. Shake off every shackle, and take hold for the salvation of your own soul, and that of your brothers sisters and friends around you. They look to you for example. Lead them right. Try to save their

souls. Love, honor and respect your parents; and in the end you will find you have sacrificed nothing; for you will have a rich and glorious reward.

September 19, 1854

## **Duty of Parents to Their Children**

One of the signs of the "last days" is the disobedience of children to their parents. 2 Timothy 3:2. And do parents realize their responsibility? Many seem to lose sight of the watch-care they should ever have over their children, and suffer them to indulge in evil passions, and to disobey them. They take but little notice of them until their own feelings are raised, and then punish them in anger.

Many parents will have to render an awful account at last for their neglect of their children. They have fostered and cherished their evil tempers by bending to their wishes and will, when the wishes and will of the children should bend to them. They have brought God's frown upon them and their children by these things. Parents, have you forgotten that which is written in the Holy Word: "He that spareth the rod hateth his son." Children are left to come up instead of being trained up. The poor little children are thought not to know or understand a correction at ten or twelve months old, and they begin to show stubbornness very young. Parents suffer them to indulge in evil tempers and passions without subduing or correcting them, and by so doing they cherish and nourish these evil passions until they grow with their growth and strengthen with their strength.

The house of God is often desecrated, and the Sabbath violated by Sabbath-believers' children. In some cases they are even allowed to run about the house, play, talk and manifest their evil tempers in the very meetings where the saints should worship God in the beauty of holiness. And the place that should be holy, and where a holy stillness should reign, and where there should be perfect order, neatness and humility, is made to be a perfect Babylon, "confusion." This is enough to bring God's displeasure, and shut his presence from our assemblies. His wrath is kindled for these things, and he will not while these things exist, go out with Israel to battle against their enemies. The enemies of our faith will be suffered to triumph on account of God's displeasure.

Parents stand in the place of God to their children and they will have to render an account, whether they have been faithful to the little few committed to their trust.

Parents, some of you are rearing children to be cut down by the destroying angel, unless you speedily change your course, and be faithful to them. God cannot cover iniquity, even in children. He cannot love unruly children who manifest passion, and he cannot save them in the time of trouble. Will you suffer your children to be lost through your neglect? Unfaithful parents, their blood will be upon you, and is not your salvation doubtful with the blood of your children upon you? children that might have been saved had you filled your place, and done your duty as faithful parents should.

God says: "I know Abraham, that he will command his household after him," and God gave him the honor of being the father of the faithful. Parents, it is your duty to have your children in perfect subjection, having all their passions and evil tempers subdued. And if children are taken to meeting, they should be made to know, and understand where they are. That they are not at home, but where God meets with his people. And they should be kept quiet and free from all play, and God will turn his face toward you, to meet with you and bless you.

If order is observed in the assemblies of the saints, the truth will have better effect upon all that hear it. A solemnity which is so much needed will be encouraged and there will be power in the truth to stir up the depths of the soul and a death-like stupor will not hang upon those who hear. Believers and unbelievers will be affected. It has seemed evident that in some places the Ark of God was removed from the church, for the holy commandments have been violated and the strength of Israel has been weakened.

Parents, correct your children. Commence while they are young, when impressions can be more easily made, and their evil tempers subdued before they grow with their growth and strengthen with their strength.

You should correct your children in love. Do not let them have their own way until you get angry, and then punish them. Such correction only helps on the evil, instead of remedying it. After you have done your duty faithfully to your children, then carry them to God and ask him to help you. Tell him that you have done your part, and then in faith ask God to do his part, that which you cannot do. Ask him to temper their dispositions, to make them mild and gentle by his Holy Spirit. He will hear you pray. He will love to answer your prayers. Through his Word he has enjoined it upon you to correct your children, to "spare not for their crying," and his Word is to be heeded in these things.



It certainly must bring God's displeasure upon parents when they leave him to do what he has left, and commanded them to do. God corrects us when we disobey, and go astray from him; and parents are bound by the word of God to correct their children when they disobey them, and show evil temper. Check the very first manifestation of passion. Break the will, (but do it with feelings of tenderness, and with discretion,) and your children will be far happier for it, and you will be happier. Your effort will be remembered of God, and he that is so particular as to observe the falling of the sparrow; he that noticed and commended Abraham's faithfulness, will not pass by your efforts. He that never slumbers nor sleeps will be ready to aid you with his Spirit and grace, and will reward your feeble efforts.

Parents, above every thing, take care of your children upon the Sabbath. Do not suffer them to violate God's holy day by playing in the house or out of doors. You may just as well break the Sabbath yourselves as to let your children do it, and when you suffer your children to wander about, and suffer them to play upon the Sabbath, God looks upon you as Sabbath-breakers. Your children, that are under your control, should be made to mind you. Your word should be their law. Will not parents wake up to their duty before it shall be too late, and take hold of the work in earnest, redeem the time, and make unsparing efforts to save their children?

Children are the lawful prey of the enemy, because they are not subjects of grace, have not experienced the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus, and the evil angels have access to these children; and some parents are careless and suffer them to work with but little restraint. Parents have a great work to do in this matter, by correcting and subduing their children and then by bringing them to God and claiming his blessing upon them. By the faithful and untiring efforts of the parents, and the blessing and grace entreated of God upon the children, the power of the evil angels will be broken, a sanctifying influence is shed upon the children, and the powers of darkness must give back.

When the destroying angel was to pass through Egypt, to destroy the first-born of man and beast, Israel was commanded to gather their children and families into their houses with them, and then mark their door-posts with blood, that the destroying angel might pass by their dwellings, and if they failed to go through with this process, there was no difference made between them and the Egyptians.

The destroying angel is soon to go forth again, not to destroy the first-born alone, but "to slay utterly old and young, both men, women and little children" who have not the mark. Parents, if you wish to save your children, separate them from the world, keep them from the company of wicked children; for if you suffer them to go with wicked children, you cannot prevent them from partaking of their wickedness and being corrupted. It is your solemn duty to watch over your children, to choose the society at all times for them. Learn your children to obey you, then can they more easily obey the commandments of God, and yield to his requirements. Don't let us neglect to pray with, and for our children. He that said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," will listen to our prayers for them, and the seal, or mark, of believing parents will cover their children, if they are trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

June 12, 1855

## To the Church

It is to be feared that the people of God are not prepared for what is coming upon the earth. Is there not a lack of energy in the church? Are we not upon the enchanted ground, and falling asleep in this important time? We desire to walk too much by sight. We must walk more by faith. We must have more energy, more unwavering faith and confidence in God. Has not pride crept into the church? Is there that close watchfulness of self that there should be? Let us each examine our own hearts and look carefully to our own lives and see how they will compare with the true Pattern who wore a plain seamless coat, whose life was a life of sacrifice, who went about doing others good, and making others happy. Let us search closely and see if we have the fruits of the Spirit.

Just as soon as pride enters the heart, the Spirit of God is shut out. Are there not those among us who indulge in pride and needless expense? They will soon regret it; for trying times are just before us, and they will then need, and desire to have, the misspent means, for they will feel want, and pinching want will be all around them.

While some indulge in pride and needless expense, some are on the opposite extreme, and by their lives and appearance act as though neatness and order are pride and sin. This is not so. They can be neat and orderly, and not have pride in their hearts. The poor can keep tidy as well as the more wealthy. They should not neglect their houses and persons, but should be neat and cleanly. Their dwellings should be kept neat and in order, and then the servants of God can find pleasure in coming to their houses and kneeling upon their floors to ask the blessing of the holy and pure God to rest upon them. He is a God of order and those who suffer themselves to be unclean and disorderly deprive themselves of many blessings they might otherwise enjoy. Filthiness among God's professed people is displeasing to him. Our God is a jealous God, he will have a clean, pure and holy people: a filthy and unclean person he will not acknowledge as his child. Those who profess to be converted to God and take upon themselves the name of Christians (Christ-like) should be the neatest people in the world. It is a dishonor to God, and a stain upon his cause, to profess to be converted to God and the truth, and yet go with slack, untidy habits uncorrected. Such must have a reformation, and their conversion must be more thorough. The fruits of religion are not disorder and

uncleanness. Those who have had no ambition to appear in a becoming manner before their brethren and sisters, should, for Christ's sake, and for the sake of the truth take hold of the work in earnest, and thoroughly reform. The world is watching for their faults, they despise God's children, and to give them occasion to reproach the religion of Christ is a sin in the sight of God. If these slack habits have grown with their growth and strengthened with their strength, there is greater necessity for decided efforts to correct these habits. Begin in earnest; do not reform in only a few things, but commence the work at once, and continue it until these slack habits are all rooted out and there is a thorough reformation.

God was so particular as to give direction to the children of Israel, after they came out of Egypt, what to do lest the Lord should pass by and see their uncleanness, and would not go up with their armies to battle against their enemies. The Lord is no less particular now, than he was then. If he noticed the sin of uncleanness then, he will notice it now; and those who are in fault, if they want to please God, and shun his frown, must reform lest he should see their untidiness and withhold victory and salvation in their meetings. Those who have indulged in pride should speedily reform, and put away their pride. They have no time to lose. They should separate themselves from the world, and not mingle with worldly company more than is actually necessary. Soon all the proud, and all that do wickedly will be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord.

Many among us put off the coming of the Lord too far, and their works correspond with their faith. There is a great responsibility resting upon parents. Their children are watching them, and any encouragement of the parents, by their example or advice to their children, a neglect to live out their faith themselves, and a mingling with the world is noticed and has its effect upon the children. Parents, do not, by your silence or consent, suffer your children to associate with those who have no love for God or for the truth which is so dear to us; the truth which is to test us, to purify us, and, by our obedience to it, make us finally overcomers. The straight and narrow path does not lay along side of the broad road. The first leads to heaven, the second to death and hell. Parents, do not try to bring these roads any nearer together. Let the contrast between the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus and those whose god is this world, be kept ever before them. Keep up the distinction between the christian and sinner. Parents whose duty it is to train up their children, should subdue their passions early. This is greatly neglected.

And have not the servants of God and the church a lack of faith? Have we not been too easily discouraged? too willing to believe that our lot was hard, and too ready to think that God had forsaken us? This is not right. God has so loved us as to give his dearly beloved Son to die for us; all heaven is interested in our salvation, and after all this, shall we consider it hard to trust so good a Father? He is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those that ask him than parents are to give good gifts to their children. We will not be discouraged, but with faith and confidence ask our Father in heaven for the things we need; and if we do not [not] receive the immediate answer to our prayers, we must not give up our courage and faith, and suffer a murmuring spirit to take possession of us. This only separates us farther from God, for it is displeasing to him.

Every saint who comes to God with a true heart, and sends earnest petitions to him in faith will be answered; but we must have enduring faith. We must not for a moment let go the promises if we do not see and realize the immediate answers to our prayers. We must not waver. We must rely upon his sure promise, "Ask and ye shall receive." God is too wise to err, and too good to withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly. Man is erring, and although his petitions are sent up from an honest heart, he does not always ask the things that are good for himself, or that will glorify God. When this is so, our wise and good Father hears our prayers and will answer them, sometimes immediately, but gives us the things that he knows are for our good and his own glory. The blessing received by us will be that which we need the most. If we could look into the plan of God, we should plainly see his wisdom and that he knows what is for our best good. Our prayers will be answered if they are sent up in faith, but nothing hurtful will be given. If we have, in the honesty of our hearts, asked any thing that God sees will not be good for us, he may withhold the thing desired, but in its place give us the blessings we most need. If the answer to our prayers does not come just when we expect it, we must not distrust God, for that will bring darkness. Our confidence in God must be strong.

Secret prayer, which is too much neglected, is the life of the Christian. Let us go to God alone and fix our minds upon him, have every thing else shut out, and then draw by living faith, light and strength from the Sanctuary. Let us not rise from our knees until we can rely upon God's promises with an unwavering faith. Then we shall be benefitted by secret prayer.

Children ask their parents for something they desire: the parent knows it will injure them, and gives them the things that will be good and healthy for them in the place of that which they desired. Not a prayer of the true saint is lost, if sent up from an honest heart.

December 18, 1855

**Note**

I have sent out (post-paid) to brethren in different States about 150 copies of "Testimony for the Church." It can be had by addressing me at Battle Creek, Mich. I shall be happy to hear from those who may receive it. Those who would encourage the circulation of such matter, can do by assisting in its publication.

January 10, 1856

### **Communication From Sister White**

Dear Brethren and Sisters, For some months past my spirit has been much depressed. God has seen fit to use me, a feeble instrument, for a few years past by giving me visions. This place I have not desired. I have ever known that it would cause me many hours of anguish of spirit. Messages have been given me, and it has been enjoined upon me to be faithful in declaring them. My feelings have been sensitive, and while with the fear of God before me, I have been obliged to faithfully relate what God has shown me, my sufferings of mind have been intense.

And then when I have seen how little the visions have been heeded, and what little effect they have had upon others, I have been discouraged. The visions have been of late less and less frequent, and my testimony for God's children had been gone. I have thought that my work in God's cause was done, and that I had no further duty to do, but to save my own soul, and carefully attend to my little family; have a good influence over my children, pray with them, and for them, that they may be saved.

I have greatly feared they might be left without a father's care. My husband's poor health has made me tremble for the future. My prospects looked dark. I have tried to bear up with good courage, but have nearly all the time carried with me an aching heart. I have seldom told my feelings, for I believed it to be wrong to talk trials and darkness to others, as it would have an effect to discourage them, and weaken their faith.

At our late Conference at Battle Creek, in November God wrought for us. The minds of the servants of God were exercised as to the gifts of the Church, and if God's frown had been brought upon his people because the gifts had been slighted and neglected, there was a pleasing prospect that his smiles would again be upon us, and he would graciously and mercifully revive the gifts again, and they would live in the Church, to encourage the desponding and fainting soul, and to correct and reprove the erring.

Our trembling faith has again pierced the clouds of darkness that have been gathering over us, and is fixed upon our Eternal Sun, whose beams have again dispersed



our gloom. And with hope and confidence we will do our duty to those around us; declare faithfully what God bids us, let the consequences be what they may. He that bids us speak will take care of the consequences if we do his will. Jesus will not lay upon us any greater burden than we can bear.

All have an influence, and that influence tells for God and heaven, or for Satan and hell. I cannot, I dare not hold my peace. I must warn those in danger to escape the wrath of God. A great work must be done for us. We are contented to live at too great a distance from God. Our hearts are not right before him, or we should feel deep longings of soul for a devotedness to his cause.

Are we willing to search our own hearts, and compare our lives with our holy Pattern! We are too well satisfied with a form. We must have the power of godliness in the soul. We must have our minds running in the right channel. Our conversation is too much upon things of earth. And when we meet to worship God, it takes time to get the mind fixed upon God, or in a heavenly frame to serve him. We have had so few thoughts of God and heaven, we cannot approach him with confidence in faith; and we pray and labor in darkness, when it is our privilege to be in the light.

There must be a living to God out of meeting. Our thoughts must be upon heavenly things, and a cheerful, happy frame of mind we should cherish, and then when we meet to worship, we can pray in faith, can come right to the point without wading through so much darkness. We must possess a spirit of consecration. This poor earth seems to be like a load stone. It draws our minds and occupies them so that there is but little room for heavenly thoughts and principles. This need not be so. My own experience tells me that heaven can attract us. We can keep our thoughts upon Jesus and his lovely character, and upon our priceless treasure. We can be strong in God. We can have an increase in faith. We must hold the victory as we obtain it, and then it will be easy believing. If we continue to hold the victory, our faith will grow. This is the only way we can be overcomers, and at last come off victorious.

But how often we get a little victory, feel that God had heard us pray, and when any trial arises, and dark clouds and adversity come, we yield up what we have obtained. Our faith dies, and we again encourage unbelief to come into our souls. And when we would make another effort for freedom of soul, it is much harder for us to come up to the point, to take God at his word than before. We must first mourn about

ourselves, and sorrow that we are so dark; and we have to make a greater effort for victory than before.

Let us have that faith that takes hold of the promises of God, and will not let go; faith that will live in adversity, clouds and gloom, and although trembling, will find its way through every obstacle, up within the second veil, and there grasp the desired blessing. A dead faith will do us no good. We must have a living faith, and then we shall have a living experience.

We have felt the power and blessing of God for a few weeks past. God has been very merciful. He has wrought in a wonderful manner for my husband. We have brought him to our great Physician in the arms of our faith, and like blind Bartimaeus have cried, "Jesus thou Son of David, have mercy on us;" we have been comforted. The healing power of God has been felt. All medicine has been laid aside, and we rely alone upon the arm of our great Physician. We are not yet satisfied. Our faith says, Entire restoration. We have seen the salvation of God, yet we expect to see and feel more. I believe without a doubt that my husband will yet be able to sound the last notes of warning to the world.

For weeks past our peace has been like a river. Our souls triumph in God. Gratitude, unspeakable gratitude, fills my soul for the tokens of God's love, which we have of late felt and seen. We feel like dedicating ourselves anew to God; devoting ourselves to work. We desire to be a living sacrifice to God, and to shed a holy influence. My very being longs after God. I thirst, I pant for living waters.

Our example and lives tell either for heaven, eternal life, or darkness and death. Our lives should be holy, and we should oft hold communion with God, draw nourishment from Jesus the living vine, that our souls may flourish in the Lord. Then can we exert a holy influence. How holy should those live who believe we are having the last message of mercy to the world. We should take a humble, meek stand, and yet the very truths that we profess will lead us to exalt the standard, and to occupy an elevated position, far above the low, vain, joking trifler of the world.

True christian humility will lead us to this. A sense of our own weakness and frailty will lead us to lean upon One that is mighty to save, whose delight is to impart strength and courage to the humble, self-abased suppliant. Humility is the greatest

ornament a christian can wear. Jesus loves to honor such, and lift them up. There is a fullness in Jesus. We can partake of his rich grace, and abundant salvation. We can rejoice in a whole Saviour, and have unwavering trust and confidence in God. We are too faithless, too doubting. Our faith in God's precious promises should grow every day. If we hold the victory over the powers of darkness it must be by constant, persevering watchfulness and almost unceasing prayer. It must be an every day work. If we grow in grace and in knowledge of the truth, we must have the words of our mouth select, and seasoned with grace. God will help in our efforts. Angels will watch over us, and our soul will be like a watered garden.

February 21, 1856

### **Extracts**

Bro. Smith, I have received a few more letters from Christian friends that have been comforting to me of which the following are a few extracts. I think all will be interested to hear often from each other, and letters that freely speak of the joys and trials, each experience, as they travel the narrow way, will often meet the cases of others. They will see that they are not alone in their experience, that others are having similar trials to themselves, and that One hope cheers all the followers of Jesus. The same arm that sustains and gives courage and strength to their fellow-travelers in the self-denying way to heaven sustains them.

February 21, 1856

### **Brethren and Sisters**

Brethren and Sisters, Let us remember the servants of God that devote themselves to his cause, and faithfully labor for the salvation of souls. Let us not forget that they sacrifice their pleasant homes, the society of their families, and travel in the heat and cold for weeks and months together. They often feel weary and sad, and perhaps when you least realize it, are troubled about their families at home. Often they have not means to send to the relief or support of their families. The servants of God need your support and comfort. Be awake. Feel and see their wants. Look closely, and see if they are comfortably clothed. Don't wait for them to express their wants. This perhaps they will not do. It is your duty to inquire into their wants. Don't neglect your duty, and think others will attend to this. Lay aside your selfish and sensitive feelings, and enter right into their wants.

Sisters, we can do something in this matter. We can deny ourselves of articles we do not actually need--wrought collars, undersleeves, "stomachers," & c., which are expressly forbidden in God's Word. Isaiahs 4:1.

Lay by yourselves in store what is spent to gratify pride, and it will make quite a sum towards defraying the expenses of the families of the messengers. They are continually making a sacrifice. They are deprived of the society of their companions, and they should have our warm sympathy, and our fervent prayers.

Our dear Bro. and Sr. Bates deserve our prayers, sympathy and support. We will remember them in their self-denial and sacrifice, and see that their wants are well supplied.

August 21, 1856

**Testimony for the Church No. 2**

I send out a quantity of this little Tract of 16 pages, post-paid. It is free for all. Those who esteem it a pleasure can assist in the publication of such matter.

November 26, 1857

### **"He Went Away Sorrowful, for He Had Great Possessions"**

At Monterey, October 8th, 1857, I was shown in vision that the condition of many Sabbath-keepers was like the young man who came to Jesus to know what he should do to inherit eternal life.

"And behold, one came, and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

"And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God: but, if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

"He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother; and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

"The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet?

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

"But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions.

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

"And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

"When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

"But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." Matthew 19:16-26.

Jesus quoted five of the last six commandments to the young man, also the second great commandment on which the last six commandments hang. These mentioned, he thought he had kept. Jesus did not mention the first four commandments, containing our duty to God. In answer to the inquiry of the young man, What lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven."

Here was his lack. He failed of keeping the first four commandments, also the last six. He failed of loving his neighbor as himself. Said Jesus, "Give to the poor." Jesus touches his possessions. "Sell that thou hast, and give to the poor." In this direct reference he pointed out his idol. His love of riches was supreme, therefore it was impossible for him to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind. And this supreme love for his riches shut his eyes to the wants of his fellow men. He did not love his neighbor as himself, therefore he failed to keep the last six commandments. His heart is on his treasure. It is swallowed up with his earthly possessions. He loves his possessions better than God, better than the heavenly treasure. He heard the conditions from the mouth of Jesus. If he would sell and give to the poor, he should have treasure in heaven. Here was a test of how much higher he prized eternal life than his riches. Did he eagerly lay hold of the prospect of eternal life? Did he earnestly strive to remove the obstacle that was in his way of having a treasure in heaven? O, no, "he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions."

I was pointed to these words, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Said Jesus, "with men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." Said the angel, "Will God permit the rich men to keep their riches, and yet they enter into the kingdom of God?" Said another angel, "No, never."

I saw that it was God's plan that these riches should be used properly, and distributed to bless the needy, and to advance the work of God. I saw that if men love their riches better than their fellow men, better than God, or the truth of his word, and their hearts are on their riches, they cannot have eternal life. They would rather yield the



truth, than sell and give to the poor. Here they are proved to see how much God is loved, how much the truth is loved, and like the young man in the Bible, many go away sorrowful, because they cannot have their riches and a treasure in heaven too. They cannot have both. They venture to risk their chance of eternal life for a worldly possession.

"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Then I saw that with God all things are possible. Truth set home to the heart by the Spirit of God, will crowd out the love of riches. The love of Jesus and riches cannot dwell in the same heart. The love of God so far surpasses the love of riches, that the possessor breaks away from his riches and transfers his affections to God. And then he is led through his love to God, to administer to the wants of God's cause. It is his highest pleasure to make a right disposition of his Lord's goods. Love to God and his fellow men predominates, and he holds all that he has as not his own, and faithfully discharges his duty as God's steward. Then can he keep the first four commandments, and the last six. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." In this way it is possible for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first."

Here is the reward for those who sacrifice for God. They receive an hundred fold in this life, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many, I saw, that are first, shall be last, and the last shall be first. I was shown those who receive the truth, but do not live it. They cling to their possessions, and are not willing to distribute of their substance to advance the cause of God. They have no faith to venture and trust God. Their love of this world swallows up their faith. God has called for a portion of their substance, but they heed it not. They reason thus, that they have labored hard to obtain what they have, and they cannot lend it to the Lord, for they may come to want. "O ye of little faith!" That God who cared for Elijah in the time of famine, will not pass by one of his self-sacrificing children. He that has numbered the hairs of their head, will care for them, and in days of famine they will be satisfied. While the wicked are perishing all around them for want of bread, their bread and water will be sure. Those who will still cling to their earthly treasure, and will not make a right disposition of that which is lent them of God, will lose their treasure in heaven, lose everlasting life.

I saw that God in his providence has moved upon the hearts of some of those who have riches, and has converted them to the truth, that they with their substance may assist to keep his work moving. And if those who are wealthy will not do this, if they do not fulfill the purpose of God, he will pass them by, and raise up others to fill their place who will fulfill his purpose, and with their possessions gladly distribute to meet the necessities of the cause of God. In this they will be first. God will have those in his cause who will do this.

I saw that God could send means from heaven to carry on his work; but this is out of his order. He has ordained that men should be his instruments, that as a great sacrifice was made to redeem them, they should act a part in this work of salvation, by making a sacrifice for each other, and by thus doing show how highly they prize the sacrifice that has been made for them.

I was directed to James 5. "Go to, now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days."

I saw that these fearful words apply particularly to the wealthy who profess to believe the present truth. The Lord calls them to use their means to advance his cause. Opportunities are presented to them, but they shut their eyes to the wants of the cause, and cling fast to their earthly treasure. Their love of the world is greater than their love of the truth, the love of their fellow men, or their love to God. He has called for their substance, but they selfishly, covetously, retain what they have. They give a little now and then to ease their conscience, but have not overcome their love for this world. They do not sacrifice for God. The Lord has raised up others that prize eternal life, that can feel and realize something of the value of the soul, and their means they have freely bestowed to advance the cause of God. The work is closing; the rich men have kept their riches, their large farms, their cattle, &c. Their means are not wanted then, and I saw the Lord turn to them in anger in wrath, and repeat these words: "Go to, now, ye rich men." He has called, but you would not hear. Love of this world has drowned his voice. Now he has no use for you, and lets you go, bidding you, "Go to, now, ye rich men."

Oh, I saw it was an awful thing thus to be let go by the Lord. A fearful thing to hold on to a perishable substance here, when he has told you, if you will sell and give alms, you can lay up treasure in heaven.

I was shown that as the work was closing up, and the truth going forth in mighty power, these rich men will bring their means and lay it at the feet of the servants of God, begging them to accept it. The answer from the servants of God is, "Go to, now, ye rich men. Your means are not needed. Ye withheld it when ye could do good with it in advancing the cause of God. The needy have suffered, they have not been blessed by your means. God will not accept your riches now. Go to, now, ye rich men."

Then I was directed to these words: "Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabbaoth."

I saw that God was not in ALL the riches that have been obtained. Satan has much more to do with it than God. It has, much of it, been obtained by oppressing the hireling in his wages. The natural, covetous, rich man has obtained these riches by grinding down the hireling, and taking advantage of individuals where he could, and adding to his treasure here, that will eat his flesh as it were fire. A strictly honest, honorable course has not been taken by some. Such must work fast and take a very different course to redeem the time.

I saw that many Sabbath-keepers are at fault here. Advantage is taken even of their poor brethren, and those who have of their abundance exact more than the real worth of things, more than they would pay for the same thing, while these same brethren are embarrassed and distressed for want of means. God knows all these things. Every selfish act, every covetous extortion, will bring its reward.

I saw it was cruel and unjust to have no consideration of a brother's situation. If he is distressed, or poor, yet doing the best he can, allowance should be made for him, and even the full value of the things he may purchase of the wealthy should not be exacted; but they should have bowels of compassion for him. God will approve of such kindly acts, and the doer will not lose his reward. But I saw a fearful account will stand against many Sabbath-keepers for close, covetous acts.

I was pointed back, and saw when there was but few that listened to, and embraced the truth, they had not much of this world's goods. The wants of the cause were divided among a very few. Then there was a necessity for houses and lands to be sold and obtain cheaper to serve them as a shelter or home, while their means were freely, and generously lent to the Lord, to publish the truth, and to otherwise aid in advancing the cause of God. As I beheld these self-sacrificing ones, I saw they had endured privation for the benefit of the cause. I saw an angel standing by them pointing them upward, and saying these words, "Ye have bags in heaven!" "Ye have bags in heaven, that wax not old! Endure unto the end, and great will be thy reward.

I saw that God had been moving on hearts. The truth that a few sacrificed so much for, in order to get it before others, has triumphed, and multitudes have laid hold of it. God has in his providence moved upon those that have means and has brought them into the truth, that as the work of God increases, the wants of the cause may be met. Much means are brought into the ranks of Sabbath-keepers.

I saw that at present God did not call for the houses his people need to live in, unless expensive houses are exchanged for cheaper ones. But if those who have of their abundance do not hear his voice, and cut loose from the world, and dispose of a portion of their property and lands, and sacrifice for God, he will pass them by, and call for those who are willing to do anything for Jesus, even to sell their homes to meet the wants of the cause. God will have a free-will offering. Those who give must esteem it a privilege to do so.

I have seen that some give of their abundance, but yet they feel no lack. They do not particularly deny themselves of any thing for the cause of Christ. They still have all that heart can wish. They give liberally, and heartily. God regards it, and the action and motive is known, and strictly marked by him. They will not lose their reward. You that cannot bestow so liberally, must not excuse yourselves, because you cannot do as much as some others. Do what you can. Deny yourself of some article that you can do without, and sacrifice for the cause of God. Like the widow, cast in your two mites. You will actually give more than all those who have given of their abundance. And you will know how sweet it is to give to the needy, to deny self, and sacrifice for the truth, and lay up treasure in heaven.

I was shown that the young, especially, young men, who profess the truth have yet a lesson of self-denial to learn. I saw that if they made more sacrifice for the truth, they would esteem the truth more highly. It would affect their hearts, purify their lives, and they would hold it more dear and sacred.

I saw that the young do not take the burden, or feel the responsibility of the cause of God. Is it because God has excused them? Oh, no. I saw that they excuse themselves. They are eased, and others are burdened. They do not realize that they are not their own. Their strength, their time, is not their own. They are bought with a price. A dear sacrifice was made for them, and unless they possess the spirit of self-denial, and sacrifice, they can never possess the immortal inheritance.

December 31, 1857

## The Future

November 20th, I was shown the people of God, and saw them mightily shaken. I saw some with strong faith and agonizing cries, pleading with God. Their countenances were pale, and marked with deep anxiety which expressed their internal struggle. There was firmness and great earnestness expressed in their countenances, while large drops of perspiration rose upon their foreheads, and fell. Now and then their faces would light up with the marks of God's approbation, and again the same solemn, earnest, anxious look settled upon them.

Evil angels crowded around them, pressing their darkness upon them, to shut out Jesus from their view, that their eyes might be drawn to the darkness that surrounded them, and they distrust God, and next murmur against him. Their only safety was in keeping their eyes directed upward. Angels were having the charge over the people of God, and as the poisonous atmosphere from these evil angels was pressed around these anxious ones, the angels, which had the charge over them, were continually wafting their wings over them, to scatter the thick darkness that surrounded them.

Some, I saw, did not participate in this work of agonizing and pleading. They seemed indifferent and careless. They were not resisting the darkness around them, and it shut them in like a thick cloud. The angels of God left them, and went to the aid of those earnest, praying ones. I saw the angels of God hasten to the assistance of every one who were struggling with all their energies to resist those evil angels, and trying to help themselves by calling upon God with perseverance. But the angels left those who made no effort to help themselves, and I lost sight of them.

As these praying ones continued their earnest cries, at times a ray of light from Jesus came to them, and encouraged their hearts, and lighted up their countenances.

I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen. I was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. It will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver of the testimony, and it will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. This straight

testimony, some will not bear. They will rise up against it, and this will cause a shaking among God's people.

I saw that the testimony of the True Witness has not been half heeded. The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the Church hangs, has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded. This testimony must work deep repentance, and all that truly receive it, will obey it, and be purified.

Said the angel, "List ye!" Soon I heard a voice that sounded like many musical instruments, all sounding in perfect strains, sweet and harmonious. It surpassed any music I had ever heard. It seemed to be so full of mercy, compassion, and elevating, holy joy. It thrilled through my whole being. Said the angel, "Look ye!" My attention was then turned to the company I had seen before, who were mightily shaken. I was shown those whom I had before seen weeping, and praying with agony of spirit. I saw that the company of guardian angels around them had doubled, and they were clothed with an armor from their head to their feet. They moved in exact order, firm like a company of soldiers. Their countenances expressed the severe conflict which they had endured, the agonizing struggle they had passed through. Yet their features, marked with severe internal anguish, shone now with the light and glory of heaven. They had obtained the victory, and it called forth from them the deepest gratitude, and holy, sacred joy.

The numbers of this company had lessened. Some had been shaken out, and left by the way. The careless and indifferent who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to agonize, persevere, and plead for it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness, and their numbers were immediately made up by others taking hold of the truth, and coming into the ranks. Still the evil angels pressed around them, but they could have no power over them.

I heard those clothed with the armor speak forth the truth in great power. It had effect. I saw those who had been bound; some wives had been bound by their husbands, and some children had been bound by their parents. The honest who had been held or prevented from hearing the truth, now eagerly laid hold of the truth spoken. All fear of their relatives was gone. The truth alone was exalted to them. It was dearer and more precious than life. They had been hungering and thirsting for truth. I asked what had made this great change. An angel answered, "It is the latter rain. The refreshing from the

presence of the Lord. The loud cry of the Third Angel."

Great power was with these chosen ones. Said the angel, "Look ye!" My attention was turned to the wicked, or unbelievers. They were all astir. The zeal and power with the people of God had aroused and enraged them. Confusion, confusion, was on every side. I saw measures taken against this company, who were having the power and light of God. Darkness thickened around them, yet there they stood, approved of God, and trusting in him. I saw them perplexed. Next I heard them crying unto God earnestly. Through the day and night their cry ceased not. I heard these words, "Thy will, O God, be done! If it can glorify thy name, make a way of escape for thy people! Deliver us from the heathen round about us! They have appointed us unto death; but thine arm can bring salvation." These are all the words I can bring to mind. They seemed to have a deep sense of their unworthiness, and manifested entire submission to the will of God. Yet every one, without an exception, was earnestly pleading, and wrestling like Jacob for deliverance.

Soon after they had commenced their earnest cry, the angels, in sympathy would have gone to their deliverance. But a tall, commanding angel suffered them not. Said he, "The will of God is not yet fulfilled. They must drink of the cup. They must be baptized with the baptism."

Soon I heard the voice of God, which shook the heavens and the earth. There was a mighty earthquake. Buildings were shaken down, and fell on every side. I then heard a triumphant shout of victory, loud, musical, and clear. I looked upon this company who, a short time before were in such distress and bondage. Their captivity was turned. A glorious light shone upon them. How beautiful they then looked. All weariness and marks of care were gone. Health and beauty were seen in every countenance. Their enemies, the heathen round them, fell like dead men. They could not endure the light that shone upon the delivered, holy ones. This light and glory remained upon them, until Jesus was seen in the clouds of heaven, and the faithful, tried company was changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, from glory to glory. And the graves were opened and the saints came forth, clothed with immortality, crying victory over death and the grave, and together with the living saints, were caught up to meet their Lord in the air; while the rich, musical shouts of Glory, and Victory, were upon every immortal tongue, and proceeding from every sanctified, holy lip.



March 25, 1858

**Note**

I now design publishing a Book of two or three hundred pages, containing a sketch of my Christian Experience up to this time, my views, and a Bible argument on the perpetuity of Spiritual Gifts. My friends who have received letters from me containing views, exhortations, or a statement of events in my experience worthy of publication in such a work, are invited to return them to me immediately by mail to Battle Creek, Mich.

April 15, 1858

## **A Warning**

Bro. Smith, As I consider the responsibilities and dangers of the people of God, I am led to fear for many, and I wish to set before them the following, which I consider a most solemn warning.

As it became evident a few years since that the burden of the Third Message would be in the West, a brother, who had much of this world's good, resolved to move West with his family, and thus introduce the work in the West.

He went with one intention, his wife with another. His intention was to proclaim the truth, but her intention was to have all their means laid out in house and lands, that the means not only be secured, and kept from the cause of God, but that her husband's time be also employed in building, planting, sowing &c. He was convicted of his duty to dispose of a portion of his means to advance the cause of God, but it was a great sacrifice for him to make, for he loved this world, and he was easily persuaded by his wife and daughter, to gratify their desire and love of their earthly treasure, and retain it. He disobeyed the call of God, to gratify his wife and daughter, and was too willing to excuse or cover up his love of the world, under a show of duty to his family.

At a certain time, the Lord gave me a view of their situation. I saw their worldly-mindedness, that instead of living out their faith after they went into a new country, they were getting a firmer grasp of this world, until it was a proverb to those around them. They professed to be looking for the glorious appearing of Jesus, professed to be God's peculiar people, that he was purifying unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, yet purchasing their large attractive lands, thus plainly declaring by their works, that this world was their home, that here was their treasure.

I was shown the wife of our brother, that she was engrossed in the spirit of this world, and loved and worshiped it; that she must unfasten her grasp, that she was a stumbling-block in her husband's way, she was holding him back, and was unwilling that he should sell and give alms, also unwilling that he should go out to talk the truth to others. I saw that unless she got out of her husband's way, cut loose from the world, and

distributed to the necessity of God's cause, the Lord would visit the family with judgment, and move her out of the way. She heeded not the message. Her whole mind was occupied in fitting up and making improvements to stay here. In the midst of this, affliction came. She was prostrated by disease, and taken away.

A few weeks after her death we visited the place with the message to the Laodiceans. We entered the dwelling of the afflicted family, and labored and prayed for them. They were in a low, worldly-minded, discouraged state. A heavy burden rolled upon me. The father was struggling for freedom, for liberty. The Lord graciously met with us, and let a little of his light shine upon us. But still we knew there was much to be done. As our brother would come up to the point to give up the world, and get it out of his heart; as he would lay his farm upon the altar, and say he would sell a part, or all of it, then the daughter would act the same part the mother had done, to pull him back, and she would plead for their treasure here. O what agony of spirit I felt. We had a season of prayer. The sufferings of the Son of God were held up before me. His agony in the garden of Gethsemane, as the sins of the whole world were laid upon him, his shameful death upon the cross, all to save guilty man. He, for their sakes became poor, that they through his poverty might be made rich. Then to see how little those for whom this sacrifice was made, were willing to suffer for the truth, I could hardly endure the realizing sense of these things.

Before I left that place I was shown in vision that God had taken the mother away in anger, and unless the father and daughter submitted to God, unless they cut loose from this world and had their affections weaned from it, God would step over the threshold again in judgment. I was astonished at what was shown me in vision. I saw that this brother loved this world more than he ever thought he did, and that it was a snare to him, it deceived him. I saw that he was so close and snug in deal, it really carried him beyond the bounds of strict truth and honesty. Said the angel, The deceitfulness of riches causes many, many of its possessors to stumble over their riches to perdition, while only a few with the unrighteous mammon will make friends, and finally be received into everlasting habitations.

I saw that the brother did not give his hired help a decent chance to serve God. It was hurry, hurry, work, work, as though they had not a dollar at their command. There was but little chance for them to pray. I saw that God seeth not as man seeth, for God despised such snug dealing and covetousness, and without an entire reform, it was

impossible for him to be saved; that he was straining every nerve to save a little means, that would be no blessing to himself or others; that he did not possess a noble generous disposition. I saw that it was right to economize, but it had been stretched into meanness without any goodly object, only to add to their treasure which would shortly eat their flesh as it were fire, unless they, as faithful stewards, made a right disposal of their Lord's goods. I saw that he had hardly allowed himself time to pray, and that it had been a mere dry form without the power.

I saw the daughter's covetousness, that her life was all wrapt up in selfishness. She had suffered no lack. Every want had been supplied. She had lived for herself, and her heart seldom beat in sympathy for other's woes or wants; that such closeness, such selfishness, covetousness, was seldom seen, and that this, without an entire reformation, would prove her ruin; and if her father left her a few thousands, whether he lived or died, it would be enough to ruin her, and displease God.

I saw that the father had not been pitiful to the unfortunate, those who labored for him, not even to the poor orphan. There had been such snug dealing practised toward them, that God could not look with any pleasure, until full restitution should be made; for he regarded it with abhorrence. All this I related to him, while my soul was bowed with deep anguish.

Last Summer I was again shown this brother's case, that he was not moving fast enough, that he was not using his means to advance the cause of God as fast as he should. The next news I heard was, that he was dead, and had left his large property to his daughter. Nothing was bestowed upon the cause of God. Last Tuesday, [March 30th,] I saw that Satan's wish had been gained. While he lived, his brethren had plunged into the world beyond their means, and stood ready to hire the use of his money to advance their own interests, and thus it was kept from the cause of God. And I saw that Satan had it just as he wanted it at his death, that nothing be left to the cause of God, but his daughter be cursed with it, and placed in a situation where it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for her to enter the kingdom of heaven. I saw that it was the design of Satan to keep all the means from the ranks of the truth that he could, and to use it as a stumbling-block for souls. He is willing that those who profess the truth, and are snug, selfish and covetous, should have means in their possession, for they idolize it. They nourish it, and it will prove their ruin; for they lay up treasure upon earth, and lose their treasure in heaven.

As I have seen that the reward of covetousness thus far upon this family should be a warning to the church, I cannot withhold from the people of God what has been shown me respecting them.

April 28, 1859

### **The Sinner's Trials**

We often hear the life of the christian described as being filled with trials, sadness and sorrow, with but little to cheer and comfort; and the impression is too often given, that if he should give up his faith and his efforts for Eternal Life, the scene would be changed to pleasure and happiness. But I have been led to compare the life of the sinner with the life of the righteous. The sinner does not have a desire to please God; therefore can have no pleasing sense of his approbation. He does not enjoy his state of sin and worldly pleasure without trouble. He feels deeply the ills of this mortal life. O yes, at times he is fearfully troubled. He fears God, but does not love him.

Is the sinner free from disappointment, perplexity, earthly losses, poverty and distress? O no! In this respect he is no more secure than the righteous. He often suffers lingering sicknesses, yet has no strong and mighty arm to lean upon, no strengthening grace from a higher power to support him. In his weakness he must lean upon his own strength. He cannot look forward with any pleasure to the resurrection morn, for he has no cheering hope that he will then have part with the blest. He obtains no consolation by looking forward to the future. A fearful uncertainty torments him, and thus he closes his eyes in death. This is the end of the poor sinner's life of vain pleasures.

The christian is subject to sickness, disappointment, poverty, reproach and distress. Yet amid all this he loves God, and loves to do his will, and prizes nothing so highly as his approbation. In the conflicts, trials, and changing scenes of this life, he knows that there is One who understands it all; One who will bend his ear low to the cries of the sorrowful and distressed; One who can sympathize with every sorrow and soothe the keenest anguish of every heart. He has invited the sorrowing ones to come to him and find rest. Amid all his affliction the christian has strong consolation, and if he suffers a lingering, distressing sickness, before he closes his eyes in death, he can with cheerfulness bear it all, for he holds communion with his Redeemer. You often see his countenance radiant with joy, while he contemplates the future with heavenly satisfaction--only a short rest in the grave, and the Life-giver will break the fetters of the tomb, release the captive and bring him from his dusty bed immortal, never more to know pain, sorrow or death. Let this hope of the christian be our hope, and we will ask

no more.

Many speak of the life of the christian taking away from us pleasure and worldly enjoyment. I say it takes away nothing worth having. Is there perplexity, poverty and distress endured by the christian? O yes, this is expected in this life. But is the sinner of whom we speak as enjoying the pleasures of this world free from these ills of life? Do we not often see in him the pale cheek, the racking cough, indicating a fatal disease? Is he not subject to burning fevers, and contagious diseases? How often do you hear his complaints of meeting with heavy losses of worldly goods; and consider, this is his only treasure. He loses all. These troubles of the sinner are overlooked.

Christians are too apt to think they are the only ones who have a hard time, and some seem to think that it is a condescension in them to embrace unpopular truth, and profess to be Christ's followers. The road seems hard. They think they have many sacrifices to make, when in truth they make no real sacrifice. If they are adopted into the family of God, what sacrifices have they made? Their following Christ may have broken friendship with worldly relatives; but look at the exchange--their names written in the Lamb's Book of Life--elevated, yes, greatly exalted to be partakers of salvation--heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, to an imperishable inheritance. If the link which binds them to worldly relatives is weakened for Christ's sake, a stronger one is formed, a link which binds finite man to the Infinite God. Shall we call this a sacrifice on our part because we yield error for truth, light for darkness, weakness for strength, sin for righteousness, and a perishable name and inheritance, for honors that are lasting, and an immortal treasure? But even in this life the christian has One upon whom to lean for support who will help him bear all his trials. But the sinner has to bear his trials alone. He goes down into the grave suffering remorse, under darkness, bound by Satan, for he is his lawful prey.

It does seem to me if there is any one who should be continually grateful, it is the christian. If there is any one who enjoys happiness even in this life, it is the faithful follower of Jesus Christ. It is the duty of God's children to be cheerful. They should encourage a happy frame of mind. God cannot be glorified by his children living continually under a cloud and casting a shadow wherever they go. The christian should cast sunshine instead of a shadow. The unbeliever often receives the impression that religion is a gloomy thing, and that the life of the christian has nothing inviting in it. If the christian dwells too much upon the rough pathway, he makes it harder than it really

is. If he dwells upon the bright spots in the way, and is grateful for every ray of light, and then dwells upon the rich reward that lies at the end of the race, instead of gloom, mourning and complaints, he will bear a cheerful countenance. He has carefully treasured every token for good, and God can safely bless him, and give him gladness of heart.

May the Lord ever give us a lively sense of the great sacrifice which has been made for us, and then present before us the inheritance purchased for us by that dear sacrifice, and may our vision be brightened and clear to dwell upon and appreciate the reward and excellent glory prepared for the faithful christian.



June 16, 1859

**Testimony for the Church No. 5.**

The Lord has visited me again in great mercy. I am preparing a Tract which will probably be ready as soon as orders can reach me. The subjects of the Tract are-- Testimony to the Laodiceans--Systematic Benevolence--The Talents, Matt. xxv--The unjust steward, Luke xvi--Co-partnership with unbelievers, and slack management of worldly matters--Idle words--Oath-taking--Meeting-house building, &c. I want all the friends of the cause to have it, pay, or no pay. Those who choose, may send ten cts. a copy, others may send more or nothing, as they choose. Let the poor who have no money, be sure to send. Address Ellen G. White, Battle Creek, Mich.

October 30, 1860

### **A Request**

Dear Brethren and Sisters, The treasury in the Poor Fund, consisting of clothes, &c., for those in need, is nearly exhausted. And as there are cases of destitution continually arising, and one new one recently, I thought it would be well for those who have clothing, bedding, or money, to spare, to send on here immediately. We hope there will be no delay, for we are going to assist some that are needy as soon as we get things together. Send your donations to Sr. Uriah Smith, or myself.

June 25, 1861

### **Power of Example**

In the epistle of Paul to [Titus 2:13, 14], we read, "Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." This great work is to be performed for those only who are willing to be purified, willing to be peculiar, and who manifest a zeal in good works. How many shrink from the purifying process! They are unwilling to live out the truth, unwilling to appear singular or peculiar in the eyes of the world. It is this mixing up with the world which destroys our spirituality, pureness and zeal. Satan's power is constantly exercised to stupefy the sensibilities of God's people, that their consciences may not be sensitive to wrong, and that the sign of distinction between them and the world may be destroyed.

I have frequently received letters of inquiry in regard to dress, and some have not rightly understood what I have written. The very class which have been presented before me, who were imitating the fashions of the world, have been very slow, and the last to be affected or reformed. There has been another class who lacked taste and order in dress, who have taken advantage of what I have written, and taken the opposite extreme, and considered that they were free from pride, and have looked upon those who dress orderly and neat as being proud. Oddity and careless dress have been considered by some a special virtue. Such take a course which destroys their influence over unbelievers. They disgust those who might be benefitted. While the visions have reproved pride and imitating the fashions of the world, they have reproved those who were careless of their apparel and lacked cleanliness of person and dress. Especially have I been shown that those who profess present truth should have a special care to appear before God to worship him upon the Sabbath in a manner showing that we respect the Creator who has sanctified and placed special honors upon that day. All who have any regard for the Sabbath should be cleanly in person, neat and orderly in dress, for they are to appear before a jealous God who marks every token of disrespect. God is offended at uncleanness and disorder. Individuals have thought it would be wrong to wear anything upon their heads but a sun-bonnet. Such go to great extremes. It cannot be called pride to wear a neat, plain, straw or silk bonnet. Our faith, if carried out, will

lead us to be so plain in dress and zealous of good works that we shall be marked as peculiar. But when we lose taste for order and neatness in dress we virtually leave the truth, for the truth never degrades, but elevates. Unbelievers look upon Sabbath-keepers as degraded, and when individuals are neglectful of their dress, and are coarse and rough, in their manners, their influence strengthens unbelievers in their conclusions.

Those who profess to be Christians in these last days which are full of peril, and do not imitate the humble, self-denying Pattern, place themselves in the enemy's ranks. He considers them his subjects, and they serve as important a purpose for Satan as any of his subjects, for they have a name to live and are dead. Others take them for example, and by their following them, lose heaven, when if they had not professed to be Christians, they would have shunned their example. These unconsecrated professors are not aware of the weight of their influence. They make the conflict much more severe for those who would be God's peculiar people. Paul in Titus 2:15, refers to God's people who are looking for the appearing of Christ. He says, "These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke, with all authority. Let no man despise thee." As we bear testimony against pride and following the fashions of the world, we are met with excuses and self-justification. Some urge the example of others. Such a sister wears hoops, if it is wrong for me to wear them it is wrong for her. Children urge the example of other children whose parents are Sabbath-keepers. Bro. A. is a deacon of the church. His children wear hoops, and why is it any worse for me to wear them than it is for them? Those who by their example furnish unconsecrated professors with arguments against those who would be peculiar, are laying a cause of stumbling in the way of the weak, and to God they must render an account for such example. I am often asked, "What do you think of hoops?" I reply, I have given you the light which has been given me. I was shown that hoops were a shame, and that we should not give the least countenance to a fashion carried to such ridiculous lengths. I am often surprised to hear that "sister White says it is not wrong to wear small hoops." No one has ever heard me say this. After being shown what I have in regard to hoops, nothing would induce me to give the least encouragement to any one to wear them.

A sister writes, "I cannot see the difference between small hoops and heavy rope skirts, which show off as much as hoops, or two or three heavy quilted skirts, which are worn to take the place of hoops."

I agree with the sister, if we discard hoops, it is wrong to put on heavy quilts to

make it appear as near like hoops as possible. We know that it is injurious to wear heavy quilts. I contend that heavy quilts and hoops are alike unnecessary. He that framed us never designed that we should be deformed with hoops, or anything to look like them. It is the inventions and fashions of the world that have led God's people, and they are unwilling to move out independent of the fashions and customs of the world. While I study God's word, I am alarmed for the Israel of God in these last days. They are exhorted to flee from idolatry. I fear that God's people are asleep and so conformed to the world that we can hardly know them, or discern between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. The distance is widening between Christ and his people, and lessening between them and the world. The marks of distinction between Christ's professed people and the world, have almost disappeared. They follow after the abominations of the nations around them, as did ancient Israel. From what has been shown me, hoops are an abomination. They are indecent, and God's people err, if they follow in the least degree, or give countenance to this fashion.

Sabbath-keepers who profess to be God's chosen, peculiar people, should discard hoops, and their practice and example should be a living rebuke to those who wear them. Some may plead convenience. I have traveled much, and have seen a great deal of inconvenience attending the wearing of hoops; and those who plead the necessity on account of health, wear them in the winter, which is a greater injury than quilted skirts. While traveling in the cars and stages, I have often been led to exclaim, Oh, modesty, where is thy blush! I have seen large companies crowding into the cars, and in order to make any headway, the hoops had to be raised and placed into a shape which was indecent. And the exposure of the form was ten-fold more with those who wore hoops, than with those who did not; and were it not for fashion, those who immodestly expose themselves would be hissed at; but modesty and decency must be sacrificed to the god of fashion. May the Lord deliver his people from this grievous sin. God will not pity those who will be slaves to fashion. But supposing there is some little convenience in wearing hoops, does this prove that it is right to wear them? Let the fashion change and convenience would no longer be mentioned. It is the duty of every child of God to inquire, Wherein am I separate from the world? Let them suffer a little inconvenience and be on the safe side. What crosses do God's people bear? They mingle with the world, partake of their spirit, dress, talk and act like them.

Please read 1 Timothy 2:9, 10. "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with brodered

hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh godliness) with good works."

1 Peter 3:3-5: "Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands."

The power of example is great. Sister A. ventures to wear small hoops; sister B. says it is no worse for me to wear hoops than sister A., and she wears hoops a little larger. Sister C. imitates the example of sister A. and B., and wears her hoops a little larger than A. and B., but all contend that their hoops are small.

Parents who would teach their children the evil of following the fashions of the world, have a hard battle. They are met with, "Why, mother, sisters A., B. and C. wear hoops; if it is wicked for me, it is for them." What can the parents say? They should set a right example before their children, and although the example of professed followers of Christ causes the children to think that their parents are too careful and severe in their restrictions, yet God will bless the efforts of these conscientious parents. If the parents do not take a decided, firm course, their children will be borne down with the current, for Satan and his evil angels are working upon their minds, and the example of unconsecrated professors is against their efforts which makes the work of overcoming far more laborious for their children. Yet with faith in God and earnest prayer, believing parents may press on in this rugged path of duty. The way of the cross is an onward, upward way. And as we advance therein, seeking the things that are above, we must leave farther and farther in the distance the things which belong to the earth. While the world and carnal professors are rushing downward to death, those who climb the hill will have to put forth efforts or they will be carried down in the broad road.

The children of the world are called the children of darkness. They are blinded by the god of this world, and are led by the spirit of the prince of darkness. They cannot enjoy heavenly things. The children of light have their affections set on things above. They leave behind them the things of this world. They fulfill the command, "Come out from among them and be ye separate." Here is the conditional promise, "I will receive

you." Christ from the beginning has chosen his people out of the world, and required them to be separate, having no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. If they love God and keep his commandments, they will be far from having the friendship, and loving the pleasures, of the world. There is no concord between Christ and Belial.

The prophet Ezra, and faithful servants of the Jewish church, were astonished when the princes came to them saying, "The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations. And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this, should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? Wouldest not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping? O Lord God of Israel, thou art righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day: behold we are before thee in our trespasses, for we cannot stand before thee because of this." Ezra 9:1, 13-15.

2 Chronicles 36:14-16: "Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the Lord which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes and sending; because he had compassion on his people and on his dwelling-place. But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against this people, till there was no remedy."

Leviticus 18:26, 27: "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you; (for all these abominations have the men of the land done which were before you, and the land is defiled.)"

Deuteronomy 32:16-22: "They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods, that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee. And when the Lord saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons and of his daughters. And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their

end shall be; for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith. They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities, and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains."

We here read the warnings which God gave to ancient Israel. It was not his good pleasure that they should wander so long in the wilderness, and he would have brought them immediately to the promised land, if they had submitted, and loved to be led by him; and because they so often grieved him in the desert, he sware in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest, save two, who wholly followed him. God required his people to trust in him alone. He did not wish them to receive help of those who did not serve him. Please read Ezra 4:1-5: "Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel, then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you; for we seek your God as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esar-haddon, king of Assur, which brought us up hither. But Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel said unto them, Ye have nothing to do with us to build a house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded. Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building, and hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose."

Ezra 8:21, 23: "Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way; because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him. So we fasted and besought our God for this, and he was entreated of us."

The prophet and these fathers did not consider them the worshipers of the true God, and though they professed friendship and wished to help them, they dare not unite with them in anything relating to his worship. When going up to Jerusalem, to build the temple of God and to restore his worship, they would not ask help of the king to assist



them in the way, but by fasting and prayer sought the Lord for help. They believed God would defend and prosper his servants in their efforts to serve him. The Creator of all things needeth not the help of his enemies to establish his worship. He asks not the sacrifice of wickedness, nor accepts the offerings of those who have other gods before the Lord.

We often hear the remark, You are too exclusive. As a people we would make any sacrifice to save souls, or lead them to the truth. But to unite with them, to love the things that they love, and have friendship with the world, we dare not, for we should then be at enmity with God.

By reading the following scriptures we shall see how God regarded his ancient Israel:

Psalm 135:4: "For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure."

Deuteronomy 14:2: "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God, and the Lord hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth."

Deuteronomy 7:6, 7: "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people."

Exodus 33:16: "For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in that thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth."

How frequently ancient Israel rebelled, and how often were they visited with judgments, and thousands slain because they would not heed the commands of God who had chosen them.

The Israel of God in these last days are in constant danger of mixing with the world and losing all signs of their being the chosen people of God. Read again Titus

2:13-15. We are brought down to the last days, when God is purifying unto himself a peculiar people. Shall we provoke God as did ancient Israel? Shall we bring his wrath upon us by departing from him and mingling with the world, and following the abominations of the nations around us?

The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself, and this consecration to God and separation from the world is plainly declared and positively enjoined in both the Old and New Testaments. There is a wall of separation which the Lord himself has established between the things of the world and the things he has chosen out of the world and sanctified unto himself. The calling and character of God's people are peculiar. Their prospects are peculiar, and these peculiarities distinguish them from all people. All of God's people upon the earth are one body, from the beginning to the end of time. They have one head that directs and governs the body. The same injunctions rest upon God's people now, to be separate from the world, as rested upon ancient Israel. The great Head of the church has not changed. The experience of Christians in these days are much like the travels of ancient Israel. Please read 1 Corinthians 10, especially from the 6th to the 15th verse.

"Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.... Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say."

1 John 3:1: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

1 John 2:15-17: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If

any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

2 Peter 2:2: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning."

James 4:4: "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

James 1:27: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

Titus 2:12-14: "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

Romans 12:2: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

John 17:14, 15, 17: "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."

Luke 6:22, 23: "Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets."

John 15:16-19: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

1 John 4:4, 5: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them."

1 John 2:5, 6: "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk even as he walked."

1 Peter 2:9: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

As we read the word of God, how plain that God's people are peculiar and distinct from the unbelieving world around them. Our position is interesting and fearful; living in the last days, how important that we imitate the example of Christ, and walk even as he walked. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." The opinions and wisdom of men must not guide or govern us. They always lead away from the cross.

The servants of Christ have not their home or their treasure here. Would that all of them could understand that it is only because the Lord reigns that we are even permitted to dwell in peace and safety among our enemies. It is not our privilege to claim special favors of the world. We must consent to be poor and despised among men until the warfare is finished and the victory won. The members of Christ are called to come out and be separate from the friendship and spirit of the world, and their strength and power consists in their being chosen and accepted of God.

The Son of God was the heir of all things, and the dominion and glory of the

kingdoms of this world were promised to him. Yet when he appeared in this world it was without riches or splendor. The world understood not his union with the Father; and the excellency and glory of his divine character were hid from them. He was therefore "despised and rejected of men," and "we did esteem him smitten of God and afflicted."

Even so the members of Christ are as he was in this world. They are the sons of God and joint heirs with Christ; and the kingdom and dominion belong to them. The world understand not their character and holy calling. They perceive not their adoption into the family of God. Their union and fellowship with the Father and the Son are not manifest to the world, and while they behold their humiliation and reproach, it does not appear what they are, or what they shall be. They are strangers. The world knows them not, and appreciate not the motives which actuate them.

The world is ripening for its destruction. God can bear with sinners but a little longer. They must drink the dregs of the cup of his wrath unmixed with mercy. Those who will be heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ to the immortal inheritance, will be peculiar. Yes, so peculiar that God places a mark upon them as his, wholly his. Think ye that God will receive, honor and acknowledge a people so mixed up with the world that they differ from them only in name? Read again Titus 2:13-15. It is soon to be known who is on the Lord's side, who will not be ashamed of Jesus. Those who have not moral courage to take their position conscientiously in the face of unbelievers, and leave the fashions of the world and imitate the self-denying life of Christ, are ashamed of him, and do not love his example.

August 27, 1861

### **Communication from Sister White**

Slavery and the War, God is punishing this nation for the high crime of slavery. He has the destiny of the nation in his hands. He will punish the South for the sin of slavery, and the North for so long suffering its overreaching and overbearing influences.

All heaven beholds with indignation, human beings, the workmanship of God, reduced to the lowest depths of degradation, and placed on a level with the brute creation by their fellow-men. And professed followers of that dear Saviour whose compassion was ever moved as he witnessed human woe, heartily engage in this enormous and grievous sin, and deal in slaves and souls of men. Angels have recorded it all. It is written in the book. The tears of the pious bond-men and bond-women, of fathers, mothers and children, brothers and sisters, are all bottled up in heaven. Agony, human agony, is carried from place to place, and bought and sold. God will restrain his anger but a little longer. His anger burns against this nation, and especially against the religious bodies who have sanctioned, and have themselves engaged in this terrible merchandise. Such injustice, such oppression, such sufferings, many professed followers of the meek and lowly Jesus can witness with heartless indifference. And many of them can inflict, with hateful satisfaction, all this indescribable agony themselves, and yet dare to worship God. It is solemn mockery, and Satan exults over it, and reproaches Jesus and his angels with such inconsistency, saying, with hellish triumph, Such are Christ's followers!

These professed christians read of the sufferings of the martyrs, and tears course down their cheeks. They wonder that men could ever possess hearts so hardened as to practice such inhuman cruelties toward their fellow-men, while at the same time they hold their fellow-men in slavery. And this is not all. They sever the ties of nature, and cruelly oppress from day to day their fellow-men. They can inflict most inhuman tortures with relentless cruelty, which would well compare with the cruelty papists and heathens exercised toward Christ's followers. It will be more tolerable for the heathen and for papists in the day of the execution of God's judgment than for such men. The cries and sufferings of the oppressed have reached unto heaven, and angels stand amazed at the hard-hearted, untold, agonizing suffering, man in the image of his Maker,

causes his fellow-man. The names of such are written in blood, crossed with stripes, and flooded with agonizing, burning tears of suffering. God's anger will not cease until he has caused the land of light to drink the dregs of the cup of his fury.

At the Roosevelt conference, when the brethren and sisters were assembled on the day set apart for humiliation, fasting and prayer, Sabbath, August 3, the Spirit of the Lord rested upon us, and I was taken off in vision, and shown the sin of slavery. Slavery has long been a curse to this nation. The fugitive slave law was calculated to crush out of man every noble, generous feeling of sympathy, that should arise in his heart for the oppressed and suffering slave. It was in direct opposition to the teaching of Christ. God's scourge now is upon the North, that they have so long submitted to the advances of the slave power. The sin of Northern pro-slavery men is great. They have strengthened the South in their sin, and sanctioned the extension of slavery, and acted a prominent part in bringing the nation into its present distressed condition.

I was shown that many realize not the extent of the evil which has come upon us. They have flattered themselves that the national difficulties would soon be settled, and confusion and war end; but all will be convinced that there is more reality in the matter than was anticipated. Many have looked for the North to strike a blow, and the controversy be ended.

I was pointed back to ancient Israel held in bondage by the Egyptians. The Lord wrought by Moses and Aaron to deliver the children of Israel. Miracles were performed before Pharaoh to convince him that they were especially sent of God to bid him to let Israel go. But Pharaoh's heart was hardened against the messengers of God, and he reasoned away the miracles performed by them. Then the Egyptians were made to feel God's judgments. They were visited by plagues. While suffering under the effect of the several plagues, Pharaoh consented to let Israel go. But as soon as the cause of their suffering was removed, his heart was hardened. His mighty men and counselors strengthened themselves against God and endeavored to explain the plagues as the result of natural causes. Each visitation from God was more severe than the preceding one, yet they would not release the children of Israel, until the angel of the Lord slew the first-born of the Egyptians. From the king upon the throne, down to the most humble and lowly, was there wailing and mourning. Then Pharaoh commanded to let Israel go. After the Egyptians had buried their dead, Pharaoh relented that he had let Israel go. His counselors and mighty men tried to account for their bereavement. They would not

admit that the visitation or judgment was from God, and they pursued after the children of Israel. When the Israelites beheld the Egyptian host in pursuit, some upon horses and some in chariots, and equipped for war, their hearts failed them. The Red sea was before, the Egyptian host behind. They could see no way of escape. A shout of triumph burst from the Egyptians to find Israel completely in their power. The Israelites were greatly terrified. The Lord commanded Moses to bid the children of Israel go forward, to lift up the rod and stretch out his hand over the sea and divide it. He did so, and lo, the sea parted and the children of Israel passed over dry shod. Pharaoh had so long withstood God, and hardened his heart against his mighty, wondrous works, that he in blindness rushed into the path God had miraculously prepared for his people. Again Moses was commanded to stretch forth his hand over the sea, "and the sea returned to his strength," and the waters covered the Egyptian host and they were drowned.

This scene was presented before me to illustrate the selfish love of slavery, the desperate measures the South would adopt to cherish the institution, and the dreadful lengths to which they would go before they would yield. The dreadful system of slavery has reduced and degraded human beings to the level of the brutes, and the majority of slave-masters regard them as such. Their consciences have become seared and hardened as was Pharaoh's; and if compelled to release their slaves, their principles are unchanged, and they would make the slave feel their oppressive power if possible. It looked to me like an impossibility now for slavery to be done away. God alone can wrench the slave from the hand of his desperate, relentless oppressor. All the abuse and cruelty exercised toward the slave is justly chargeable to the upholders of the slave system, whether they be Southern men or Northern men.

The North and the South were presented before me. The North have been deceived in regard to the South. They are better prepared for war than has been represented. Most of their men are well skilled in the use of arms, some of them from experience in battle, others from habitual sporting. They have the advantage of the North in this respect, but have not, as a general thing, the power of endurance and valor that Northern men have.

I had a view of the late disastrous battle at Manassas, Va. It was a most exciting, thrilling, distressing scene. The Southern army had everything in their favor, and were prepared for a dreadful contest. The Northern army was moving on with triumph, not doubting but that they would be victorious. Many were reckless, and marched forward



boastingly as though victory were already theirs. As they neared the battle-field, many were almost fainting through weariness and want of refreshment. They did not expect so fierce an encounter. They rushed into battle and fought bravely, desperately. The dead and dying were on every side. Both the North and the South suffered severely. The Southern men felt the battle, and in a little would have been driven back still further. Northern men were rushing on, although their destruction was very great. Just then an angel descended and waved his hand backward. Instantly there was confusion in their ranks. It appeared to the Northern men that their armies were retreating, when it was not in reality so; and a precipitate retreat commenced. It seemed wonderful to me. Then it was explained, that God had this nation in his own hand, and would suffer no victories to be gained faster than he ordained, and no more losses to the Northern men than in his wisdom he saw fit, to punish the North for their sin. And in this battle had the Northern army pushed the battle still further, in their fainting, exhausted condition, a far greater struggle and destruction awaited them, which would have caused great triumph in the South. God would not permit this, and sent an angel to interfere. The sudden falling back of the Northern troops was a mystery to all. They knew not that God's hand was in the matter.

The destruction of the Southern army was so great that they had no heart to boast. The sight of the dead, dying and wounded gave them but little courage to triumph. This destruction, occurring when they had every advantage, and the North great disadvantage, caused them great perplexity. They know that if the North have an equal chance with them, victory is certain for the North. Their only hope is to occupy positions difficult of approach, and then have formidable arrangements to hurl destruction on every hand.

The South have been strengthening themselves greatly since their rebellion first commenced. Then if active measures had been taken by the North, this rebellion would have been speedily crushed out. But that which was small at first has increased in strength and numbers until it is a most powerful rebellion. Other nations are intently watching this nation, for what purpose I was not informed, and are making great preparations for some event.

The greatest anxiety now exists among our national men. They are in great perplexity. Pro-slavery men and traitors are in their very midst, and while they are professedly in favor of the Union, they have an influence in decisions, some of which

even favor the South.

I was shown the inhabitants of the earth in the utmost confusion. There was war, bloodshed, want, privation, famine and pestilence, in the land; and as these things were without, God's people began to press together, and cast aside their little difficulties. Self-dignity no longer controlled them. Deep humility took its place. Suffering, perplexity and privation, caused reason to resume its throne, and the passionate and unreasonable man became sane, and acted with discretion and wisdom.

My attention was then called from the scene. There seemed to be a little time of peace. Then the inhabitants of the earth were again presented before me, and everything was in the utmost confusion again. Strife, war and bloodshed, with famine and pestilence, raged everywhere. Other nations were engaged in this confusion and war. War caused famine. Want and bloodshed caused pestilence. And then men's hearts will fail them for fear, "and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth."

The unbelieving world will soon have something to think of besides their dress and appearance; and as their minds are torn from these things by distress and perplexity, they have nothing to turn to. They are not prisoners of hope, and therefore do not turn to the "Strong Hold." Their hearts will fail them for repining and fear. They have not made God their refuge, and he will not be their consolation then, but will laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh. They have despised and trampled upon the truths of God's word. They have indulged in extravagant dress, and have spent their lives in hilarity and glee. They have sown to the wind, they must reap the whirlwind.

In the time of distress and perplexity of nations there will be many who have not given themselves wholly to the corrupting influences of the world and the service of Satan, who will humble themselves before God, and turn to him with their whole heart and find acceptance and pardon.

August 27, 1861

## **Perilous Times**

Those among Sabbath-keepers who have been unwilling to make any sacrifice, but have yielded to the influence of the world, are to be tested and proved. The perils of these last days are upon us, and a trial is before the young which they have not anticipated. They are to be brought into most distressing perplexity. The genuineness of their faith will be proved. They profess to be looking for the coming of the Son of man, yet some of them have been a miserable example to unbelievers. They have not been willing to give up the world, but have united with them, have attended picnics, and other gatherings of pleasure, flattering themselves that they were engaged in innocent amusement. Yet I was shown that it was just such indulgences that separate them from God and make them children of the world. God owns not the pleasure or amusement seeker as his follower. He has given us no such example. Those only who are self-denying, and who live a life of sobriety, humility and holiness, are true followers of Jesus; and such cannot engage in and enjoy the frivolous, empty conversation of the lovers of the world.

Isaiah 3, was presented before me. I was shown that this prophecy has its application to these last days; and the reproofs are given to the daughters of Zion who have thought only of appearance and display. Read verse 25: "Thy men shall fall by the sword and thy mighty in the war." I was shown that this portion of Scripture will be strictly fulfilled. Young men and women professing to be christians, yet having no christian experience, and having borne no burdens, and felt no individual responsibility, are to be proved. They will be brought low in the dust, and long for an experience in the things of God, which they failed to obtain.

"War lifts his helmet to his brow, O God, protect thy people now."

A day of heart-rending anguish is before us. I was shown that pointed testimonies should be borne, and those who will come up to the help of the Lord, will receive his blessing. But Sabbath-keepers have a work to do. Hoops, I was shown, were an abomination, and every Sabbath-keeper's influence should be a rebuke to this ridiculous fashion, which has been a screen to iniquity. It arose from a house of ill-fame in Paris.

Individuals were shown me who will despise instruction, even if it comes from heaven, and they will frame some excuse to avoid the most pointed testimony, and in defiance of all the light given, and testimony borne, will put on hoops because it is the fashion, and risk the consequences.

August 27, 1861

## **Organization**

I was shown that some have been fearing they should become Babylon if they organize; but the churches in Central New York have been perfect Babylon, confusion. And now unless the churches are so organized that they can carry out and enforce order, they have nothing to hope for in the future. They must scatter into fragments. Previous teachings have nourished the elements of disunion. A spirit has been cherished to watch and accuse, rather than to build up. If ministers of God would unitedly take their position and maintain it with decision, there would be a uniting influence among the flock of God. Separating bars would be broken to fragments. Hearts would flow together and unite like two drops of water. Then there would be power and strength in the ranks of Sabbath-keepers far exceeding anything we have yet witnessed. The hearts of God's servants are made sad by meeting, as they journey from church to church, the opposing influence of other ministering brethren. Individuals have stood ready to oppose every step of advance God's people have made. Those who have dared to venture out have their hearts saddened and distressed by the lack of union of action on the part of their fellow-laborers. We are living in solemn times. Satan and evil angels are working with mighty power, with the world on their side to help them. And professed Sabbath-keepers, claiming to believe important, solemn truth, unite their forces with the combined influence of the powers of darkness to distract and tear down that which God designs to build up. Their influence is recorded as those who retard the work of advance and reform among God's people.

The agitation of the subject of organization has revealed a great lack of moral courage on the part of ministers proclaiming present truth. Some who were convinced that organization was right failed to stand up boldly and advocate it. They let some few understand that they favored it. Was this all God required of them? No: he was displeased with their cowardly silence, and lack of action. They feared blame and opposition. They watched the brethren generally to see how their pulse beat before standing manfully for what they believed to be right. The people waited for the voice of their favorite minister in the truth, and because they could hear no response in favor from them, decided that the subject of organization was wrong. Thus the influence of some of the ministers was against this matter while they professed to be in favor. They

were afraid of losing their influence. Some one must move here and bear responsibility, and venture his influence; and as he has become inured to censure and blame, he is suffered to bear it. His fellow-laborers who should stand by his side and take their share of the burden, are looking on to see how he succeeds in fighting the battle alone. But God marks his distress, his anguish, his tears, his discouragements and despair, while his mind is taxed almost beyond endurance; and as he is ready to sink, God lifts him up and points him to the rest for the weary, the reward for the faithful; and again he puts his shoulder under the heavy burden. I saw that all will be rewarded according as their works shall be. Those who shun responsibility will meet with loss in the end. The time for ministers to stand together is when the battle goes hard.

November 19, 1861

## **Our Duty to the Poor**

Inquiries are often made in regard to our duty to the poor who embrace the third message; and we have long been anxious to know, ourselves, how to manage with discretion the cases of poor families who embrace the Sabbath. But while at Roosevelt, N.Y., August 3, 1861, I was shown some things in regard to the poor.

God does not require our brethren to take charge of every poor family that shall embrace this message. If they should do this, the work of the messengers to enter new fields must cease, for the fund would be exhausted. Many are poor from their own lack of diligence and economy, and they know not how to use means aright. If they should be helped it would hurt them. Some will always be poor. If they should have the very best advantages, their case would not be helped. They have not good calculation, and would use all the means they could obtain, be it much or little. Some know nothing of denying self and economizing to keep out of debt, and get a little ahead for a time of need. If the church should help such individuals instead of leaving them to rely upon their own resources, they would injure them in the end; for they look to the church, and expect to receive help from them, and do not practice self-denial and economy when they are well provided for. And if they do not receive help every time, Satan tempts them, and they become jealous, and very conscientious for their brethren, fearing that they do not do all their duty to them. The mistake is on their own part. They are deceived. They are not the Lord's poor.

The instructions given in the word of God in regard to helping the poor do not touch such cases. The instructions given in God's word are for the unfortunate and afflicted. God in his providence has afflicted individuals to test and prove others. Widows and invalids are in the church to prove a blessing to the church. They are part of the means God has chosen to develop the true character of Christ's professed followers, and to call into exercise the precious traits of character manifested by our compassionate Redeemer.

Many who are single, and can but barely live, choose to marry and raise a family, when they know they have nothing to support them. And worse than this, they have no

family government. Their whole course in their family is marked with their loose, slack habits. They have but little control of themselves, are passionate, impatient, and fretful. Such embrace the message, and then feel that they are entitled to assistance from their more wealthy brethren; and if their expectations are not met, they complain of the church and accuse them of not living out their faith. Who must be the sufferers in this case? Must the cause of God be sapped, and the treasury in different places exhausted, to take care of these large families of poor? No. The parents must be the sufferers. They will not as a general thing suffer any greater lack after they embrace the Sabbath than they did before.

There is an evil among some of the poor which will certainly prove their ruin unless they overcome it. They have embraced the truth with their coarse, rough, uncultivated habits, and it takes some time for them to see and realize their coarseness, and that it is not in accordance with the character of Christ. They look upon others who are more orderly and refined as being proud, and you may hear them say, "The truth brings us all down upon a level." Here is an entire mistake in thinking that the truth brings the receiver down. It brings him up, refines his taste, sanctifies his judgment, and if lived out is continually fitting him for the society of holy angels in the city of God. The truth is designed to bring us all up upon a level.

The more able should ever act a noble, generous part in their deal with their poorer brethren, and also give them good advice, and then leave them to fight life's battles through. I was shown that a most solemn duty rests upon the church to have an especial care for the destitute widows, orphans, and invalids.



November 26, 1861

## Testimony to the Church

When at Roosevelt, N.Y., August 3, 1861, the condition of God's people was presented before me. Many failed in coming up to the standard set up by our Saviour. They are in an alarming condition, not careful to examine the foundation of their hope, but are indifferent to their state, and self-deceived. Some, I saw, had departed from God, and were united with the spirit of the world. As different fashions are introduced, one after another have fallen back from their steadfastness, and have lost their peculiarity. It is crossing to come out from the world and be separate. As soon as individuals cease warring against the spirit of the world they are Satan's easy prey. Our efforts are too feeble to resist an influence which leads us from God, and which brings us in union with the world.

Those who separate from God and lose their spirituality, do not fall back all at once into a state which the true Witness calls lukewarm. They conform to the world little by little. As its influence steals upon them, they fail to resist it and maintain the warfare. After the first step is taken to have friendship with the world, darkness follows and they are prepared for the next. At every step they take in the downward course darkness gathers about them, until they are enshrouded. As they conform to the world they lose the transforming influence of the Spirit of God. They do not realize their distance from God. They think themselves in good case because they profess to believe the truth. They grow weaker and weaker, until the Spirit of God is withdrawn, and God bids his angels, Let them alone! Jesus spues them out of his mouth. He has borne their names to his Father; he has interceded for them, but he ceases his pleadings. Their names are dropped, and they are left with the world. They realize no change. Their profession is the same. There has not been so glaring a departure from the appearance of right. They had become so assimilated to the world that when heaven's light was withdrawn they did not miss it.

Truths have been committed to our trust more sacred than were ever imparted to mortals upon earth, yet we have not as a people been faithful to our trust. Unfaithful Sabbath-keepers are the worst enemies the truth can have. If those who profess the truth would live it out, then the Lord would magnify his name among them, and make them a

powerful people.

The inhabitants of the earth are given to idolatry. They are filling the cup of their iniquity. Fashion is a tyrant, and nearly all are slaves to it. Travel in the cars, steamboats, or where you will, and you will see the human frame covered with extravagant decorations, and deformed with hoops. Modesty is rare; it seems to have departed from this enlightened age. Sodom and Gomorrah will rise up in the judgment and condemn this generation, for if they had been privileged with the light which now shines upon the inhabitants of the earth, they would have repented long ago.

God will have a separate and peculiar people. Their faith is peculiar. Their prospects are peculiar and glorious, and if they do not consider the heavenly inducement offered them of sufficient value to lead them to renounce the fashions of the world, when God rises up to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity, they must perish with them. Please read Isaiah 26:21; James 4:4. "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." 1 John 2:15: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." We are called upon in these perilous times to elevate the standard. It has been left to trail in the dust. The fashions of the world hold God's people in bondage.

Those who have really chosen God and heaven as their portion will be peculiar. The sanctifying influence of the truth has separated them from the world, and they will have moral courage to carry out their faith, and by their simple plainness of dress and holy living condemn the idolatry and extravagance of this age. Professed Sabbath-keepers who would advocate the wearing of hoops and useless ornaments, no matter how high their profession, the truth has not had its sanctifying influence upon the heart. They are not dead to the world. When the tree dies the leaves fall off. There is just as wide a difference between the follower of Jesus Christ and the worldling, as there is between a tree clothed with its green foliage and a dead and leafless tree. The truth accomplishes a work for the receivers. It causes them to die to the world, and live unto God. Such can receive no satisfaction in adorning their heads with flowers, while they have a true sense of the sufferings of their Redeemer on account of their sins. His sacred brow was encircled with cruel thorns, which bruised his holy temples. This thought should be enough to cause every true follower of Jesus to discard any useless ornaments to decorate their bodies.

Some Sabbath-keepers so earnestly desire to have friendship with the world, that they mangle their feelings and make wretched work of following Christ. They desire the approval of God and the friendship of the world too. Such, I saw, would certainly lose heaven. They do not enjoy this world, therefore they lose both. In these hours of probation all can choose life if they will. Their fruits will show their choice. For a life of humble obedience here, God will grant the rich reward hereafter. He will accept of nothing but entire consecration. A dreadful deception is upon many minds, even of Sabbath-keepers. They have neglected to cherish and follow the light God has given them, and have been left completely deceived. Please read Matthew 7:21-23. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Souls will come up to the day of God's visitation under a perfect deception. They had marked out a course for themselves. They did not let the Bible place the bounds for them. They did not heed the exhortation, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean; and I will receive you."

I was shown that God is not slack concerning his promises, if his people will obey his requirements. He is faithful who hath promised. The condition of our being received of God is, to separate ourselves from the world. The followers of Jesus and the world can not unite. Please read John 17:14: "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world." John 15:18, 19: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

There is a disposition among some Sabbath-keepers to rejoice that they have truths that can be sustained by the word of God, and that the unbeliever can not gainsay, and they rest satisfied. They make no advancement in the divine life; their faith is not made perfect by works; they do not feel their lack of spirituality, but boast that they have the truth, and they sometimes advocate it in an unbecoming manner. They feel rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and know not that they are

wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. What stronger delusion can deceive the human mind than that which makes us believe we are on the right foundation, and God accepts our works, when we are not conforming to his will, and when we mistake the form of godliness for the spirit and power thereof, supposing we need nothing when we need all things. Please read James 1:27: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

What a work is before us! Self-denial and the cross were shown me as standing all along in the way of life. Can we persevere in such a warfare as this? Grace is against nature, and the whole strength of self is opposed to the victory. Can we take up the cross and bear it after Jesus, and consent to be like him who was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin? When the pleasures of the world come before us, we must renounce them instantly, and prefer before these the favor of God and the cross of Christ. And in this self-denying course we shall obtain victories, and in the end win eternal glory. The unbelieving world were shown me, unwilling to submit to the claims and order of God's government. They refuse obedience to his will; they are at variance with their Maker, and their words and works are opposed to the principles and laws of his government. Therefore we can not enjoy, and be in harmony with, the friendship of the world, and not become estranged from God.

Amos 9:9, 10, was presented before me. "For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us."

God's people will be tested and proved. The plain and pointed testimony must act a prominent part in this work. In these days of darkness and peril who is able to stand and speak the whole truth? Multitudes of teachers prophesy smooth things. They see no special cause of alarm in the present condition of the professed people of God. The people are asleep, and the teachers are asleep. They cry, Peace, peace, and the multitude that hear believe their report and are at ease. This makes the necessity greater for faithful teachers to bear the pointed, faithful testimony. The present is a time of scouring and purifying, a time of warfare and trial. The house of Israel is being sifted, even as corn is sifted in a sieve. The chaff must be removed, and it will require close work to separate the chaff from the kernels of grain. God's discerning eye will detect the

smallest particle of chaff, and yet he will not cause to fall upon the ground the least kernel of grain.

February 18, 1862

## Consecration

Sabbath-keepers will be tested and proved. A close and searching work must go on among the people of God. How soon, like ancient Israel we forget God and his wondrous works, and rebel against him. Some look to the world, and desire to follow its fashions, and participate in its pleasures in the same manner that the children of Israel looked back into Egypt, and lusted for the good things they had enjoyed there, which God chose to withhold from them to prove them, and thereby test their fidelity to him. He wished to see if his people valued more highly his service, and the freedom he had so miraculously given them, than the indulgences they enjoyed in Egypt while in servitude to a tyrannical, idolatrous people.

Every true follower of Jesus will have sacrifices to make. God will prove them, and test the genuineness of their faith. I have been shown that picnics, donations, shows, and other gatherings of pleasure, the true followers of Jesus will discard. They can find no Jesus there, and no influence which will make them heavenly minded, and increase their growth in grace. The word of God obeyed, leads us to come out from all these things and be separate. The things of the world are sought for, and considered worthy to be admired and enjoyed by all those who are not devoted lovers of the cross, and are not spiritual worshipers of a crucified Jesus.

There is chaff among us, and this is why we are so weak. Some are constantly leaning to the world. Their views and feelings harmonize much better with the spirit of the world than with Christ's self-denying followers. It is perfectly natural for them to prefer the company of those whose spirit will best agree with their own. And such have quite too much influence among God's people. They take a part with them, and have a name among them, and are a text for unbelievers and the weak and unconsecrated ones in the church. These persons of two minds will ever have objections to the plain pointed testimony which reproves individual wrongs. In this refining time, these persons will either be converted wholly, and sanctified by obeying the truth, or they will be left with the world, where they belong, to receive their reward with them.

"By their fruits ye shall know them." All of Christ's followers bear fruit to his

glory. Their lives testify that a good work has been wrought in them by the Spirit of God, and their life is unto holiness. It is elevated and pure. Those who bear no fruit, have no experience in the things of God. They are not in the vine. Read John 15:4, 5: "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine: no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

If we would be spiritual worshipers of Jesus Christ we must sacrifice every idol, and fully obey the first four commandments. Matthew 22:37, 38: "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment."

The first four commandments allow us no separation of the affections from God. Nor is anything allowed to divide, or share, our supreme delight in him. Whatever divides the affections, and takes away from the soul supreme love to God, takes the form of an idol. Our carnal hearts would cling to, and seek to carry along, our idols; but we cannot advance until we put them away; for they separate from God. The Great Head of the church has chosen his people out of the world, and required them to be separate. He designs that the spirit and life of his commandments shall draw them to himself, and separate them from the elements of the world. To love God and keep his commandments is to be far from loving the world's pleasures and friendship. There is no concord between Christ or Belial. The people of God may safely trust in him alone, and without fear press on in the way of obedience.

February 18, 1862

## **Phrenology, Psychology, Mesmerism, and Spiritualism**

I have been shown that we must be guarded on every side, and perseveringly resist the insinuations and devices of Satan. He has transformed himself into an angel of light, and is deceiving and leading thousands captive. The advantages he takes of the science of the human mind, is tremendous. Here, serpent-like, he imperceptibly creeps in to corrupt the work of God. The miracles and works of Christ, he makes all human. If Satan should make an open, bold attack upon Christianity, it would bring the Christian in distress and agony at the feet of his Redeemer, and the strong and mighty Deliverer would affright the bold adversary away. But Satan, transformed into an angel of light, works upon the mind to allure from the only safe and right path. The sciences of phrenology, psychology, and mesmerism, have been the channel through which Satan has come more directly to this generation, and wrought with that power which was to characterize his work near the close of probation.

Read 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12. "And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Satan has come unperceived through these sciences, and poisoned the minds of thousands and led them to infidelity. He is well pleased to have them spread wide. It is his own plan, laid out by himself, that he may have access to minds, and influence them as he pleases. And while it is believed that one human mind so wonderfully affects another, Satan, ready at hand, insinuates himself, and works on the right hand and on the left. And while those devoted to these sciences laud them to the heavens because of the great and good works they affirm are wrought by them, they are cherishing and glorifying Satan himself who steps in and works with all power and signs and lying wonders,--with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.



Said the angel, "Mark its influence. The controversy between Christ and Satan is not yet ended." This entering in of Satan through the sciences, is well devised by his Satanic majesty, and will eventually root out of the minds of thousands true faith in Christ's being the Messiah, the Son of God.

I was directed to the power of God manifested through Moses, when the Lord sent him in before Pharaoh. Satan understood his business and was upon the ground. He well knew that Moses was chosen of God to break the yoke of bondage upon the children of Israel; and that he in his work prefigured Christ's first advent to break Satan's power over the human family, and deliver those who were made captives by his power. Satan knew that when Christ should appear, mighty works and miracles would be wrought by him, that the world might know that the Father had sent him. He trembled, for his power. He consults with his angels to accomplish a work which shall answer a two-fold purpose: 1. To destroy the influence of the work wrought by God through his servant Moses, by working through his agents, and thus counterfeiting the true work of God. 2. The influence of his work through the magicians would reach down through all ages, and would destroy in the minds of many true faith in the mighty miracles and works of Christ, which would be performed by him when he should come to this world. He knew that his kingdom would suffer, for the power which he held over mankind would be subject to Christ. It was no human influence or power Moses possessed, which wrought on the minds, that produced those miracles before Pharaoh. It was the power of God. These signs and wonders were wrought through Moses, to convince Pharaoh that the great "I AM" sent him to command Pharaoh to let Israel go, that they might serve him.

Pharaoh called for the magicians to work with their enchantments. They also showed signs and wonders, for Satan came to their aid, to work through them. Yet even here, the work of God was shown superior to the power of Satan, for the magicians could not perform all those miracles God wrought through Moses. Only a few of them could they do. The magicians' rods did become serpents, but Aaron's rod swallowed up theirs. After the magicians sought to produce the lice, and could not, then they were compelled by the power of God to acknowledge even to Pharaoh, saying, "This is the finger of God." Satan wrought through the magicians in a manner calculated to harden the heart of the tyrant Pharaoh against the miraculous manifestations of God's power. Satan thought to stagger the faith of Moses and Aaron in the divine origin of their mission, and then his instruments, the magicians, would prevail. Satan was unwilling to have the people of Israel released from Egyptian servitude, that they might serve God.

The magicians failed to produce the miracle of the lice, and could no more imitate Moses and Aaron. God would not suffer Satan to proceed further, and the magicians could not save themselves from the plagues. "And the magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians." Exodus 9:11.

God's controlling power here cut off the channel through which Satan worked, and caused even those through whom Satan wrought so wonderfully to feel his wrath. Sufficient evidence was given to Pharaoh to believe, if he would. Moses wrought by the power of God. The magicians wrought not by their own science alone, but by the power of their god,--the Devil. Satan has ingeniously carried out his deceptive work in counterfeiting the work of God.

As we near the close of time, the human mind is more readily affected by Satan's devices. He leads deceived mortals to account for the works and miracles of Christ upon general principles. Satan has ever been ambitious to counterfeit the work of Christ, and establish his own power and claims. He does not generally do this openly and boldly. He is artful, and knows that the most effectual way for him to accomplish his work, is to come to poor fallen man in the form of an angel of light. Satan came to Christ in the wilderness in the form of a beautiful young man,--more like a monarch than a fallen angel. He came with scripture in his mouth. Said he, "It is written," &c. Our suffering Saviour meets him with scripture, saying, "It is written." Satan takes the advantage of the weak, suffering condition of Christ. He took upon him our human nature.

Read Matthew 4:8, 11: "Again the Devil taketh him up into a exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the Devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him."

Here Satan spread the world before Christ in the most attractive light, and intimates to him that he need not endure so much suffering to obtain the kingdoms of earth. He will yield all his claims if he will but worship him. Satan's dissatisfaction first commenced in heaven because he could not be first and highest in command,--equal with God, exalted above Christ. He rebelled and lost his estate, and he, and those who

sympathized with him, were turned out of heaven. In the wilderness he hoped to gain advantage through the weak and suffering condition of Christ, and obtain from him that homage he could not obtain in heaven. Jesus, even in his faint and exhausted condition, yields not to the temptation of Satan for a moment, but shows his superiority and exercises his authority by bidding Satan, "Get thee hence"--or, depart from me. Satan was baffled, and then studied how he could accomplish his purpose and receive the honor from the human race which was refused him in heaven, and by Jesus upon earth. Could he have succeeded in tempting Jesus Christ, then the plan of salvation would have failed, and he would have succeeded in bringing hopeless misery upon mankind. That which Satan failed to effect in coming to Christ, he has accomplished in coming to man.

If Satan can so befog and deceive the human mind, and lead mortals to think there is an inherent power in themselves to accomplish great and good works, they cease to rely upon God to do that for them which they think exists in themselves to do. They acknowledge not a superior power. They give not God the glory he claims, and which is due to his great and excellent Majesty. Satan's object is thus accomplished. He exults that fallen man presumptuously exalts himself, as he exalted himself in heaven, and was thrust out. He knows that the ruin of man is just as sure if he exalts himself as his was certain. He has failed in his temptations to Christ in the wilderness. The plan of salvation has been carried out. The dear price has been paid for man's redemption. And now Satan seeks to tear away the foundation of the Christian's hope, and turn the minds of men in a channel that they may not be benefited or saved by the great sacrifice offered. He leads fallen man, through his "all deceivableness of unrighteousness," to believe that he can do very well without an atonement; that he need not depend upon a crucified and risen Saviour; that man's own merits will entitle him to God's favor, and then he destroys man's confidence in the Bible, well knowing if he succeeds here, and the detector which places a mark upon himself is destroyed, he is safe. And he fastens the delusion upon minds that there is no personal Devil, and those who believe this make no effort to resist and war against that which does not exist, and poor blind mortals finally adopt the maxim--"Whatever is is right." They acknowledge no rule to measure their course. Satan leads many to believe that prayer to God is useless, and but a form. He well knows how needful is meditation and prayer, to keep Christ's followers aroused to resist his cunning and deceptions. Satan's devices will divert the mind from these important exercises, that the soul may not lean for help upon the mighty One, and obtain strength from him to resist his attacks.

I was pointed to the fervent, effectual prayers of his people anciently. "Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly." Daniel prayed unto his God three times a day. Satan is enraged at the sound of fervent prayer, for he knows that he will suffer loss. Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes because an excellent spirit was in him. Fallen angels feared his influence would weaken their control over the rulers of the kingdom, for Daniel was high in command. The accusing host of evil angels stirred up the presidents and princes to envy and jealousy, and they watched Daniel closely to find some occasion against him that they might report him to the king, but they failed. Then these agents of Satan sought to make his faithfulness to God the cause of his destruction. Evil angels laid out the plan for them, and these agents readily carried it into effect. The king was ignorant of the subtle mischief purposed against Daniel. With the full knowledge of the king's decree he still bows before his God, "his windows being open." He considers supplication to God of sufficient importance to sacrifice his life rather than to relinquish it. On account of his praying to God he was cast into the lion's den. Evil angels accomplished their purpose thus far. But Daniel continues to pray, even in the den of lions. Was Daniel suffered to be consumed? Did God forget him there? O, no; Jesus, the mighty Commander of the host of heaven, sent his angel to close the mouths of those hungry lions that they should not hurt the praying man of God, and all was peace in that terrible den. The king witnessed his preservation, and brought him out with honors. Satan and his angels were defeated and enraged. The agents Satan had employed were doomed to perish in the terrible manner they had plotted to destroy Daniel. The prayer of faith is the great strength of the Christian, and will assuredly prevail against Satan. This is why he insinuates that we have no need of prayer. The name of Jesus our advocate he detests, and when we earnestly come to him for help, Satan's host is alarmed.

It will serve his purpose well if we neglect the exercise of prayer, for then his lying wonders are more readily received. Satan accomplishes his object in setting his deceitful temptations before man, that which he failed to accomplish in tempting Christ. He sometimes come in the form of a lovely young person, or in a beautiful shadow. He works cures, and is worshiped by deceived mortals as a benefactor of our race. Phrenology and mesmerism are very much exalted. They are good in their place, but they are seized upon by Satan as his most powerful agents to deceive and destroy souls. The detector, the Bible, is destroyed in the minds of thousands, and Satan uses his arts and devices, which are received as from heaven. And Satan here receives the worship

which suits his satanic majesty. Thousands are conversing with and receiving instructions from this demon-god, and acting according to his teachings. The world, which is considered to be benefited so much by phrenology and animal magnetism, never was so corrupt. Satan uses these very things to destroy virtue and lay the foundation of Spiritualism.

I was directed to this scripture as especially applying to modern Spiritualism. Colossians 2:8: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Thousands, I was shown, have been spoiled through the philosophy of phrenology and animal magnetism, and have been driven into infidelity. If the mind commences to run in this channel it is almost sure to lose its balance and be controlled by a demon. "Vain deceit" fills the minds of poor mortals. They think there is such power in themselves to accomplish great works, that they realize no necessity of a higher power. Their principles and faith are "after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Jesus has not taught them this philosophy. Nothing of the kind can be found in his teachings. He did not direct the minds of poor mortals to themselves to a power which they possessed. He was ever directing their minds to God, the Creator of the universe, as the source of their strength and wisdom. Especial warning is given in verse 18: "Let no men beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind." The teachers of Spiritualism will come in a pleasing, bewitching manner to deceive you, and if you listen to their fables you are beguiled by the enemy of righteousness, and will surely lose your reward. When once the fascinating influence of the arch deceiver overcomes you, you are poisoned, and its deadly influence adulterates and destroys your faith in Christ's being the Son of God, and you cease to rely on the merits of his blood. Those deceived by this philosophy are beguiled of their reward through the deceptions of Satan. They rely upon their own merits, exercise voluntary humility, are willing to even make sacrifices, and debase themselves, and yield their minds to the belief of supreme nonsense, receiving the most absurd ideas through those whom they believe to be their dead friends. Satan has so blinded their eyes and perverted their judgment that they perceive not the evil. They follow out the instructions purporting to be from their dead friends, now angels in a higher sphere. Satan has chosen the most certain, fascinating delusion, calculated to take hold of the sympathies of those who have laid their loved ones in the grave. Evil angels assume the form of these loved ones, and relate incidents connected with their lives, and

perform acts which their friends performed while living. In this way they deceive and lead the relatives of the dead to believe their deceased friends are angels hovering about them, and communing with them, which they regard with a certain idolatry. What they may say has greater influence over them than the word of God. These evil angels who assume to be dead friends will either utterly reject God's word as idle tales, or if it suits their purpose best will select the vital portions which testify of Christ and point out the way to heaven, and change the plain statements of the word of God to suit their own corrupt nature, and ruin souls. All may, with due attention to the word of God, be convinced if they will of this soul-destroying delusion. The word of God declares in positive terms that "the dead know not anything." Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6: "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun."

Deceived mortals are worshiping evil angels, believing them to be the spirits of their dead friends. The word of God expressly declares that "the dead have no more a portion in anything done under the sun." Spiritualists say the dead know everything that is done under the sun, that they communicate to their friends on earth, give valuable information, and perform wonders. Psalm 115:17: "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." I have been shown that Satan, transformed into an angel of light, works with all deceivableness of unrighteousness. He who could take up the Son of God, who was made a little lower than the angels, and place him upon a pinnacle of the temple, and take him up into an exceeding high mountain to present before him the kingdoms of the world, can exercise his power upon the human family, who are far inferior in strength and wisdom to the Son of God, even after he had taken upon himself man's nature. In this degenerate age Satan holds control over mortals who depart from the right, and venture upon his ground. He exercises his power upon such in an alarming manner. I was directed to these words, "Intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind." Some, I was shown, gratify their curiosity, and tamper with the Devil. They have no real faith in Spiritualism, and would start back with horror at the idea of being a medium. Yet they venture, and place themselves in a position where Satan can exercise his power upon them. They do not mean to enter deep into this work, but such know not what they are doing. They are venturing on the Devil's ground, and are tempting him to control them. This powerful destroyer considers such his lawful prey, and will exercise his power upon them, and

that against their will. When they wish to control themselves they cannot. They yielded their mind to Satan and he holds them captive, and he will not release his claims. No power can deliver the ensnared soul but the power of God, in answer to the earnest prayers of his faithful followers.

The only safety now is to search for the truth as revealed in the word of God as for hid treasure. The Sabbath question and man not immortal and the testimony of Jesus are the great and important truths to be understood, which will prove as an anchor to hold God's people in these perilous times. But the mass despise the truths of God's word, and prefer fables. 2 Thessalonians 2:10, 11: "Because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, and for this cause God shall send them strong delusions that they should believe a lie."

The most licentious and corrupt are highly flattered by these Satanic spirits, which they believe to be the spirits of their dead friends, and they are "vainly puffed up in their fleshly minds." Colossians 2:19: "And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God," they deny Him who ministers strength to the body, that every member may increase with the increase of God.

"Vain philosophy." The members of the body are controlled by the head. Spiritualists lay aside the Head, and every member of the body they believe must act themselves, and fixed laws will lead them on in a state of progression to perfection without a head. John 15:1-6: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

Christ is the source of our strength. He is the vine, we the branches. We must receive nourishment from the living vine. Deprived of the strength and nourishment of the vine, we are as members of the body without a head, and are in the very position Satan wishes us to be in, that he may control these members as pleases himself. He

works "with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusions that they should believe a lie." Spiritualism is a lie. It is founded upon the great original lie, "Thou shalt not surely die." Thousands cut off the Head, and the members act without Jesus for their head, and the result is, another guides the body. Satan controls them.

I was shown that Satan cannot control minds unless they are yielded to his control. Those who depart from the right are in serious danger now. They separate themselves from God and from the watch-care of the angels of God, and Satan, ever upon the watch to destroy souls, begins to present to such his deceptions, and they are in the utmost peril. And if they see and try to resist the powers of darkness and to free themselves from Satan's snare, it is not an easy matter. They have ventured on Satan's ground, and he claims them. He will not hesitate to engage all his energies, and call to his aid all his evil host to wrest a single human being from the hand of Christ. And those who have tempted the Devil to tempt them will have to make desperate efforts to free themselves from his power. When they begin to work for themselves, then angels of God whom they have grieved will come to their rescue. Satan and his angels are unwilling to lose their prey. They contend and battle with the holy angels, and the conflict is severe. And if those who have erred continue to plead, and in deep humility confess their wrongs, angels who excel in strength will prevail and wrench them from the power of the evil angels.

As the curtain was lifted and I was shown the corruption of this age, my heart sickened, my spirit nearly fainted within me. I saw that the inhabitants of the earth were filling up the measure of the cup of their iniquity. God's anger is kindled, and will be no more appeased until the sinners are destroyed out of the earth.

Satan is Christ's personal enemy. He is the originator and leader of every species of rebellion in heaven and earth. His rage increases, and we do not realize his power. If our eyes could be opened to discern the fallen angels at their work with those who feel at ease and consider themselves safe, we should not feel so secure. Evil angels are upon our track every moment. We expect a readiness on the part of bad men to act as Satan suggests; but while our minds are unguarded against Satan's invisible agents, they will assume new ground, and will work marvels and miracles in our sight. Are we prepared to resist them by the word of God, the only weapon we can use successfully? Some will



be tempted to receive these wonders as from God. The sick will be healed before us. Miracles will be performed in our sight. Are we prepared for the trial when the lying wonders of Satan shall be more fully exhibited? Will not many souls be ensnared and taken? Forms of error, and departure from the plain precepts and commandments of God and giving heed to fables is fitting minds for these lying wonders of Satan. We must all now seek to arm ourselves for the contest in which we must soon engage. Faith in God's word, prayerfully studied and practically applied will be our shield from Satan's power, and will bring us off conquerors through the blood of Christ.

April 22, 1862

## Testimony for the Church

I have been shown the high and responsible position God's people should occupy. They are the salt of the earth and the light of the world, and must walk even as Christ walked. They will come up through much tribulation. The present is a time of warfare and trial. Our Saviour says in Revelation 3:21, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." The reward is not given to all who profess to be followers of Christ, but to those who overcome, even as he overcame. We must study the life of Christ, and learn what it is to confess him before the world. No one can confess Christ unless the mind and Spirit of Christ are in him. The fruits of the Spirit are manifested outwardly, and these are a confession of Christ.

In order to confess Christ, we must have Christ to confess. No one can truly confess Christ unless the mind and Spirit of Christ live in him. If a form of godliness, or an acknowledgment of the truth, were always a confession of Christ, we might say, Broad is the way that leadeth unto life, and many there be that find it. We must understand what it is to confess Christ, and wherein we deny him. It is possible with our lips to confess Christ, yet in our works to deny him. If we have forsaken all for Christ, we shall manifest in our lives humility, our conversation will be heavenly, our conduct blameless. The powerful purifying influence of truth in the soul, and the character of Christ exemplified in the life, are a confession of Christ. If the words of eternal life are sown in our hearts, the fruit is righteousness and peace. We may deny Christ in our life by the love of ease, love of self, jesting and joking, and by seeking the honor of the world. We may deny him in our outward appearance, by a proud look or costly apparel, or by conformity to the world. We shall not be able to exhibit in our character the life of Christ, or the sanctifying influence of the truth, only by constant watchfulness, and persevering and almost unceasing prayer.

I was shown that many drive Christ from their families by an impatient, passionate spirit. Such have something to overcome in this respect. The human family was presented before me, enfeebled. Every generation has been growing weaker; and disease of every form visits the human race. Thousands of poor mortals are dragging out

a miserable existence. Some with deformed, sickly bodies, shattered nerves, and gloomy minds. Satan's power upon the human family increases. If the Lord should not soon come and destroy his power, the earth would soon be depopulated.

I was shown that Satan's power is especially exercised upon the people of God. Many were presented before me in a doubting, despairing condition. The infirmities of the body affect the mind. A cunning and powerful enemy attends our steps, and employs his strength and skill in trying to turn us out of the right way. And it is too often the case that the people of God are not on their watch; therefore are ignorant of his devices. He works by means which will best conceal himself from view. And he often gains his object.

Brethren have engaged in patent-rights and other enterprises, and have induced others to interest themselves, who could not bear the perplexity and care of such business. Their anxiety and over-taxed minds seriously affect their already diseased bodies, and they then become desponding, which increases to despair. They lose all confidence in themselves, and think God has forsaken them, and they dare not believe that God will be merciful to them. These poor souls will not be left to the control of Satan. They will make their way through the gloom, and their trembling faith will again fasten upon the promises of God, and he will deliver them, and turn their sorrow and mourning into peace and gladness. But such, I was shown, must learn by the things they suffer, to let patent-rights and these various enterprises alone. They should not suffer even their brethren to flatter them to entangle themselves with any such enterprise, for their anticipations will not be realized, and then they are thrown upon the enemy's battle-field unarmed for the conflict. Means, which was shown me should be put into the treasury of God to advance his cause, is worse than lost by being invested in some of these modern improvements. Those who profess the truth, and feel at liberty to engage, and capable of engaging, in these patent rights and inventions, should not go among their brethren and make that their field of operation, but go among unbelievers. Let not your name and profession as an Adventist decoy your brethren who wish to consecrate their means to God. But go out into the world, and let that class invest their means who care not for the advancement of the cause of God.

I was shown the necessity of opening the doors of our houses and hearts to the Lord. When we begin to work in earnest for ourselves, and for our families, then we shall have help from God. I was shown that merely observing the Sabbath and praying

morning and evening are not positive evidences that we are Christians. These outward forms may all be strictly observed, and yet true godliness be lacking. Titus 2:14: "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." All who profess to be Christ's followers should have command of their own spirit, and not speak fretfully or impatiently. The husband and father should check that impatient word he is about to utter. He should study the effect of his words, lest they leave sadness and a blight.

I was shown that infirmities and disease especially affect females. The happiness of the family depends much upon the wife and mother. If she is nervous and weak, and is suffered to be overtaxed with labor, the mind is depressed, for it sympathizes with the weariness of the body; and then she too often meets with cold reserve from the husband. If every thing does not move off just as pleasantly as he could wish, he blames the wife and mother. He does not always seem to know how to sympathize with her, and is almost wholly unacquainted with her cares and burdens. He realizes not that he is aiding the great enemy in his work of tearing down. He should by faith in God lift up a standard against Satan, but he seems blinded to his own interest and hers. He treats her with indifference. He knows not what he is doing. He is working directly against his own happiness, and is destroying the happiness of his family. The wife becomes desponding, discouraged. Hope and cheerfulness are gone. She goes her daily rounds mechanically, because she sees her work must be done. Her lack of cheerfulness and courage is felt through the family circle. There are many miserable families like this, all through the ranks of Sabbath-keepers. And angels bear the shameful tidings to heaven, and the recording angel makes a record of it all. The husband should manifest great interest in his family.

Especially should he be very tender of the feelings of a feeble wife. He can shut the door against much disease. Kind, cheerful, and encouraging words will prove more effective than the most healing medicines. This will bring courage to the heart of the desponding and discouraged, and the happiness and sunshine brought into your family by kind acts and encouraging words, will pay you ten-fold. The husband should remember that much of the burden of training his children rests upon the mother. She has much to do with moulding their minds. This should call into exercise the tenderest feelings of the father, and with care should he lighten the burdens of the wife. He should encourage her to lean upon his large affections, and direct her mind to heaven, where there is strength and peace, and a final rest for the weary. He should not come to his

home with a clouded brow, but should with his presence bring sunlight into the family, and should encourage his wife to look up and believe in God. Unitedly can they claim the promises of God, and bring his rich blessing into the family. Unkindness, complaining, and anger, shut Jesus from the dwelling. I saw that angels of God will flee from a house where there are unpleasant words, fretfulness and strife.

I have also been shown that there is often a great failure upon the part of the wife. She does not make strong efforts to control her own spirit, and make home happy. There is often fretfulness and unnecessary complaining on her part. The husband comes home from his labor weary and perplexed, and often meets a clouded brow; instead of cheerful, encouraging words. He is mortal, and his affections become weaned from his wife, he loses the love of his home, his pathway is darkened, and his courage gone. He yields his self respect and that dignity which God requires him to maintain. The husband is the head of the family, as Christ is the head of the church, and any course which the wife may pursue to lessen his influence and lead him to come down from the dignified, responsible position God would have him occupy, displeases God. It is the duty of the wife to yield her wishes and will to her husband. Both should be yielding, but preference is given in the word of God to the judgment of the husband. And it will not detract from the dignity of the wife to yield to him who she has chosen to be her counselor, adviser, and protector. The husband should maintain his position in his family with all meekness, yet with decision. Some have asked the question, Must I be on my guard, and feel a restraint upon me continually? I have been shown that we have a great work before us to watch ourselves with jealous care, and search our own hearts, and know wherein we fail, and then guard ourselves upon that point. We must have perfect control of our own spirit. "He that offendeth not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." The light that shines upon our path, the truth that commends itself to our consciences, will condemn and destroy, or sanctify and transform, the soul. We live too near the close of probation to be content with a superficial work. The same grace which we have hitherto considered sufficient will not sustain us now. Our faith must be increased, and we must be more like Christ in conduct and disposition in order to endure, and successfully resist, the temptations of Satan. The grace of God is sufficient for every follower of Christ.

Our efforts must be earnest and persevering to resist the attacks of Satan. He employs his strength and skill in trying to turn us out of the right way. He watches our going out and coming in, and intends to hurt or destroy us. He works most successfully

in darkness, injuring those who are ignorant of his devices. He could not gain advantage if his method of attack was understood. The instruments he employs to effect his purposes, and transmit his fiery darts, are often the members of our own families.

Those we love may speak or act unguardedly, which may wound us deeply. It was not their intention to do this, but Satan magnifies their words and acts before the mind in a manner by which he hurls a dart from his quiver to pierce us. We brace ourselves to resist the one whom we think has injured us, and thus we encourage Satan's temptations. Instead of praying to God for strength to resist Satan, we suffer our happiness to be marred by trying to stand for what we term "our rights." In thus doing, we allow Satan a double advantage. We act out our aggrieved feelings, and by taking this course Satan uses us as his agents to wound and distress those who did not intend to injure us. The requirements of the husband may sometimes seem unreasonable to the wife, when if she should take the second view of the matter, in as favorable a light for him as possible, if she would calmly, candidly consider, she would see that to yield her own way, and submit to the judgment of her husband, even if it conflicted with her feelings, would save them both from unhappiness, and would give them great victory over the temptations of Satan.

I saw that the enemy would either contend for the usefulness or the life of the godly, and will try to mar their peace as long as they live in this world. But his power is limited. He may cause the furnace to be heated, but Jesus and angels will watch the trusting Christian, that nothing may be consumed but the dross. The fire kindled by Satan, can have no power to destroy or hurt the true metal. It is important to close every door possible, against the entrance of Satan. It is the privilege of every family to so live that Satan cannot take advantage of anything they may say or do, to tear each other down. Every member of the family should bear in mind that all have just as much as they can do to resist our wily foe, and with earnest prayers and unyielding faith, they must rely upon the merits of the blood of Christ, and claim his saving strength. The powers of darkness gather about the soul and shut Jesus from our sight, and at times we can only wait in sorrow and amazement until the cloud passes over. These seasons are sometimes terrible. Hope seems to fail, and despair seizes upon us. In these dreadful hours we must learn to trust, to depend on the sole merits of the atonement, and in all our helpless unworthiness cast ourselves upon the merits of the crucified and risen Saviour. We shall never perish while we do this--never! When light shines on our pathway, it is no great thing to be strong in the strength of grace. But to wait patiently in

hope, when all is dark, when clouds envelope us, requires faith and submission which causes our will to be swallowed up in the will of God. We are too quickly discouraged, and earnestly cry for the trial to be removed from us, when we should plead for patience to endure, and grace to overcome.

Without faith it is impossible to please God. We can have the salvation of God in our families, but we must believe for it, live for it, and have a continual abiding faith and trust in God. We must subdue a hasty temper, and control our words; and in this we shall gain great victories. Unless we control our words and temper, we are slaves to Satan. We are in subjection to him. He leads us captive. All this jangling, and unpleasant, impatient, fretful words, are an offering presented to his satanic majesty. And it is a costly offering, more costly than any offering we can make to God, for it destroys the peace and happiness of whole families, destroys health, and is eventually the cause of forfeiting an eternal life of happiness. The restraint God's word imposes upon us is for our own interest. It increases the happiness of our families, and all around us. It refines our taste, sanctifies our judgment, and brings peace of mind, and in the end, everlasting life. Under this holy restraint we shall increase in grace and humility, and it will become easy to speak right. The natural, passionate temper will be held in subjection. An indwelling Saviour will strengthen every hour. Ministering angels will linger in our dwellings, and with joy carry the tidings of our advance in the divine life heavenward, and the angel will make a cheerful, happy record.

May 6, 1862

## **The Cause in Northern Wisconsin**

A blighting influence is upon the cause of present truth in Northern Wisconsin. If all had felt that attachment for the Review which God designed they should, they would have been benefited and instructed by the truths it advocates. They would have had a correct faith, a settled position upon the truths applicable for this time, and would have been guarded and saved from this fanaticism. The sensibilities of many are blunted; false excitement has destroyed their discernment and spiritual eye-sight. It is of the highest importance now for them to move understandingly, that Satan's design may not be fully carried out and his object accomplished in overthrowing those whom he has had power to deceive.

When those who have witnessed and experienced false exercises, are convinced of their mistake, then Satan takes advantage of their error, and holds it constantly before them, to make them afraid of any spiritual exercises, and in this way he seeks to destroy their faith in true godliness. A fear rests upon the mind, of making any effort by earnest, fervent prayer to God for special aid and victory, because they were once deceived. Such must not let Satan gain his object, and drive them to cold formality and unbelief. They must remember that the foundation of God standeth sure. Let God be true, and every man a liar. Their only safety is to plant their feet upon the platform of truth, to see and understand the third angel's message, prize, love, and obey the truth.

God is leading out a people, and bringing them into the unity of the faith, that they may be one, as he is one with the Father. Various views and differences of opinion must be yielded, that all may come in union with the body, that they may have one mind and one judgment.

1 Corinthians 1:10: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

Romans 15:5, 6: "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another, according to Christ Jesus that ye may with one mind and



one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Philippians 2:2: "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind."

There should be a mutual interest in the cause of God. There has been a lack of interest in the cause in Wisconsin. There has been a lack of energy. Some think it no sin to idle away their time, while others who have a love for, and interest in the precious cause of truth, economize their time, and in the strength of God exert themselves and labor hard that their families may be made neat and comfortable, and they have something besides to invest in the cause, that they may do their part to keep the work of God moving, and lay up a treasure in heaven. One is not to be eased and others burdened. God requires of those who have health and strength of body, to do what they can, and use their strength to his glory, for they are not their own. They are accountable to God for the use they make of their time and strength, which is granted them of Heaven.

The duty to help in the advancement of truth does not rest alone upon the wealthy. All have a part to act. The man who has employed his time and strength to accumulate property is accountable for the disposition he makes of that property. If one has health and strength, that is his capital, and he must make a right use of it. If he spends hours in idleness and needless visiting and talking, he is slothful in business, which God's word forbids. Such have a work to do to provide for their own families, and then lay by them in store for charitable purposes as God has prospered them.

We are not placed in this world merely to care for ourselves, but we are required to aid in the great work of salvation, and imitate the self-denying, self-sacrificing, useful life of Christ. Those who love their own case better than they love the truth of God, will not be anxious to use their time and strength wisely and well, that they may act a part in spreading the truth.

Many of the young in Wisconsin have not felt the weight of the cause or the necessity of their making any sacrifice to advance it. They can never gain strength until they change their course and make special efforts to advance the truth, that souls may be saved.

Some deny themselves and manifest an interest and have double labor, because of their untiring effort to sustain the cause they love. They make the cause of God a part of them, and if it suffers they suffer with it; when it prospers, they are happy.

Proverbs 3:9, 10: "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thy increase, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine. Those who are slothful may quiet themselves and think that God requires nothing of them because they have no increase. This will be no excuse for them, for if they had diligently employed their time, if they had not been slothful in business, they would have increase. If their heart was fixed to exert themselves to cast into the treasury of God, ways would be opened for them, and they would have some increase to devote to the cause of God, and lay up in heaven a treasure."

### Sanctification

There is no Bible sanctification for those who cast a part of the truth behind them. There is light enough given in the word of God, so that none need to err. The truth is so elevated as to be admired by the greatest minds, and yet it is so simple that the humblest feeblest child of God can comprehend it, and be instructed by it. Those who see not the beauty that there is in the truth, who attach no importance to the third angel's message, will be without excuse; for the truth is plain.

2 Corinthians 4:3, 4: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

John 17:17, 19: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

1 Peter 1:22: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently."

2 Corinthians 7:1: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

Philippians 2:12-15: "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."

John 15:3: "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."

Ephesians 5:25-27: "Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

Here is Bible sanctification. It is not merely a show or outside work. It is sanctification received through the channel of truth. It is truth received in the heart, and practically carried out in the life.

Jesus considered as a man was perfect. Yet he grew in grace.

Luke 2:52: "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Even the most perfect Christian may increase continually in the knowledge and love of God.

2 Peter 3:14, 18: "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless. But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen."

Sanctification is not the work of a moment, an hour, or a day. It is a continual growth in grace. We know not one day how strong will be our conflict the next. Satan lives, and is active, and every day we need to earnestly cry to God for help and strength to resist him. As long as Satan reigns we shall have self to subdue, besetments to overcome, and there is no stopping place. There is no point to which we can come and say we have fully attained.

Philippians 3:12: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus."

It is constantly an onward march. Jesus sits as a refiner and purifier of his people, and when his image is reflected in them perfectly, they are perfect and holy, and prepared for translation. A great work is required of the Christian. We are exhorted to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Here we see where the great labor rests. There is a constant work for the Christian. Every branch in the parent vine must derive life and strength from that vine, in order to yield fruit.

May 13, 1862

## **The Power of Satan**

Fallen man is Satan's lawful captive. The mission of Jesus Christ was to rescue him from his power. Man is naturally inclined to follow Satan's suggestions, and he cannot of himself successfully resist so terrible a foe, unless Christ, the mighty conqueror, dwells in him, guiding his desires, and giving him strength. God alone can limit the power of Satan. He is going to and from in the earth, and walking up and down in it. He is not off his watch for a single moment, through fear of losing an opportunity to destroy souls. It is important that God's people understand this, that they may escape his snares. Satan is preparing his deceptions that in his last campaign against the people of God, they may not understand that it is he. 2 Corinthians 11:14: "And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." While some deceived souls are advocating that he does not exist, he is taking them captive, and is working through them to a great extent. Satan knows better than God's people the power that they can have over him, when their strength is in Christ. When they humbly entreat the mighty Conqueror for help the weakest believer in the truth, relying firmly upon Christ, can successfully repulse Satan and all his host. He is too cunning to come openly, boldly, with his temptations, for then the drowsy energies of the Christian would arouse, and he would rely upon the strong and mighty Deliverer. But Satan comes in unperceived, and in disguise he works through the children of disobedience, who profess godliness. Satan will go to the extent of his power to harass, tempt, and mislead God's people.

He who dared to face, and tempt, and taunt our Lord, and who had power to take him in his arms and carry him to a pinnacle of the temple, and up into an exceeding high mountain, will exercise his power to a wonderful degree upon the present generation, who are far inferior in wisdom to their Lord, and who are almost wholly ignorant of his subtlety and strength.

In a marvelous manner will he affect the bodies of those who are naturally inclined to do his bidding. Satan exults for his own sake that he is regarded as a fiction. When he is made light of, and is represented by some childish illustration, or as some animal, it suits him well. He is thought so inferior that minds are wholly unprepared for his wisely-laid plans, and he almost always succeeds well. If his power and subtlety

were understood, minds would be prepared to successfully resist him.

All should understand that Satan was once an exalted angel. His rebellion shut him out of heaven, but did not destroy his powers and make him a beast. Since his fall he has turned his mighty strength against the government of heaven. He has been growing more artful, and has learned the most successful manner to come to the children of men with his temptations.

Satan has originated fables with which to deceive. He commenced in heaven to war against the foundation of God's government, and since his fall has carried on his rebellion against the law of God, and has brought the mass of professed Christians to trample under their feet the fourth commandment, which brings to view the living God. He has torn down the original Sabbath of the decalogue, and instituted in its place one of the laboring days of the week.

The great original lie which he told to Eve in Eden, "Thou shalt not surely die," was the first sermon ever preached on the immortality of the soul. This sermon was crowned with success, and terrible results followed. He has brought minds to receive that sermon as truth, and ministers preach it, sing it, and pray it. No literal Devil, and probation after the coming of Christ, are fast becoming popular fables. The Scriptures plainly declare every person's destiny forever fixed at the coming of the Lord. Revelation 22:11, 12: "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. And behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

Satan has taken advantage of these popular fables to hide himself. He comes to poor deceived mortals through modern Spiritualism, which places no bounds to the carnally minded, and, if carried out, separates families, creates jealousy and hatred, and gives liberty to the most degrading propensities. People know but little yet of the corrupting influence of Spiritualism. The curtain was lifted, and much of its dreadful work was revealed to me. I was shown some who have had an experience in Spiritualism, and have since renounced it, who shudder as they reflect upon how near they came to utter ruin. They had lost control of themselves, and Satan made them do that which they detested. But even they have but a faint idea of Spiritualism as it is.

Ministers inspired of Satan can eloquently dress up this hideous monster, hide its deformity and make it appear beautiful to many. But it comes so direct from his satanic majesty, that all who have to do with it, he claims as his control, for they have ventured upon forbidden ground, and have forfeited the protection of their Maker.

When poor souls have been fascinated with the eloquent words of the teachers of Spiritualism, and they have yielded to its influence, and afterward find out its deadly character, and would renounce and flee from it, some cannot. Satan holds them by his power, and he is not willing to let them go free. He knows that they are surely his while he has them under his special control. But if they once free themselves from his power, he can never bring them again to believe in Spiritualism, and so directly under his control. The only way for such poor souls to overcome Satan, is to discern between pure Bible truth and fables. As they acknowledge the claims of truth, they place themselves where they can be helped. They should entreat those who are experienced, and have faith, to plead with the mighty Deliverer in their behalf. It will be a close conflict. Satan will reinforce his evil angels who have controlled the individuals; but if the saints of God with deep humility fast and pray, their prayers will prevail. Jesus will commission holy angels to resist Satan, and he will be driven back and his power broken from off the afflicted ones. Mark 9:29: "And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting."

The popular ministry cannot successfully resist Spiritualism. They have nothing to shield their flocks from its baleful influence. Much of the sad result of Spiritualism will rest upon ministers of this age; for they have trampled under their feet the truth, and in its stead have preferred fables.

The sermon Satan preached to Eve upon the immortality of the soul--"Thou shalt not surely die"--they have re-iterated from the pulpit, and the people receive it as pure Bible truth. It is the foundation of Spiritualism. The word of God nowhere teaches the soul of man immortal. Immortality is an attribute of God alone. 1 Timothy 6:16: "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto: whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen."

God's word, rightly understood and applied, is a safeguard against Spiritualism. An eternally burning hell preached from the pulpit, and kept before the people, does injustice to the benevolent character of God. It presents him as the veriest tyrant in the

universe. This wide spread dogma has turned thousands to universalism, infidelity, and atheism.

The word of God is plain. It is a straight chain of truth. It will prove an anchor to those who are willing to receive it, even if they have to sacrifice their cherished fables. It will save them from the terrible delusions of these perilous times.

Satan has led the minds of the ministers of different churches to adhere as tenaciously to their popular errors, as he led the Jews in their blindness to cling to their sacrifices, and crucify Christ. The rejection of light and truth leaves men captives, and subjects of Satan's deception. The greater the light they reject, the greater will be the power of deception and darkness which will come upon them.

I was shown that God's true people are the salt of the earth, and the light of the world. God requires of them continual advancement in the knowledge of the truth, and in the way of holiness. Then will they understand the coming in of Satan, and in the strength of Jesus will resist him. Satan will call to his aid legions of his angels to oppose the advance of even one soul, and, if possible, wrest it from the hand of Christ.

I saw evil angels contending for souls, and angels of God resisting them. The conflict was severe. Evil angels were crowding about them, corrupting the atmosphere with their poisonous influence, and stupefying their sensibilities. Holy angels were anxiously watching these souls, and were waiting to drive back Satan's host. But it is not the work of good angels to control minds against the will of the individuals. If they yield to the enemy, and make no effort to resist him, then the angels of God can do but little more than hold in check the host of Satan, that they should not destroy, until further light be given to those in peril, to move them to arouse and look to heaven for help. Jesus will not commission holy angels to extricate those who make no effort to help themselves.

If Satan sees he is in danger of losing one soul, he will exert himself to the utmost to keep that one. And when the individual is aroused to his danger, and, with distress and fervor, looks to Jesus for strength, Satan fears he shall lose a captive, and he calls a re-enforcement of his angels to hedge in the poor soul, and form a wall of darkness around him, that heaven's light may not reach him. But if the one in danger perseveres, and in helplessness and weakness casts himself upon the merits of the blood of Christ,



Jesus listens to the earnest prayer of faith, and sends a re-enforcement of those angels which excel in strength to deliver them. Satan cannot endure to have his powerful rival appealed to, for he fears and trembles before his strength and majesty. At the sound of fervent prayer, Satan's whole host trembles. He continues to call legions of his evil angels to accomplish his object. And when angels, all-powerful, clothed with the armory of heaven, come to the help of the fainting, pursued soul, Satan and his host fall back, well knowing that their battle is lost.

The willing subjects of Satan are faithful and active, united in one object. And although they will hate, and war with each other, yet they will improve every opportunity to advance their common interest. But the Great Commander in heaven and earth has limited Satan's power.

My experience has been singular, and for years I have suffered peculiar trials of mind. The condition of God's people, and my connection with the work of God, has often brought upon me a weight of sadness and discouragement which cannot be expressed. For years I have looked to the grave as a sweet resting-place.

In my last vision I inquired of my attending angel why I was left to suffer such perplexity of mind, and so often thrown upon the Devil's battle-ground. I entreated that if I must be so closely connected with the cause of truth, that I might be delivered from these severe trials. There was power and strength with the angels of God, and I plead that I might be shielded.

Then our past life was presented before me, and I was shown that Satan had sought in various ways to destroy our usefulness; that many times he has laid his plans to get us down from the work of God; he had come in different ways, and through different agencies, to accomplish his purposes; and through the ministration of holy angels he had been defeated. I saw that in our journeying from place to place, he had frequently placed his evil angels in our path to cause accidents which would result in our losing our lives; but holy angels were sent upon the ground to deliver. Several accidents have placed my husband and myself in great peril, and our preservation has been wonderful. I saw that we had been the special objects of Satan's attacks, because of our interest in, and connection with, the work of God. As I saw the great care God has every moment for those who love and fear him, I was inspired with confidence and trust in God, and felt reproved for my lack of faith.

May 20, 1862

## **The Two Crowns**

In the vision given me in Battle Creek, October 25th, 1861, I was shown this earth, dark and gloomy. Said the angel, "Look carefully!" Then I was shown the people upon the earth: some were surrounded with angels of God, others were in total darkness, surrounded by evil angels. I saw an arm reached down from heaven, holding a golden scepter. On the top of the scepter was a crown studded with diamonds. Every diamond emitted light, bright, clear, and beautiful. Inscribed upon the crown were these words, "All who win me are happy, and shall have everlasting life."

Below this crown was another scepter upon which was also placed a crown, in the center of which were jewels, gold, and silver, which reflected some light. The inscription upon the crown was, "Earthly treasure--Riches is power. All who win me have honor and fame." I saw a vast multitude rushing forward to obtain this crown. They were clamorous. Some in their eagerness seemed bereft of their reason. They would thrust one another, crowding back those who were weaker than they, and trample upon those who in their haste fell. Many eagerly seized hold of the treasures within the crown, and held them fast. The heads of some were as white as silver, and their faces were furrowed with care and anxiety. Their own relatives, bone of their bone and flesh of their flesh, they regarded not: but, as appealing looks were turned to them, they held their treasures the firmer, as though fearful, in an unguarded moment, they should lose a little, or divide with them. Their eager eyes would often fasten upon the earthly crown, and count and recount its treasures. Images of want and wretchedness appeared in that multitude, and looked wishfully at the treasures there, and turned hopelessly away as the stronger overpowered and drove back the weaker. Yet they could not give it up thus; but with a multitude of deformed, sickly, and aged, sought to press their way to the earthly crown. Some died in seeking to reach it. Others fell just in the act of taking hold of it. Many but just laid hold of it when they fell. Dead bodies strewed the ground, yet on rushed the multitude, trampling over the fallen and dead bodies of their companions. Every one who reached the crown possessed a share in it, and were loudly applauded by an interested company standing around it.

A large company of evil angels were very busy. Satan was in their midst, and all

looked with the most exulting satisfaction upon the company struggling for the crown. Satan seemed to throw a peculiar charm upon those who eagerly sought it. Many who sought this earthly crown were professed Christians. Some of them seemed to have a little light. They would look wishfully upon the heavenly crown, and often seemed charmed with its beauty, yet could obtain no true sense of its value and glory. While one hand was reaching forth languidly for the heavenly, the other was reached eagerly for the earthly, determined to possess that, and in their earnest pursuit for the earthly, they lost sight of the heavenly. They were left in darkness, yet they were anxiously groping about to secure the earthly crown. Some became disgusted with the company who sought it so eagerly, and they seemed to have a sense of their danger, and turned from it, and earnestly sought for the heavenly crown. The countenances of such soon changed from dark to light, from gloom to cheerfulness and holy joy.

A company I then saw pressing through the crowds of people with their eyes intently fixed upon the heavenly crown. As they earnestly urged their way through the disorderly crowd, angels attended them, and made room through the dense throng for them to advance. As they neared the heavenly crown, the light emanating from it shone upon them, and around them, dispelling their darkness, and growing clearer and brighter, until they seemed to be transformed, and resembled the angels. They cast not one lingering look upon the earthly crown. Those who were in pursuit of the earthly, mocked them, and threw black balls after them, which did them no injury while their eyes were fixed upon the heavenly crown. But those who turned their attention to the black balls were stained with them. The following scripture was presented before me:

Matthew 6:19-21: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

"The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters; for he will either hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Then that which I had seen was explained to me as follows: The multitude which were shown me, who were so eagerly striving for the earthly crown, were those who love this world's treasure, and are deceived and flattered with its short-lived attractions. Some I saw who professed to be the followers of Jesus, are so ambitious to obtain earthly treasures, that they lose their love for heaven, act like the world, and are accounted of Heaven as of the world. They profess to be seeking an immortal crown, a treasure in the heavens; but their interest and principal study is to acquire earthly treasures. Those who have their treasures in this world, and love their riches, cannot love Jesus. They may think that they are right, and, although they cling to what they have, with a miser's grasp, you cannot make them see it, or feel that they love money more than the cause of truth, or the heavenly treasure.

"If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness," There was a point of time in the experience of such, when the light given them was not cherished, and it became darkness. Said the angel, "Ye cannot love and worship the treasures of earth, and have the true riches."

The young man came to Jesus and said unto him [Matthew 19:16.], "Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Jesus gave him his choice, to part with his possessions and have eternal life, or retain them, and lose it. His riches were of greater value to him than the heavenly treasure. The condition, that he must part with his treasures, and give to the poor, in order to be a follower of Christ, and have eternal life, chilled his desire, and he went away sorrowful.

Those who were shown me clamorous for the earthly crown, were those who will resort to any means to acquire property. They become insane upon that point. Their whole thoughts and energies are directed for earthly riches. They trample upon the rights of others, and oppress the poor, and the hireling in his wages. If they can take advantage of those who are less shrewd, and poorer than they, and manage to increase their riches, they will not hesitate a moment to oppress them, and even see them brought to beggary.

The men whose heads were white with age, and their faces furrowed with care, who were eagerly grasping the treasures within the crown, were the aged who have but a few years before them. Yet they were eager to secure their earthly treasures. The nearer they came to the grave, the more anxious they were to cling to them. Their own

relatives were not benefited. The members of their own families were permitted to labor beyond their strength to save a little money. They did not use it for others' good, or for their own. It was enough for them to know that they had it. When their duty to the poor, and the wants of God's cause are presented before them, they are sorrowful. They would gladly accept the gift of everlasting life, but are not willing that it should cost them any thing. The conditions are too hard. But Abraham would not withhold his only son. He could sacrifice this child of promise to obey God more easily than many would sacrifice some of their earthly possessions.

It was painful to see those, who should be ripening for glory, and daily fitting for immortality, exerting all their strength to keep their earthly treasures. Such, I saw, could not value the heavenly treasure. Their strong affections for the earthly, cause them to show by their works that they do not esteem the heavenly inheritance enough to make any sacrifice for it.

The "young man" manifested a willingness to keep the commandments, yet our Lord told him that he lacked one thing. He desired eternal life, but loved his possessions more. Many are self-deceived. They have not sought for truth as for hid treasures. Their energies and powers are not put to the best account. Their minds, which might be illuminated with heaven's light, are perplexed and troubled. Mark 4:19: "The cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful." "Such," said the angel, "are without excuse." I saw the light waning away from them. They did not desire to understand the solemn, important truths for this time, and they thought they were well off without understanding them. Their light went out, and they were groping in darkness.

The multitude of deformed and sickly, pressing for the earthly crown, are those whose interests and treasures are in this world, and, although they are disappointed on every side, they will not place their affections on heaven, and secure to themselves a treasure and home there. They fail of the earthly, yet while in pursuit of it, lose the heavenly. Notwithstanding the disappointment, and unhappy life, and death, of those who were wholly bent upon obtaining earthly riches, others follow the same course in their pursuit for earthly treasures. They rush madly on, disregarding the miserable end of those whose example they are following.

All those who reached the crown, and possessed a share in it, and who were

applauded, are those who obtained that which was the whole aim of their life,--riches. And they received that honor which the world bestows upon those who are rich. They have influence in the world. Satan and his evil angels are satisfied. They know that such are surely theirs, and while they are living in rebellion against God, they are Satan's powerful agents.

Those who became disgusted with the company clamoring for the earthly crown, are those who have marked the life and end of those striving for earthly riches, and have seen they were never satisfied, that they were unhappy, and they became alarmed, and separated themselves from that unhappy class, and sought the true and durable riches.

Those who were urging their way through the crowd for the heavenly crown, attended by holy angels, were shown me to be God's faithful people. Angels led them on, and they were inspired with zeal to press forward for the heavenly treasure.

The black balls which were shown me thrown after the saints, were the reproachful falsehoods put in circulation concerning God's people, by those who love and make a lie. The greatest care should be taken to live a blameless life, and abstain from all appearance of evil, and then move boldly forward, and pay no regard to the reproachful falsehoods of the wicked. While the eyes of the righteous are fixed upon the heavenly, priceless treasure, they will be more and more like Christ, and will be transformed, and fitted for translation.

May 27, 1862

## The Future

At the transfiguration Jesus was glorified by His Father. We hear Him say, "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him." Thus before His betrayal and crucifixion He was strengthened for His last dreadful sufferings.

As the members of the body of Christ approach the period of their last conflict, "the time of Jacob's trouble," they will grow up into Christ, and will partake largely of His Spirit. As the third message swells to a loud cry, and as great power and glory attends the closing work, the faithful people of God will partake of that glory. It is the latter rain which revives and strengthens them to pass through the time of trouble. Their faces will shine with the glory of that light which attends the third angel.

I saw that God would in a wonderful manner preserve His people through the time of trouble. As Jesus poured out His soul in agony in the garden, they will earnestly cry and agonize with Him day and night for deliverance. The decree will go forth that they must disregard the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and honor the first day, or lose their lives; but they will not yield, and trample under their feet the Sabbath of the Lord, and honor an institution of the Papacy. Satan's host, and wicked men, will surround them, and exult over them, because there will seem to be no way of escape for them. But in the midst of their revelry and triumph, there is peal upon peal of the loudest thunder. The heavens have gathered blackness, and are only illuminated by the blazing light and terrible glory from heaven, as God utters His voice from His holy habitation.

The foundations of the earth shake, buildings totter and fall with a terrible crash. The sea boils like a pot, and the whole earth is in terrible commotion. The captivity of the righteous is turned, and with sweet and solemn whisperings they say to each other, "We are delivered. It is the voice of God." With solemn awe they listen to the words of the voice. The wicked hear, but understand not the words of the voice of God. They fear and tremble, while the saints rejoice. Satan and his angels, and wicked men, who had been exulting that the people of God were in their power, that they might destroy them from off the earth, witness the glory conferred upon those who have honored the holy

law of God. They behold the faces of the righteous lighted up, and reflecting the image of Jesus. Those who were so eager to destroy the saints could not endure the glory resting upon the delivered ones, and they fell like dead men to the earth. Satan and evil angels fled from the presence of the saints glorified. Their power to annoy them was gone forever.



August 19, 1862

### **Letter to E. W. Shortridge**

Bro. Shortridge: October 25, I was shown in vision that the truth had not had its sanctifying influence upon your heart, and there has not been that reform in you which was necessary in order for you to be a successful laborer in the gospel field. It is a most solemn, important work, to present the last message of mercy to the world, and bear a testimony which is to prove a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. I was shown that it was of the highest importance for those who bear this message to be right, and to be ensamples to the flock.

In the first vision given me for you before I had seen you, I was shown that you were capable of doing good; but you had much to learn, and if thoroughly converted to the truth you could present the arguments of our position in a clear, pointed manner. I was shown that there was much chaff introduced into your preaching that God had nothing to do with, and which grieved His Holy Spirit. You must be as I expressed to you, "torn all to pieces, and made over new;" for that preaching which was acceptable in your former labors, would not be acceptable to God, or do good in this last solemn message. Your trifling expressions and gestures must be entirely put away, and you realize the tendency and evil of them, or your labors will prove a curse instead of a blessing.

In the last vision given October 25, I saw that your labors, your life and conversation, have not taken that elevated character which is in keeping with the message you bear. You put on a dignity which is not objectionable, if you would carry it out in your life, and maintain a true, godly dignity, especially in the pulpit. Many of your expressions, figures and gestures, are not dignified in the sight of heaven, of angels, or of Christ's devoted followers. With some you excite mirthfulness, and disgust with others. If deep conviction of truth rests upon minds, and they feel that vital importance is attached to the decisions they make, your presenting solemn truths in such a trifling manner banishes the solemn impressions the truth has made, and the scale turns, and decisions are made on the wrong side. Angels are grieved and turn from you in displeasure and the record is made in heaven of your sin; for thus heaven regards it.

God requires his servants who labor for the salvation of souls, to be ensamples to the flock; and unfaithfulness on their part is regarded by heaven as a high crime, and will be visited with God's anger. Earthly conflicts and battles were presented before me. No one is allowed to fill the place of officer unless he has been proved, and confidence could be placed in his integrity, his skill, bearing and ability. He must lead the company placed under his command, and by his own example inspire them with the same spirit which animates him. Should these officers be detected in unfaithfulness, if they do not suffer death, they are immediately removed, and another is placed in their stead. Then I saw how much more important were the battles in which we are engaged. And the burden of this work is committed to ministers; they are overseers of the flock. Please read Acts 20:28. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

The people look to the ministers and imitate their example and they are responsible to God for the influence they exert. They must render an account to God for their words and acts. If they are unskillful workmen, they have mistaken their calling. The lives of the holy apostles were presented before me. They were ensamples, and it was safe for the flock to follow them. I was shown that while you could present some points of truth clearly, you lack personal piety and humility. Your former associations and labors have led you to rely upon your own sufficiency instead of depending at all times upon God for strength. Since you embraced the third angel's message, you have not realized that unless God's special power attends this message, your labors are vain. You have too exalted an opinion of yourself. The success of this message does not depend upon those who are called smart men. God can raise up men and fit them to carry this message in the power and the Spirit. Although they are lowly, yet in humble obedience they will learn of God and receive counsel of him. I was shown that you have but little experience in this your new work. In your former manner of preaching you could pass along with a superficial work, and it would pass off well. Not so in this solemn message. God requires of his ministers purity of soul, holiness of heart and life, constant watchfulness, and almost unceasing prayer. All your boasting, jesting, joking, and foolish talking must be laid aside, and you earnestly seek the grace of God that you may overcome these evils which destroy your influence. God will not bear with your folly. Unless you can exert a holy influence and be a living example to those for whom you labor, you had better cease laboring to win souls to Christ; for they follow your example, and entirely fail to come up to God's requirements. You feel that your

testimony is crippled that your brethren take too rigid a course with you; but when you are converted to this message you will be a free man in the pulpit,--you will not feel under restraint. From the cleansed fountain will proceed only pure, sweet water. Your brethren are none too particular. God is particular, and his angels who are sent forth to do his will are grieved with your lack of spirituality, pureness, and godliness. You must bring yourself under strict discipline, and reform in life, or your labors will prove a curse instead of a blessing.

You have been at fault in being too familiar with females; and if your past life in this respect is to be a sample of your future course, you will not be the least benefit in this great work. Your past course has lacked in many respects, and evil reports have followed you. You have not abstained from all appearance of evil. Said the angel as he pointed to you, "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord." We are a sect everywhere spoken against, and we are accounted as the offscouring of all things. Caution and discretion should mark all your moves. It is a great thing to stand between the living and the dead, and be mouth-piece for God. Satan and evil angels are watching for your downfall; they are seeking to direct your course. I saw that you grieved much that reproach has followed you, but you are not altogether clear in this matter,--you have given occasion by your folly. I was cited to this Scripture, 1 Peter 2:19, 20: "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if when ye do well, and suffer for it ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God."

I was shown that those who have but recently commenced to labor in this message should not move without counsel from those who have an experience in this message, and they should not dictate as to the arrangements and best manner of carrying forward this message, for they would be in danger of making decisions which, if carried out, would prove an entire failure.

I was shown that your feelings toward Bro. Waggoner are unjust, and you have enlisted the sympathies of others, to the injury of Bro. Waggoner. They look upon you as abused, when it is not the case. Bro. Waggoner was grieved with your weaving into your discourses that which injured your testimony. He labored for your good. I saw that you draw largely upon the sympathies of some who are young in the truth. I saw them looking toward Bro. W. with suspicion and jealousy. They know not what they are doing. They are inexperienced, and need that one should teach them.

I saw that you are lifted up in your own eyes, are boastful, and God does not approbate your labors. You and your family overreach in making efforts to keep up appearances, which is a snare to you, and had led to unfaithfulness on your part, in regard to the means raised by the church for a specified object, and entrusted to you to be devoted to that object. You have broken upon that means to apply to your own wants, as though it were your own, earned by your faithful labor among us. It was not your own. You had no right, according to the light given me, to touch that means, or to use it for any purpose except for the one for which it was raised.

Bro. S., your family is proud. They know not the first principles of the third angel's message. They are in the downward road, and should be brought under a more saving influence. These influences affect you and make you weak. You have not ruled well your own house, and while you lack so much at home, you cannot be entrusted to dictate important and responsible matters in the church. This scripture was presented before me; "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?"

Bro. S., I was shown that you must take hold of this work aright, or your labors are vain. You need the influence of the Spirit of God. When you are converted, then you can strengthen your brethren. You feel too sufficient of yourself. I was then referred to the learned and eloquent Paul. Although he had a thorough knowledge of the ways and works of God, and was divinely instructed of him, and was a mighty laborer in word and doctrine, yet his course was marked with humility and fear in regard to himself.

Please read 2 Corinthians 2:15, 16: "For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?"

2 Corinthians 3:5, 6: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament."

2 Corinthians 6:3, 4: "Giving no offense in anything, that the ministry be not

blamed; but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses."

1 Thessalonians 2:4: "But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness; for we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus sake."

1 Corinthians 4:9: "For we are made a spectacle unto the world, to angels, and to men."

May God help you to see these things as they are, that you may be a skillful workman that needeth not to be ashamed.

August 19, 1862

### **Explanation**

I wish to say to those who received my Circular calling for help for E. W. Shortridge, that I now deeply regret that I sent it to you. In it I did not state all that I had seen relative to E. W. S., as my testimony to him in this sheet, dated Nov. 22nd, 1861, shows. I did state in the Circular that "with experience" he "would make a successful laborer." He has had an opportunity to obtain that experience, but has either neglected or despised the admonitions and advice of experienced brethren. I had no thoughts when I first saw E. W. S., of calling for aid for him, but Bro. Snook urged the necessity of his having immediate help.

At the Conference at Battle Creek, April 26-29, E. W. S. being present, the subject of what I had done to raise means for him was fully discussed, when it was

"Moved by Bro. Hull that the Conference take the responsibility in this case, and free sister White from further care in the matter. Carried." See Review, Vol. xvii, No. 24.

But the matter is still a great care and burden to me, and it will be a pleasure to me to pay back to the faithful donors the money freely given to, and foolishly squandered by, E. W. S. All who apply during the present month will immediately receive the amount of their donation by mail.

September 16, 1862

### **An Extract from a Letter Written to a Distant Female Friend**

You speak of living among secesh. I am sorry that it is so. It is so strange that Northern men can sympathize with this terrible rebellion and the institution of slavery.

But have you never considered that there is a greater rebellion against God's government by the inhabitants of the earth, which is winked at? Satan was the first rebel. He is the great leader of all rebellions. He rebelled against the laws of God's government, framed by God himself, which were afterward written with his own finger upon tables of stone. Nearly all the human family have proved disloyal to the higher law, the ten commandments. We are laboring with all our energies to show the transgressors of God's law their danger, and bring them back to their allegiance to the higher constitution and laws. The world is given to idolatry, and they have forgotten God, their Maker and Preserver. They openly transgress his law, trample on the Sabbath, and in thus doing break the fourth commandment of the decalogue. Instead of keeping God's own rest-day, which he sanctified after he had rested upon it, and set it apart for man to observe and reverence, they honor a Papal institution. Oh, how the God of heaven has been insulted and despised. I pity the Sabbath-breaker who has soon to meet God over his broken law. No excuse will avail the transgressor then, for with the Bible and the almanac, every person of common abilities can tell just what day God sanctified and commanded him to observe, and when that day comes.

We have now an exhibition in our land of how serious a matter it is to lightly esteem, or rise up against, and prove disloyal to, the government or constitution of our land. And then consider how high a crime it must be to trample upon and despise the laws of God's government, and bow to, and reverence, an institution of [the] Papacy, framed by the Man of Sin, who exalted himself above God, and who is the great enemy of God. Is not this the highest and most heaven-daring rebellion? Does it not deserve the highest punishment? Will God take to heaven, and into his own glorious presence, those who are living in open violation of one of the plainest precepts of the decalogue? No, no. It can never be that he will take those who are living in rebellion to his holy law to heaven, among pure angels who delight to do his will, and obey the laws of his righteous government, for there would be a second rebellion in heaven. The indignation

of heaven is aroused at man's open and daring rebellion against God's holy law.

The signs are fulfilling which give us unmistakable evidence that Christ is at the door. And just before he shall come in his majesty and glory to take vengeance on the rebellious, that all may be left without excuse, he will cause a proclamation of his law to go forth that every disloyal subject may return to their allegiance to his government and laws. If they continue in their rebellion they can find no more place in heaven than Satan found after he rebelled.

You may plead that you cannot keep the Sabbath because your friends do not keep it. Such an excuse you will not dare to plead before Him who suffered so much to redeem you. Matthew 10:37: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me."

Luke 14:26: "If any man come to me and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

Verse 33: "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." Many more passages of scripture I might refer you to, but you are acquainted with them. How many as they read these plain, close words of our Saviour, will pass them by unheeded! Others will look at them doubtfully, and turn away, saying, These are hard sayings; who can obey them? Did not our Saviour know that many would not obey his requirements? Did he who so loved us as to give his life for us, leave us any requirements or conditions of salvation which we could not obey? Oh, no, all his requirements are reasonable and just, and we can obey them.

Hate referred to in Luke 14:26, means a less degree of love. We are to have supreme love to God, and our friends are to be loved secondarily. Our love for husband, wife, brother, sisters, father, or mother, must be inferior to our love to God. Our love for these dear relatives must not be blind and selfish, and cause us to forget God. When these ties of relationship lead us to prefer their favor by disregarding the truth, we love them more than we love Jesus, and are not worthy of him. In that fearful time when we need an arm to protect and shield us, stronger than any human arm, stronger than the arm of father, brother, or husband, and shall call upon him that is mighty to save, he will



not hear us. He will bid us to lean upon those whom we preferred before him, whom we loved above him, whom we would not forsake for him. He will say, Let them deliver you, let them save you. I gave you proof of my love. I left the glory of my Father, and all my majesty and splendor, and came into a world cursed with sin and pollution. For your sakes I became poor, that you through my poverty might be made rich. I bore insult and mockery, and died a shameful death upon the cross, to save you from hopeless misery and death. Yet this did not excite your love enough to obey me, and lead you to prefer my favor above the favor of earthly friends, who have given you but feeble proofs of their love. I know you not; depart from me.

God will test and prove his people. One sacred truth after another will be brought to bear upon their hearts, close and cutting, until their faith will be purified and tried like gold, until all their dross will be purged away, and Jesus will present them unto his Father without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. We must overcome through trials and sufferings, as Jesus overcame. We must not shun the cross or the suffering part of religion. The language of the heart should be, Let me know the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. Let me suffer with him that I may reign with him.

September 23, 1862

### **Liberal**

I wish to say that none of the friends who so liberally donated for E. W. S. have accepted my offer to return to them the amount of their donations. Fearing that a burden would fall upon me in this matter, friends have sent to me the sum of ten dollars to assist me in refunding what might be called for. The following is from the church at Grass River, St. Law. Co., N.Y.:

"Whereas, Sister White, in her love to God's cause and his servants, has done what she could to procure a home for E. W. Shortridge, and

"Whereas, Said E. W. S. has proved himself unworthy of such help, which has thrown a heavy trial upon sister W., therefore,

"Resolved, That we as a church do deeply sympathize with sister W. in this additional trial, and we do hereby promise, if sister W. shall have to refund the sums paid to her for E. W. S., to pay our share of the whole amount to her again.

"After reading the Supplement, I drew up the preceding preamble and resolution, and presented them to the church in this place at our church-meeting last Tuesday night, when they were unanimously adopted. It was also voted to send \$5 in advance to you.

"Your unworthy brother. H. G. Buck."

I would express my thanks to the liberal friends of the cause of truth, who have manifested so much sympathy and liberality in assisting me to bear the burden of this unpleasant affair. The ten dollars sent to me I shall apply to the Association.

It is a painful reflection that those who wish to honor the Lord with their substance, cannot assist those who appear to be true objects of Christian liberality without, in at least three cases out of four, being stung with proofs that it is unworthily applied. These things should teach us all caution for time to come.

January 6, 1863

## Testimony for the Church

At the Conference at Battle Creek, May 27th, 1856, I was shown in vision some things that concern the church generally. The glory and majesty of God was made to pass before me. Said the angel, "He is terrible in his majesty, yet ye realize it not; terrible in his anger, yet ye offend him daily. Strive to enter in at the straight gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." These roads I saw were distinct, separate, in opposite directions. One leads to eternal life, the other to death, eternal death. I saw the distinction in these roads, also the distinction between the companies traveling these roads. The roads are opposite; one is broad and smooth; the other narrow and rugged. So the parties that travel these roads are opposite in character, in life, in dress, and conversation.

Those traveling in the narrow way are talking of the joy and happiness they will have at the end of the journey. Their countenances are often sad, yet often beam with holy, sacred joy. They do not dress like the company in the broad road, or talk like them, or act like them. A Pattern has been given them. A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief opened that road for them, and traveled that road himself. His followers see his footsteps and are comforted and cheered. He went through safely, so can they, if they follow his footsteps.

In the broad road all are occupied with their persons, their dress, and the pleasures in the way. Hilarity and glee they fully indulge in, and think not of their journey's end, of the certain destruction at the end of the path. Every day they approach nearer their destruction, yet they madly rush on faster and faster. Oh! how dreadful this looked to me.

I saw many traveling in this broad road who had written upon them, "Dead to the world, The end of all things is at hand, Be ye also ready." They looked just like all the vain ones around them, except a shade of sadness which I noticed upon their countenances. Their conversation was just like the gay, thoughtless ones around them;

but they would occasionally point to the letters on their garments with great satisfaction, calling for the others to have the same upon theirs. They were in the broad way, yet they professed to be of that number who were traveling the narrow way. Those around them would say, "There is no distinction between us; we are all alike; we dress and talk and act alike."

Then I was pointed back to the years 1843 and 1844. There was a spirit of consecration then, that there is not now. What has come over the professed peculiar people of God? I saw the conformity to the world, the unwillingness to suffer for the truth's sake. I saw a great lack of submission to the will of God. I was pointed back to the children of Israel after they left Egypt. God in mercy called them out from the Egyptians that they might worship him without hindrance or restraint. He wrought for them in the way by miracles, he proved them, he tried them by bringing them into straight places. After the wonderful dealings of God, and their deliverance so many times, when tried or proved by God, they murmured. Their language was, "Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt." They lusted for the leeks and onions there.

I saw many who profess to believe the truth for these last days, think it strange that the children of Israel murmured as they journeyed, and after the wonderful dealings of God to them, should be so ungrateful, and forget what God had done for them. Said the angel, "Ye have done worse than they." I saw that God has given his servants the truth so clear, so plain, that it cannot be resisted. Every where they go they have certain victory. The enemies cannot get round the convincing truth. Light has been shed so clear that the servants of God can stand up anywhere and let truth, clear and connected, bear away the victory. This great blessing has not been prized, has not been realized. If any trial arises, some begin to look back and think, they have a hard time. Some of the professed servants of God do not know what purifying trials are. They make trials sometimes for themselves, imagine trials, and are so easily discouraged, so easily hurt, self-dignity is so quick to feel, that they injure themselves, injure others, and the cause. Satan magnifies and puts things into the mind that if given way to will destroy the usefulness and influence of such.

I saw that some had felt tempted to take themselves from the work, to labor with their hands. I saw that if the hand of God should be taken from them, and they left subject to disease and death, then such would know what trouble is. It is a fearful thing

to murmur against God. They do not bear in mind that the way they are traveling in is a rugged, self-denying, self-crucifying way, and they must not expect everything to move on as smoothly as though they were traveling in the broad road.

I saw that some of the servants of God, even messengers, are so easily discouraged, self is so quickly hurt, that they imagine themselves slighted and injured when it is not so. They think their lot hard. Such realize not how they would feel should the sustaining hand of God be withdrawn, and they pass through anguish of soul. Their lot they then would see would be ten-fold harder than it was before, while they were employed in the labor of God, suffering trials and privations, yet withal having the approbation of God. Some that are laboring in the cause of God know not when they do have an easy time. They have had so few privations, have hardly known anything of want or wearing, labor or burden of soul, that when they have an easy time, their lives almost entirely free from anguish of spirit, are favored of God, they know it not, and think their trials great. I saw that unless such have a spirit of self-sacrifice, and are ready to labor cheerfully, not sparing themselves, God will release them. He will not acknowledge them as his self-sacrificing servants; but will raise up those who will labor, not slothfully, but in earnest, and will know when they have an easy time. God's servants must feel the burden for souls, and weep between the porch and the altar, and cry, "Spare thy people, Lord."

Some of the servants of God have given up their lives, to spend and be spent, for the cause of God, until their constitutions are gone, and they are almost worn out with mental labor, incessant care, toil and privations, while others have not had, and would not take, the burden upon them. Yet just such ones think they have a hard time, because they never have experienced hardships. They never have been baptized into the suffering part, and never will be, as long as they manifest so much weakness, and so little fortitude, and love their ease so well. From what God has shown me, there needs to be a scourging among the messengers, and the slothful, and dilatory, and self-caring ones, scourged out, and have a pure, faithful, and self-sacrificing company that will not study their ease, but minister faithfully in word and doctrine, that are willing to suffer and endure all things for Christ's sake, and to save those for whom he died. Let these servants feel the woe upon them if they preach not the gospel, and it will be enough; but all do not feel this.

I was shown the conformity of some professed Sabbath-keepers to the world. Oh,

I saw it was a disgrace to their profession, a disgrace to the cause of God. They give the lie to their profession. They think they are not like the world, but they are so near like them in dress, in conversation, and actions, that there is no distinction. I saw them decorating their poor mortal bodies, which are liable any moment to be touched by the finger of God, and laid upon a bed of anguish. Oh, then, as they approach their last change, mortal anguish racks their frames, and the great inquiry then is, "Am I prepared to die? prepared to appear before God in judgment, and stand the grand review?" Ask them then how they feel about decorating their bodies, and if they have any sense of what it is to be prepared to appear before God, they will tell you that if they could take back and live over the past, they would correct their lives, shun the follies of the world, its vanity, its pride, and would adorn the body with modest apparel, and set an example to others around them. They would live to the glory of God. Why is it so hard to lead a self-denying, humble life? Because professed Christians are not dead to the world. It is easy living after we are dead. But there is a hankering after the leeks and onions of Egypt. They have a disposition to dress and act as much like the world as possible, and yet go to heaven. Such climb up some other way. They do not enter through the narrow way and straight gate.

Such will have no excuse. Many, I saw, dressed like the world to have an influence. But here they make a sad and fatal mistake. If they would have a true and saving influence, let them live out their profession, show their faith by their righteous works, and make the distinction great between the Christian and the world. I saw that the words, the dress, and actions should tell for God. Then a holy influence will be shed upon all, and all will take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus, and unbelievers will see that the truth we profess has a holy influence, and that faith in Christ's coming affects the character of the man or woman. If any wish to have their influence tell in favor of truth, let them live it out, and imitate the humble Pattern.

I saw that God hates pride, and that all the proud, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up. I saw that the third angel's message must yet work like leaven upon many minds that profess to believe it, and purge away their pride, selfishness, covetousness, and love of the world.

Jesus is coming, and will He find a people conformed to the world? and will He acknowledge them as His people that He has purified unto Himself? Oh, no. None but the pure and holy will He acknowledge as His. Those that have been purified and made

bright through suffering, and have kept themselves separate, unspotted from the world, He will own as His.

As I saw the dreadful fact that God's people were conformed to the world, with no distinction, only in name, between many of the professed disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus, and unbelievers, my soul felt deep anguish. I saw that Jesus was wounded and put to an open shame. Said the angel, as with sorrow he saw the professed people of God loving the world, partaking of the spirit of the world, and following its fashions, "Cut loose! Cut loose!" lest He appoint thee thy portion with hypocrites and unbelievers outside the city. Thy profession will only cause thee greater anguish, and thy punishment will be greater, because ye knew His will, but did it not."

I saw that those who profess to believe the third angel's message, often wound the cause of God by lightness, joking, and trifling. This evil, I was shown, was all through our ranks. I saw that there should be an humbling before God, and that the Israel of God should rend the heart and not the garment. Childlike simplicity is rarely seen; the approbation of man is more thought of than to fear to displease God. Said the angel, "Set thine heart in order, lest He visit thee in judgment, and the brittle thread of life be cut, and ye lie down in the grave unsheltered, unprepared for the judgment. Or if ye do not make your bed in the grave, unless ye soon make your peace with God, tear yourselves from the world, your hearts will grow harder, and ye will lean upon a false prop, a supposed preparation, and find out your mistake too late to secure a well-grounded hope."

I saw that some professed Sabbath-keepers spend hours that were worse than thrown away, studying this or that fashion, to decorate the poor mortal body. While, you make yourselves appear like the world, and as beautiful as you can, remember that the same body may, in a few days, be food for the worms. And while you fix it up to your taste to please the eye, you are dying spiritually. God hates your vain, wicked pride, and He looks upon you as a whited sepulchre; but within full of corruption and uncleanness. Mothers set the example of pride to their children, and while so doing, sow seed that will spring up and bear fruit. The harvest will be plenteous and sure. That which they sow, they shall reap. There will be no failure in the crop.

I saw, parents, that it is easier for you to learn your children a lesson of pride, than a lesson of humility. And that Satan and his angels stand right by your side to make

the act of yours, or the word that you may speak to them, effectual to encourage them to dress, and in their pride to mingle with society that is not holy. Oh, parents, you plant a thorn in your own bosoms that you will often feel in anguish. And when you would counteract the sad lesson you have learned your children, you will find it a hard thing. It is impossible for you to do it. You may deny them things that will gratify their pride, yet that pride lives in the heart, yet longing to be satisfied, and nothing can kill this pride but to have the quick and powerful Spirit of God find way to the heart, and work like leaven there and root it out.



January 13, 1863

### **Testimony for the Church**

I saw that young and old neglect their Bibles. They do not make that book their study, and the rule of life as they should, especially the young. Most of them are ready, and find plenty of time to read almost any other book. But the word that points to life, eternal life, is not perused and daily studied. That precious, important book, that is to judge them in the last day, is scarcely studied at all. Idle stories have been attentively read, while the Bible has been passed by, neglected. A day is coming, of clouds and thick darkness, when all will wish to be thoroughly furnished by the plain, simple truths of the word of God; that they may meekly, yet decidedly, give a reason of their hope. This reason of their hope, I saw, they must have to strengthen their own souls for the fierce conflict. Without this they are wanting, and cannot have firmness and decision.

Parents had much better burn the idle tales of the day, and the novels as they come into their houses. It would be a mercy to their children. Encourage the reading of these story-books, and it is like enchantment. It bewilders and poisons the mind. I saw that unless parents awake to the eternal interest of their children, they will surely be lost through their neglect. And the possibility of these unfaithful parents being saved themselves is very small. Parents, I saw, should be exemplary. They should exert a holy influence in their families. They should let their dress be modest, different from the world around them. You should rebuke pride in your children, if you value their eternal interest. Faithfully rebuke this pride, and encourage it not in deed or word. I saw that this pride must be torn out of our families. O, the pride that was shown me of God's professed people. It has increased every year, until it is now impossible to designate professed Advent Sabbath-keepers from all the world around them. Much, I saw, was expended for ribbons and laces for the bonnets, collars [The question has often been asked me if I believed it wrong to wear plain linen collars. My answer has always been, no. Some have taken the extreme meaning of what I have written about collars, and have maintained that it was wrong to wear one of any description. I was shown expensively wrought collars, and expensive and unnecessary ribbons and laces, which some Sabbath-keepers have worn, and still wear, for the sake of show and fashion. I did not design to be understood, by naming collars, that nothing like a collar should be worn, or by naming ribbons, that no ribbons at all should be worn.] and other needless

articles to decorate the body, while Jesus the King of glory, who gave His life to redeem them wore a crown of thorns. This was the way their Master's sacred head was decorated. He was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." And yet the very ones that profess to be washed by the blood of Jesus, spilt for them, can dress up, and decorate their poor, mortal bodies, and dare to profess to be the followers of the holy, self-denying, humble Pattern. O, I wish that all could see this in the light that God sees it, and showed it to me. It seemed too much, too much for me to bear, to feel the anguish of soul that I felt as I beheld it. "God's people," said the angel, "are peculiar, such He is purifying unto Himself." I saw that the outside appearance was an index to the heart. When hung with ribbons, collars and needless things, it plainly shows that all this is in the heart, and unless that such persons are cleansed from their corruption, they can never see God, for the pure in heart alone will see Him.

I saw that the axe must be laid at the root of the tree. Such pride should not be suffered in the church. It is these things that separate God from His people, that shuts the Ark away from them. Israel has been asleep to the pride, and fashions, and conformity to the world, in their very midst. They advance every month in pride, covetousness, and selfishness, and love of the world. When the truth affects the heart, it will cause a death to the world, and the ribbons, laces and collars will be laid aside, and if dead, the laugh, the jeer, and scorn of unbelievers will not move them. They will feel an anxious desire to be separate from the world, like their Master. They will not imitate its pride, fashions or customs. The noble object will be ever before them, to glorify God, and gain the immortal inheritance. This prospect will swallow up all besides of an earthly nature. God will have a separate and distinct people from the world. And if any have a desire to imitate the fashions of the world, that they do not immediately subdue, just so soon God ceases to acknowledge them as His children. They are the children of the world and darkness. They hanker after the leeks and onions of Egypt, want to be as much like the world as possible; and those who profess to have put on Christ, by thus doing put Him off, and show that they are strangers to grace, strangers to the meek and lowly Jesus. If they had acquainted themselves with Him, they would walk worthy of Him.

I saw that the Israel of God must arise, renew their strength in God by renewing, and keeping their covenant with Him. Covetousness, selfishness, and love of money,

and love of the world, are all through the ranks of Sabbath-keepers. These evils are drying up the sacrifice of God's people. Those that have this covetousness in their hearts are not aware of it. It has gained upon them imperceptibly. And unless it is rooted out, their destruction will be as sure as Achan's was. Many have taken the sacrifice from God's altar, and they love the world, love its gain and increase, and unless there is an entire change they will perish with the world. God has lent them means. It is not their own; but God has made them His stewards. And because of this, they call it their own, and hoard it up. But, O, how quick, when the prospering hand of God is removed from them, it is all snatched away in a moment. There must be a sacrificing for God, a denying self for the truth's sake. O, how weak and frail is man. How puny his arm. I saw that soon the loftiness of man is to be brought down, and the pride of man humbled. Kings and nobles, rich and poor, alike shall bow, and the withering plagues from God shall fall upon them.

January 20, 1863

## Parents and Children

I have been shown that while parents who have the fear of God before them restrain their children, they should study their dispositions and temperaments, and should seek to meet their wants. Some parents attend carefully to the temporal wants of their children; if sick, they kindly and faithfully nurse them, and then think their duty done. They mistake here. Their work has but just begun. The wants of the mind should be cared for. It requires skill to apply the proper remedies to cure a wounded mind. Children have trials just as hard to bear, just as grievous in character, as older people. Parents do not always feel alike. Their minds are often perplexed. They labor under mistaken views and feelings. Satan buffets them, and they yield to his temptations. They speak irritably, and in a manner to excite wrath in their children, and are sometimes exacting and fretful. The poor children partake of the same spirit, and the parents are not prepared to help them, for they were the cause of the trouble. Sometimes everything seems to go wrong. It is fretfulness all around, and all have a very miserable, unhappy time of it. The parents lay the wrong upon their poor children, and think them very disobedient and unruly, and the worst children in the world, when the cause of the disturbance is in themselves. In this manner some parents raise many a storm, by their lack of self-control. Instead of kindly asking the children to do this, or that, they are ordered in a scolding tone, and at the same time a censure or reproof is on their lips which the children have not merited. This course, pursued toward children, destroys their cheerfulness and ambition. They do your bidding, not from love, but because they dare not do otherwise. Their heart is not in the matter. It is a drudgery, instead of a pleasure, which often leads them to forget to follow out all your directions, which increases your irritation, and makes it still worse for the children. The fault-finding is repeated, their bad conduct arrayed before them in glowing colors, until a discouragement comes over the children, and they are not particular whether they please or not. A spirit of "I don't care" seizes them, and they seek that pleasure and enjoyment away from home, away from their parents, which they do not find at home. They mingle with street company, and are soon as corrupt as any of the worst.

Upon whom rests this great sin! If home had been made attractive, had the parents manifested love and affection for their children, and with kindness found

employment for them, in love instructed them how to obey their wishes, they would have touched an answering cord in their hearts, and their willing feet, and hands, and hearts, would have all readily obeyed them. Parents, by controlling themselves, and speaking kindly, and praising their children when they try to do right, encourage their right efforts, make them very happy, and throw a charm into the family circle which will chase away every dark shadow, and bring cheerful sunlight in.

Parents sometimes excuse their own wrong course because they do not feel well. They are nervous, and cannot, they think, be patient and calm, and speak pleasantly. They deceive themselves in this thing, and please Satan. He exults that the grace of God is not allowed by them as sufficient to overcome natural infirmities. They can, and should, at all times, control themselves. God requires it of them. They should realize that when they give way to fretfulness and impatience they cause others to suffer. Those around them are affected by the spirit they manifest, and if they in their turn act out the same spirit, the evil is increased, and everything goes wrong.

Parents, when you feel fretful, you should not commit so great a sin as to poison the whole family with this dangerous irritability. At such times set a double watch over yourself, and resolve in your heart not to offend with your lips. Nothing but pleasant, cheerful words should escape from your lips. Say to yourself, "I will not mar the happiness of my children by a fretful word." By thus controlling yourself, you will grow stronger. Your nervous system will not be so sensitive. You will be strengthened by the principles of right. The consciousness in your heart that you are faithfully discharging your duty, will strengthen you. Angels of God will smile upon your efforts, and help you. When you feel impatient, you too often think it is all in your children, and you blame them when they do not deserve it. At another time they might do the very same things, and all be acceptable and right. Children know, and mark, and feel these irregularities, and they are not always alike. Sometimes they are better prepared to meet changeable moods, and at other times they are nervous, and fretful, and cannot bear censure. Their spirit rises up in rebellion against it. Parents want all due allowance made for their state of mind, yet do not always see the necessity of making the same allowance for their poor children. They excuse in themselves that, which if they see in their children, who have not their years of experience and discipline, they would highly censure. Some parents are of a nervous temperament, and when fatigued with labor or oppressed with care, do not labor to preserve a calm state of mind, but manifest to those who should be dearest to them on earth, fretfulness and lack of forbearance, which

displeases God, and brings a cloud over the family. Children, in their troubles, should often be soothed with tender sympathy. Mutual kindness and forbearance will make home a paradise, and attract holy angels into the family circle.

The mother can and should do much toward controlling her nerves and mind when it is depressed; and even when she is sick, she can, if she only schools herself, be pleasant and cheerful, and can bear more of their noise than she would once have thought it possible. If infirmities, or depression of spirits affect the mother, she should not make the children feel her infirmities, and cloud their young, sensitive minds, and cause them to feel that the house is a tomb, and the mother's room the most dismal place in the world. The mind and nerves can gain tone, and strength, by exercising the will. The power of the will in many cases will prove a mighty soother of the nerves.

Do not let your children see you with a clouded brow. If they yield to temptation, and afterwards see and repent of their error, forgive them just as freely as you hope to be forgiven of your Father in heaven. Kindly instruct them, and bind them to your hearts. It is a critical time for children. Influences will be thrown around them to wean them from you, which you must counteract. Teach them to make you their confident. Let them whisper in your ear their trials and joys. By encouraging this, you will save them from many a snare that Satan has prepared for their inexperienced feet. But if you treat your children only with sternness, if you forget your own childhood, and forget that they are but children, and try to make them perfect, and make them men and women in their acts at once, you will close the door of access which you might otherwise have to your children, and you drive them to open a door for injurious influences, to affect their young minds, and before you awake to their danger, their minds have been poisoned by others.

Satan and his host are making most powerful efforts to sway the minds of the children, and they must be treated with candor, Christian tenderness and love. This will give you a strong influence over them, and they will feel that they can repose unlimited confidence in you. Throw around your children charms for home, and your society. If you do this, they will not desire so much the society of other young associates. Satan works through young associates to influence and corrupt the minds of each other. It is the most effectual way he can work. Young associates have a powerful influence over one another. Their conversation is not always choice and elevated. Evil communications will be breathed into the ear, which, if not decidedly resisted, find a lodgment in the

heart, take root, and spring up to bear fruit, and corrupt their good manners. Because of the evils now in the world, and the restriction necessary to be placed upon the children, parents should have double care to bind them to their hearts, and let them see they wish to make them happy.

Parents should not forget their childhood years, how much they yearned for sympathy and love, and how unhappy they felt when censured and fretfully chided. They should be young again in their feelings. You should bring your mind down to understand the wants of your children. With firmness, all mixed with love, require your children to obey you. Your word should be implicitly obeyed.

Angels of God are watching the children with the deepest interest, to see what characters they develop. If Christ dealt with us as we often deal with each other and with our children, we should stumble and fall through utter discouragement. I saw that Jesus knows our infirmities, and Himself hath felt their experience in all things but in sin, therefore He hath proportioned a way and a path to our strength and capacity, and like Jacob, hath marched softly and in evenness with the children as they were able to endure, that He might entertain us by the comfort of His company, and be to us a perpetual guide. He does not despise, neglect, or leave behind the children of the flock.

He has not bid us to move forward and leave them. He has not traveled so hastily as to leave us with our children behind. O no, but He has evened the path to life, even for children. And parents are required in His name to lead them along the narrow way. God has proportioned a way and a path according to the strength and capacity of children.

January 19, 1864

### **Communications to Elder M. Hull**

"November 5, 1862, I was shown the condition of Bro. Hull. He was in an alarming state. His lack of consecration and vital piety, left him subject to Satan's suggestions. He has relied upon his own strength, instead of the strong arm of the Lord, and that mighty arm has been partially removed.

"I was shown that the most alarming feature in the case of Bro. Hull is, he is asleep to his danger. He feels no alarm, feels perfectly secure, and at rest, while Satan and his angels are exulting over their conquest. Just as long as Bro. Hull maintained a conflict, his mind was reined up, and there was a collision of spirits. He has now ceased the conflict, and the collision ceases. His mind is at rest, and Satan lets him have peace. Oh, how dangerous was the position in which he was shown me! His case is nearly hopeless, because he makes no effort to resist Satan, and extricate himself from his dreadful snare.

"Bro. Hull has been dealt with faithfully. He has felt himself too much restrained. He could not act out his nature; and yet, while the power of the truth, with all its force influenced him, he was comparatively safe. But break the force and power of truth upon the mind, and there is no restraint, no bounds. The natural propensities take the lead, and there is no end, no stopping-place. He has become tired of the conflict, and has for some length of time wished he could more freely act himself, and has felt hurt at the reproofs of his brethren. He was presented to me as standing upon an awful gulf, ready to leap. If he takes a leap, it will be final. His eternal destiny will be fixed. He is doing work, and making decisions for eternity. The work of God is not dependent upon Bro. Hull. If he leaves the ranks of those who bear the blood-stained banner of Prince Immanuel, and joins the company who bear the black banner, it will be his own loss, his own eternal destruction.

"I saw that those who wish, can have plenty of room to doubt the inspiration and truths of God's word. God compels none to believe. They can choose to rely upon the evidences he has been pleased to give, or doubt and perish. It is life or death with you, Bro. Hull. Already I saw a cloud of evil angels surrounding you, and you at perfect ease



among them. Satan has been telling you a pleasing story about an easier way than to be in constant warfare with conflicting spirits; but choose that way, and in the end you will find that you will have a heavy and fearful toll to pay.

"I saw that you have felt strong in yourself, that you had arguments which could not be gainsayed, and you have not relied upon the strength of the Lord. You have too often rushed upon Satan's ground to meet an opponent. You have not waited until you knew that the truth, or cause of God demanded a discussion; but you have engaged with opponents where with a little forethought you would have decided that the truth could not be advanced, or the cause of God benefited. Precious time has thus been spent.

"Satan has looked on and witnessed the heavy blow Bro. Hull has dealt to Spiritualism in Battle Creek. Spiritualists have understood his organization, and felt assured it would not be in vain to make a determined effort to overthrow him who injured their cause so much. In discussing with Spiritualists you have not merely to meet the man and his arguments, but Satan and his angels. And never should merely one man be sent forth alone to engage with a Spiritualist. If the cause of God really demands that Satan and his host be confronted through a spiritual medium, if enough is at stake to call for such a discussion, then one should never go forth alone, but several together, that with prayer and faith the host of darkness may be driven back, and the speaker shielded by angels that excel in strength.

"Bro. Hull, you was shown me under the soothing influence of a fascination which will prove fatal, unless the spell is broken. You have parleyed with Satan, and reasoned with him, and tarried upon forbidden ground, and have exercised your mind in things which were too great for you, and by indulging in doubts and unbelief, have attracted evil angels around you, and driven from you the holy and pure angels of God. If you had steadfastly resisted Satan's suggestions, and had sought strength from God with a determined effort, you would have broken every fetter, and driven back your spiritual foe, and come closer and nearer to God, and triumphed in his name. I saw that it was presumption in you to go forth to meet a Spiritualist when you were enshrouded in clouds of unbelief, and bewildered. You went to battle with Satan and his host without an armor, and have been grievously wounded, and are insensible to your wound. I fear, greatly fear, that the thunders and lightnings of Sinai would fail to move you. You are in Satan's easy chair, and do not see your fearful condition and make any effort. If you do not arouse, and recover yourself from the snare of the Devil, you must

perish. The brethren and sisters would save you, but I saw that they could not. You have something to do. You have a desperate effort to make, or you are lost. I saw that those who were under the bewitching influence of Spiritualism, know it not. You have been charmed, and mesmerized, and yet know it not, and do not make the least effort to come to the light.

"I saw that we are now in the shaking time. Satan is working with all his power to wrest souls from the hand of Christ, and cause them to trample under foot the Son of God. An angel repeated slowly and emphatically these words: 'Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy who has trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace?' Character is being developed. Angels of God are weighing moral worth. God is testing and proving his people. These words were presented to me by the angel: 'Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily while it is called today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.' God is displeased that any of his people who have known the power of his grace, should talk their doubts, and by thus doing make themselves a channel for Satan to transmit his suggestions to other minds. A seed of unbelief and evil sown, is not readily rooted up. Satan nourishes it every hour, and it grows strong and flourishes. A good seed sown, needs to be nourished, watered, and tenderly cared for; because every poisonous influence is thrown about it to hinder its growth, and cause it to die.

"Satan's efforts are more powerful now than ever before; for he knows that his time to deceive is short. Bro. Hull, I saw that you had injured yourself greatly by exposing your weakness, and telling your doubts to those who are Satan's agents. By soft words and fair speeches you have been deceived, and exposed yourself in a most reckless manner to the attacks of Satan. How could you do so? How could you wound yourself, and reproach God's word in the manner you have? You have recklessly rushed upon the Devil's battle ground, and it is no marvel that your mind is so stupid and unfeeling. Already has Satan through his agents poisoned the atmosphere you breathe; already have evil angels telegraphed to his agents upon earth in regard to the course to be pursued toward you. And this is one whom God has called to stand between the living and the dead; this is one of the watchmen upon the walls of Zion to tell the people

the time of night. A heavy responsibility rests upon you. If you go down, you will not go alone; for Satan will employ you as his agent to lead souls to death.

"I saw that angels of God were looking sorrowfully toward you. They had left your side, and were turning mournfully away, while Satan and his angels were grinning in exultation over you. If you had battled with your doubts yourself, and not encouraged the Devil to tempt you, by talking out your unbelief, and loving to dwell upon it, you would not have attracted the fallen angels about you in such numbers. But you chose to talk your darkness; you chose to dwell upon it; and the more you talk and dwell upon it, the darker and darker you grow. You are shutting out every ray of Heaven's light from you; and a great gulf is coming between you and those only that can help you. If you proceed in the way you have started, misery and woe are before you. God's hand will arrest you in a manner that will not suit you. His wrath will not slumber.

"But now he invites you. Now, just now, he calls upon you without delay to return unto him, and he will graciously pardon, and heal all your backslidings. God is leading out a people who are peculiar. He will purify them, he will cleanse them, and fit them for translation. Every carnal thing will be separated from God's peculiar treasure, until they stand out, each one like gold seven times purified.

"I saw that it was a cruel position for Brn. Waggoner and Frisbie to be in, serving the purposes of Satan by suffering their minds to run just as he would lead them in the channel of unbelief. Their greatest sin was in talking out these dark doubts and midnight unbelief, and drawing other minds into the dark channel their own minds were in.

"God's people will be sifted even as corn is sifted in a sieve, until all the chaff is separated from the pure kernels of grain. We are to look to Christ for an example, and imitate the humble pattern. You do not feel reconciled to the discipline you need, and do not exercise and practice that self-denial which Christ requires of those who are truly heirs of salvation. Those who are engaged in the work of saving souls, are co-workers with Christ. His was a work of disinterested benevolence; of constant, self-sacrifice. Those who have had so great a sacrifice made for them, that they might be made partakers of his heavenly grace, should in their turn sacrifice and deny self, to aid in the great work of bringing others to the knowledge of the truth. Self-interest should be laid aside. Selfish desires and self-comfort should not now stand in the way of God's work in saving souls. God's ministers are laboring in Christ's stead. They are his ambassadors.

They are not to study their ease, comfort, pleasure, desires, or convenience. They must suffer for Christ, be crucified with him, and rejoice that they can in every sense of the word, know the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ.

"I saw that ministers who labored in word and doctrine have a great work before them, and a heavy responsibility rests upon them. I saw that when they labor they do not come close enough to hearts. Their work is too general, and often too scattered. Their labor must be concentrated to the very ones they are laboring for. When they are preaching in the desk, their work is only commenced. They must then live out their preaching, ever guard themselves, that they bring not a reproach upon the cause of God. They should illustrate by example the life of Christ. 1 Corinthians 3:9. 'For we are laborers together with God.' 2 Corinthians 6:1. 'We then as workers together with him beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain.' The minister's work is not done when he leaves the desk. He should not then throw off the burden and occupy his mind with reading or writing, unless it is actually necessary; but should follow up his public labors by private efforts--laboring personally for souls whenever an opportunity presents--conversing around the fireside, beseeching and entreating souls in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God. Our work here is soon to close, 'and every man will receive his own reward according to his own labor.'

"I was shown the saints' reward, the immortal inheritance. Then I was shown how much God's people had endured for the truth's sake, and that they would count Heaven cheap enough. They reckoned that the sufferings of this present time were not worthy to be compared with the glory which should be revealed in them. And the people of God in these last days will be tried. Soon their last trial will come, and then they receive the gift of eternal life.

"You, Bro. Hull, have suffered reproach for the truth's sake. You have felt the power of the truth, and of an endless life. You have had God's Spirit witness with yours that you was owned and accepted of him. I saw if you resist the Devil and gird on your armor anew, and stand at your post, and fight manfully the battles of the Lord, you will be victorious, and you will soon lay off your armor and wear a victorious crown. Oh, is not the inheritance rich enough? Did it not cost a dear price, the agony and blood of the Son of God? I call upon you in the name of the Lord to awake. Rush from the awful deception Satan has thrown over you. Lay hold on everlasting life. Resist the Devil. Evil angels are around you, whispering in your ears, visiting you with lying dreams, and you

listen to them and are pleased. Oh, for the sake of Christ, for your own soul's sake, tear away from this dreadful influence before you grieve God's Spirit entirely from you.

Bro. Hull, "Sabbath, June 6, 1863, I was shown in regard to the work of God, and the spread of the truth. Preachers and people have too little faith, too little devotion and true godliness. The people imitate the preacher, and the preacher has a very great influence upon the people.

"Bro. Hull, God wants you to come nearer to him, where you can take hold of his strength, and by living faith claim his salvation, and be a strong man. If you were a devotional, godly man in the pulpit and out, a mighty influence would attend your preaching. You do not closely search your own heart. You have studied many works to make your discourses thorough, able, and pleasing. But the greatest and most necessary study you have neglected--the study of yourself. A thorough knowledge of yourself, meditation and prayer, have been neglected by you too much. They have come in as secondary things. Your success as a minister depends upon your keeping your own heart. You will receive more strength by spending one hour each day in meditation, and mourning over your failings and heart-corruptions, and pleading for God's pardoning love, and the assurance of sins forgiven, than you would by spending many hours and days in studying the most able authors, and making yourself acquainted with every objection to our faith, and the most powerful evidences in favor of our faith.

"Why our preachers do so little is because they do not walk with God. God is a day's journey from most of them. The closer you watch your own heart, the more watchful and guarded you will be, lest by your words or acts you dishonor the truth, and give occasion for the tongue of slander to follow you and the truth, and souls be lost through your neglect of self-examination, of heart-study, and of vital godliness. The deportment of the minister of Christ should be holy, and a rebuke to vain, frothy professors. The beams of truth and holiness shining from your serious, heavenly conversation, will convict and lead others to the truth, and will compel those around you to say, God is with these men, of a truth. It is the carelessness and looseness of professed ministers of Christ that give them so little influence.

"There are many professors, but few praying men. If our preachers were men who prayed more in secret, who carried their preaching into practice in their families, who ruled their houses with dignity and gravity, their light would indeed shine to others

around them.

"Bro. Hull, I have been shown if you would dedicate yourself to God, hold communion with him, meditate much, watch your failings, mourn and lament before the Lord in the deepest humility on account of them, relying upon him for strength, you would be in the most profitable business in which you ever were engaged; for you would be as though drinking at a living fountain, and then giving others to drink from that same fountain which revives and strengthens you.

"Dear brother, unless there is a change in your Christian character, you will fail of everlasting life; for our busy foe will lay his snares, and you not being nigh to God, will fall into the net he has prepared for you. You feel restless and uneasy, and study is your element; but you fail sometimes in the subject. When you should be studying yourself, your own heart, you are engaged in reading books. When you should by faith be drawing yourself to Christ, you are studying books; and I saw all your study will be of no use to you unless you study faithfully yourself. You are not acquainted with yourself. Your mind dwells but little upon God. Self-confident, you pass along without knowing that self must die if you would be a successful minister of Christ. You lack sobriety and gravity out of the pulpit. These things counteract your pulpit labor.

"Ever since your case was first presented to me in vision, I have seen a lack in you. Your mind was not elevated. You would stand in the desk, and handle the most holy, sacred, elevating truths in an able manner, but when treating upon the most solemn subjects, you often mix in something comical, to create a smile, which has often destroyed the force of your whole discourse. You handle solemn truths with ease, but do not live them. You do not carry them out, and that is the reason the heavenly endorsement is lacking. Many whose ears you have pleased, will talk of the smart discourse, the able preacher, but are no more impressed with the necessity of obeying the truth, than before they listened to it. They go on just the same, transgressing God's law as before. It was the minister that pleased them, not the truths that he uttered. You remain at such a distance from God that his power does not set home the truth. You must live religion in your family, which will have an influence to elevate your family, to elevate your wife. When at home you throw off restraint and act like a boy, and the weight of the truth, and the burden of the work, do not rest upon you. You are not choice of your words, or of your example.

"Your only safety is in studying yourself, your weakness and failings. Do not cease to guard yourself. Watch yourself at home more closely. Watch yourself when away from home. You neglect your closet duties, and lay off your armor, give up to a spirit of recklessness that drives angels from your family, and from you. Do not neglect to search your own heart at home. Lavish not all your affections upon your family. Preserve your heart's best affections to devote to Jesus, who has redeemed you by his blood. When at home, be fitting up all the time for your Master's business when you shall be away from home. If you do this, you will have the armor on every moment. Your soul's highest desire will be to glorify God, to do his will upon earth, and you will have sweet confidence and trust in him. You will not feel so restless, but will have a constant theme for meditation, devotion, and holiness. I was referred to 1 Corinthians 9:27, 'But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.' Here is a work for you, to understand yourself, and not be flattered with any remarks which unwise and foolish brethren may make of your efforts. They may praise your preaching, but let it not elate you. If God's blessing attends your labors, fruits will be seen. Your preaching will not merely please, but will gather in souls.

"Bro. Hull, you must be guarded on every side. I saw that whatever divides the affections, or takes away from the heart the supreme love of God, or prevents unlimited confidence and entire trust in him, assumes the character, and takes the form, of an idol in our hearts. I was pointed to the first great commandment: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.' There is no separation allowed here in our affections from God. Nothing is here allowed to divide our supreme love or delight in him. Your will, wishes, plans, desires, and pleasures, must all be in subjection. You have something to learn, to exalt the Lord God in your heart, in your conversation, in all your acts; and then Jesus can teach you, and help you, as you cast your net on the right side of the ship, to bring it to shore full of fishes. Without the help of Christ in casting your net, you may toil weeks, months, and years, without seeing much fruit of your labor.

"I saw that you would be tempted that your brethren want to gauge you. You will feel that they put too much restraint upon you. Your brethren only want to gauge you to live according to God's word, to carry out the instructions there given, and God wishes to bring you there, and angels are watching you with the deepest solicitude, knowing that you must come there and conform your life to the word of God, that you may be

blessed and strengthened of God, or you will fall out by the way. While you preach to others, you yourself will be a castaway. You may be an overcomer, you may win eternal life. You are recovering yourself from the snare of the Devil.

"But other snares the enemy is preparing for you. God will help and strengthen you, if you seek him earnestly. But study yourself. Try every motive. Let not your aim be in your discourses to preach smart, to exhibit Moses Hull; but let it be to exhibit Christ. Simplify the truth to your hearers, that small minds may comprehend it. Make your discourses plain, pointed, and solemn. Bring the people to a decision. Make them feel the vital force of truth. If any speak one word of flattery to you, rebuke them sharply. Tell them Satan has troubled you with that for some time, and they need not help the Devil in his work.

"When among the sisters, be reserved. No matter if they think you lack courtesy. If a married or unmarried sister shows any familiarity, repulse them. Be abrupt and decided, that they may ever understand that you give no countenance to such weakness. When before the young, and at all times, be grave, be solemn. I saw that if Bro. Loughborough and yourself make God your strength, a work will be accomplished by you for his poor people, for two can be a host. Come close to each other, pray together and separately, be free with each other. Bro. Hull should confide in Bro. Loughborough's judgment, and listen to his counsel and advice.



February 20, 1866

## **Our Late Experience**

It is due our friends who have manifested a true interest in our welfare, that we give them a statement of our experience during our present affliction. The 16th of August last, the affliction came upon my husband which has made him a sufferer until the present time. I am aware that some of his professed friends who have been watching us with a jealous eye, have secretly rejoiced in his affliction, and like Job's comforters, charge him with being afflicted because of his sins. But I leave all these professed friends with the Lord. My husband's affliction in the wise providence of God will accomplish the purpose that he designs--will test the sincerity of friends, will reveal the jealous and fault-finding, and those who love to accuse, and who would exult could they discover a supposed wrong in Bro. White.

My husband has never professed to be anything more than a mortal man, subject to errors and infirmities; yet his whole soul and interest have been in the work of God. His happiness has been interwoven with the success of the truth. As the cause of God has prospered, he has rejoiced. When the cause suffered on account of rebellion, he has been afflicted, and his soul has been bowed down with heaviness. He is now a sufferer because of transgression against the laws of his being. His sin has not been in unjust deal with others, nor in neglect of the wants of those who have needed sympathy and aid, nor in disregarding the widow and fatherless in their affliction. Neither has he sinned in lifting up himself above his brethren, and despising their counsel and advice. He has sinned against himself and against God in overtaking the energies of his system, which were renewed and invigorated in answer to our earnest, unceasing prayers ten years ago, when consumption had brought him to the brink of the grave. Prolonged, unceasing labor, without rest or recreation, has told upon his physical and mental energies.

For twenty years he has labored constantly in this work, rejoicing in the prosperity of the cause, and bowed down with intense anguish when it has suffered and been made to bleed by its professed friends turning traitors, and tearing down that which they once built up. Very many times when no visible sign might have been given to others, has his heart ached with a terrible energy that God alone could understand.

For years my husband has suffered with occasional numbness of limbs. He has especially been thus afflicted when he has had a weight of distress upon his spirits, and his cautiousness has caused him to feel an overwhelming sense of responsibility in regard to the salvation of souls, and the prosperity of the cause, as he has seen the unrighteous course of some who professed the truth. He has many times awaked in the night with numbness of the limbs, and has been obliged to rub them with energy to bring them again to their right feeling. He has frequently suffered with severe pain in his limbs, especially after long speaking, which made it impossible for him to sleep. He has occasionally sprung from the bed when partially asleep, and rushed to the window to obtain air before he could breathe. His heart seemed to him to stop its beating. He has also suffered with pain in his back and left side. It has been for years very tedious to him to sit for a great length of time in the same position, or ride all day in a carriage. After returning from the Office at night, it has been very wearisome, and often painful, to remain long in a sitting posture. He has found the greatest relief in lying down upon the sofa, or lounge. Notwithstanding he suffered almost constantly with pain in a greater or less degree in some portions of his body, yet he labored on, doing more work than one or two well men should have done.

Last Spring we received a most pressing invitation from Bro. Ingraham to come to Wisconsin. He entreated us if we ever responded to an urgent call for help, to respond to his request, for help he must have. We knew that Bro. Ingraham needed help and encouragement. We knew that we needed rest of body and mind. We had deprived ourselves almost entirely of social and domestic enjoyment, in order to complete our writing, and had looked forward to at least a short period of rest, at the close of the General Conference. At the close of that Conference we found ourselves excessively exhausted in physical and mental strength; yet duty seemed to urge us West, and we dared not remain at home. We had not in years past consulted our own ease and pleasure, and God had sustained us. Would he not sustain us now? We thought it the safest course to venture. We summoned all the energy we could, and started on our journey.

We attended meetings in Wisconsin, and went to the farthest extent of our strength. Our diet was not such as would nourish the strength. We could obtain but little fruit. I could not relish the food. My stomach was constantly weak and swollen, and the jar of riding in a carriage caused such pain in the region of that organ, as was almost

insufferable. After our first meeting, we were compelled to tarry a few days at Bro. Loudon's, in Janesville, to rest. There we could obtain fruit at the market, and we lived on bread and fruit. We felt refreshed, after a little rest, to continue our journey to Hundred Mile Grove. The cars took us to Madison, and there we found a brother from Lodi waiting the arrival of the train in expectation of meeting only Eld. Loughborough. He had come prepared to take him to Lodi, twenty miles distant. He was not expecting my husband and myself. His conveyance was therefore not easy or comfortable for us all. The roads were bad. It seemed to us that we should be compelled through weariness and pain to stop, or obtain a more comfortable conveyance. But I felt determined to endure it. We remembered past days, when we had let nothing stand in the way of duty, and had journeyed when weak and suffering, enduring fatigue, cold, and hunger, and had never yet been turned from our purpose, but pressed through every difficulty, and God has sustained us. Our lives had been preserved, and we would trust in him still. If we should hire a more easy conveyance, some weak brother or sister might take advantage of it, and say Bro. and sister White had become so exalted they could not ride in a humble wagon. My sufferings increased, until we were obliged to stop and beg some straw from a stack, with which my husband filled the body of the wagon. Upon this I sat down, a place having been made for my feet, and rode until the journey was completed, which was at 1 o'clock the next morning. We were seven hours riding twenty miles. The Lord strengthened us to continue our journey to Hundred Mile Grove, the next day, and to bear testimony in the meetings held in that place.

We felt it to be our duty to visit Iowa before returning to Michigan. We had no knowledge of the rebellion of Elders Snook and Brinkerhoff, but we felt that there was a work for us to do in that State. On our way to Pilot Grove, Iowa, we first heard of the rebellion, which was only a few hours before we met its leaders face to face in the meeting-house. We labored with intense feeling to save the poor sheep who had been wounded and torn, and left bleeding by these unfaithful shepherds. Our efforts were crowned with success. While engaged in labor to meet opposition, falsehood, and insult, low prejudice, and jealousy, we had thought but little of our health. The blessed results that followed our labors, cheered us amid the gloom which we felt as we beheld what results these two shepherds had accomplished in their dreadful work of tearing to pieces the flock of God.

Our overtaxing labors in Iowa told upon the strength of my husband. His labors in meeting this rebellion were of such a nature as to arouse his zeal, and lead him beyond

what a prudent consideration for his health would have allowed. But if he could, after his return home, have had a period of entire rest, and, entire freedom from anxiety and care, he would have recovered from the effects of that journey. But the work that these false ministers had been doing for months in preparing for a determined rebellion, in gathering testimonies of falsehood from rebels and traitors, such as Moses Hull, Ransom Hicks, and many others of like stamp--some of whom had figured largely in the so-called "Messenger of Truth," made it necessary for us to write again, to save the honest from being deceived, when we had anticipated a little period of rest. This extra labor was too much for us, when we were already worn with intense mental excitement from the rebellion in Iowa.

When the time came to attend our appointment in Memphis, we needed rest of body and mind. A constant strain had been upon us for months. Our nights were spent in broken sleep, because of bodily infirmities. Yet we urged up our exhausted energies, arose at midnight, walked about a mile to the depot, and stepped on board the train which was to take us to Detroit. We were obliged to wait at Ridgeway about two hours for the arrival of a train from the east, before the stage would leave for Memphis. My husband laid down upon a bench in the depot, and slept about fifteen minutes, which relieved his weariness in a measure. We rode about seven miles, to Bro. Gurney's, and obtained some rest and sleep, to prepare us to attend the evening appointment. The meetings in Memphis were those of labor. My husband here performed the amount of labor which was sufficient for two men who possessed a good degree of strength. His vital energies were exceedingly depressed, yet his zeal in the cause of God urged him on presumptuously to exhaust, by over labor, the little strength that remained. Our meetings closed on Sunday evening, after 11 o'clock. We retired after midnight, and arose at daybreak to take the stage for the cars. The cars missed connection, and we did not arrive at our home till past midnight.

My husband slept but little, and would not be prevailed upon to rest the next day. He thought his business required his presence at the Office. Night found him exhausted. His sleep was broken and unrefreshing, yet we rose in the morning at 5 o'clock to take our usual walk before breakfast. We stepped into Bro. Lunt's garden, and while my husband attempted to open an ear of corn I heard a strange noise, and looking up saw his face flushed, and his right arm hanging helpless at his side. His attempt to raise his right arm was ineffectual--the muscles refused to obey the will.

I helped him into the house, but he could not speak to me until in the house he indistinctly uttered, "Pray, pray." We dropped upon our knees and cried to God who had ever been to us a present help in time of trouble. He soon uttered words of praise and gratitude to God, that he could use his arm. His hand was partially restored, but not fully. We sent for an electric battery, but none of us had experience sufficient to apply electricity in this critical case. A proposition was made to have the owner of the battery called to apply it. The physician came and applied the battery. We were trying to exercise faith in God. We called in a few who had faith, and our earnest petitions ascended to Heaven for help from above. The rich blessing of Heaven came frequently upon us all. Still there seemed to be a draw-back to our faith--the physician applying the battery. We prayerfully considered the matter, and when he next came, told him we should no longer need his services. After this we felt no hindrance to our faith. My husband and myself felt the need of our drawing near to God. And as we by confessions and prayer drew near to God, we had the blessed assurance that he drew near to us. How unspeakably precious was the sense of God's boundless mercy toward us, his afflicted children! The stroke that had fallen upon my husband might have been final, or left him with one-half of his body palsied and dead. We wept for joy, that amid our affliction the care of God was toward us. The mighty Maker of the world--the omnipotent Ruler of the universe, was our Father! Precious, exceedingly precious, were these seasons of communion with God! Much of the time my husband was happy in the Lord. Day and night the praise of God was upon his lips, and the sick room was truly a heavenly place.

The first five weeks of our affliction we spent at our own home. For wise purposes our heavenly Father did not see fit to raise my husband to immediate health in answer to our earnest prayers, although he seemed preciously near to comfort and sustain us by his Holy Spirit.

We had confidence in the use of water as one of God's appointed remedies, but no confidence in drugs. My vital energies were too much exhausted for me to attempt to use water in my husband's case. His wearing labors had long been bringing about the result, and could we expect God to work a miracle to heal him without our using the means or agencies he had provided for us? As there was no one in Battle Creek who dared take the responsibility of administering water in my husband's case, we felt that it might be duty to take him to Dansville, N. Y., where he could rest, and water be applied by those well skilled in its use. We dared not to follow our own judgment. We asked counsel of God, and after a prayerful consideration of the matter decided to go. My

husband endured the journey well--much better than we had feared.

We remained in Dansville about three months. We obtained rooms a short distance from the institution. Our accommodations were by no means pleasant. Our room was small, and the sun visited it but a few minutes in the morning. Yet we did not feel this as we should, had we been confined to it. We were both able to walk out and be in the open air much of the time; and every day, except Sabbath and first-day, we took treatment, which did not leave us much time to be in our room.

Some may have thought that we had given up our faith that God would raise my husband to health in answer to prayer, when we went to Dansville, and placed ourselves under the care of physicians there. But not so. While we did not feel like despising the means God had placed in our reach for the recovery of health, we felt that God was above all, and he who had provided water as his agent, would have us use it to assist abused Nature to recover her exhausted energies. We believed that God would bless the efforts we were making in the direction of health. We did not doubt that God could work a miracle, and in a moment, restore to health and vigor. But should he do this, would we not be in danger of again transgressing--abusing our strength by prolonged, intemperate labor, and bring upon ourselves even a worse condition of things?

If we violate the laws of our being we must pay the penalty. Suffering, more or less, will follow every violation of Nature's laws. But when we repent of our transgressions, and commence earnestly the work of reform; when we do all that we can to redeem our errors, by placing ourselves in the best possible condition to regain the strength that we in our zeal lost; then we are in just that position where we can exercise faith in God, and ask him to do that for us which we cannot do for ourselves. We may rely upon God's promises, and believe that his power will repair even Nature's broken-down machinery, and we be placed where we can labor again in the cause of God more understandingly, wisely preserving the strength God has given us instead of crippling it by excessive labor.

"Our Home" at Dansville was the only place I could think of where we could go and be free from business and care. Were we to go among those of our faith anywhere, they would not be prepared to realize our worn out condition, especially the condition of my husband. We have so long borne the burden of the work which has compelled us to act with that determination of character, which has known nothing of turning aside,

giving back and yielding to circumstances, that our brethren and sisters would be unprepared to understand that we must be free from every anxiety, and that they must not trouble us with questions requiring thought, nor introduce to us matters which would in the least excite or depress the mind. We chose to go to Dansville, and be, as it were, isolated from our brethren, and lost in a certain sense to the work and cause of God, and to feel no responsibility resting upon us of the cause in which we had unitedly labored with all our energies for twenty years.

We were unable to attend Dr. Jackson's morning lectures but a few times for the following reasons: The first and greatest reason was, the heated atmosphere of the hall had a painful and benumbing influence upon the brain of my husband. When he dwelt upon the subject of Health, we were too deeply interested for the good of our wearied minds, for our minds would begin to travel, comparing Dr. J.'s philosophy with facts established in our minds, which had been received from higher and unerring authority. The mind would become excited and weary. Especially was this the case with my husband. And again, when Dr. Jackson and other physicians advanced and sought to sustain ideas that we could not receive from our religious standpoint, especially in regard to amusements and pleasure, dancing, card-playing, theater going, etc., we could not see harmony between his religious teachings, and the teachings of Christ recorded in the New Testament.

We had nothing to do with religious controversy, nor with advancing our views, nor in getting together those of our faith and having meetings. We went to Dansville for rest of body and mind. And although we expected to hear and see that which we could not receive and unite in, yet these things, notwithstanding our efforts to the contrary, would excite the mind more or less; and in the long wakeful nights we were comparing the life of Christ, and his teachings in regard to what constitutes a Christian, with the teachings on this point set forth at that institution, and we could not harmonize them.

As we have taken an active part in the Health Reform, and have twice been at Dansville, once as visitors, and once as patients, and have spoken in high terms of the skill of their physicians in curing disease by the application of water, and other hygienic remedies, many have supposed that we approbated and received all that was taught by the leaders of that institution. The questions have frequently been asked us, not only by our people, but by leading men of other denominations, "Do you sanction the card-playing, dancing, and attending theaters? I understand they profess to be religious, and

that they mix all these amusements with their religion." It has been necessary for us to speak plainly and say that we have had no part nor lot in these matters, and we do not approve of such amusements being recommended by Christian men and women as innocent. I heard more than one mother at Dansville remark that she had extolled the physicians at Dansville to her children, yet would not have her sons hear them recommend these amusements for anything; for she had instructed her children that the influence of these amusements was evil; that she had known them to be thus in her observant experience, and had not seen in them redeeming features that would lead her to change her opinion in regard to their pernicious influence, especially on the young. I have been asked, "Could you with safety send your youthful children, away from your influence, to that institution to learn the correct manner of living, and to regain lost health?" I was compelled to say that I could not, unless they were children who had marked independence of mind, and firm religious principles. This alone proves a safeguard against those who would attempt to gloss over these amusements by calling them harmless, and needful for health, and try to persuade them to join in the dance, the card-playing, and theater-going.

God has committed to my care children, not to train for worldly amusement, but for Heaven; and it is my duty to place them in the best possible conditions to understand their duty to God, and to become heirs of immortality. It is impossible for me to be guiltless if I place them in the way of temptation, where there is danger of their being thrown into every class of society, and being corrupted by surrounding influences. There is enough frivolity existing all around us, having a tendency to discourage serious impressions, and to put God out of the mind. Thousands of youth have bid fair to be an honor to their parents, and useful members in society, who have in an evil hour yielded to the Tempter who came in the form of a professed friend, and for the first time broke over the barrier to their conscience and attended the theater, to see and hear the performance of some celebrated actor. Everything fascinates them--their imagination is lively--their senses, their hearts, are carried away captive--they are intoxicated with excitement. They leave the theater; but their imagination continues to dwell upon the scenes they have witnessed, and they are anxious to go again, and again. They acquire a passion to witness theatrical performances. At times they may be convicted that card-playing and attending theaters are not having a beneficial influence upon their health and morals; yet they do not possess sufficient fortitude and independence to tear away from these exciting pleasures. They may strengthen themselves with the thought that physicians have not only attended theaters themselves, but have recommended others to



do so, and these physicians were Christians. They thus stifle conscience with the example of worldly, pleasure-loving, professed Christians. They have learned to play cards, considering it an innocent amusement. In attending the theater they place themselves in the most dangerous company, and are exposed to the deceptive, fascinating charms of the gambler, the sensualist, and that class of females "whose steps take hold on hell." They yield to temptation, and continue their downward course until their consciences become seared, and they will not hesitate to degrade themselves by any vice.

Christians are those who follow Christ. "Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean, and I will receive you." Tenderness of conscience in regard to these amusements should never be called precision and narrowness of mind. How can Christians call that innocent which is a snare to the soul, which has led thousands in the road to certain ruin? I cannot believe a true follower of Christ will touch a card for amusement, nor read novels, nor attend balls and theaters. If they have learned of Him who is meek and lowly of heart, they will have disrelish for former pleasures and amusements. There will be possessed by the devoted Christian, a living principle in the soul, influencing the mind, employing the affections, and guiding the will, which will give force to the whole character. Their efforts will be to lead souls away from sinful pleasures to the path of holiness, by the bright reflection of their exemplary, blameless lives.

I shall ever remember with gratitude, the kind attention and respect we received, not only from physicians at "Our Home," but also from the helpers. The attendants in the bath-rooms, and waiters at the table were as attentive to our wants as we could wish. They seemed desirous to make our stay with them as pleasant and happy as it was in their power to do.

February 27, 1866

### **Our Late Experience**

When we left Battle Creek for Dansville we did not feel that in order to regain health we must leave our religion behind. We felt that if ever we needed the consolations of faith and hope, it was in our time of severe affliction. Three times a day we had special seasons of prayer for the Lord to restore my husband to health, and for his special grace to sustain us in our affliction. These seasons of prayer were very precious to us. Our hearts were often filled with unspeakable gratitude that it was our privilege to call God our Father; that amid our affliction we had a heavenly Father in whom we could trust without fear, who was acquainted with all our distresses; one who had invited us in helplessness and affliction to lean upon his strong arm for strength and support.

My husband could obtain but little rest or sleep nights. He suffered with the most extreme nervousness. I could not sew or knit in his room, or converse but very little, as he was easily agitated, and his brain confused almost beyond endurance. He required almost constant care, and the Lord gave me strength according to my need. I was wonderfully sustained. Many nights when my husband was suffering with pain, unable to rest or sleep, have I left my bed at midnight and bowed before God and earnestly prayed for him to grant us this token of his love and care--that my husband might realize the soothing influence of his Holy Spirit, and find rest in sleep. For ten nights in succession, when it was impossible for him to rest or sleep, we had the evidence that God heard us pray, and my husband would drop into a quiet sleep. We frequently felt such a refreshing from the presence of God, that although it was in the still hours of the night, our Saviour seemed so precious that we praised God aloud without fear or restraint. And as we awoke refreshed in the morning, our first moments of wakefulness were generally spent in praise and thankfulness to God for the blessing of rest and sleep.

My husband was of good courage nearly all the time he was at Dansville, although he was a sufferer. During the last few weeks that we were there, we had better rooms, in a much more pleasant house, than we had previously occupied. Our rooms were now upon the first floor, which made quite a difference in my labor, as heretofore I had been obliged to ascend a flight of stairs.

We could truly say that our affliction had been a blessing to us, for we had time to examine our hearts, and carefully review our past lives, which was profitable for us. Our whole souls were drawn out after God--for an entire conformity to his will. I obtained but little rest or sleep nights. I was nurse and attendant to my husband, and the responsibility of his case seemed to rest principally upon me. He was fast losing flesh and strength. As dyspepsia pressed heavily upon him, he would cease to eat things which gave evidence of disturbing his stomach, till he was brought in his diet to simple Graham mush, and unleavened cakes without salt, milk, or sugar.

November 26, at our season of prayer in the morning, we were led out to pray fervently that God would especially bless my husband, and give him a large measure of his Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God rested upon us, and we were especially revived and strengthened in the Lord, and we united our voices in praise to God. As my husband was unable to walk up the hill to take his meals in the institution, Eld. Loughborough kindly performed the office of waiter, and brought our meals to us in a basket. My birthday dinner consisted of Graham mush, hard Graham crackers, applesauce, sugar, and a cup of milk. And the 26th of November was a cheerful, happy day for me. I felt the peace of God abiding upon me, and that night spent much of the time in prayer to God for my husband. November 27, Eld. Loughborough came into our room and united with us in family prayer. We all had an unusual spirit of prayer. Heaven seemed very near. We felt the sanctifying influence of the Spirit of God; not a cloud intervened between us and our Saviour, and unspeakable gratitude filled our hearts, and we could not hold our peace. We shouted the high praise of God for his rich and precious blessing which was by us more highly prized than any earthly treasure. How rich, how exceedingly precious, seemed the promises of God! We could thank him for affliction. For more than one hour we could only rejoice and triumph in God. Especially did my afflicted husband share largely in this shower of grace. His countenance, though emaciated by disease, was radiant with a holy light as he praised God with a loud voice. Angels of God seemed to be all around us. I thought that the time had come and when my husband, in the strength of God would rise above disease and triumph in his saving power. The influence of this heavenly refreshing seemed to abide with us many days. But we had to learn that the time for our deliverance had not yet come; but that this great blessing was to prepare us for still greater trials.

December 4th, my husband passed a restless, suffering night. I prayed by his

bedside as usual, but the Lord was not pleased to answer our prayers. He was troubled in mind. He thought that he might go down into the grave. He stated that death had no terrors to him.

The reform my husband had made in his diet, previous to his sickness, had a very beneficial influence upon his health. His head was generally free from pain and never felt clearer. By eating no meat, but grains, fruits and vegetables, simply cooked, his appetite was good, and he partook of his food with a keen relish. His brain felt so clear that he thought it safe for him to labor on, trusting much to the beneficial influence of his simple diet; and in addition to the labors and burdens he had hitherto borne, he added the Health Reform--making extra efforts to teach Sabbath-keeping Adventists how to live to preserve health and enjoy the blessing of God.

December 4th, before referred to, I felt intensely. I did not believe for a moment that my husband would die. But how was he to be inspired with faith to feel and say, "I shall not die, but live to declare the works of the Lord?" That night was the most distressing I had experienced during his illness. I did not sleep, but pondered the matter in my mind in regard to our future course. Previous to this night, I had not thought of leaving Dansville. I saw that the courage, hope, and buoyancy of spirits which had sustained my husband were failing. I had been remarkably sustained to endure anxiety, and the care of him during his sickness. He was considerate of my health and strength. Yet his case required constant care. I knew that no one at Dansville could take my place; and I had so long had the burden and care of his case that I could not leave for others to do that which I had considered not only a duty but a privilege to do for my afflicted husband. I did not consider this a task--it was to me a privilege. I have been nearly all my life an invalid, and tenderly, and patiently has he sympathized with and watched over, and taken care of me when I was suffering, and now my turn had come to repay in a small measure the attention and kind offices I had received. And again, I felt such a degree of the peace of God, and the consolations of his Spirit in the happy performance of my duty that I can say from the heart that I would not exchange the blessings and valuable experience I have obtained during the last six months, for those of the same length of time in any former period of my life.

I feared that I could not long endure being deprived of sleep so much, nights, and the additional tax upon my strength of taking treatment; and if I failed, where would my husband drop? Who would care for him as I had done?

Our accommodations were as good as we could expect, and we were very grateful that they were as pleasant and comfortable. But our rooms were small and inconvenient for our family, and with a cold winter before us, I could not see how we could be made comfortable and happy. My husband was losing flesh and strength every day. I thought of our large and convenient house at Battle Creek, with its high and airy rooms, and asked myself the question, Would we not make more rapid progress toward health were we at our own home? I thought of the large reservoir of hot water upon our stove--ready for use at any time, and our immense cistern of soft water, and our filter in the cellar, our various bathing pans, and bath room fitted up with a stove. But all these convenient things had but little weight in my mind compared with my anxiety to get my husband, while I could, among his tried brethren who knew him, and who had been benefited by his labors, and were acquainted with the perseverance and zeal with which he had toiled to do the work of God, that he might be found at his post. His faithful brethren could sympathize with, and help him by their prayers and faith. I prayed God to guide me, and not suffer me to take one wrong step; but to give me wisdom to choose the right course. The more earnestly I prayed, the stronger was the conviction fastened upon my mind that I must take my husband among his brethren, even if we should again return to Dansville. But my course seemed plain to take him to Rochester, and try the effect of the journey, and if this proved beneficial, to go still further, even to Battle Creek, after a short stay at Rochester. I said not a word to my husband of the exercise of my mind. He had not even thought he could leave Dansville in his reduced state.

In the morning Dr. Lay called, and I told him that unless there should be a decided improvement in the case of my husband in two or three weeks, at most, I should take him home. He answered, "You cannot take him home, he is not able to endure such a journey." I answered, I shall go; I shall take my husband by faith, relying upon God, and shall make Rochester my first point, tarry there a few days, and then go on to Detroit, and if necessary, tarry there a few days to rest, and then to Jackson and rest there a short time, and then go on to Battle Creek. This was the first intimation my husband had of my intentions. He said not a word.

The same day I saw Dr. Jackson at his home and he kindly granted me an interview. I stated the case to him, and told him I had thoughts of taking my husband home. He advised me to take him to a nearer point than Battle Creek, and try the experiment of journeying; and if it worked favorably it might be the best thing I could

do; but advised me to return if he got better, and continue the use of water. I mentioned to Dr. Jackson that an invitation had been sent me from our friends in Rochester to attend their Monthly Meeting to be held the next Sabbath, and if my husband was able, to have him come also; and that they further stated that they did not make this request for us to labor or have any burden of the meeting, but they were very desirous to see us among them, and thought we might gain courage, and the journey and the change might be beneficial to our health. Dr. Jackson gave consent, and expressed his opinion that we might have a few days of pleasant weather, and it would be well to improve it. He thought it would do us good.

Should we attend the Monthly Meeting at Rochester, we must leave Dansville the next Monday. I made known our intention to Eld. Loughborough, who was surprised at this sudden move; but as he considered the matter it all looked right to him. My husband soon began to manifest anxiety to go to Rochester. That evening we packed our trunks and before 9 o'clock were all ready for an early start the next morning. My husband slept none that night. In the morning it looked rather discouraging in regard to taking out a sick man. We had a drizzling rain storm. But we choose rather to risk the consequences of going than staying after we had made the decision to go. We took hastily an early breakfast, and between 7 and 8 o'clock were on our way to Wayland, a distance of seven miles, in an open carriage. We traveled on, trusting in God as our helper.

My husband endured the journey well to Wayland, and there lay down in the depot and rested until the cars came which were to take us to Rochester. He had been unable to have the temperature of his room above 60 degrees. Heat had a powerful influence upon his brain. He dreaded riding on the cars very much, because of their heated atmosphere. But the way seemed providentially prepared for us. As the train came along we saw a sleeping-car attached, and we begged the privilege of taking our seats in it, which was granted. Here we found as good conveniences as we could ask for. My husband rode comfortably to Rochester, where Bro. Orton with his easy, convenient hack, was waiting at the depot, the arrival of the train. He took us to the house of his son-in-law, Bro. J. B. Lamson, about three miles distant.

All who are acquainted with my husband know that his cautiousness, conscientiousness, and benevolence, have been large and active, and ruling traits in his character, and have been special blessings in qualifying him for his business career in

connection with the work and advancement of the cause of present truth. But in the debilitated and excitable state of his nervous system during his illness, these special developments, which had been a blessing to him in health, were painfully excitable, and a hindrance to his recovery.

During the three weeks that we were in Rochester, much of the time was spent in prayer. My husband proposed sending to Maine for Eld. J. N. Andrews--to Olcott for Bro. and Sr. Lindsay, and to Roosevelt, requesting those who had faith in God, and felt it their duty, to come and pray for him. These friends came in answer to his call, and for ten days we had special and earnest seasons of prayer. All who engaged in these seasons of prayer were greatly blessed. They not only felt a burden of prayer for my husband, but in their own behalf. With brokenness of spirit, with their faces bathed in tears would these servants of God entreat that a deep work of grace might be wrought in their own hearts. Shouts of victory, and praise to God ascended to Heaven for his tokens of love and acceptance. I never enjoyed greater freedom in prayer. We had the assurance that our petitions were heard. We were often so refreshed with heavenly showers of grace that we could say, "My cup runneth over." We could weep and praise God for his rich salvation.

My husband was often especially blessed as he ventured to believe God and trust in his power to save. At times he seemed free and happy, but with dyspepsia pressing upon him he seemed unable to retain hopeful feelings, and in faith to calmly trust in God at all times, claiming his precious promises as his. Those who came from Roosevelt were obliged soon to return to their homes. Bro. Andrews, and Bro. and sister Lindsay, still remained. We continued our earnest supplications to Heaven. It seemed to be a struggle with the powers of darkness. Sometimes the trembling faith of my husband would grasp the promises of God, and sweet and precious was the victory then enjoyed. Then again his mind seemed depressed, and to be too weak to hold the victory he had gained.

Every season of prayer increased in interest, and every one who took part in them felt repaid for their efforts in drawing near to God, and praying for my husband, by the work which they felt was wrought for their own souls. Bro. Andrews especially felt the burden of the case, and labored earnestly in faith, while the power of the Holy Spirit seemed to indite prayer. Every member of our family consecrated themselves anew to God. Our dear children united with us in this work of consecration, which was well wet

down with tears. Bro. and sister Lindsay were refreshed and strengthened by the blessing of Heaven. Bro. and sister Orton's, and Bro. and sister Lamson's hearts were more firmly united with ours; and we all shared in a work of grace that was being wrought for us. I felt the assurance that we should come forth from the furnace of affliction purified.

Once at the house of Bro. Andrews, while engaged in a season of prayer I felt like presenting my case to the Lord, entreating him to give me health of body, and strength of mind. All present seemed to make my case a special subject of prayer. I felt a sweet, heavenly settling into God. A heavenly atmosphere pervaded the room. Since that time I have not been troubled with tenderness of the stomach; and my food has not hurt me.

Christmas evening as we were humbling ourselves before God, and earnestly pleading for deliverance, the light of Heaven seemed to shine upon us, and I was wrapt in a vision of God's glory. It seemed that I was borne quickly from earth to Heaven, where all was health, beauty, and glory. Strains of music fell upon my ear, melodious, perfect, and enchanting. I was permitted to enjoy this scene a while before my attention was called to this dark world. Then my attention was called to things transpiring here upon this earth, which I shall not attempt to relate here, but may give them at some future time. I had an encouraging view of the case of my husband, the particulars of which will be presented hereafter.

My husband then proposed our returning to Battle Creek the next week on Monday, New Year's evening. He had been unable to sit up long at a time. At times the journey looked large to him, and his fears would sometimes arise that he might be too weak to accomplish such a journey. But I felt the evidence that the Lord would go with us on our journey, and bring us safely to our home again.

New Year's morning was not as pleasant as we wished to see. The appearance of the clouds indicated a storm, and we could not forget the heavy snow storm just two years previous. Circumstances did not seem to favor our starting for Battle Creek. But my mind seemed fixed that we must go; so we were to take the cars that night about 10 o'clock. We took our seats in the carriage to convey us to the depot, believing that we were moving in the path of duty. Bro. Andrews kindly offered to accompany us to Battle Creek if it would relieve me of a burden; but I told him that I wished to go, trusting alone in God to sustain us. Several brethren and sisters accompanied us to the



cars, and remained with us till we started.

We felt that angels of God were all around us. We went comfortably and safely to the Falls where we changed for a sleeping-car. My husband did not sleep, but he felt cheerful and happy. All appearance of a storm disappeared soon after we had taken our seats in the cars, and we had pleasant weather through the entire journey. I felt too much responsibility to sleep much. The words

"Gentle angels round me glide, Hopes of glory round me bide," were in my mind much of the time during the night. My husband arose in the morning feeling better than usual. He was cheerful, and of good courage. We prepared for him his simple breakfast of mush and gems, which we warmed on the stove. We could not make it very palatable to him; he ate but very little.

We were prospered on our journey--made connections all right, and came on most comfortably. My husband enjoyed the journey, for he realized that the sustaining hand of God was beneath him. On the arrival of the train at Battle Creek, we met several of our faithful brethren who received us gladly. As we entered our own home again, we met several faithful sisters who had labored all day, heating the rooms, airing bedding, and cooking food, so that when we came we should have nothing to do but rest and enjoy our home. We found the table ready for us to be seated, and partake of refreshments about 5 o'clock, which we needed, as we had tasted nothing since our breakfast in the morning. Faithful hands had prepared dinner for us at 2 o'clock, expecting us on the arrival of an earlier train.

My husband rested well through the night. The next Sabbath, although feeble, he walked to the meeting-house and spoke about three-quarters of an hour. We also attended the communion season in the evening. The Lord strengthened him as he walked out upon his faith. We felt grateful to God that we were again in the midst of our dear people in Battle Creek. When my husband was first afflicted they felt that the stroke had fallen upon them. Our affliction they made their own. They stood faithfully by our side, and how truly and tenderly did they seek to relieve me of every burden which they could take. Day and night for the first five weeks of our affliction were they unremitting in their care and attention. And when we left for Dansville that burden and interest for us did not cease. They had frequent, and stated seasons of prayer for us, the poor afflicted servants of Christ. We find them the same--manifesting a kind and heart-

felt sympathy for us in our affliction. They are ready to bear our burdens as far as it is possible for them so to do. They have offered us liberal donations which we declined, as we at present do not need pecuniary aid. A number who have faith, meet together every week, and engage in earnest, fervent prayer to God for the restoration of my husband to health. May God reward the faithfulness of this dear people, is our prayer.

My husband is improving. He is not troubled as much with nervousness, anxiety, and fears. He suffers but little pain, but we cannot see that he gains in flesh. His stomach is gaining in strength, and takes care of food better. He is now venturing out in diet slowly--eats some fruit. His appetite is good, and he enjoys his food. The weather has not been favorable for him to ride or walk out much. We improve every pleasant day, and take him out to ride several miles in the country. He rode one day eight miles to Bro. Godsmark's, took dinner and returned the same day.

I believe, without a doubt, in the perfect and entire restoration of my husband to health. The Lord is for us, praise his holy name! Although Satan has tried to press us sore, yet help has been laid upon one that is mightier than he, and in the name of Jesus, our great Deliverer, shall we come off conquerors.

We still ardently desire the fervent prayers of God's people, that we may be sustained in, and delivered from, our present affliction.

March 26, 1867

### **An Acknowledgement**

In the vision given me in Rochester, December 25, 1865, I was shown that picture-taking had been carried to too great lengths by Sabbath-keeping Adventists; and that much means had been spent in multiplying copies which was worse than lost. This means should have been invested in the cause of God. I was shown that we had done wrong in expending means in picture-taking.

We acknowledge our error. We deeply regret that we ever consented to sit for our pictures. For years I would not consent to have our pictures taken, though solicited so to do. How many times I have wished we had remained steadfast. But all we can do now is to confess our wrong and ask God to forgive us, and entreat the forgiveness of our brethren and sisters.

October 8, 1867

## Questions and Answers

Bro. Smith: I have received from the hands of the Wisconsin and Illinois Conference Committee the following questions. I append a reply to each of them, that both question and reply may appear in the same number of the Review for the benefit of the brethren and sisters of the Wis. and Ill. Conference, and all others who wish to learn the facts in the case.

### Question Number One

Did you receive your views upon health reform before visiting the health institute at Dansville, N.Y., or before you had read works on the subject?

### Answer

It was at the house of Bro. A. Hilliard, at Otsego, Mich., June 6, 1863, that the great subject of Health Reform was opened before me in vision. I did not visit Dansville till August, 1864, fourteen months after I had the view. I did not read any works upon health until I had written *Spiritual Gifts*, Vols. iii and iv, *Appeal to Mothers*, and had sketched out most of my six articles in the six numbers of "How to Live." I did not know that such a paper existed as the *Laws of Life*, published at Dansville, N.Y. I had not heard of the several works upon health, written by Dr. J. C. Jackson, and other publications at Dansville, at the time I had the view named above. I did not know that such works existed until September, 1863, when in Boston, Mass., my husband saw them advertised in a periodical called the *Voice of the Prophets*, published by Eld. J. V. Himes. My husband ordered the works from Dansville and received them at Topsham, Maine. His business gave him no time to peruse them, and as I determined not to read them until I had written out my views, the books remained in their wrappers. As I introduced the subject of health to friends where I labored in Michigan, New England, and in the State of New York, and spoke against drugs and flesh meats, and in favor of water, pure air, and a proper diet, the reply was often made, "You speak very nearly the opinions taught in the *Laws of Life*, and other publications, by Drs. Trall, Jackson, and others. Have you read that paper and those works?" My reply was that I had not, neither

should I read them till I had fully written out my views, lest it should be said that I had received my light upon the subject of health from physicians, and not from the Lord. And after I had written my six articles for How to Live, I then searched the various works on hygiene and was surprised to find them so nearly in harmony with what the Lord had revealed to me. And to show this harmony, and to set before my brethren and sisters the subject as brought out by able writers, I determined to publish "How to Live," in which I largely extracted from the works referred to.

### Question Number Two

Does not the practice of the sisters in wearing their dresses nine inches from the floor contradict Testimony No. 11, which says they should reach somewhat below the top of a lady's gaiter boot? Does it not also contradict Testimony No. 10, which says they should clear the filth of the street an inch or two without being raised by the hand?

### Answer

The proper distance from the bottom of the dress to the floor was not given to me in inches. Neither was I shown ladies' gaiter boots; but three companies of females passed before me, with their dresses as follows with respect to length:

The first were of fashionable length, burdening the limbs, impeding the step, and sweeping the street and gathering its filth; the evil results of which I have fully stated. This class, who were slaves to fashion, appeared feeble and languid.

The dress of the second class which passed before me was in many respects as it should be. The limbs were well clad. They were free from the burdens which the tyrant, Fashion, had imposed upon the first class; but had gone to that extreme in the short dress as to disgust and prejudice good people, and destroy in a great measure their own influence. This is the style and influence of the "American Costume," taught and worn by many at "Our Home," Dansville N. Y. It does not reach to the knee. I need not say that this style of dress was shown me to be too short.

A third class passed before me with cheerful countenances, and free, elastic step. Their dress was the length I have described as proper, modest and healthful. It cleared the filth of the street and side-walk a few inches under all circumstances, such as

ascending and descending steps, &c.

As I have before stated, the length was not given me in inches, and I was not shown a lady's boot. And here I would state that although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be those spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation. As I wrote upon the subject of dress the view of those three companies revived in my mind as plain as when I was viewing them in vision; but I was left to describe the length of the proper dress in my own language the best I could, which I have done by stating that the bottom of the dress should reach near the top of a lady's boot, which would be necessary in order to clear the filth of the streets under the circumstances before named.

I put on the dress, in length as near as I had seen and described as I could judge. My sisters in Northern Michigan also adopted it. And when the subject of inches came up in order to secure uniformity as to length everywhere, a rule was brought and it was found that the length of our dresses ranged from eight to ten inches from the floor. Some of these were a little longer than the sample shown me, while others were a little shorter.

Numerous letters came to me from all parts of the field, inquiring the length of the dress shown me. Having seen the rule applied to the distance from the floor of several dresses, and having become fully satisfied that nine inches comes the nearest to the samples shown me, I have given this number of inches in No. 12, as the proper length in regard to which uniformity is very desirable. If it be said that a lady's boot is not nine inches high, I would say I wear a boot eight inches high, and when I have walked before my sisters with it uncovered as those properly dressed passed before me in vision, they could not see the top of my boot.

### Question Number Three

In Testimony, No. 11, you say: "my apology for calling your attention again to the subject of dress is that not one in twenty of my sisters, who profess to believe the testimony, have taken the first step in the dress reform." How long before writing No. 11, had you worn the reformed dress?

## Answer

I put on the reformed dress September, 1865, when I visited Dansville with my sick husband. It was the same length I now wear, and I was distinctly given to understand that it was not the "American Costume." I have worn this style of dress ever since that time, excepting at meetings, in the crowded streets of villages and cities, and when visiting distant relatives. Since I commenced to write No. 11, in January, 1867, I have worn no other than the reformed dress. My reasons for pursuing the course I have are as follows:

1. I put on the reformed dress for general use more than two years since, because I had seen that it was a convenient, modest, and healthful style, and would, in the providence of God, as Health Reform should lead the way, finally be adopted by our people.

2. It was my duty to avoid raising prejudice against the dress, which would cut off my testimony if I wore it, until I had fully set the matter before the people, and the time came, in the order of events, for it to be generally adopted.

3. The dress reform was among the minor things that were to make up the great reform in health, and never should have been urged as a testing truth necessary to salvation. It was the design of God that at the right time, on proper occasions, the proper persons should set forth its benefits as a blessing, and recommend uniformity, and union of action.

4. The issue came too soon. The defence of the dress was forced upon us by those who opposed it, who at the same time professed full confidence in my testimonies. When the Health Institute was opened at Battle Creek, and the dress adopted by female patients, as directed by the physicians, then came the opposition, chiefly from brethren at Battle Creek. The physicians having full confidence in my testimonies, stated to them that the style of dress they recommended for their patients was the same as I had seen would be adopted by our people. Then came the general inquiry, and a strange spirit of blind and bitter opposition arose with some who professed to be among the firmest friends of the testimonies. The general inquiry spread everywhere, and in the autumn and winter of 1866, letters came in from all directions inquiring in regard to what I had seen, asking for immediate answers. I therefore determined to hasten out No. 11. We

visited the church at Wright, Mich., December 21, 1866, and labored with them six weeks. I there wrote most of Testimony, No. 11. The first two Sabbaths and first-days I spoke to the people in my long dress. But when I had fully set the matter before the people without raising their prejudice, I put on my present style of dress, which was immediately adopted by the numerous sisters of that church. I have worn it since that time. At Greenville, Orleans, Orange, Windsor, Bushnell, Greenbush, Monterey, and Ithaca, I have, in speaking upon the great subject of health, mentioned the dress reform as one of the items of least importance which make up the great whole. With the dear sisters of these churches I have had no unhappy conflicts. I have presented the claims of this new and unpopular style of dress to them, while I set them an example. They have received my testimony, and have followed my example from principle, and not as the result of being urged. Those who, by their blind opposition, brought the issue too soon, caused confusion and prejudice, especially in the church at Battle Creek, must settle the matter with God and their brethren. I am clear in this matter, having done the best I could in standing in defence of the truth, and in laboring to save our people from confusion upon the subject.

#### Question Number Four

Is there not danger of brethren and sisters taking extreme views of the health reform?

#### Answer

This may be expected in all stirring reforms. The devotion to the subject manifested by our preachers and by the Review, and the unqualified, stirring appeals for large sums of money without giving proper cautions in the matter, has given the impression to many that Health Reform is that which demands their attention above all others, and some who need to be taught the first principles of righteousness, have urged it out of season, and have thus disgusted the people. It is God's plan that persons who are suited to the work should prudently and earnestly set forth the Health Reform, then leave the people to settle the matter with God and their own souls. It is the duty of those every way qualified to teach it to make people believe and obey, and all others should be silent and be taught.

#### Question Number Five



Is there not danger of urging the health reform upon others before they are prepared to receive?

Answer

There is. This is especially true in the matter of dress. When we first received the third message the Lord had many things to say to us, but we could not hear them all then. He has led us with a gentle hand and tender care, step by step, till we have reached the reform in health. When young disciples have learned what we had learned up to the time of the introduction of this reform, let this also be prudently set before them.

Question Number Six

Your last vision was given December, 1865. Many inquire, "if the visions are so important for the church, why so long before the subject of health reform was brought out?"

Answer

I had, before I had the last vision December, 1865, spoken quite fully upon the subject of health. My last vision related mostly to individual cases. I have written thousands of pages since that time of personal testimonies which most of our people know nothing about. I have written hundreds of letters relative to the establishing of a Health Institute of which still more are ignorant. I have been pressed with cares, labors and grief by reason of sickness in my own family. Yet I have done much in further bringing out the subject under most unfavorable circumstances. It may be that I have done this, especially on the dress question, as fast as the Lord would have me. It has certainly been brought out faster than some who raise this question have been ready to receive it.

Question Number Seven

Shall we understand by what you have said in your testimonies in favor of recreation, that you approbate such vain amusements as chess, checkers, charades, back-gammon, hunt-the-whistle, and blind-man's-buff?

It is generally reported in this conference that you have taken an interest in the amusements which have been practiced at the health institute at battle creek, that you play checkers, and carry a checker-board with you as you visit the brethren from place to place.

Answer

Since I professed to be a follower of Christ at the age of twelve years, I have never engaged in any such simple plays and amusements as named above. Neither have I at any time given my influence in their favor. I do not know how to play at checkers, chess, back-gammon, fox-and-geese, or any thing of the kind. I have spoken in favor of recreation, but have ever stood in great doubt of the amusements introduced at the Institute at Battle Creek, and have stated my objections to the physicians and directors, and others, in conversation with them, and by numerous letters.

On pages 24-26 of Testimony No. 12, I have spoken of "Recreation for Christians," as follows:

"I was shown that Sabbath-keepers as a people labor too hard without allowing themselves change, or periods of rest. Recreation is needful to those who are engaged in physical labor, yet still more essential for those whose labors are principally mental.

"I was shown that it is not essential to our salvation, nor for the glory of God, for us to keep the mind laboring, even upon religious themes, constantly and excessively. There are amusements which we cannot approve, because Heaven condemns them,--such as dancing, card-playing, chess, checkers, &c. These amusements open the door for great evil. Their tendencies are not beneficial, but their influence upon the mind is to excite and produce in some minds a passion for those plays which lead to gambling, and dissolute lives. All such plays should be condemned by Christians. Something should be substituted in the place of these amusements. Something can be invented, perfectly harmless.

"I saw that our holidays should not be spent in patterning after the world, yet they should not be passed by unnoticed, for this will bring dissatisfaction to our children. On these days when there is danger of our children partaking of evil influences, and

becoming corrupted by the pleasures and excitement of the world, let the parents study to get up something to take the place of more dangerous amusements. Give your children to understand you have their happiness and best good in view.

"Let families unite together and leave their occupations which have taxed them physically and mentally, and make an excursion out of the cities and villages a few miles into the country, by the side of a fine lake, or in a nice grove, where the scenery of nature is beautiful. They should provide themselves with plain, hygienic food, and spread their table under the shade of a tree, or under the canopy of heaven provided with the very best of fruits and grains. The ride, the exercise, and the scenery, will quicken the appetite, and they can come around a repast which kings might envy.

"Parents and children on such occasions should feel as free as air from care, labors or perplexities. Parents should become children with their children, making it as happy as possible for them. Let the whole day be given to recreation. Exercise of the muscles in the open air, for those whose employment has been within doors and sedentary, will be beneficial to health. All who can, should feel it a duty resting upon them to pursue this course. Nothing will be lost, but much gained. They can return to their occupations with new life, and new courage to engage in their labor with new zeal. And such have gained much, for they are better prepared to resist disease."

I will here give extracts from Testimony No. 12, pages 77-79, in regard to vain amusements:

"Those connected with the Health Institute now located at Battle Creek, should feel that they are engaged in an important and solemn work; and in no way should they pattern after the physicians at the institution at Dansville in matters of religion and amusements. Yet, I saw that there would be danger of imitating them in many things, and losing sight of the exalted character of this great work. And should those connected with this enterprise descend from the exalted principles of present truth, to imitate in theory and practice those at the head of institutions where the sick are treated only for the recovery of health, and should they cease to look at their work from a high religious stand-point, the especial blessing of God would not rest upon our institution any more than upon those where corrupt theories are taught and practiced."

"I was shown that the position of Dr. Jackson in regard to amusements was

wrong, and that his views of physical exercise were not all correct. The very amusements he recommends hinder the recovery of health in many cases, where one is helped by them. And physical labor for the sick, is to a great degree condemned by Dr. Jackson, which proves in many cases the greatest injury, while such mental exercise as playing at cards, chess, and checkers, excites and wearies the brain, and hinders recovery. Light and pleasant physical labor will occupy the time, improve the circulation, relieve and restore the brain, and prove a decided benefit to the health. But take from the invalid all such employment, and he becomes restless, and, with a diseased imagination, views his case as much worse than it really is, which tends to imbecility.

"For years past I have been shown from time to time that the sick should be taught that it was wrong to suspend all physical labor in order to regain health. In thus doing the will becomes dormant, the blood circulates through the system sluggishly, and grows more impure. Where there is danger of the patient's imagining his case worse than it really is, indolence will be sure to produce the most unhappy results. Well-regulated labor gives the invalid the idea that he is not totally useless in the world, that he is, at least, of some benefit. This will afford him satisfaction, give him courage, and impart to him vigor, which vain, mental amusements can never do."

I have answered these questions as fully and as well as circumstances would admit. If other brethren have similar questions to propose I shall be glad to answer them also, as I can find time.

January 14, 1868

## **An Appeal to the Friends of Truth**

Many of you are well aware that ours is a peculiar work, and that our labors are hard and sometimes very unpleasant. In our travels we find many persons, and sometimes, as in Maine, the majority of Sabbath-keepers, poorly prepared to receive our testimony, simply because they have not read such works as *Spiritual Gifts*, *Testimony to the Church*, *How to Live*, *Appeal to Mothers*, and *Appeal to Youth*. Could all such on embracing the Sabbath be interested to read these works, their minds would be prepared to receive our testimony and be benefited by our labors. In Maine not more than one fourth of the families of Sabbath-keepers have a full set of the above-named books, hence our labors in that State were protracted, unpleasant and wearing.

The work to be done, in which we appeal for help at this time, is to induce all Sabbath-keepers to read these works, and inform themselves as to the things taught in them, and thus be prepared to judge as to the nature of our work. We do not now appeal to those who see no necessity of our peculiar work, therefore have no interest in it. These are the very persons who need help, and for their good we ask you, who are interested in our labors, to help us in our efforts to help this class. And in no way can you assist us so much as in circulating these books.

There is now at our office of publication in Battle Creek, and in the hands of agents, a good supply of this kind of reading, which should be put into the hands of those who have not read these works. With the united efforts of friends, and blessing of God, this good work could be accomplished in a short of time.

It is our opinion that these books should immediately be placed in the hands of all persons who have not read them, not only of those who observe the Sabbath, but those also who attend our meetings with a degree of interest to learn the truth, and offer the following reasons:

1. The present is a special time of reclaiming the backslidden in heart and life, the erring and the rebellious; and the prejudices of such against the testimonies, and against our work, form the strongest barrier between these persons and the living body of

believers. Most of these persons really know nothing of what is taught in these works, and nothing can remove their prejudices and prepare them to receive our public labors so well as to read the books.

2. From the very nature of the case, considering all the circumstances, persons who do not read these books, and do not feel any special interest in the subject of Spiritual Gifts, are almost certain to receive prejudice against them, and against our work, indulge in things reprov'd by them, and finally fall under the influence of our enemies, and separate themselves from the body, and give up the cause.

3. It is much easier to fortify persons against heresy and rebellion than to reclaim them after they have thus fallen. And these persons in their downward course have an influence on others, and sometimes cause trials to the whole church, which calls for hard and anxious labor from the servants of God for weeks. Thus the precious time and strength of our ministers is called for, and much means is expended to remedy that which might have been prevented by the reading of the aforesaid works.

4. The greatest cause of our spiritual feebleness as a people, is the lack of real faith in Spiritual Gifts. If they all received this kind of testimony in full faith, they would put from them those things which displease God, and would everywhere stand in union and in strength. And three-fourths of the ministerial labor now expended to help the churches could then be spared to the work of raising up churches in new fields.

A general movement should be made upon this subject, in which all our people can manifest their faith and interest. And we feel sure that in a well-directed, general interest, the blessing of God would come down upon us as a people, and great vigor and strength would be given to the cause. This will require a sacrifice, one that will be accepted of the Lord.

In placing this class of reading before those who can be helped, our people can sacrifice of their means, and of their time, in searching out those destitute of these books, and in furnishing them. In this work they can show a commendable zeal and a living interest. Our ministers who labor with the churches can canvass the entire field, and assist our churches and scattered brethren in this work, in connection with their general labor.

## How Shall it be Done?

1. Let our active ministers and brethren each obtain a good supply, and when and where practicable, in a proper manner, urge the sale of them to those who are able to purchase.

2. Let them give them to those who do not feel able to pay for them, provided they are worthy persons, who give evidence of sufficient interest to read them to profit.

If any such should not read them, or should they read them and not become interested in them, they could be gathered up and put into more worthy hands.

3. These persons can keep an account of all they give, and receive credit at the office of publication for the same at wholesale prices.

4. All our people can donate means and forward to the office more or less as they have ability and a willing heart to do, to pay the wholesale prices of these works that are judiciously distributed gratuitously. Let our ministers, elders, and deacons at once bring this matter before our people, Let subscription papers be opened for men, women and children, to donate liberally from ten cents to one hundred dollars. Let none be passed by.

And we would appeal especially to those brethren among us who are in health and in the strength of manhood, who are each adding hundreds, or perhaps thousands, to their amount of property annually. We need your liberal help in this work, and expect it. Has God blessed you with health, and has he prospered you in your fields, and almost all to which you have put your hands, then use in his cause a portion of that with which he has blessed you, and thus secure his still more abundant blessing. Go to God in prayer with this matter, and do your duty in relation to it.

Blank subscription papers will immediately be forwarded to many of you, which you are requested to circulate and obtain pledges to be paid before the General Conference in May 1868. Collect, as far as possible, and as fast as you can, forward to the Office.

In past times we had the pleasure of leading off in such enterprises. We can

hardly be denied the privilege at this time, especially as our friends during our last twenty-weeks' tour, West and East, have been so liberal with us. God has opened their hearts and hands, and they will allow us to dedicate especially to him a portion of their liberalities to us for the above named object.

In our future labors we design to take with us a full supply of this kind of reading matter, and place in every family interested in our faith and hope, full sets of Spiritual Gifts, and How to Live, and in the hands of every Sabbath-school scholar and youth, Appeal to Mothers, Appeal to Youth, and Sabbath Readings, either bound, pamphlet, or tract form.

Dear brethren, we shall still appeal to you to do your duty in this matter, both through the Review, in the congregations of the saints, and by your firesides. You will hear us as we speak for the Lord and his cause. Be not fearful of being too liberal. Should more be received than needed in this branch of the work, it can be used for the circulation of tracts.

Servants of the church.



March 24, 1868

## **Dealing With Those Overtaken in the Sin of Adultery**

In regard to the case of the injured sister A. G., we would say in reply to the questions of J. H. W., that it is a feature in the cases of most who have been overtaken in sin, as her husband has, that they have no real sense of their villainy. Some, however, do, and are restored to the church; but not till they have merited the confidence of the people of God by unqualified confessions, and a period of sincere repentance. This case presents difficulties not found in some, and we would add only the following:

1. In cases of the violation of the seventh commandment, where the guilty party does not manifest true repentance, if the injured party can obtain a divorce without making their own cases and that of their children, if they have them, worse by so doing, they should be free.

2. If they would be liable to place themselves and their children in worse condition by a divorce, we know of no scripture that would make the innocent party guilty by remaining.

3. Time, and labor, and prayer, and patience, and faith, and a godly life, might work a reform. To live with one who has broken the marriage vows, and is covered all over with the disgrace and shame of guilty love, realizes it not, is an eating canker to the soul; and yet, a divorce is a life-long, heart-felt sore. God pity the innocent party. Marriage should be considered well before contracted.

4. Why! oh, why! will men and women who might be respectable, and good, and reach Heaven at last, sell themselves to the Devil so cheap, wound their bosom friends, disgrace their families, bring a reproach upon the cause, and go to hell at last? God have mercy. Why will not those who are overtaken in crime manifest repentance proportionate to the enormity of their crime, and fly to Christ for mercy, and heal, as far as possible, the wounds they have made?

5. But, if they will not do as they should, and if the innocent have forfeited the legal right to a divorce, by living with the guilty after his guilt is known, we do not see

that sin rests upon the innocent in remaining, and her moral right in departing seems questionable, if her health and life be not greatly endangered in so remaining.

6. As in the days of Noah, one of the signs of these times is a passion for injudicious and hasty marriages. Satan is in this. If Paul could remain single, and recommend the same to others, that he and they might be wholly the Lord's, why not those who would be wholly his, and wish to make a sure thing of avoiding the cares, trials, and bitter anguish, so frequent in the experiences of those who choose the married life, remain as he was? And more, if he chose to remain so, and could recommend it to others, eighteen centuries since, would not to remain as he was, be a commendable course for those who are waiting for the coming of the Son of man, unless evidences were unquestionable that they were bettering their condition, and making Heaven more sure by so doing? When so much is at stake, why not be on the sure side every time?

March 24, 1868

### **Hops (Tobacco and Swine)**

Hops.--In answer to many inquiries, we would say that we believe there is business for Seventh-day Adventists to enter upon for a livelihood, more consistent with their faith than the raising of hops, tobacco, or swine.

And we would recommend that they plant no more hops, or tobacco fields, and that they reduce the number of their swine. They may yet see it duty, as most consistent believers do, to keep no more. We would not urge this opinion upon any. Much less would we take the responsibility of saying, "Plow up your hop and tobacco fields, and sacrifice your swine to the dogs."

While we would say to those who are disposed to crowd hop, tobacco, and swine growers among our people, that they have no right to make these things, in any sense, a test of Christian fellowship, we would also say to those who have these miserable things on hand, If you can get them off your hands without great loss, consistency with the faith of this people whose publications and oral teachings have so much to say on the subject of reform, more than suggests that you should get them off your hands as soon as possible.

April 14, 1868

## **An Appeal to the People in its Behalf**

We are not Spiritualists. We are Christian women, believing all the Scriptures say of man's creation, his fall, his sufferings & woes on account of continued transgression, of his hope of redemption thro' Christ, and of his duty to glorify God in his body and spirit which are his, in order to be saved. We do not wear the style of dress here represented to be odd,--that we may attract notice. We do not differ from the common style of woman's dress for any such object. We choose to agree with others in theory and in practice, if we can do so, and at the same time be in harmony with the law of God, and with the laws of our being. We believe it wrong to differ from others unless it be necessary to differ in order to be right. In bearing the cross of adopting the reform dress we are led by a sense of duty. And although it may appear objectionable to those who are governed by fashion, we claim that it is the most convenient, the most truly modest, and the most healthful style of dress worn by woman.

We have counted the cost of appearing singular in the eyes of those who feel compelled to bow to fashion. And we decide that in the end it will pay to try to do right, though for the present we may appear odd in the eyes of those who will sacrifice convenience, comfort, and health, at the altar of fashion.

We have also looked at the fact that our course in this matter of dress will cost our friends disagreeable feelings, and have taken into the account those things which excited their feelings of prejudice against the reform dress. When among strangers we are supposed to be Spiritualists, from the fact that some of that class adopt what is commonly called "the short dress." And the question is frequently asked, "Are you Spiritualists?" To answer this question, and to give the reader some of the reasons why we adopt so unfashionable a style of dress, is this little tract given. We are well aware that some of those who espoused the cause of Spiritualism, over the moral worth of whom a shade of uncertainty has been cast, by the extravagances and immoralities among them, have adopted the short dress, and that their zeal in so doing, under the peculiar circumstances, could but disgust the people against anything of the kind.

How could it be otherwise? The people are shut up to fashion. They do not

understand the benefits of our style of dress. And it is all the more objectionable to them as it resembles in some respects that worn by some doubtful Spiritualists. We most certainly bid ladies who have embraced Spiritualism a hearty welcome to all the blessings and benefits of a convenient, healthful, and (being of a proper length, and neatly and properly fitted and made,) truly modest dress, and wish they were as consistent and right in other respects.

In the existing state of things the people may regard the adoption of our style of dress as a bold step on our part, showing more independence than good taste. They may censure us. They may deal in wit and sarcasm in reference to our dress. They may even utter bitter speeches on account of our course in this thing. But our work shall be, by the grace of God, to patiently labor to correct their errors, remove their prejudices, and set before them the reasons why we object to the popular style of woman's dress, also some of the reasons why we adopt ours. We object to the popular style of woman's dress,

1. Because it is not convenient. In doing housework, in passing up and down stairs with both hands full, a third hand is needed to hold up the long skirts. See that lady passing up to her chamber with a child in her arms, and both hands full, stepping upon her long skirts, and stumbling as she goes. She finds the popular style of dress very inconvenient. But it is fashionable, and must be endured.

If she goes into her garden to walk or to work among her flowers, to share the early, refreshing, morning air, unless she holds them up with both hands, her skirts are dragging and drabbling in dirt and dew, until they are wet and muddy. Fashion attaches to her cloth that is, in this case, used as a sort of mop. This is exceedingly inconvenient. But for the sake of fashion it must be endured.

In walking upon the streets, in the country, in the village, or in the crowded city, her long skirts sweep the dirt and mud, and lick up tobacco spittle, and all manner of filth. Careless gentlemen sometimes step on these long dresses, and, as the ladies pass on, tear them. This is trying, and sometimes provoking; and it is not always convenient to mend and cleanse these soiled and torn garments. But they are in harmony with fashion, and all this must be endured.

In traveling in the cars, in the coach and omnibus, fashionable dresses, especially when extended by hoops, are sometimes not only in the way of the wearers, but of

others; and we charitably think that were it not for the overruling power of fashion, measures would be taken to do away with their inconvenience.

We object to the popular style of woman's dress,

2. Because it is not healthful. To say nothing of the suicidal practice of compressing the waist, so as to suppress natural respiration, inducing the habit of breathing only from the top of the lungs; and not to dwell particularly upon the custom of suspending unnecessary weight upon the hips, in consequence of too many and too long skirts, there is much that may be said relative to the unhealthfulness of the fashionable style of woman's dress; but we suggest at this time only the following:

(a) It burdens and obstructs the free use of the lower limbs. This is contrary to the design of God in securing to woman the blessings of activity and health.

(b) It frequently shuts her indoors when her health demands that she should enjoy exercise in the pure, invigorating air of heaven. If she goes out in the light snow, or after a shower, or in the dews of the morning or the evening, she bedrabbles her long skirts, chills the sensitive, unprotected ankles, and takes cold. To prevent this she may remain shut up in the house, and become so delicate and feeble that when she is compelled to go out she is sure to take cold, which may result in cough, consumption, and death.

It may be said that she can reserve her walks till the sun has gathered up all this dampness. True, she may, and feel the languor produced by the scorching heat of a midday's summer sun. The birds go forth with their songs of praise to their Creator, and the beasts of the field enjoy with them the early freshness of the morning; and when the heat of the sun comes pouring down, these creatures of nature and of health retire to the shade. But this is the very time for woman to move out with her fashionable dress! When they go forth to enjoy the invigorating air of the morning, she is deprived of this rich bounty of Heaven. When they seek the cooling shade and rest, she goes forth to suffer from heat, fatigue and languor.

(c) It robs her of that protection from cold and dampness, which the lower extremities must have to secure a healthful condition of the system. In order to enjoy a good state of health, there must be a proper circulation of the blood. And to secure a good circulation of the current of human life, all parts of the body must be suitably clad.

Fashion clothes woman's chest bountifully. And in winter loads her with sacks, cloaks, shawls, and furs, until she cannot feel a chill, excepting her limbs and feet, which, from their want of suitable clothing, are chilled, and literally sting with cold. The heart labors to throw the blood to the extremities; but is chilled back from them in consequence of their being exposed to cold for want of being suitably clothed. And the abundance of clothing about the chest, where is the great wheel of life, induces the blood to the lungs and brain, and produces congestion.

The limbs and feet have large veins, to receive a large amount of blood, that warmth, nutrition, elasticity, and strength, may be imparted to them. But when the blood is chilled from these extremities, their blood vessels contract, which makes the circulation of the necessary amount of blood in them still more difficult. A good circulation preserves the blood pure, and secures health. A bad circulation leaves the blood to become impure, and induces congestion of the brain and lungs, and causes diseases of the head, the heart, the liver, and the lungs. The fashionable style of woman's dress is one of the greatest causes of all these terrible diseases.

But the evil does not stop here. These fashionable mothers transmit their diseases to their feeble offspring. And they clothe their feeble little girls as unhealthfully as they clothe themselves, and soon bring them to the condition of invalids, or, which is preferable in many cases, to the grave. Thus fashion fills our cemeteries with many short graves, and the houses of the slaves of fashion with invalids. O God, must this state of things continue?

We object to the fashionable style of woman's dress,

3. Because, under certain circumstances, it is, to say the least, not the most modest, on account of exposures of the female form. This evil is greatly aggravated by the wearing of hoops. Ladies with long dresses, especially if extended with hoops, as they go up and down stairs, as they pass up the narrow door-way of the coach and the omnibus, or as they raise their skirts, to clear the mud of the streets, sometimes expose the form to that degree as to put modesty to the blush.

Having noticed some of the wrongs of the popular style of woman's dress, we now wish to show in reference to the reform dress that:

1. It is convenient. No arguments are needed to prove that our style of dress is most convenient in the kitchen. In passing up and down stairs, the hands are not needed to hold up the skirts of our dresses. Being of a convenient length, they take care of themselves, while our hands are better employed.

We can go out into the untrodden snow, or after a fall of rain, and, if our feet and limbs are entirely protected, all is dry and comfortable. We have no fears of taking cold as we trip along, unburdened by trailing skirts, in our morning walks. We can, in spring and summer, walk and work among our flowers without fear of injury from the dews of early morning. And then, the lower portion of our skirts, not having been used as a mop, are dry, and clean, and comfortable, not compelling us to wash and clean them, which is not always convenient when other important matters demand time and attention.

In getting into, and out of, carriages, in passing old trunks, boxes, and other ragged furniture, and in walking over old, broken sidewalks, where nails have worked up an inch or two above the surface of the plank, our dresses are not exposed to a thousand accidents and rents to which the trailing dresses are fated. To us, this is a matter of great convenience.

2. It is healthful. Our skirts are few and light, not taxing our strength with the burden of many and longer ones. Our limbs being properly clothed, we need comparatively few; and these are suspended from the shoulders. Our dresses are fitted to sit easily, obstructing neither the circulation of the blood, nor natural, free, and full respiration. Our skirts being neither numerous nor fashionably long, do not impede the means of locomotion, but leave us to move about with ease and activity. All these things are necessary to health.

Our limbs and feet are suitably protected from cold and damp, to secure the circulation of the blood to them, with all its blessings. We can take exercise in the open air, in the dews of morning or evening, or after the falling storm of snow or rain, without fears of taking cold. Morning exercise, in walking in the free, invigorating air of heaven, or cultivating flowers, small fruits, and vegetables, is necessary to a healthful circulation of the blood. It is the surest safeguard against colds, coughs, congestions of the brain and lungs, inflammation of the liver, the kidneys, and the lungs, and a hundred other diseases.



If those ladies who are failing in health, suffering in consequence of these diseases, would lay off their fashionable robes, clothe themselves suitably for the enjoyment of such exercise, and move out carefully at first, as they can endure it, and increase the amount of exercise in the open air as it gives them strength to endure, and dismiss their doctors and drugs, most of them might recover health, to bless the world with their example and the work of their hands. If they would dress their daughters properly, they might live to enjoy health, and to bless others.

Christian Mother: Why not clothe your daughter as comfortably and as properly as you do your son? In the cold and storms of winter, his limbs and feet are clad with lined pants, drawers, woolen socks, and thick boots. This is as it should be; but your daughter is dressed in reference to fashion, not health nor comfort. Her shoes are light, and her stockings thin. True, her skirts are short, but her limbs are nearly naked, covered by only a thin, flannel stocking reaching to her muslin drawers. Her limbs and feet are chilled, while her brother's are warm. His limbs are protected by from three to five thicknesses; hers, by only one. Is she the feeblest? Then she needs the greatest care. Is she indoors the most, and, therefore, the least protected against cold and storm? Then she needs double care. But as she is dressed, there is nothing to hope for the future relative to her health but habitual cold feet, a congested brain, headache, disease of the liver and lungs, and an early grave.

Her dress may be nearly long enough; but let it sit loosely and comfortably. Then clothe her limbs and feet as comfortably, as wisely, and as well as you do those of your boy; and let her go out, and enjoy exercise in the open air, and live to enjoy health and happiness.

3. It is modest. Yes, we think it is the most modest and becoming style of dress worn by woman. If the reader thinks otherwise, will he please turn to the first page, and again examine the figure there represented, and then tell us wherein this style of dress is faulty or unbecoming? True, it is not fashionable. But what of that? Fashions do not always come from Heaven. Neither do they always come from the pure, the virtuous, and the good.

It is true that this style of dress exposes her feet. And why should she be ashamed of her well-clad feet any more than men are of theirs? It is of no use for her to try to conceal the fact that she has feet. This was a settled fact long before the use of trailing

skirts extended by hoops, giving her the appearance of a hay stack, or a Dutch churn.

But does the popular style of woman's dress always hide her feet from the public gaze? See that lady passing over the muddy street, holding her skirts nearly twice as far from the ground as ours, exposing, not only her feet, but her nearly-naked limbs. Similar exposures are frequent as she ascends and descends the stairs, and as she is helped into, and out of, carriages. These exposures are disagreeable, if not shameful; and a style of dress which makes their frequent occurrence almost certain, we must regard as a poor safeguard of modesty and virtue. But we did not design an exposure of this false modesty in relation to woman's feet, but simply a defense of the style of dress which we regard, in every way, truly modest.

What style of dress can be neater, more modest, and more becoming girls from the ages of five to fourteen years, than ours? Stand those girls of fashion beside these, and then say which appears most comfortable, most modest, and most becoming. The fashionable style is not as long as ours, yet no one laughs at those who follow that style for wearing a short dress. Their limbs are nearly naked, while modesty and health clothe the limbs of the others. Fashion and false modesty look upon these girls who have their limbs clad in reference to comfort, modesty, and health, with horror, but smile upon those whose dresses are quite as short, and whose limbs are uncomfortably, immodestly, and unhealthfully exposed. Here come the cross and the reproach, for simply doing right, in the face of the tyrant--Fashion. God help us to have the moral courage to do right, and to labor patiently and humbly in the great cause of reform.

In behalf of my sisters who adopt the reform dress,

#### A Few Suggestions

1. We recommend the reform dress to all. We urge it upon none. When Christian women see the wrongs of the fashionable style, and the benefits of ours, and put it on from a sense of duty, and have the moral courage to wear it anywhere and everywhere, then will they feel at home in it, and enjoy a satisfaction and blessing in trying to do right.

2. But those who adopt the reform dress should ever bear in mind the fact that the power of fashion is terrible; and that in meeting this tyrant, they need wisdom, humility,

and patience,--wisdom to speak and act so as not to offend the slaves of fashion unnecessarily; and humility and patience to endure their frowns, their slights, and their reproachful speeches.

3. In view of existing prejudices against the reform dress, it becomes our duty in adopting it to avoid all those things which make it unnecessarily objectionable. It should reach to within eight or nine inches from the floor. The skirt of the dress should not be extended as with hoops. It should be as full as the long dress. With a proper amount of light skirts, the dress will fall properly and gracefully about the limbs.

Anything eight or nine inches from the floor is not the reform dress. It should be cut by an approved pattern, and fitted and made by directions from one who has experience in this style of dress.

4. Taste should be manifested as to colors. Uniformity in this respect with those who adopt this style of dress, is desirable so far as convenient. Complexion, however, may be taken into the account. Modest colors should be sought for. When figured colors are used, those that are large and fiery, showing vanity and shallow pride in those who choose them, should be avoided. And a fantastic taste in putting on different colors, is bad, such as white sleeves and pants with a dark dress. Shawls and bonnets are not in as good taste with the reform dress, as sacks and hats, and caps in winter.

5. And be right yourselves. Secure and maintain, in all the duties and walks of life, the heavenly adorning. The apostle speaks to the point:

"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." 1 Peter 3:1-4.

My dear sisters: Such an ornament, such a course of life and conduct, will give you influence for good on earth, and be prized in Heaven. Unless you can obtain and maintain this, I entreat you to lay off the reform dress. Do not disgrace it with a want,

on your part, of neatness, cleanliness, taste, order, sobriety, meekness, propriety, modesty, and devotion to your families and to your God. Be a recommendation and an ornament to the reform dress, and let that be a recommendation and an ornament to you.

April 14, 1868

## **Feeding of Infants**

I am often told that in *How to Live*, I stated that infants should be nursed but three times a day. This is a mistake. But it is true that in the second number of that work, page 52, the following expression is found: "Babes should be nursed but three times a day." These are neither my words, nor my sentiments. The article containing them was extracted from Cole's *Philosophy of Health*. The printer failing to give the proper credit, the following statement was given on the first page of No. 3: "The article in No. 2, headed, *Particular directions to Parents and Guardians*, should have been credited to this excellent work, *The Philosophy of Health*."

My sentiments are these:

1. No general rules can be established in the care of all infants, in consequence of their almost endless varieties of condition at birth, and their different constitutional wants.

2. No mother would confine the period of infancy to a few days, or weeks, or even months after birth. In *How to Live*, No. 2, page 44, I did say, "Infancy extends to the age of six or seven years."

3. The term properly called infancy, requires several changes as to the periods of taking food. Before birth it is receiving nourishment constantly. And the changes from this to the establishment of only two meals a day, which may, in most children, be done from the ages of one to three years, must be gradual.

4. No rules for all children can be given as to the progressive steps in these changes. Parents must view the wants of their children by the best light they have. When all act upon the best light they can obtain, it can hardly be expected that all mistakes will be avoided, but it is safest and best for the cause of reform, to err, if err we must, on the side of custom, rather than on the side of extreme change.

April 21, 1868

### **They Sleep in Jesus**

The recent obituary notice of Sr. Nichols, wife of Bro. Otis Nichols, of Dorchester, Mass., called to mind the fact that many of the faithful friends of present truth, who from the Second-advent ranks were the first to embrace the Sabbath, now sleep in Jesus.

They bore the Sabbath cross when it was heavier than it now is, on account of its friends being few, and its enemies and their persecutions being many and bitter. Now the Sabbath cross is comparatively light, because of the many friends of the Sabbath, and the well-known fact that the Sabbath of the Bible is clearly sustained by sacred and secular history.

Bro and Sr. Nichols were among the first to embrace the Sabbath, and liberally hand out their means to sustain the cause in its infancy. It was money from her hand that bore our expenses from their door, in 1844, to the first Conference of believers in the third message, held at Rocky Hill, Conn. Of these who then bore the cross, and with their means sustained the cause, and have since toiled and suffered for the good of others, and have died in hope, it is said, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them."

Among these are also my venerable parents. They both rest in hope: my mother in Illinois, my father in Connecticut; but when the trump of God shall awake the dead, and they be caught up to meet their Lord in the air, these who have toiled side by side in their Master's vineyard, will meet in immortal vigor, to see in many of those who shall be saved by the influence of the third message, the fruits of their labors and their prayers.

Learning that my father was very feeble and near his end, and that he was anxious to see me before his death, I left my sick husband in Brookfield, November, 1866, and went alone to see him. He was living with one of my sisters, in Kensington, Conn. When I met my dear father, I saw a great change had come over him since last we

parted. I at once saw that the feebly-burning taper of life must soon go out. As we met, he wept like a child, and expressed his gratitude that I had made the sacrifice of leaving my sick husband to come to see him. He often remarked that he felt that it was our last meeting, and that he felt that he could not be denied the privilege of seeing me and hearing me speak once more to the people. I immediately sent for my three sisters, living in Maine. They all came, and together we, five sisters in all, surrounded the bed of our dying father, who had then passed his fourscore years.

But before these sisters came, we enjoyed a Sabbath meeting in which my father took part. Although very feeble, he was dressed, sat up during the meeting, and finally arose and bore an excellent testimony. His mind was very fruitful on Bible subjects, and he seemed sweetly ripened for the heavenly garner. This was his last testimony, and its memory is precious.

In two weeks I enjoyed another Sabbath with my father. The large kitchen was well filled with brethren and sisters, some from a distance. My sisters from Maine were present, and there I had the privilege of speaking to them. It was suggested that the meeting be at the next house on account of my father's feebleness; but this he would not listen to for a moment. He stated that this would be the last time he should hear me speak, and he could not be denied the privilege. It was a most solemn, affecting meeting. This was evidently the last meeting we should all enjoy together in the present state of things. One at least, of our family, would be severed from us before we could meet again. And the solemn inquiry was, Shall we all meet again in that world where sickness and death will be known no more?

This visit with my dear sisters was most satisfactory, and I trust profitable. Although we were not practically agreed on all points of religious duty, yet our hearts were one.

My father, as he sank nearer and nearer the grave, did not lose his clearness of intellect, but to the last his mind was active, and especially fruitful in the things relating to the kingdom of God. He often stated that it was a great pleasure to him to have so many of his children around him in his last hours. His patience in his afflictions, and willingness, and even anxiety to have the hours of his probation close, were remarkable. The praise of God, and grateful expressions of his goodness were continually upon his lips, and thus he died.

He sleeps in Jesus, and we are awaiting the coming of the Life-giver to break the fetters of the tomb, and release the captives from their prison-house, and reunite the severed links of the family chain. All who have kept the word of his patience, shall be exalted to the right hand of God, and be rewarded with an inheritance in the better world, and possess everlasting life.

We cherish feelings of the tenderest regard of our dear Bro. Nichols. More than twenty years since, we shared his hospitalities when friends were few and poor. For several years nearly all the means necessary to bear our expenses came from his purse. And although his lot may still be in the furnace of affliction, he should be comforted with the fact that his was the great privilege of doing for the advancement of the cause of truth, when one dollar would count more than one hundred at its present stage. May the sentiment of his heart be in harmony with the words of the prophet, so frequently quoted his house more than twenty years since:

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."



January 5, 1869

## **The Review and Herald**

Ministers who are engaged in active labor in the cause of God, and who have earned a reputation among our people, should use their influence to the very best advantage.

Their responsibilities do not cease with their pulpit labors. It is the duty of all who can write, especially those who minister in holy things, to exercise their talents in this direction. They should feel that it is one branch of their work to give tangible proofs of their interest in the Review and Herald, by the pointed, spiritual, articles from their pens for its columns. This paper, which is the only preaching that hundreds have, is not what it might be, or what it should be. Here is an opportunity to speak to thousands, and all who do speak through the Review should have a burden of something to say.

Men of but small experience who have but little influence, can get up commonplace sermons. Some of the people read them, while others feel no interest to read them. There is nothing in the words, or arrangement of ideas that melts and burns its way into the heart. Some have interest enough to read every sermon, however deficient in new ideas and interest. When individuals in process of time become acquainted with the men whose names appear at the head of their sermons, they see that these men are not all what they profess to be--that they are deficient in experience. They lose confidence in the paper, and when they read sermons from the pens of men whose names they are not acquainted with, they feel a distrust, because they have been deceived before, and although good matter may be contained in the sermons, they do not acknowledge it as food, therefore they lose much good instruction. Some men would be ministers who have mistaken their work. To them were committed talents, not more than two, or one. Their position is in a humble sphere. God only requires them to do their duty according to their measure of responsibility, and he will accept the work of such, if well done, as readily as the work of those who have greater ability; of them he expects corresponding returns.

Christians will not make light of the smallest gift in the church. But some of the writers of the sermons which have appeared in the Review have not been at work upon

their one, or two talents, but have been handling the five not committed to them at all. They make bad work. The Master knew their ability, and gave them no more than they could make the very best use of, that at the reckoning time, he need not require more of them than they had ability to perform. None should needlessly mourn that they cannot glorify God by talents he has never committed to them. Those who are restricted to only one talent, if they use it well, God will accept according to their ability.

God would not have us aspire after great things, seeking to a large work, but he requires all to do their work well. If men are entrusted with limited talents, let them not aspire to trade with the five, but let them with contented humility, feeling the weight of their responsibility, make the most of what they have. The Master will require no larger interest than was proportionate to the amount entrusted to them.

Some of our ministers are capable of bearing greater responsibilities than they are willing to take. They prefer to trade with two talents, when five have been committed to them. In bearing responsibilities, something must be ventured, as in the case of one engaged in trade. Some shrink from this through fear. Their trust is not in God. They fear censure, or that loss will be incurred by them. A due amount of caution is necessary, but even this excellent qualification may be abused, and a spirit of indolence or cowardice encouraged. God does not design that individual responsibility shall be laid off.

Especial efforts should be made by ministers who have the cause of God at heart, to contribute to the columns of the Review the most interesting, spiritual articles. All can find time to do this if they have a will and heart to engage in the work. Some are too indolent and ease-loving. They will spend hours in chatting upon subjects not especially connected with the advancement of the cause and work of God. The time thus spent is lost, and they are unprofitable servants. If the time had been occupied in the study of the word of God, thoroughly furnishing themselves from its precious pages, fitting themselves to be able ministers, their employment would be more profitable. They would have something to write. They could furnish articles which would instruct and encourage the people of God. Such would be only doing their duty, and would be giving to the flock of God their portion of meat in due season. Some of our ministers occupy considerable time in reading. This is all right if not carried too far. Much reading is as great a weariness to the flesh as making many books. But few realize that much reading is brain-wearing work, as much so as writing. A portion of the time occupied by these

who love reading, and who feel that it is a great privation to be diverted from their favorite exercise, should investigate carefully their object. Is it in reading merely to benefit themselves, that they may have an intellectual feast? Even in reading God's word selfishness may come in. You may feast yourselves upon portions of the word which shine with special brightness, and if you make no further use of the blessing, and shut up these precious rays of light to yourselves, your light will become dim, and finally go out.

If God makes you a channel through which to communicate his light, that others may be benefited, be careful how you hide it under a bushel. According to the directions of Christ, the proper course is to set it upon a candlestick, that it may give light to all who are in the house. Better take a portion of the time you devote to reading, and attend to duties that some one must perform. Some must write, that the people of God scattered abroad may be instructed. Have the cogitations of your mind been fruitful upon Bible subjects, or in religious experience, in connection with the work of God? Well, write out these thoughts for the benefit of others who need them. In thus doing, the cause of God can be served as well, and it may be better than by pulpit labor.

When feasting upon God's word, because of the precious light you gather therefrom, present it to others that they may feast with you. But let your communications be free and heartfelt. You can best meet the people where they are, rather than in seeking for lofty words which reach to the third Heavens. The people are not there, but right here in this sorrowing, sinful, corrupt world, battling with the stern realities of life.

Christ came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. He was our example, and God has apportioned to us our work, to minister to the necessities of others, according to the ability he has given us. As we use this ability to the best account, it will increase. Those who do all they can on their part with what God has entrusted to them, and bear their whole weight upon him, he will strengthen them just when strength is required. In thus doing, we give God room to work for us; to teach and lead and impress us, and make us channels through which his light can be communicated to many who are in darkness.

As a people we are surely saying by our works, "My Lord delayeth his coming." Our Lord has given us a fearful caution, not even to say this in "our hearts." With many

the warning is utterly disregarded. Their works, and words, and their life is saying distinctly to others, My Lord delayeth his coming. Say not, unfaithful steward, this concerneth not me, I am a Christian. Was not the evil steward a professed Christian? a forgetful, negligent, slothful steward of his Lord's goods? He was outwardly a steward, a professed Christian. He calls Christ, "My Lord." He believes in the coming of his Lord; but he only says, That coming is delayed. Then he presumes on that delay to use for the gratification of his own appetite and pleasure, his Lord's goods. But his portion is assigned him with hypocrites and unbelievers, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth. I entreat you my brethren to arouse from your sloth, and take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. As a people we are increasing in riches. I am alarmed as I see so little of the spirit of sacrifice. Selfishness and the love of the world is closing up the soul, that the rays of heavenly light cannot penetrate it. As God's stewards, I entreat of you to dispense of your means; lighten the load of care, burden and responsibility which is resting upon you.

Brethren, use your influence to obtain a more extended circulation of the Review. You can do much more than you are doing in obtaining subscribers for the Review. If you would imitate, in this good work, the example of our enemies who publish error, or the example of Satan in his perseverance in circulating slander and falsehood, the list of subscribers would be greatly increased. Let every one go to work earnestly, perseveringly, to see what they can do in interesting others to read. Let all become missionaries; and you who have talents of money, put it out to the exchangers. Invest in the cause of God. Do not, I entreat you, continue to pursue a course of robbery with God.

Some of the brethren who are intrusted with the larger talents, have failed to improve upon them as they should have done. Some have talents of influence, some have talents of means, and others have both talents of influence and money. Upon such, rest weighty responsibilities. We profess to be servants of Jesus Christ. As servants, to us is committed a work. It is not our own means intrusted to us for investment. Were it ours, we might study our pleasure in its use. The capital is the Lord's. We are responsible for its use or abuse. If we bury our talents of influence or money in the earth, and allow them to lie dormant, withholding them from his cause, we shall be condemned when the Master comes to reckon with us, and to require his own, not ours, with usury. He has purchased us with his own sufferings and blood, to secure from us

willing servitude; yet we withhold from him that which is his own. There is a failure upon the part of ministers and people. They withhold from God. They do not use their talents of influence and means to the glory of God. Ministers have not interested themselves in the prosperity of the Review as was their duty. Here is an opportunity to speak to thousands. Those engaged in active labor in the gospel field should understand that all are interested in their mission. They should feel it a privilege and duty to report their meetings, and communicate matters of interest, which would be for the encouragement of God's people scattered abroad.

About one week since, I dreamed of being before a large concourse of people. Those who labor in the Office, also the ministers who are engaged in active labor in the cause and work of God, were present Brethren Smith, Amadon and Gage stood each holding a copy of the Review. They raised it in their hands above the heads of the people to attract their attention. Their countenances expressed interest and anxiety. I felt burdened to speak. I arose, and referred to the important work in which we were engaged, in warning the world to prepare for the coming of the Lord. I stated that this warning message would be a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death; if this message was not received unto salvation, it would prove the condemnation of those who rejected it. How important, then, that the truth be presented in the most attractive light, in the power of the Holy Spirit, which shall have a winning and compelling power upon those who shall come under its influence. I said to the people, Those who minister in word and doctrine, and those who are handling sacred things in the Office, are engaged in the same work. Our work is of the same exalted character; and we should feel a deep interest in the Review, and make it a channel through which the brightest beams of light shall shine forth to the people. That paper is as dear to me as an only son. The Lord would have us all feel an individual interest in the prosperity of the Review. All should feel as deep an interest as they would in an only son.

All who act a part in contributing to the paper, and all who are engaged in the work of selecting articles for it, should have a zealous care that its columns should contain the most precious light. Especially the ministers should arouse. They should feel a special interest in the paper, and if it is not as full of interest as they could wish they should feel that perhaps they have failed to do their duty. When your zeal and interest come up to the right standard the people will feel a deeper interest in liberally sustaining it, and when this is fully done, if the people desire a larger paper, and will sustain it by their means and influence, it will be made just as large as they desire. God's cause will

be strong and triumph if ministers and people will alike show their faith by their works. And it will be weak, and languish, if the ministers and people have small faith and small works.

January 12, 1869

### **A Dream**

While at Battle Creek, about five months since, I dreamed of being with a large body of people. A portion of this assembly started out prepared to journey. We had heavily-loaded wagons. As we journeyed, the road seemed to ascend. On one side of this road was a deep precipice. On the other side was a high, white, smooth wall, like the hard finish upon plastered rooms.

As we journeyed on, the road grew narrower and steeper. Some places in the road seemed very narrow, so much so that we concluded that we could travel no longer with the loaded wagons. We then loosed them from the horses, and took a portion of the luggage from the wagons and placed it upon the horses, and journeyed on horseback.

As we progressed, the path still continued to grow narrow. We were obliged to press close to the wall, in order to save ourselves from falling off the narrow road, down the deep precipice. In doing this, the luggage on the horses pressed against the wall, and caused us to sway toward the precipice. We feared that we should fall, and be dashed in pieces on the rocks.

We then cut the luggage from the horses, which fell over the precipice. We continued, on horseback, greatly fearing as we came to the narrower places in the road, that we should lose our balance, and fall. At such times, a hand seemed to take the bridle and guide us over the perilous way. As the path grew more narrow, we decided that we could go no longer on horseback with safety, and we left the horses and went on foot, in single file, one following in the footsteps of another.

At this point, small cords were let down from the top of the pure white wall, which we eagerly grasped, to aid us in keeping our balance upon the path. As we traveled, the cord moved along with us. The path finally became so narrow that we concluded that we could travel more safely without our shoes; so we slipped them from our feet, and went on some distance without them. Soon it was decided that we could travel more safely without our stockings; these were removed, and we journeyed on with bare feet.

We then thought of those who had not accustomed themselves to privations and hardships. Where were such now? They were not in the company. At every change, some were left behind, and those only remained who had accustomed themselves to endure hardships. The privations of the way only made these more eager to press on to the end. Our danger of falling from the pathway increased. We pressed close to the white wall, yet could not place our feet fully upon the path, for it was too narrow.

We then suspended nearly our whole weight upon the cords, and would exclaim, "We have hold from above! We have hold from above!" The same words were uttered by all the company in the narrow pathway. As we heard the sounds of revelry and mirth that seemed to come from the abyss below, we shuddered. We heard the profane oath, the vulgar jest, and low, vile songs. We heard the war songs and the dance songs. We heard instrumental music, and the loud laugh, mingled with cursing and cries of anguish and bitter wailing, and were more anxious than ever to keep upon the narrow, difficult pathway.

Much of the time we were compelled to suspend our whole weight upon the cords. And these increased in size as we progressed.

I noticed that the beautiful white wall was stained with blood. It caused a feeling of regret to see the wall thus stained. This feeling, however, lasted but for a moment, as I soon thought that it was all as it should be. Those who are following after will know that others have passed the narrow, difficult way before them, and will conclude that if others were able to pursue their onward course, they can do the same. And as the blood should be pressed from their aching feet, they would not faint with discouragement; but, seeing the blood upon the wall, they would know that others had endured the same pain.

At length we came to a large chasm at which our path ended. There was nothing now to guide the feet, nothing upon which to rest them. Our whole reliance must be upon the cords, which had increased in size, until they were as large as our bodies. Here we were for a time thrown into perplexity and distress. We inquired in fearful whispers, "To what is the cord attached?"

My husband was just before me. The large drops of sweat were falling from his brow. The veins in his neck and temples were increased to double their usual size, and



suppressed, agonizing groans came from his lips. The sweat was dropping from my face, and I felt such anguish as I had never felt before. A fearful struggle was before us. If we failed here, all the difficulties of our journey had been experienced for naught. Before us, on the other side of the chasm, was a beautiful field of green grass, about six inches high. I could not see the sun, but bright, soft beams of light, resembling fine gold and silver, were resting on this field. Nothing I had seen upon earth could compare in beauty and glory with this field.

But could we succeed in reaching it? was the anxious inquiry. Should the cord break, we must perish. Again, in whispered anguish, the words were breathed, "What holds this cord?" For a moment we hesitated to venture. Then we exclaimed, "Our only hope is to trust wholly to the cord. It has been our dependence all the difficult way. It will not fail us now." Still we were hesitating and distressed. The words were then spoken, "God holds the cord. We need not fear." These words were then repeated by those behind us, accompanied with, "He will not fail us now. He has brought us thus far safely."

My husband then swung himself over the fearful abyss into the beautiful field beyond. I immediately followed. And oh, what a sense of relief and gratitude to God we felt! I heard voices raised in triumphant praise to God. I was happy, perfectly happy.

I awoke, and found that from the anxiety I had experienced in passing over the difficult route, every nerve on my being seemed to be in a tremor. This dream needs no comment. It made such an impression upon my mind that probably every item in it will be vivid before me while my memory shall continue.

August 17, 1869

**Remarks By Mrs. E. G. White, at the Tent-Meeting in Oakland, July 2, 1869**

I would be glad if I had more strength today. But my trust is in God, that if He has a testimony for me to bear to this people, I shall have strength to bear it before this meeting shall close. I feel the deepest interest in the work and cause of God. It has been a privilege to me, although unable to sit up through the entire meeting, to be present, and to hear what I have heard this afternoon. I feel thankful for this privilege.

August 17, 1869

**Remarks By Mrs. E. G. White, at the Tent-Meeting in Oakland, July 2, 1869**

We have the deepest interest that this meeting, at this time, shall not be in vain. We want to see the work of God prospering. We know that it is a very important time. It is a solemn time. We feel the importance of our people's arousing and awaking, that they may understand the time in which we live. The probation of all of us must soon close. And are we ready for the appearing of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven? Have we the wedding garment on? Or shall we be of that number that shall be left outside because unready? How anxious we are that every one of you should have the wedding garment on. Not the garment of your own righteousness, but the righteousness of Christ; that you should have this on, and so be prepared, that, when the examination of the guests shall take place, you may not be of those that shall be bound hand and foot, and cast out, because unready. It is readiness that we want. It is fitness that we want. And who is ready? To be unready will be an entire failure. To be unready will be an eternal loss. But if we can, in this day of probation, see that we are unready; if we can here see our wretchedness, and our need, and now humble ourselves before God, He will be found of us, and He will work for us mightily. And now is the time for us to begin to work. You that have not entered, heart and soul and spirit, into this work, now is the time for you to engage in it with all your souls. Christ has said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength." Tell me, is any provision made here for a division of your affections? Where is there any chance for your affections to be separated from God, and yet you be acquitted in the day of God? I terribly fear that many that bear the name of Seventh-day Adventists are stumbling-blocks in the way of sinners. They neither enter into the work themselves, and those that would enter in, they hinder by their unconsecrated lives. God forbid that we should go down to death with the blood of souls upon our garments. God forbid that we should stand merely bearing the name of Christians, when we are not sanctified by the truths we profess. God forbid that we at last find that our lives have been an entire failure, an entire mistake, and there appear no soul to whom we can point, as one whom we have been the means of saving, and bringing in through the gates, into the city. Shall it appear finally that we have been wrapped up in our own self-righteousness, all covered up with the spirit and love of the world?

And you that have not sanctified your souls by obeying the truth, do you expect that Christ at His appearing will make you ready? There will then be no atoning blood to wash away the stains of sins. It is while it is called today that you may, if you will, hear His voice, and harden not your heart, as in the day of provocation. It is today that the Spirit of God invites. It is today that the sweet voice of mercy is falling upon your ears. It is today that the heavenly invitation comes to you. It is today that in Heaven everything says, Come. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely.

Will you enter into the work right here at the commencement of the meeting? We have not come here for the amusement of any. We have not come here to gratify the curiosity of any. We have come here thinking that perhaps God, in our weakness, would give us strength to speak a word to the people, and invite them to come, for all things are now ready. The heavenly invitation to the supper has gone forth, and we want you to come. We do not want you, backslidden ones, to wait till the meeting is about closing, and then try to put in for a share. You want the blessing at the very commencement.

Do you want to find Jesus? He is at the feast. You may find Him here. He has come up to the feast. There are men and women that have brought Him with them; and now we want you to press through, and touch the hem of His garment, that you may receive of the virtue that is found in Him, and triumph in the God of your salvation.

The waters of the fountain are freely opened for you; and will you drink? Will you come? Will you obey the gracious invitation? Come, for all things are now ready. Whosoever will, let him come and partake of the waters of life freely. It is now that we want childlike simplicity. We want to see everything like pride, and vanity, and folly, put away. We have the Judgment in view. Men and women will want strength that is greater than any human aid to lean upon. They must lean upon the mighty arm of Jehovah. We have in view that day when the works of men are to be tried, and tested; and we want you to get ready. We make appeals to you, in the name of our Master, to get ready. We make appeals to you to rid yourselves of the pride of the world, the pride, and vanity, and folly, of life. Jesus loves you. Jesus pities you. The angelic host He sends to minister unto you. And now, while all Heaven is interested for you, will you be interested for yourselves? Will you begin to seek God earnestly for your own salvation? Will you work it out with fear and trembling? Will you be careful how you step before

God? Will you have the approbation of him whose arm moves the universe? Give me the smiles of God, and the approving glance of my Redeemer, and I will give you the whole world besides. Let me have one word of approbation from Jesus, and it is enough. I love Him, for in Him my hopes of everlasting life are centered. I love His word and His requirements. I love to do His will. And only let me know what my duty is, and I am ready to perform. It is my meat and drink.

I look a little ahead, and I see a crown of glory that is laid up for us who wait, and love, and long for, the appearing of the Saviour.

It is the waiting ones who are to be crowned with glory, honor, and immortality. You need not talk to me of the honors of the world, or the praise of its great ones. They are all vanity. Let but the finger of God touch them, and they would soon go back to dust again. I want honor that is lasting, honor that is immortal, honor that will never perish; a crown that is richer than any crown that ever decked the brow of a monarch.

Oh! to have the approbation of high Heaven! This is what we want. Let us gain the spirit of humility. Let in a spirit of confession. Do not be so afraid that if you confess your sins, no one will have confidence in you. The apostle says, Pray one for another, and confess one to another, that ye may be healed. You want to let the spirit of humility right in here. You want to find Jesus. We want to triumph in Him here. We want a shout of the King in the camp. But we must first have Him in our midst.

And you who have been hanging on to the skirts of Zion, we want to hear your songs for rejoicing ere this meeting shall close. We want to see you stand in the congregation of the saints, and say, Hear what the Lord has done for me. We want to hear your voices speaking forth the honors of your Redeemer. We want to hear songs of praise from lips that have not sounded His praise for months. We want to hear shouts of victory from those that have been overcome. We want to have the sweet Spirit of Christ come freely into our midst. We want the waters of salvation to flow here. And we want all to take hold of the work together. Shall we take right hold together, and sweet union and love be here, melting, and cementing, and uniting, our hearts together as one? Oh, that here we might triumph in God! Oh, that all you that are here might go home better men and women, and carry a power with you into your families, a saving power into your neighborhoods, a saving power wherever you go. You who engage in your various employments, you want the power of the truth inwrought in your very souls. Not merely

put on; but inwrought in your very being, that you can talk to others as though these things were living realities. Get away from the chilling influence, and spirit of earth. Get a little higher. "Upward to God be the heart's adoration." A little nearer to God, to Jesus, and to angels. Get the heavenly unction; and then you can take it home with you.

March 8, 1870

## **The Law of God**

The world is increasing in sin. The ungodly are rapidly filling up the cup of their iniquity, preparing for retribution from the God of justice. The degeneracy of the race is rapid and fearful. As it was in the days of Noah, thus shall it be when the Son of Man shall be revealed.

Previous to the destruction of the old world by a flood, its inhabitants were reeking in corruption. Sin and crime of every description prevailed. The state of the world now is fast reaching the point when God will say to it, as he did anciently: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." One of the grievous sins existing in this degenerate age of corruption is adultery. This shameful sin is practiced to an alarming extent. The Sabbath and the marriage institution were ordained of God in Eden to be preserved sacred and holy. Both of these institutions of divine appointment have been disregarded and set at naught by men and women, whose hearts are fully set in them to do evil.

But if the transgressors of the seventh commandment were to be found only among those who do not profess to be Christ's followers, the evil would not be a tenth part as great as it now is. But the crime of adultery is largely committed by professed Christians. Both clergymen and laymen, whose names stand fair upon the church record, are alike guilty. Many who profess to be the ministers of Christ are like the sons of Eli who ministered in the sacred office, and took advantage of their office to engage in crime and commit adultery, causing the people to transgress the law of God. A fearful account will such have to render when the cases of all shall pass in review before God, and they be judged according to the deeds done in the body.

Many of this class whose hearts are carnal, take the position that the law of God is abolished. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." They have not been transformed by the renewing of their minds. They are lawless. They profess to be holy, while they are servants of sin. Many of those who teach that the law of God is abolished are lascivious men, fornicators, and adulterers. They are forward to rate against the law of God, and curse

the bondage of the law. Their bitter speeches illy compare with the words of Paul: "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."

Paul in his epistle to Timothy describes the very men who are under the bondage of the law. They are the transgressors of the law. He names them lawless, disobedient, sinners, unholy, profane, murderers, adulterers, liars, and all who depart from sound doctrine. 1 Timothy 1:9, 10.

The law of God is the mirror to show man the defects in his character. But it is not pleasant to those who take pleasure in unrighteousness to see their moral deformity. They do not prize this faithful mirror, because it reveals to them their sins. Therefore, instead of instituting a war against their carnal minds, they war against the true and faithful mirror, given them by Jehovah for the very purpose that they may not be deceived, but that they may have revealed to them the defects in their character. Should the discovery of these defects lead them to hate the mirror, or to hate themselves? Should they put away the mirror which discovers these defects? No; the sins which they cherish, which the faithful mirror shows them as existing in their characters, will close before them the portals of Heaven, unless they are put away, and they become perfect before God.

Listen to the words of the faithful apostle: "By the law is the knowledge of sin." These men who are zealous to abolish the law, had far better manifest their zeal in abolishing their sins. Adultery is one of the terrible sins of this age. This sin exists among professed Christians of every class; but is found to exist to the greatest extent among those who war against the law of Jehovah.

Christians are called to lay their bodies a living sacrifice upon the altar of God. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

If the bodies professedly laid upon the altar of God should pass that scrutiny that was given the Jewish sacrifice, how few would stand the test, and be pronounced perfect



before God, preserved unto holiness, free from the taints of sin or pollution. No lame sacrifice could God receive. No injured or diseased sacrifice would God accept. The offering given to God was required to be sound, in every respect without blemish, and valuable.

None can glorify God in their body, as he requires, while they are living in transgression of the law of God. If the body violates the seventh commandment, it is through the dictation of the mind. If the mind is impure the body will naturally engage in impure acts. Purity cannot exist in the soul of one who yields his body to impure acts. If the body is serving lust, the mind cannot maintain consecration to God. To preserve a sanctified mind, the body must be preserved in sanctification and honor. The mind will then serve the law of God, and yield willing obedience to all its claims. Then, with the apostle, such can yield their members as instruments of righteousness unto God. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lust thereof." The freedom which the apostle describes as the privilege of Christ's followers will never be experienced by those who delight to trample under foot the law of God. The freedom and blessedness expressed in the following words, will be experienced by that class who yield obedience to the law of Jehovah: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." The apostle charges the Galatians to "walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lust of the flesh." He farther states: "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

But those who would delight to have the law done away, would delight in sin. Their carnal hearts are not in unison with that law which the apostle declares to be holy, just, and good. Paul inquires, "Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said referring to one of the ten commandments, Thou shalt not covet." Saul did not commence a raid against the law in order to justify a life of sin; but when his mind was enlightened in regard to the claims of the law of God, he saw himself a sinner, a transgressor of the law. His sins were brought before him, and what was the result? Did he commence a tirade against the law which showed him that he was a transgressor? Is it in his heart to crucify that law? Oh no! he crucified the carnal mind which rises in enmity against the law of God. "Sin revived," says Paul, "and I," not the law, "died." Oh! when will professed Christians awake to see the brink of the precipice they are standing upon in refusing to acknowledge the claims of the law of God?

The Lord made man upright; but he has fallen, and become degraded, because he refuses to yield obedience to the sacred claims which the law of God has upon him. All the passions of man, if properly controlled and rightly directed, will contribute to his physical and moral health, and insure to him a great amount of happiness. The adulterer, the fornicator, and the incontinent, do not enjoy life. There can be no true enjoyment for the transgressor of God's law. The Lord knew this, therefore he restricts man. He directs, commands, and he positively forbids.

But many are so far deceived by the devil that they think that they themselves can excel the great God in providing ways and means for human happiness. They charge their unhappiness to the prohibitions contained in the law of the ten commandments; and if they can in any way feel released from the claims of the law of God, they will be free and happy indeed.

Many will not search the Scriptures for themselves. They remain in willing ignorance of the origin and perpetuity of the law of the ten commandments. They trust to the researches of others to settle this matter for them. Blind leaders say, "You need not keep the law of God, for it is not binding. It is a yoke of bondage." And the willingly ignorant are blind, led by the blind. Neither are guiltless. God has provided for them in his law a mirror, that they may see their true character. Does it improve their condition to break this faithful looking-glass, because it reveals to them their defects? The work they should engage in is to put away sin, and every impurity, and work righteousness. Their remaining in willing ignorance of the claims of the law of God will not shield them from the penalty to be inflicted in consequence of its violation.

The Lord well knew that the happiness of his children depends upon their submission to his authority, and living in obedience to this holy, just and good rule of government. Man may pass on awhile, and conceal the fact that he is an adulterer; yet God has His eye upon him. He marks the man. He cannot conceal his crimes from God. He may apparently conduct himself properly before his family, and before the community, and be esteemed as a good man. But does he deceive himself in thinking there is not knowledge with the Most High? He is exposing his corruption to the view of the Majesty of Heaven. He who is high and lifted up, and the train of whose glory fills the temple, sees and knows, even the thoughts, and the intents and purposes of the heart of the transgressor who is debasing himself in the sight of the pure, sinless angels, who

are recording all the acts of the children of men. And not only is his sin seen, but it is marked by the recording angel.

The transgressor of God's law may pass on for a time without exposure; but, sooner or later, he will find himself overtaken, exposed, and condemned. Whoever dares to violate the law of God will experience for himself that "the way of the transgressor is hard." The opposition and willing ignorance in regard to the law of God, is the reason so few feel that they are under moral obligation. They despise the law which was the instrument that slew Paul. They cannot say with him, I die; but they earnestly strive to live, while they cry, Death to the law!

This is virtually their testimony. The commandment came, sin revived; the law died, and the carnal mind lived. This is the order with the transgressor. Their spiritual powers are benumbed. Eternal things are not discerned. Their works are carnal, and their example is corrupting.

Sin does not appear as sinful, unless viewed in the truthful mirror God has given them as a test of character. When men and women acknowledge the claims of the law of God, and plant their feet upon this platform of eternal truth, they will stand where the Lord can give them moral power to let their light so shine before men that they may see their good works, and glorify our Father who is in Heaven.

Their course will be marked with consistency. They will not justly earn the charge of hypocrisy and sensualism. Then man can preach Christ with power, being imbued with his Spirit. They can utter truths which will melt and burn their way to the hearts of the people. They have moral force, for they are in harmony with the moral law, and their words proceed from pure hearts, and from clean lips.

March 29, 1870

### **Practical Remarks**

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Matthew 6:33, 34.

We feel a deep interest for the people of God. We are anxious that they should rightly estimate the important truths for these last days, and have correct views in reference to the characters they must develop in order to obtain the redemption promised the faithful and perfect. We would that all felt a deeper interest in regard to their own salvation and that of their fellow-men. We wish that all would regard the work of repentance, faith, and devotion, as essential to the formation of their religious characters.

It is apparent that but few have any just sense of the solemnity of the time in which we live, and the important work to be accomplished in this time. The Judgment is just before us, and yet personal, selfish interest in temporal things, engages the time and attention, and eternal things are not discerned. Eternal interests are made secondary. This is the great cause of the lack of spirituality, of courage, of godliness, and of living faith, among God's people. They do not seem to possess that faith and confidence in God that should be expected of men and women who profess to be Christians waiting for the appearing of their Lord. They are not willing to surrender all for Christ, and thus comply with God's requirements. They hesitate to invest much in his work and in his cause. When we consider that that God who gave us life, and who has surrounded us with his rich blessings, has the first claim upon our attention, we shall withdraw our love and affection from this world and from all earthly treasures, and center them upon God. Our best and holiest affections should be devoted to him. When controlled by his Spirit, there will be no danger of their being perverted or misplaced. Their influence will lead others to purity and a holy life.

Eternal things should awaken our interest, and should be regarded, in comparison with temporal things, as of infinite importance. God requires of us to make it our first

business to attend to the health and prosperity of the soul. We should know that we are enjoying the favor of God, that he smiles upon us, and that we are his children indeed, and in a position where he can commune with us, and we with him. We should not be at rest until we are in that position of lowliness and meekness that he can safely bless us, and we be brought into a sacred nearness with God, where his light may shine upon us, and we reflect that light to all around us. But we cannot do this unless we are earnestly striving ourselves to live in the light. This God requires of all his followers, not merely for their own good, but also for the benefit of others around them.

We cannot let our light shine out to others, so as to attract their attention to heavenly things, unless we have the light in us. We must be imbued with the Spirit of Jesus Christ, or we cannot manifest to others that Christ is in us the hope of glory. We must have an indwelling Saviour, or we cannot exemplify in our lives his life of devotion, his love, his gentleness, his pity, his compassion, his self-denial, and purity. This is what we earnestly desire. This should be the study of our lives, How shall I conform my character to the Bible standard of holiness?

If we are put to great inconvenience in regard to our temporal arrangements in order to attain this exalted position, which God requires us to meet, we should not hesitate or complain. Christ sacrificed his majesty, his splendor, his glory, and his honor, and for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. He condescended to a life of humiliation. He was subjected to scorn. He was despised and rejected of men. He bore insult and mockery, and a most painful death in the most shameful manner, in order that he might exalt and save the fallen sons and daughters of Adam from hopeless misery. In view of this unparalleled sacrifice and mysterious love manifested for us by our Redeemer, shall we withhold from God our entire service, which at the best is so feeble? Shall we use selfishly, for business, or pleasure, the time which is necessary for us to devote to religious exercises, to the study of the Scriptures, and to self-examination and prayer? Said the divine Teacher, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." We must devote time to the study of the Scriptures. A mere casual reading of them is not enough. We should investigate, and pray that our understanding may be quickened to comprehend the teachings of the precious word of God. Our Saviour continues his words, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." The life principle is found in Christ.

We cannot obtain a growth in grace and a knowledge of the divine will unless we give especial attention to these essential duties. Our spiritual strength will languish without these precious aids. We should greatly dishonor God, if we devoted the strength of brain, bone, and muscle, to the meager object of obtaining the things of the present life, which cannot secure to us the life which is to come, which will measure with the life of God.

I feel deeply in this matter. The truths you have been listening to from God's servants so attentively, are realities to me. They are not idle tales. The scenes of this earth's history are rapidly passing, and our probation is soon to close. Many of us who profess to be Christians are unready, and have not the preparation required to meet that fearful day, when in Heaven it shall be said, "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." It is for us to bend all our energies to obtain the necessary preparation for that important time. We profess that we are preparing for a better country. Our faith says that we are merely passing through this land as pilgrims and strangers. We are not fellow citizens here. We are not dwellers upon the earth; because as a snare shall the day of the Lord come upon all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. We have not built our hopes here, in this world. Our actions have testified to our faith, that in Heaven is our enduring substance. Our manners and our actions should all be living preachers to testify that the things of this life are of minor consequence; that they must pass away, and that the things of the kingdom of God, the treasures that are reserved for the faithful overcomers, outweigh every earthly consideration, and every earthly treasure.

To live thus, demands vigor of spirit to fight the fight of faith. Practical religion carries with it energy and perseverance. Its operations are manifested in meekness, love, humbleness of mind, in self-denial and disinterested benevolence. Our Heavenly Father weighs the purposes and intentions of the heart. If the greater amount of your strength, anxiety, and interest, is employed to serve yourselves and your families, and for the purpose of carrying forward your worldly enterprises, how can you testify to an unbelieving world that the truths you believe are a reality? How do you show to others that your faith is genuine, and that you really believe that the end of all things is at hand?

It is impossible for men to have this belief and not express it and show this faith

by their works. It is impossible for them to feel the worth of souls for whom Christ died, and to believe in his speedy coming, if their interest is devoted to acquiring, and their strength wholly spent in caring for, the things of this world.

"For we are made a spectacle unto the world, to angels, and to men." God requires us to rise above the world, and breathe the atmosphere of Heaven. Then can you give to Jesus the unreserved devotion of your heart, and the entire obedience of your life. It is not enough for you to pray with your families, and devote a little time to religious exercises in meeting. Is this all that God claims? He requires the whole heart--the undivided affections. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself."

Men and women put forth energy in serving themselves. They are earnest, and frequently endure much suffering, in laboring very hard to attain some earthly benefit, some worldly object. They exhaust themselves in the pursuit of worldly treasures so that it is impossible for them to render to God the service he requires, and will accept. It is almost impossible for some to keep from falling asleep when the exercise is changed from the service of self and the world, to the service of God. Some seem to have no power to keep their eyes open in meeting. Satan seems to mesmerize them when important truths are presented. Their vitality was exhausted in laboring for temporal things. They left their strength in the harvest field or in their several avocations to secure the things of this life. But few realize that, in thus doing, they are sustaining an eternal loss. God does not accept their lame, sickly, inefficient sacrifice. Therefore, you hear these men complaining of doubts and of darkness. They have no real happiness. They have no experience in the things of God, and can relate no deep and earnest exercises of mind. They suppose that they are Christians. They know not that their Redeemer liveth by actual experience. His love and grace do not brighten into higher, holier perfection their Christian character, giving them a glorious triumph amid the buffeting of Satan and the sorrows and trials of this life. This might be their experience if they would comply with the requirements of God's word.

Eternal things should be of the first importance, and of as much greater consequence than earthly things, as Heaven is higher than the earth. Yet how often is the strength exhausted in obtaining earthly treasures. Men and women who profess to be followers of Christ, do not take time to seek the Lord. He has promised that if they

would seek him, he would be found of them. Oh! that Christ's professed followers would live in such a manner before the world that they would be constrained to acknowledge their sincerity because their works testify to their faith. When unbelievers see that Christ's professed followers deny their faith by their unconsecrated lives, the truths they profess and advocate, seem to them like idle tales.

Missionaries are wanted. We wish you all possessed a living, missionary spirit. You need not, in order to become missionaries, go to California or to Europe. You have work to do in your own families and in your neighborhoods. If your works have not been in accordance with your faith where you are best known, so that you are in good repute with those that are without, you are not the men upon whom God will place the burden of a work for more distant localities and foreign missions. Do you feel the importance and the burden, so that you will introduce the truth to your best friends and those with whom you associate from day to day? Are you missionaries in your neighborhoods, and in your own families? Are you seeking to have a deep work of reformation going forward where you are best known? Is your life such as to give you influence at home with your families and workmen? You can hang up the charts, and show them the truth, as it is there illustrated. You can teach them, if you have a mind thus to do, by explaining prophetic history, and tracing down prophecies, that the end of all things is at hand. You can impress them with the sacredness of the law of God, and show them its claims upon them.

Many have been converted to the truth by working with men who judiciously gave them precept backed up by example. We are not to use the truth as a club to beat our neighbors with. We should follow the injunction of the inspired apostle, "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves." By wisdom and meekness you may win souls to Christ and to the truth. But some, instead of doing this work, make their own business of the highest consequence. They are conversing upon their temporal business, and they are urging all to energy, that they may obtain the greatest amount of labor. This is their first great burden of interest from morning until noon, and from noon until night. All through the day their deportment and actions say to their workmen, My farm is my God and of more value to me than the truth or the salvation of your souls. The day's record passes above, and "wanting" is written against that man's name. He professes to be a servant of Jesus Christ, but has served only his own interest. He is an unfaithful servant. You are surrounded with men and women who will appear in the judgment against you. They will say, "You believed these things, and why did you not



tell me? Your houses and lands were of more interest to you, than my soul's salvation.

It is displeasing to God for any who profess to love him to work so hard with their hands and brains in their own business as to unfit themselves to render to God that service which comes from a fervent spirit. Christians should not make it a practice to urge their families to work until their energy is exhausted, and there is no vitality left to devote to the service of God, who requires soul, body, mind, and strength. If you employ the powers of your entire being to serve your own interest, what have you reserved to offer to God? Is it not a lame sacrifice? "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Time is well spent that is devoted to the instruction of your children. You may be living, acceptable missionaries for God, and yet be mechanics, merchants, and farmers. You can engage in the work of your Master with all your souls, and let your light shine to others. May the Lord arouse you, is my prayer, to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added. How do you prove God? Have you not made all the provisions it was possible for you to make? Have you not looked far into the future to arrange for your supposed future wants? Have you not taken thought for the morrow, and is not your salvation made secondary? You do not attend to things of eternal moment; but are looking years into the future, to provide for your families.

But what says our Lord? "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek;) for your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his

righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

The words of our Saviour here quoted need no comment. They are sufficiently plain to be understood by all who sincerely desire to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, and attain to Christian perfection. It is not necessary to possess a powerful intellect to comprehend the words of important instruction which fell from the lips of the divine Teacher. Those thus endowed may overlook the valuable lesson here given, because of its simplicity and clearness, while a follower of Christ, even if feeble in intellect, may be better prepared to grasp these precious words of Christ, and comprehend his illustrations drawn from the objects he is familiar with. He tries to follow the teachings of Christ, and his heart is set on heavenly things. The bent of his mind and heart proves his sincerity. The simple faith and trust in God of this man is more acceptable to God than the brilliant intellect and the most eminent talents with lack of sincerity, and faith and trust in God. The Master, in the reckoning day, will not ask, How much have you known? or professed?, or talked? but, How much have you loved? and where was your heart? Was it above, or beneath? A heart set upon Heaven is a heart set upon God. Learning is no proof of the grace of God in the heart. If the affections and heart are upon earth's treasure, they are constantly tempting the Devil to tempt them. The heart that is earnestly seeking and contemplating heavenly things, is fortified against lustful ambitions and worldly desires.

The men of the world are dwellers upon the earth. They know no other conversation but earthly. They are blinded by the god of this world. Moles are ever burrowing in the earth. They cannot see. So is the understanding of world-loving men darkened. Many professed Christians are no better. Their affections are on earthly things. They view the truth and heavenly things from the worldling's stand-point. They mistake gain for godliness, sin for grace, the world for God, and their own wills for the will of God. There are more of this class than many suppose. Moses esteemed "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible."

How can God be glorified in the life of that professed follower of his, who does not set his affections on things above, but condescends to keep company with, and

enjoy the society of, his open enemies? The aspirations of the heart are for earthly gain. The things which are seen, and which are temporal, engross the attention, and God is forgotten.

Christians should be careful that they keep the heart with all diligence. They should cultivate a love for meditation, and cherish a spirit of devotion. Many seem to begrudge moments spent in meditation, and the searching of the Scriptures, and prayer, as though the time thus occupied was lost. I wish you could all view these things in the light God would have you; for you would then make the kingdom of Heaven of the first importance. To keep your heart in Heaven, will give vigor to all your graces, and put life into all your duties. To discipline the mind to dwell upon heavenly things, will put life and earnestness into all our endeavors. Our efforts are languid, and we run the Christian race slowly, and manifest indolence and sloth, because we so little value the heavenly prize. We are dwarfs in spiritual attainments. It is the privilege and duty of the Christian to be "increasing in the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." As exercise increases the appetite, and gives strength and healthy vigor to the body, so will devotional exercises bring an increase of grace and spiritual vigor.

The affections should center upon God. Contemplate his greatness, his mercy and excellences. Let his goodness and love and perfection of character captivate your heart. Converse upon His divine charms, and the heavenly mansions He is preparing for the faithful. He whose conversation is in Heaven, is the most profitable Christian to all around him. His words are useful and refreshing. They have a transforming power upon those who hear them, and will melt and subdue the soul.

We allow the trials and sorrows of earth to so overcome us that we have but little strength to press through the clouds of darkness to the eternal reward. The contemplation of heavenly things will revive our drooping faith, increase our courage and perseverance, and render our trials and sufferings far more easy. It will enable us to bear them with patience and joy. Says Paul: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." When a Christian draws his life from above, and strengthens his soul with the contemplation of things that are unseen, God is honored, because he takes him at his word. He believes

the promise, and it is accounted unto him for righteousness.

If such an amount of time is required to make preparations for the wants of the body for this short life, how much time do you consider will be required for spiritual exercises, in order to perfect Christian character, that you may be counted worthy of the better life which is eternal? Do you think a fitness for a pure and holy Heaven comes along naturally, without special effort on your part? Great preparation has been made by our heavenly King, in our Father's house, for the saints of God; and a great preparation have we to make to attain purity of character and a moral fitness for the home of sacred bliss to which we shall be introduced if we are found worthy. Therefore let us aspire after the heavenly life. Withdraw your thoughts from worldly things; for they will benumb your affections and pollute your soul. Learn daily of Him who has invited you to be meek and lowly, and you will find rest to your soul. Christ is our consolation and our strength. We are not required to labor, or to employ our thoughts, more than we now do; but to change the current of these thoughts and labors, and employ as many serious thoughts every day upon our salvation, and how we may show ourselves approved unto God, and have our conversation upon His excellent glory and the life to come, as we now devote to worldly affairs and things that are of no profit. A transformation is required of us, a renewing of the mind, that we may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.

April 12, 1870

### **Practical Remarks**

We have been listening to pointed truths pressed home to the heart by the Spirit of God. Some professed followers of Christ may be inclined to say, as did the disciples at a certain time as they listened to the earnest truths which fell from the lips of the divine Teacher, "This is an hard saying, who can hear it?" Many may think that the way is made too straight; when we talk of self-denial, and sacrifice for Christ's sake, they think we dwell too much on these points. You would prefer to hear us speak of the Christian's reward. We know that those who are faithful will inherit all things; but the great question with us should be, "Who may abide the day of his coming; and who shall stand when he appeareth?" Who shall be counted worthy to receive the exceeding great and precious reward that shall be given to the overcomers? Those who shall be partakers of Christ's sufferings, will be sharers with him of his glory.

Without holiness, the word of God tells us, no man can see the Lord. Without purity of life it is impossible for us to be fitted and prepared to dwell with the holy and sinless angels in a pure and holy Heaven. No sin can be there. No impurity can enter the pearly gates of the golden city of God. And the question for us to settle is, whether we will turn from all sin and comply with the conditions God has given us, that we may become his sons and daughters. Separation from the world he requires of us in order to become members of the royal family.

The light has been given us showing us the path plain and distinct that we might not err therein, if we will only study the chart which points out the way. But while many of us profess to be Christians, we fail to make the word of God the man of our counsel; we fail to make it our guide; we do not study its pages and acquaint ourselves with the principles contained in its sacred record.

If we would only study the truths of God's word, and do his will, we should know of the doctrine; we should not be ignorant of the important truths for this time. We believe without a doubt that Christ is soon to come; and believing this we feel a necessity upon us to plead with men and women to prepare for the coming of the Son of Man. We do not want that any of you should be of that number who shall call for rocks

and mountains to fall on them to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. We want you rather to be of that number who shall enter in through the gates into the city, who shall have an abundant entrance, and shall have right to the tree of life, and shall eat of its immortal fruit and pluck of its healing leaves. We want you to be of that company that shall bow before the throne of God crying, "Worthy, worthy, worthy, is the Lamb that was slain for us." We want you to be praising God with immortal tongues, and be saved with an everlasting salvation; and, therefore, we warn you to flee from the wrath to come. We plead with you to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord. It is perfection that is required; and nothing short of perfection will enable you to see the King in his beauty.

When you are all ready, having overcome your sins, having put away all your iniquity from you, you are in a condition to receive the finishing touch of immortality. Many are waiting and expecting that a more favorable opportunity than the present time will come when they can put away sin more easily than now; and when it will not require so great humility and sacrifice on their part, and they will not have to make the effort they are required to make at the present time to perfect holiness in the fear of God. I fear that while they are thus waiting for the better time, their probation may close and they be found in their sins. For the sentence is to go forth: "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." This may be spoken in Heaven in your case, and the work for you will have been done, and you lost, eternally lost.

It will not be safe for you to wait for a better time to come. It is while it is called today. If any man will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. It is to listen today to the invitation of mercy. It is to yield your pride, your folly, your vanity, and make an entire surrender of your heart to God. Come to him with your talents and all the influence you have, and lay all these without reserve at the feet of Him who died on Calvary's cross to redeem you. His head wore the crown of thorns; and they were pressed into his sacred temples, and sent the blood trickling down his face and beard. He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him. He was smitten and afflicted, and it was for you and me he thus suffered. And while you stand without moral courage to take your position, and to gird the armor of righteousness about you, you are manifesting cowardice which should make you ashamed. He has made provision whereby you can stand amid the perils of this age.

Your grasp should be fastened upon the eternal, and you realize that you have the strength that is mighty to cling to, which will be to you a stronghold and fortress in the day of trouble, affliction, and peril. But will that better time and that more favorable opportunity ever come to those who would say to the Spirit of God, as did Felix, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee? Is the opportunity ever to come when we can leave sin any more easily than at the present moment? Is the time coming when we can take hold of the truth any more easily than now? Satan has come down with great power, and is working with great activity to weave his net around unguarded souls and thereby take them captive in his snares, that they may not be partakers of the glories that are to be revealed at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

Are we willing that Satan should carry out his purposes? Many yield themselves willingly to his influence, and by their course of action tempt the devil to tempt them. It is for us to make an effort to turn from iniquity, to the living God. In Christ's sermon on the mount, in the lesson he there gave his disciples, he says, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." Perfection in our position is what the Son of God requires. "Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" The life he speaks of here, is that life which measures with the life of God, the life that is to be eternal, a life forevermore in the kingdom of glory, without sorrow, without pain, without sickness, without distress, and without death.

As he thus presents eternal life to his followers, is it not of more consequence to them than the life of this world? Your attention should not be turned in the direction of anxiety, fear, and solicitude, in regard to your meat and drink, and the clothing you are to put upon these bodies. Is not the better life to be sought after with far greater carefulness, and we engage in the work with greater earnestness than we should in making unnecessary preparations for this life? While we are engaged almost wholly in the preparation for this life, we are losing the opportunity of gaining eternal life. But can we not invest more in this enterprise of everlasting life than in the things of this short life? We may gather, and gather, and lay up our treasures upon earth, but they are only a snare to us. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures

in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

Why does the Saviour, the prince of life, who has given his own life for us, say, Lay not up treasures upon earth? He explains: "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." While you are laying up treasure here, you will be forgetting the treasure above, forgetting that you are only passing through this world as strangers and pilgrims; therefore you are not to lay up your treasure upon earth, but lay up your treasure above. It is safe there, and nothing will ever deprive you of your treasures.

But here you build your happiness, here you study how you can have fine and goodly houses, how you can add field to field, and treasure to treasure; and while you are doing this, brain, bone, and muscle, are taxed to the utmost to secure your earthly treasure, and you have no time to serve God, you have no time to spend in seeking for Heaven, you have no time to devote to repentance, and the separating of your sins from you, and becoming perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect.

This perfection we must reach. Should I tell you that you need not be very earnest, you need not be very active, the Lord is pleased to have you enjoy the things of this life, therefore you may be as calm and moderate in religious things as you choose, and while you are thus doing you will be gaining everlasting life, I should be telling you things not written in this book.

I want to exhort you to pray always. There is no resting spot here; there is no period when you can relax your efforts, no period when you can safely cease striving, agonizing, to enter in at the strait gate. It is positively dangerous to fasten your affections upon the things of this world, and devote your time to your own sinful gratification. You idolize self, and make this world your God. There is no period when you can do this with safety. While you are thus engaged disease may be feeling after your heart-strings, and death may be on your track. Your probation may close and you be unsaved. Do you think when the Lord shall come in the clouds of heaven, in the glory of his Father, with the holy retinue of angels, that he will give to you probation, that you may have another opportunity to form your characters for Heaven? Is it to give you time to obtain moral fitness to enter the kingdom of glory? No opportunity is granted you then. It is then too late. No atoning blood then pleads in your behalf to wash away the stain of sin. Just as you then are, you will remain. Just as you fall, so you must



come up in the resurrection. And if you are living when the Son of Man is revealed, just as you are then found when he shall appear, if unready, so you must remain. The impure cannot then obtain perfection of Christian character. No work of purification can then be performed.

Opportunity is now given you to improve and become perfect this side of the Judgment. You must obtain a moral fitness here to meet your God. You should be right, just right, if you wish to obtain an entrance in through the gates of the holy city of God. Should your probation close today and you be brought just as you are this moment to the gate of the city, and it should open before you, and the rays of light that emanate from the throne of God should beam forth upon you, could you endure it? Could you bear it, in your sins and in your iniquity and imperfection? Could you enjoy that sacred and divine light? Not for a moment. You would drop as powerless as the Roman guard, who watched around the sepulcher of Jesus Christ, when the angels there descended to resurrect the Son of God. As that light fell upon the Roman guard, they became as dead men. They fell to the earth. They could not endure the light from Heaven, which was reflected from one mighty angel. Neither can you unless you have a fitness for it here. Could you be brought through the gates into the holy city, your probation closed and sins upon you, pride, folly, envy, evil surmisings, lustful passions, covetousness and these evil things, and gaze upon sinless angels, who never have fallen, never been in disobedience and transgression, and behold in every countenance the light of the glory of God as it shineth in the face of Jesus Christ, and see the redeemed saints that have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, how would you feel? You hear a voice inquire, Who are these? And the answer is given, These are they which have come up through great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

You look around and see those that have made a covenant with God by sacrifice. You then behold yourself. Impurity is upon you. Your garments are defiled with pollution of the world. Sin has left its disgusting impress upon your countenance. You cannot endure the glory and light. And you would say, Anywhere but here to be pained with this glory and beauty and loveliness. You could not endure it. You were not worthy. No, you were not ready for it, and you could not dwell there. You would rather be anywhere else. You would prefer that rocks and mountains should fall upon you and hide you from the unbearable glory that you behold everywhere.

Says Christ, Agonize to enter in at the strait gate; for many I say unto you shall seek to enter in and shall not be able. It requires an effort; and while we may talk, and plead, and entreat men and women, some may feel as amused as though it was a mere idle tale. They may feel as did those to whom Noah preached warning them that the flood was coming upon the earth. They could laugh and ridicule. They would say, How can God destroy this world that he has made so beautiful? We do not believe it. Nevertheless the waters of the flood came, notwithstanding their unbelief, and they were washed away, and the world was cleansed of its moral pollution.

Now, as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the day when the Son of Man shall be revealed. These things will seem to many like idle tales, nevertheless they are true, and without preparation, without readiness, without moral fitness, you can have no place in the kingdom of glory.

We see beauty, and loveliness, and glory in Jesus. We behold in him matchless charms. He was the majesty of Heaven. He filled all Heaven with splendor. Angels bowed in adoration before him, and readily obeyed his commands. Our Saviour gave up all. He laid aside his glory, his majesty, and splendor, and came down to this earth and died for a race of rebels, who were transgressors against his Father's commandments. Christ condescended to humble himself that he might save the fallen race; he drank the cup of suffering, and in its place offers us the cup of blessing; yes, that cup was drained for us; and although many know all this, yet they choose to go on in sin and folly; and still Jesus invites them. He says, Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely. Provision is made that those who have been faithful may be crowned with honor, and glory, and immortality; that they may dwell in his presence, and never know sorrow and sighing more. He has engaged to crown you with glory, and yet you turn away from His offers of mercy!

What ingratitude is manifest for all his matchless love. He invites all to come to him. Will you come?

The truths of God's word must be brought to bear upon us, and we must lay hold upon them. If we do this, they will have a sanctifying influence upon our lives; they will fit us that we may have a preparation for the kingdom of glory; that when our probation shall close, we may see the King in His beauty, and dwell in His presence forevermore.

And now the question is, are we willing to make the sacrifice? "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." Who said this? Thus said God, the creator of the heavens and the earth, He who lends you life and breath; He speaks to you. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." What a promise is this!

And do you think that by embracing the truth of God you are degrading yourself? that you are lowering yourself by embracing the truth of heavenly origin? The truth elevates the receiver every time. It sanctifies his taste, it refines his judgment, it elevates him, and by enabling him to perfect holiness, it brings him nearer to the character of the heavenly angels. It brings purity of character and purity of life, and gives a fitness that we may join the heavenly company in the kingdom of glory. Without this fitness, we can never see the heavenly abode. And yet many say of the truth, that it takes from them everything that they desire to keep. Let me say, It takes from you nothing that it is best for you to retain.

What does the Lord require? He requires the whole heart. He says, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself. What chance does this give you to love and serve self? What allowance for the affections to be diverted from God, to have your interest upon the world and worldly things? No; it is an entire surrender that is required. Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and I will receive you.

It is the strength of the entire being that God requires. He requires of you a separation from the world and the things of the world. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." It is separation from the love of the world that is required; and what is given you in its place? "I will be a father unto you." Do you have to separate in your affections from friends? Does the truth require you to stand alone in your position to serve God, because others around you are not willing to yield to the claims that Christ has upon them? Does it require a separation in feeling from them? Yes; and this is the cross which you must bear, which leads many to say, I cannot yield to the claims of the truth. But says Christ, If any man love father, or mother, or brother, or sister, more than me, he is not worthy of me. Whosoever will come after me, and will be my disciple, let him take up his cross and follow me. Here is the cross of self-denial and sacrifice; to

separate in your affections here from those who will not yield to the claims of truth. Is this too great a sacrifice to make for Him who sacrificed all for you? Here are the conditions specified by God. If we comply, he says to us, I will be a father unto you, and will receive you, and ye shall be sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King, and heirs of an immortal inheritance that is incorruptible, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you. What a relationship is this? Do you call this degrading? Do you call this a position that shall lower you or detract from your dignity and bring you down to a low level in life? Do you call this humiliation? Do you call this a great sacrifice, to become members of the royal family and children of the heavenly King, elevated by the truths of God, fitted up for the society of heavenly angels in the kingdom of glory? What is this, in truth? It is true exaltation. It is that which will ennoble every time. The truth of God is ennobling, it is elevating, it is refining, it is sanctifying. Tell me not of any exaltation out of Jesus Christ.

When man was plunged in hopeless misery, when death was his portion, Christ left the majesty, splendor, and glory, of the heavenly kingdom, and humbled himself to a life of unexampled suffering and humiliation, and an ignominious death, that he might become a stepping-stone for man, that he might climb up upon his merits, and by virtue of his blood become enabled so to serve God, that he could accept his efforts to keep his broken law, and through obedience, man could thus be brought back again and reinstated in Eden, and share again in the glory that was at first given to the holy pair as they stood in the perfection of beauty, and in their holy innocence, in the garden of Eden. This was to be given back to Adam and his faithful children, who through the merits of the blood of Christ should be washed and sanctified and made worthy to be brought back to eat of the immortal fruit of the tree of life that Adam and Eve forfeited all right to by disobedience. If we then refuse to accept of Christ as our Saviour, are we in an exalted position? No, indeed; we are just where Adam and Eve were after their transgression, degraded, fallen, and without a Saviour; just where they would have remained had they not accepted Jesus Christ as their Redeemer.

Sinners, without God you are in this helpless condition, without hope in the world, in sin, in the bonds of iniquity and vileness and corruption; and yet your words imply that you consider it a great condescension to grasp the chain of truth that is let down from Heaven to earth, that you may take hold upon it and be brought nearer to Heaven and Jesus Christ. Do you call this condescension? Do you call this a

humiliation? There are no other means of true exaltation. There is no provision made for man only through Jesus Christ whereby he may be exalted. You may talk of the honors of this world. But look at Moses. He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Here he had the privilege of living in kings' houses. He was a mighty warrior, and went forth with the armies of the Egyptians to battle; and when they returned from their successful conquest, they everywhere sung of His praise and His victories. The highest honors of the world were within his grasp; but he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy these honors and the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of reward. He could look right through the cloud of affliction, persecution, and trials, and see the ransomed people of God, by faith, crowned with glory, honor, and everlasting life. He chose in this present life to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. He esteemed the riches of the coming kingdom of glory greater than the riches of Egypt.

In like manner we have fixed our minds upon the exceeding great and precious reward; and, in order to obtain it, we must have a perfect character. The angels of God are watching the development of character. Angels of God are weighing moral worth; and we are to obtain a fitness here to join the society of sinless angels. Do you expect that when Christ comes he will give you that fitness? Not at all. You must be found of him without spot, without blemish, or wrinkle, or anything like it. Now is the watching and trying time. Now it is the time to obtain a preparation to abide the day of his coming, and to stand when he appeareth. Do you say that you cannot do it because around you are so much sin and iniquity and corruption? I refer you to Enoch. He lived just previous to the world's being washed from its moral pollution, by a flood. He was on the earth at the time when corruption was teeming on every hand; and yet he bore the impress of the divine. He walked with God three hundred years; and he was not, for God took him, that is, translated him to Heaven. The flaming chariots of God were sent for this holy man, and he was borne to Heaven. Enoch had the witness that he pleased God. And this witness we can have.

Enoch represents those who shall remain upon the earth and be translated to Heaven without seeing death. He represents that company that are to live amid the perils of the last days, and withstand all the corruption, vileness, sin, and iniquity, and yet be

unsullied by it all. We can stand as did Enoch. There has been provision made for us. Help has been laid upon One that is mighty; and we all can take hold upon his mighty strength. Angels of God, that excel in strength, are sent to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. These angels, when they see that we are doing the very utmost on our part to be overcomers, will do their part, and their light will shine around about us, and sway back the influence of the evil angels that are around us, and will make a fortification around us as a wall of fire. Ample provisions have been made for us when we are burdened, and weary, and cast down, and in distress.

Help has been laid upon One who is mighty. The great burden-bearer, who took our nature that he might understand how to sympathize with our frailty, and with our temptations, knows how to succor those that are tempted. And does he say, Carry your burdens yourself? No; but, Come unto me ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. But you say, It is this yoke that I have dreaded to wear, and this burden I have endeavored to shun. But Christ says the yoke he has prepared for you to wear is easy if you submit your neck to it, and the burden is light if you cheerfully and resolutely lift it. "Come unto me," says Christ, "and I will give you rest." How much lighter than the burden of sin and iniquity that you take along. How much lighter than the conscience which is constantly stinging and reproaching you. A violated conscience is hard to be endured. How much easier is the yoke of Christ than all this!

The trouble is, the meekness is lacking; the lowliness is not there. We are not willing to come right down to the simplicity of the gospel. We want honor one of another. We are not willing to suffer affliction with the people of God, as was Moses. We are not willing to have our names cast out as evil. And although all Heaven is inviting us to break away from the influence of earth, and fix our eye upon things of immortal worth, yet we keep them fixed upon the bubbles of earth. We are unwilling to have our affections elevated. We are like a prostrate vine, its tendrils clinging to worthless stubble. Let your tendrils entwine around the throne of God. You are unwilling that the soul should be uplifted to God. You allow your mind to be diverted with the things right around you here; and while you are doing this, the heavenly glory is eclipsed, it is lost sight of.

The Majesty of Heaven is standing before the Father, pleading, My blood, my

blood; spare the sinner a little longer for my sake. What are you doing for him while he is pleading? Seeking your pleasure, following in the ways of folly, corruption, sin, and iniquity; and yet he is pleading his blood before the throne of his Father! Oh! can you not be entreated to come? We entreat you to come. Come now, just as you are. Come, turn and live. Come to the Burden-bearer.

Mothers, who have so many burdens to bear, you see your children going astray, and you feel your lack of wisdom and strength to lead them the right way. Jesus says to you, "Come." Sisters, who have your burdens to bear, of care and perplexity, so much so that you often feel that life is a burden, let me say to you, The Burden-bearer, the Majesty of Heaven, has invited you to come unto Him. Come, He says, unto me, and lay your burdens upon me.

Will you come? You may tell your sorrows to one another; but the case of others might not be like yours, so they could not appreciate your burden of sorrow should you tell them of it. And then you hug it again to your heart, and your dry and tearless eye does not discover your burden to those around you. But you open the Bible, and there you read, Come unto me, ye that are heavy laden, and ye shall find rest to your souls; and you say, Oh! here is the promise such as I need. And again you read, We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and you say, Here I come to thee, Father, with my burden of anxiety, and will lay it at thy feet. You come to God in prayer, and you say, Here Lord, my anguish is so great I cannot form my prayer into words, but, Lord, thou understandest it all, and I lay my burden upon thee, the Burden-bearer. I will lay it on thee, and thou hast promised to take it. Take my burden of cares, I cannot carry it any longer; now, Lord, bear it for me. Now since you have thus carried your burden to the Lord, leave it there; do not take it away with you. Many come to the Lord in this way, and they never really lay their burden upon him; for they gather it all up again, and carry it away with them. You are not to do this. Leave your burden there, leave it with the Burden-bearer, he has promised to take it. Then come away and say, I will not gather my burden up again, but when I have left it with Jesus, I will not begin to worry about it again. And then let the anguish of your soul be exchanged for rejoicing in the Lord. You are not to go with your heads bowed down in darkness, and crying, Oh, my troubles and perplexities! No; there is something better for you to dwell upon. It is the immortal treasure, the exceeding great reward; it is to talk of the matchless charms of the loving Saviour, and his undying love for sinners. Think of this, and you will not consider that you have had any trials worth speaking of. Go to Calvary, and behold the

agony of the Son of God upon the cross, and your little trials will sink into insignificance.

May the Lord help you. I will detain you no longer, but would say, We invite you to come to Christ. We invite you to lay your burden upon the Burden-bearer. We want you to get your eye fixed upon the immortal charms of the heavenly land, and when your eye is fastened upon these, you will be willing to make any sacrifice, and count all things else but loss. You can then say with Paul, God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Bear cheerfully the cross of Christ, instead of shunning every cross you can. Try to imitate His life of self-denial and sacrifice, and do good to others that are around you, that at last you may be partakers of His glory, and have a crown placed upon your brow; and you will cast your crowns at His feet, and bow in adoration before Him, and fill Heaven with rich music and songs to the Lamb.

Do not talk to me of the honors and treasures of this life. I have my eye fixed upon the eternal substance, the immortal inheritance. I must see the King in His beauty. I love my Lord and Saviour, and it is my life to honor and glorify Him upon the earth. Take His smiles away, and everything is dark and gloomy to me. But let me have His smiles, and everything would be a Heaven to me. The darkest place on earth would be a paradise. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will toward men!" Sinners, we long for you to be saved and join the songs of victory in the kingdom of glory. We love you. Think you, if we did not, we should be entreating and begging you to come to Christ and be saved in God's appointed way? We hope to meet you in the Judgment with your names recorded in the Lamb's book of life, there to remain as long as God shall exist, and enjoy the blessings of everlasting life throughout eternal ages.



May 31, 1870

### **Christian Recreation.**

I have been thinking what a contrast would be seen between the gathering that we are having here today, and such gatherings as they are generally conducted by unbelievers. Instead of prayer and the mentioning of Christ and religious things, we should have the silly laugh and the trifling conversation. Their idea would be to have a general high time. It would commence in folly and end in vanity. We want in these gatherings to have them so conducted, and to so conduct ourselves, that when we return to our homes we can have a conscience void of offense toward God and man; a consciousness that we have not wounded nor injured in any manner those with whom we have been associated, or had an injurious influence over them.

Here is where very many fail. They do not consider that they are accountable for the influence they daily exert; that in all their associations in life, they must render an account to God for the impressions they make, and the influence they cast. If this influence is such as shall have a tendency to draw the mind away from God, and attract it into the channel of vanity and folly, and lead persons to seek for their own pleasure, in amusements and foolish indulgences, they must give an account for this. And if these persons are men and women of influence, if their position is such that their example will affect others, then the greater sin will rest upon them for neglecting to regulate their conduct by the Bible standard.

The occasion we are enjoying today is just according to my ideas of recreation. I have tried to give my views upon this subject, but they are better illustrated than expressed. I was here on this ground about one year since, when there was a gathering similar to this. Nearly every thing passed off very pleasantly then, but still there were some things objectionable. There was considerable jesting and joking indulged in by some. All were not Sabbath-keepers, and there was an influence manifest that was not as pleasant as we could wish.

But I believe, that while we are seeking to refresh our spirits and invigorate our bodies we are required of God to use all our powers at all times to the best purpose. We may associate together as we are here today, and do all to the glory of God. We can and

should conduct our recreations in such a manner that we shall be better fitted for the more successful discharge of the duties devolving upon us, and our influence be more beneficial upon those with whom we associate, especially upon an occasion like this, which should be of good cheer to all of us. We can return to our homes improved in mind, and refreshed in body, and prepared to engage in the work anew with better hope and better courage.

We are of that class who believe that it is our privilege every day of our lives to glorify God upon the earth; that we are not to live in this world merely for our own amusement, merely to please ourselves. We are here to benefit humanity and be a blessing to society. And if we should let our minds run in that low channel that many who are seeking only vanity and folly permit their minds to run in, how can we be a benefit to our race and generation? how can we be a blessing to society around us! We cannot innocently indulge in any amusement which will not fit us for the more faithful discharge of ordinary life duties.

We want to seek the elevated and lovely. We want to direct the mind away from those things that are superficial and of no importance, and that have no solidity. What we desire is, to be gathering new strength from all that we engage in, from all these gatherings for the purpose of recreation, from all these pleasant associations. We want to be gathering new strength to become better men and better women. We want from every source possible to gather new courage, new strength, new power, that we may elevate our lives to purity and holiness, and not come down upon the low level of this world. We hear many who profess the religion of Jesus Christ speak often like this: "We must all come down upon a level." There is no such thing as Christians' coming down upon a level. As we embrace the truth of God, and the religion of the Bible, this is not coming down, it is coming up upon a high and elevated level, a higher stand point where we may commune with God.

For this very reason Christ humiliated himself to humanity, and took upon himself our natures, that by his own humiliation, and suffering and sacrifice, he might become a stepping stone to fallen men, that they might climb up upon his merits, and through his excellence and virtue receive from God an acceptance of their efforts to keep his law. There is no such thing here as coming down upon a level. It is the elevated and exalted platform of eternal truth that we are seeking to plant our feet upon. We are seeking to be more like the heavenly angels, more pure in heart, more sinless, more

harmless and undefiled.

We are seeking for purity and holiness of life, that we may at last be fitted for the heavenly society in the kingdom of glory; and the only means to attain this elevation of Christian character is through Jesus Christ. There is no other way for the exaltation of the human family. Some talk of humiliation, and of the sacrifice they make because they adopt the truth of heavenly origin! Surely this is not accepted by the world, it is not received by the unbeliever. They may talk of those that have embraced the truth, and sought the Saviour, and represent them as leaving everything, and giving up everything, and making a sacrifice of everything that is worth retaining. But do not tell me this. I know better. My experience proves this to be otherwise. You need not tell me that we have to give up our dearest treasures, and receive no equivalent. No, indeed! That God, that Creator, that planted the beautiful Eden for our first parents, and has planted for us the lovely trees and flowers, and everything that was beautiful and glorious in nature for the human race to enjoy, designed that they should enjoy it. Then do not think that God wishes us to yield up everything which it is for our happiness here to retain. All he requires us to give up is that which would not be for our good and happiness to retain.

That God who has planted these noble trees and clothed them with the rich foliage, and given us the brilliant and beautiful shades of the flowers, and whose handy and lovely work we see in all the realm of nature, does not design to make us unhappy; he does not design that we shall have no taste, and take no pleasure in these things. It is his design that we shall enjoy them. It is his design that we shall be happy in the charms of nature, which are of his own creating. It is right that we should choose such places as this grove for seasons of relaxation and recreation. But while we are here, it is not to devote our attention to ourselves merely, and fritter away precious time, and engage in amusements which will encourage a disrelish for sacred things. We have not come here to indulge in jesting and joking, in the senseless laugh and foolish talking. We here behold the beauties of nature. And what then? Fall down and worship them? No, indeed. But as you behold these works of nature's let your mind be carried up higher to nature's God; let it be elevated to the Creator of the universe, and then adore the Creator who has made all these beautiful things for your benefit, for your happiness.

Men and women will delight in lovely paintings; but where do the artists get their ideas of these things to put upon the canvas? From nature's beautiful scenery. Persons are ready to worship the talent which can produce a beautiful drawing; but where do

those who devote their life to this work obtain their designs? From nature, only from nature; and yet these individuals will devote the entire strength of their being, and will bestow all their affections upon their tastes in this direction. Yet art can never attain the perfection seen in nature. Many withdraw their minds from the beauties and glories of nature that our Creator has prepared for them to enjoy, and devote all the powers of their being to perfection of art; yet all these things are only imperfect copies from nature. The Maker of all these beautiful things is forgotten. I have seen many who would go into ecstasies over a picture of a sunset; but at the same time, they could have the privilege of seeing an actual and glorious sunset almost every evening in the year. They can see the beautiful tints with which nature's Master and invisible Artist, with divine skill, has painted glorious scenes on shifting canvas, and carelessly turn from the heavenly-wrought picture to paintings of art, traced by imperfect fingers, and they will almost fall down and worship them. What is the reason of all this? It is because the enemy is almost constantly seeking to divert the mind from God. But when you present God, and the religion of Jesus Christ, will they receive them? No, indeed. They cannot accept of Christ. What! they make the sacrifice they would have to make to receive him? Not at all. But what is required? Simply their heart's holiest and best affections for him who left the glory of the Father and came down to die for a race of rebels. He left his riches, his majesty, and his high command, and took upon himself our nature, that he might make a way of escape--to do what? To humiliate you? To degrade you? No, indeed. To make a way of escape for you from hopeless misery, and to elevate you to his own right hand in his kingdom at last. For this, the great, the immense, sacrifice was made. And who can realize this great sacrifice? Who can appreciate it? None but those who understand the mystery of godliness, who have tasted of the powers of the world to come, who have drank from the cup of salvation that has been presented to us. This cup of salvation the Lord offers us, while with his own lips he drained, in our stead, the bitter cup which our own sins had prepared, and which was apportioned us to drink. Yet we talk as though that Christ who has made such a sacrifice, and manifested such love for us, would deprive us of everything that is worth having!

But what good would he deprive us of? He would deprive us of the privilege of giving up to the natural passions of the carnal heart. We cannot get angry just when we please, and retain a clear conscience and the approval of God. But are we not willing to give this up? Will the indulgence of corrupt passions make us any happier? It is because it will not, that there are restrictions laid upon us in this respect. It will not add to our enjoyment to get angry, and cultivate a perverse temper. It is not for our happiness to

follow the leadings of the natural heart. Will we be made better to indulge them? No. They will cast a shadow in our households, and will throw a pall over our happiness when indulged in. Giving way to your own natural appetites will only injure your constitution, and tear your system to pieces. Therefore God would have you restrict your appetite, have control over your passions, and hold in subjection the entire man. And he has promised to give you strength if you will engage in this work.

The sin of Adam and Eve caused a fearful separation between God and man. And here Christ steps in between fallen man and God, and says to man, You may yet come to the Father; there is a plan devised through which God can be reconciled to man, and man to God; and through a mediator you can approach God. And here he stands to mediate for you. He is the great High Priest who is pleading in your behalf; and it is for you to come and present your case to the Father through Jesus Christ. Thus you can find access to God; and if you sin your case is not hopeless. "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

I thank God that we have a Saviour. And there is no other way whereby men and women can be exalted except through Jesus Christ. Then let no one think that it is a great humiliation on his part to accept of Jesus Christ; for when we take that step, we take the first step toward true exaltation; we take hold of the golden cord that links finite man with the infinite God, and elevates us that we may be fitted for the society of pure and heavenly angels in the kingdom of glory.

Be not discouraged; be not faint-hearted. Although you may have temptations; although you may be beset by the wily foe; yet, if you have the fear of God before you, angels that excel in strength will be sent to your help, and you can be more than a match for the powers of darkness. Jesus lives. He has died to make a way of escape for the fallen race; and he lives today to make intercession for us, that we may be exalted to his own right hand. Have hope in God. The world is traveling the broad way; and as you travel in the narrow way, and have principalities and powers to contend with, and the opposition of foes to meet, remember that there is provision made for you. Help has been laid upon One that is mighty; and through him you can conquer.

Come out from among them and be separate, says God, and I will receive you, and ye shall be sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. What a promise is this? It is a pledge to you that you shall become members of the royal family, heirs of the heavenly

kingdom. If a person is honored by, or becomes connected with, any of the monarchs of earth, how it goes the rounds of the periodicals of the day, and excites the envy of those who do not think themselves so fortunate. But here is One who is king over all, the monarch of the universe, the originator of every good thing; and he says to us, I will make you my sons and daughters; I will unite you to myself; you shall become members of the royal family, and children of the heavenly King.

And then says Paul, "having therefore these promises dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord." Why should we not do this, when we have such an inducement, the privilege of becoming children of the Most High God, the privilege of calling the God of Heaven our father? Is not that enough? And do you call this depriving you of everything that is worth having? Is this the giving up of everything that is worth possessing? Let me be united to God and his holy angels, for this is my highest ambition. You may have all the possessions of this world, but I must have Jesus; I must have a right to the immortal inheritance, the eternal substance. Let me enjoy the beauties of the kingdom of God. Let me delight in the paintings which his own fingers have colored. I may enjoy them. You may enjoy them. But we may not worship them. But through them we may be directed to Him and behold his glory who has made all these things for our enjoyment.

Again I would say, Be of good courage. Trust in the Lord. Do not let the enemy rob you of the promises. If you have separated yourselves from the world, God has said that he will be your father, and you shall be his sons and daughters. Is not that enough? What greater inducement could be presented before you! Is there any great object in being a butterfly, and having no substance nor aim in life? Oh! let me stand on the platform of eternal truth. Give me immortal worth. Let me grasp the golden chain that is let down from Heaven to earth, and let it draw me up to God and glory. This is my ambition. This is my aim. If others have no higher object than to dress up with bows and ribbons, and fantastic things here, if they can delight in outward display and satisfy their souls with it, let them enjoy it. But let me have the inward adorning. Let me be clothed with that meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. And I recommend it to you, young ladies and young men, for it is more precious in his sight than the gold of Ophir. It is this which makes a man more precious than fine gold, even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Just so with you, my sisters, and you, young people; it will make you more precious in the sight of Heaven than fine gold, yea, than

the golden wedge of Ophir. I recommend to you, Jesus my blessed Saviour. I adore him. I magnify him. Oh! that I had an immortal tongue that I could praise him as I desire; that I could stand before the assembled universe and speak in praise of his matchless charms. And while I adore and magnify him, I want you to magnify him with me.

Praise the Lord, even when you fall into darkness. Praise him even in temptation. "Rejoice in the Lord always," says the apostle; "and again I say rejoice." Will that bring darkness and gloom into your families? No, indeed; it will bring a sunbeam. It will be the gathering of rays of eternal light from the throne of glory, and scattering them around you. Let me exhort you to engage in this work, scatter this light and life around you, not only in your own path, but in the paths of others with whom you associate. Let it be your object to make those around you better; to elevate them; to point them to Heaven and glory and lead them to seek, above all earthly things, the eternal substance, the immortal inheritance, and the riches which are imperishable.

July 19, 1870

## **The Camp-Meetings**

The Camp-Meetings in Iowa and Illinois have been meetings of deep interest to me. As we say those who had come, some from quite a distance, at the expense of time, and of money, I inquired whether all would return to their homes, having gained the object for which they came. The objects of these meetings, are, to separate from business cares, and burdens, and devote a few days of time exclusively to seeking the Lord. The time should be occupied in self-examination, close searching of heart, and penitential confession of sins, and renewing our vows to the Most High God. If any came to these meetings for less worthy objects, we hope the character of the meetings was such as to bring the minds of all to the proper objects of the meetings.

In Marion the Lord was indeed merciful to us, and gave us strength to speak the words he gave us, with clearness to the people. There was not a dissenting voice in the meeting. The people came to work, and they did work. The conference meetings were characterized with spiritual testimonies, one following the other in quick succession. The promptness which marked these meetings gave us comfort and strength. We felt rather sad to see several sick upon the ground, which was very unpleasant for the sick, and wearisome to those who had the care of them. Some were sufferers through the extra labor of preparing for the meeting. They were liberal-souled people, and wanted nothing done with stinginess. Some made large provisions; and were thoroughly wearied out when they came to the meeting, and as soon as they were released from the pressure of work, exhausted Nature caused them to feel that she had been abused. Some of these persons had never before attended a camp-meeting, and were not informed in regard to what preparations they were required to make. They lost some of the precious meetings they had purposed to attend.

Now these made a mistake in making so large preparation. Nothing should be cooked, or taken to the camp-meeting, unless it be the most healthful articles, cooked in a simple manner, free from all spice and grease. Much cooking is unnecessary. Pies will not keep in hot weather. Cake will keep better, but is not the most healthful food for the stomach at any time, and is not at all proper food for camp-meetings. Those who are exercising every day, can better take care of food, even if it is not of the very best



quality for health. Those who come to attend meetings, especially for the worship of God, to increase in spirituality, should not indulge the appetite, and cannot do it with safety. Pies and cake are not the proper food for those to eat who wish to preserve health at the camp-meeting.

I am well convinced that none need to make themselves sick preparing for camp-meeting, if they observe the laws of health in their cooking. If they make no cake, or pies, but cook simple graham bread, and depend on fruit, canned or dried, they need not get sick in preparing for the meeting, and they need not be sick while at the meeting, from eating the unhealthful food they exhausted their strength to prepare. None should go through the entire meeting, without some warm food. There are always stores upon the ground where this may be obtained.

When we commenced the camp-meeting in Nora, Ill., I felt it my duty to make some remarks in reference to their eating. I related the unfortunate experience of some at Marion, and told them I charged it to unnecessary preparations made for the meeting, and also eating the unnecessary preparations while at the meeting. Some brought cheese to the meeting, and ate it; although new, it was altogether too strong for the stomach, and should never be introduced into it. Cake was brought into our tent. I ate a small piece, and my stomach refused to retain it; it was spiced with cinnamon. If my stomach would not acknowledge this as food, but rebelled against it, what condition must these be in who partook of this food every day. I stated to our brethren and sisters, something like the following: They must not be sick upon that encampment. If they clothed themselves properly in the chill of morning, and at night, and were particular to vary their clothing according to the changing weather, so as to preserve proper circulation, and should strictly observe regularity in sleeping, and in eating of simple food, and should eat nothing between meals, they need not be sick. They might be well during the meetings, and be able to appreciate, with clear minds, the truth, and might return to their homes refreshed in body and in spirit. I stated that if those who had been engaged in hard labor from day to day should now cease their exercise, and yet eat their average amount of food, their stomachs would be overtaxed. It was the brain power we wished to be especially vigorous at this meeting and in the most healthy condition to hear the truth and to appreciate it, and to retain it, and practice it after their return from the meeting. If the stomach was burdened with too much food, even of a simple character, the brain force would be called to the aid of the digestive organs. There is a benumbed sensation experienced upon the brain. There is an impossibility of keeping the eyes

open. The very truths which should be heard, understood and practiced by them, they lose entirely through indisposition, or because the brain is almost paralyzed in consequence of the amount of food taken into the stomach.

I recommended them to take something warm upon the stomach every morning, at least. They could do this without much labor, they could make graham gruel. If the graham was too coarse they could sift it. While the gruel is hot they could add milk to suit themselves, this will make a most palatable and healthful dish for the camp-ground, and if your bread is dry you can crumb it into your gruel, and it will be enjoyed. I do not approve of eating much cold food for the reason that the vitality must be drawn from the system to warm the food until it becomes of the same temperature as the stomach before the work of digestion can be carried on. Another very simple, yet wholesome dish is beans boiled and baked, and a portion of them may be diluted with water, add more cream and make a broth, the bread can be used the same as in the graham gruel. Dried corn can be easily prepared, left to soak over night, scald it up in the morning, add milk, which is easily obtained, and you have warm, healthful food, free from spice and grease.

I am gratified to see the progress many have made in the health reform, yet sorry to see so many behind. I stated that if any one became sick upon the encampment I designed to inquire the cause, and make a note of it, for I was not willing the reputation of our meeting should suffer by being reported as the cause of making people sick. These meetings can be made a blessing to the bodily health, as well as to increase the health of the soul, if a proper course be pursued at these important gatherings. I am happy to state that no one was sick, to my knowledge, so that they were deprived of the meetings.

The meeting at Marion was good, souls there were convicted and converted to the truth. We felt assured that Jesus indeed came up to the feast, and made glad the hearts of his people.

At Nora there was an apparent lack of union with some who came to the meeting. They possessed a spirit of fault-finding, of jealousy, which brought sadness of heart upon us, and we were fearful at times that many would leave that meeting with their impenitent hearts bound in darkness and unbelief, unsubdued by the grace of God. But as the meetings progressed testimonies were called out from those who had the burden of the meeting as the occasion required. And as the pointed, solemn truths of God's

word were made clear to the understanding of all who had any desire to learn, there seemed to be a decided change with many for the better. Confessions were made by brethren one to another, and a ready response was made to these penitential acknowledgments of their wrongs. The prayer and conference meetings were conducted by Bro. Littlejohn. He labored with unabated interest in all these social meetings, making appropriate remarks as the occasion required. The instructions thus given by our brother in faithfulness upon so many points, we think will not be soon forgotten. There was especially a work wrought for the church at Monroe. Hearts had been estranged, false reports had been circulated to the injury of brethren, many had been found guilty of carrying a reproach to the door of their neighbors, and some had willingly taken up the reproach against their neighbor which had been left at their door, and in their turn they carried the reproach to others. Thus had God been dishonored, and his precious cause reproached. But there was a good work begun with that church. If this work had commenced at an earlier stage of the meeting, some, who returned to their homes unblessed because of their wrongs, might have so humbled their hearts before God and returned to him with broken hearts and contrite spirits, that they might have gone to their homes rejoicing that the truth had made them free indeed. We are sorry that any returned to their homes destitute of the approving love of God.

We are confident that a large number of our brethren and sisters present at that meeting were greatly benefited, and returned to their homes to take a nobler stand for God, and work from altogether a higher standpoint than they had ever done before. Many bore testimony that they had never seen the force and power of truth, and the necessity of perfecting Christian character as they had during these meetings. Our earnest prayer to God is that they may go forward growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, until they attain to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. By request of the church at Monroe we united in prayer with them that the cementing spirit of God might bind the hearts of these believers in bonds of closest union and Christian fellowship.

August 2, 1870

## **Camp-Meetings**

The last evening we enjoyed upon the Nora campground, the Lord blessed me with unusual freedom in speaking to the people, of the necessity of having Jesus in their company as they returned to their homes. I spoke of the importance of coming to such meetings with a mind to work for their own salvation, and that of others. They should have the object before them of earnestly seeking for a deeper work of grace, and a more thorough knowledge of the truth, that they may "be ready always, to give an answer to every man that asketh, a reason of the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear," "having a good conscience, that whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ." "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good. And an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil; for of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

There can be no influence so detrimental to a camp-meeting, or any gathering for religious worship, as much visiting and careless conversation. Frequently men and women assemble in companies, and engage in conversation upon common subjects; which do not relate to the meeting. Some have brought their farms with them, and others their houses, laying their plans for building. Some are dissecting the characters of others, and have no time or disposition to search their own hearts, to discover the defects in their own characters, that they may correct their wrongs, and perfect holiness in the fear of God. If all who profess to be followers of Christ would improve the time out of meeting in conversing upon the truth, and dwelling upon the Christian's hope, and in searching their own hearts, and in earnest prayer before God, pleading for his blessing, there would be a much greater work accomplished than we have yet seen. Unbelievers, who falsely accuse those who believe the truth, would be convinced, because "of their good conversation in Christ." The words and actions are the fruit which we bear; "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

God gave direction to the Israelites to assemble before him in the place which he should choose, and observe special days, at set periods, wherein no unnecessary work was to be done; but the time was to be devoted to a consideration of the blessings of

God bestowed upon them. At these special seasons they were to bring gifts, free-will offerings, and thank-offerings, unto the Lord, according as the Lord had blessed them. They were directed to rejoice--the man-servant and maid-servant, the stranger, the fatherless and widow--that God had by his own wonderful power brought them from servile bondage to the enjoyment of freedom. And they were commanded not to appear before the Lord empty. They were to bring tokens of their gratitude to God for his continual mercies and blessings bestowed upon them. These offerings were varied, according to the estimate which the donors placed upon the blessings they were privileged to enjoy. Thus the characters of the people were plainly developed. Those who placed a high value upon the blessings God bestowed upon them, brought offerings in accordance with their appreciation of his blessings. Those whose moral powers were stupefied and benumbed by selfishness and idolatrous love of the favors received, rather than of fervent love of their bountiful Benefactor, brought meager offerings. Thus their hearts were revealed. Besides these special religious feast-days of gladness and rejoicing, the yearly passover was to be commemorated by the Jewish nation. The Lord covenanted that if they were faithful in the observance of his requirements, he would bless them in all their increase, and in all the works of their hands.

God requires no less of his people in these last days, in sacrifices and offerings, than he did of the Jewish nation. Those whom God has blessed with a competency, also the widow and the fatherless, should not be unmindful of his blessings. Especially should those whom God has prospered render to God the things that are God's. They should appear before him with a spirit of self-sacrifice, and bring their offerings in accordance with the blessings God has bestowed upon them. But many whom God prospers manifest base ingratitude to him. If his blessings rest upon them, and he increases their substance, they make these bounties as cords to bind them to the love of their possessions, and they allow worldly business to take possession of their affections, and their entire being, and neglect devotion and religious privileges. They cannot afford to leave their business cares, and come before God, even once a year. They turn the blessings of God into a curse. They serve their own temporal interests, at the neglect of God's requirements.

Men, with their thousands, remain at home, year after year, engrossed in their worldly cares and interests, and feel that they cannot afford to make the small sacrifice of attending the yearly gatherings to worship God. He has blessed them in basket and in store, and surrounded them with his benefits on the right hand and on the left, yet they

withhold from God the small offerings he has required of them. They love to serve themselves. Their souls will be like the unrefreshed desert without the dew or rain of heaven. The Lord has brought to them the precious blessing of his grace. He has delivered them from the slavery of sin, and the bondage of error, and has opened to their darkened understandings the glorious light of present truth. And shall these evidences of God's love and mercy call forth no gratitude in return? Will those who profess to believe that the end of all things is at hand be blind to their own spiritual interest, and live for this world, and this life alone? Do they expect their eternal interest will take care of itself? Spiritual strength will not come without an effort on their part.

Many who profess to be looking for the appearing of our Lord are anxious, burdened, gain-seekers for this world. They are blind to their eternal interest. They labor for that which satisfieth not. They spend their money for that which is not bread. They strive to content themselves with the treasures they have laid up upon the earth, which must perish. And they neglect the preparation for eternity, which should be the first and only real work of their life.

Let us all who possibly can, attend these yearly gatherings. All should feel that God requires this of them. If they do not avail themselves of the privileges God has provided for them to become strong in him, and in the power of his grace, they will grow weaker and weaker, and have less and less desire to consecrate all to God. Come, brethren and sisters, to these sacred convocation meetings, to find Jesus. He will come up to the feast. He will be present, and he will do for you that which you need most to have done. Your farms should not be considered of greater value than the higher interests of the soul. All the treasures you possess, be they ever so valuable, would not be rich enough to buy you peace and hope, which would be infinite gain, if it cost you all you have, and the toils and sufferings of a life-time. To have a strong, clear sense of eternal things, and a heart of willing obedience to yield all to Christ, are blessings of more value than all the riches, and pleasures, and glories of this world.

These camp-meetings are of importance. They cost something. The servants of God are wearing out their lives to help the people, while many of them appear as if they did not want help. For fear of losing a little of this world's gain, some let these precious privileges come and go, as though they were of but little importance. Let all who profess to believe the truth, respect every privilege that God offers them to obtain clearer views of his truth, and his requirements, and the necessary preparation for his

coming. A calm, cheerful and obedient trust in God is what he requires.

You need not weary yourselves with busy anxieties and needless cares. Work on for the day, faithfully doing the work which God's providence assigns you, and he will have a care for you. Jesus will deepen and widen your blessings. You must make efforts if you have salvation at last. Come to these meetings prepared to work. Leave your home cares, and come to find Jesus, and he will be found of you. Come with your offerings as God has blessed you. Show your gratitude to your Creator, the giver of all your benefits, by a free-will offering. Let none who are able come empty-handed. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

April 11, 1871

## **Duty to Children**

I have been shown that parents generally have not taken a proper course with their children. They are not restrained as they should be. They are left to indulge in pride, and follow their own inclinations. Anciently, parental authority was regarded, and children were in subjection to their parents. They feared and revered them; but the order in these last days is reversed. Some parents are in subjection to their children. They fear their children, and yield to them. They fear to cross the will of their children. But just as long as children are under the roof of their parents, dependent upon them, they should be subject to them. Parents should move with decision, requiring the following out of their views of right.

Eli might have restrained his wicked sons, but he feared their displeasure. He suffered them to go on in their rebellion, until they were a curse to Israel. Parents are required to restrain their children. The salvation of children depends very much upon the course pursued by their parents. In their mistaken love and fondness for their children, they indulge them to their hurt, nourish their pride, and put upon them trimmings and fixings which make them vain, and lead them to think that dress makes the lady or gentleman. But a short acquaintance convinces those with whom they associate that an outside appearance is not sufficient to hide the deformity of a heart void of the Christian graces, but filled with self-love, haughtiness, and uncontrolled passion. Those who love meekness, humility, and virtue, should shun such society, even if it be Sabbath-keepers' children. Their company is poisonous; their influence leads to death. Parents realize not the destructive influence of the seed which they are sowing. It will spring up, and bear fruit which will make their children despise parental authority.

Children, even after they are of age, are required to respect and look after the comforts of their parents. They should listen to the counsel of godly parents, and not feel that, because a few years are added to their life, they have grown out of their duty to them. There is a commandment with promise to those who honor their father and their mother.

Children in these last days are so noted for their disobedience and disrespect that



God has especially noticed it, and it constitutes a sign that the end is near. It shows the power of Satan upon minds, and the almost complete control he has of the minds of the young. By many, age is no more respected. It is considered too old-fashioned to respect the aged, for it dates back as far as the days of Abraham. Says God, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him." Anciently, children were not permitted to marry without the consent of their parents. Parents chose for their children. It was considered a crime for children to contract marriage upon their own responsibility. The matter was first laid before the parents and they were to consider whether the person to be brought into a close relation to them was worthy, and whether the parties could provide for a family. It was considered by them of the greatest importance that they, the worshipers of the true God, should not intermarry with an idolatrous people, lest they lead their families away from God.

Even after their children were married, the most solemn obligation rested upon them. Their judgment then was not considered sufficient without the counsel of their parents; and they were required to respect and obey their wishes, unless they should conflict with their duty to God.

Again I was directed to the condition of children in these last days. Children are not controlled. Parents should commence their first lesson of discipline when their children are babes in their arms. Teach them to yield their will to yours. This can be done by bearing an even hand, and manifesting firmness. Parents should have perfect control over their own spirits, and with mildness, and yet firmness, bend the will of the child until it shall expect nothing else but to yield to their wishes.

Parents do not commence in season. The first manifestation of temper is not subdued, and the children grow stubborn, which increases with their growth, and strengthens with their strength. Some children, as they grow older, think it a matter of course that they must have their own way, and that their parents must submit to their wishes. They expect their parents to wait upon them. They are impatient of restraint, and when old enough to be a help to their parents, they do not bear the burdens they should. They have been released from responsibilities, and grow up worthless at home and worthless abroad. They have no power of endurance. The parents have borne the burden, and have suffered them to grow up in idleness, without habits of order, industry, and economy. They have not been taught habits of self-denial, but have been petted and indulged, their appetites gratified, and they come up with enfeebled health. Their

manners and deportment are not agreeable. They are unhappy themselves, and make those around them unhappy. And when the children are but children still, and while they need to be disciplined, they are allowed to go out in company, mingle with the society of the young, and one has a corrupting influence over the other.

The curse of God will surely rest upon unfaithful parents. Not only are they planting thorns which will wound them here, but they must meet their own unfaithfulness when the Judgment shall sit. Many children will rise up in the Judgment and condemn their parents for not restraining them, and charge upon them their destruction. The false sympathy and blind love of parents cause them to excuse the faults of their children, and pass them by without correction, and their children are lost in consequence, and the blood of their souls will rest upon unfaithful parents.

Children who are thus brought up undisciplined, when they profess to be Christ's followers, have everything to learn. Their whole religious experience is affected by their bringing up in childhood. The same self-will often appears; the same lack of self-denial; the same impatience manifested under reproof; the same love of self and unwillingness to seek counsel of others, or to be influenced by others' judgment; the same indolence, shunning of burdens, lack of bearing responsibilities, are seen in their relation to the church. It is possible for such to overcome; but how hard the battle! how severe the conflict! how hard to pass through a course of thorough discipline, which is necessary for them to reach the elevation of Christian character! Yet if they overcome at last, they will be permitted to see before they are translated how near the precipice of eternal destruction they came, caused by the lack of right training in youth, and by not learning submission in childhood.

April 18, 1871

## **The Poor**

Some who are poor in this world's goods are apt to place all the straight testimony upon the shoulders of the men of property. But they do not realize that they also have a work to do. God requires them to make a sacrifice. He requires of them to sacrifice their idols. They should lay aside such hurtful stimulants as tobacco, tea, and coffee. If they are brought into straightened circumstances while exerting themselves to do the best they can, it will be a pleasure for their wealthy brethren to help them out of trouble.

Many lack wise management and economy. They do not weigh matters well, and move cautiously. Such should not trust to their own poor judgment, but counsel with their brethren who have experience. Those who lack good judgment and economy are often unwilling to seek counsel. They generally think that they understand how to conduct their temporal business, and are unwilling to follow advice. They make bad moves and suffer in consequence. Their brethren are grieved to see them suffer, and they help them out of difficulty. Their unwise management affects the church. It takes means from the treasury of God which should have been used to advance the cause of present truth. If these poor brethren would take a humble course and be willing to be advised and counseled by their brethren, and then are brought into straightened places, their brethren should feel it their duty to cheerfully help them out of difficulty. But if they choose their own course and rely upon their judgment, they should be left to feel the full consequences of their unwise course, and learn by dear experience that "in a multitude of counselors there is safety." God's people should be subject one to another. They should counsel with each other, that the lack of one be supplied by the sufficiency of the other. I saw that the stewards of the Lord have no duty to help those persons who persist in using tobacco, tea, and coffee.

### Speculations

I saw that some have excused themselves from aiding the cause of God because they were in debt. Had they closely examined their own hearts they would have discovered that selfishness was the true reason why they brought no free-will offering to God. And some will remain in debt. Because of their covetousness, the prospering hand

of God will not be with them to bless their undertakings. They love this world better than they love the truth. They are not being fitted up and made ready for the kingdom of God.

If a new patent passes through the country, men who profess to believe the truth have found a way to raise means and join the enterprise. God is acquainted with every heart. Every selfish motive is known to him, and he suffers things to arise to try the hearts of his professed people, to prove them, and develop character. In some instances the Lord will suffer men to go on, and meet with an entire failure. His hand is against them to disappoint their hopes and scatter what they possess. Individuals who have really felt an interest in the cause of God, and have been willing to venture something for its advancement, will find it a sure and safe investment. Some will have a hundred-fold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting. But all will not receive their hundred-fold in this life, because they cannot bear it. They would, if intrusted with much, become unwise stewards. The Lord withholds it for their good; but their treasure in Heaven will be secure. How much better is such an investment as this! The desire that some of our brethren possess to earn means fast, leads them to engage in a new enterprise and invest means, and their expectations of making money are not realized. They sink that which they could have spent in God's cause. There is an infatuation in these new enterprises. And notwithstanding these things have been acted over so many times, and the example of others is before them who have made investments and have met with an utter failure, yet they are slow to learn. Satan allures them on, and makes them drunk with anticipated hopes. When these hopes are blasted, they suffer many discouragements in consequence of their unwise adventures. If means are lost, the person looks upon it as a misfortune to himself, as his loss. But he must remember that it is the means of another that he is handling, that he is only a steward, and God is displeased with the unwise management of that means which could have been used to advance the cause of present truth. The unfaithful steward must give an account of his stewardship at the reckoning day.

April 25, 1871

## **Perilous Times**

The unbelieving world will soon have something to think of beside their dress and appearance; and as their minds are torn from these things by distress and perplexity, they have nothing to turn to. They are not prisoners of hope, and therefore do not turn to the Stronghold. Their hearts will fail them for repining and fear. They have not made God their refuge, and he will not be their consolation then, but will laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh. They have despised and trampled upon the truths of God's word. They have indulged in extravagant dress, and have spent their lives in hilarity and glee. They have sown to the wind, they must reap the whirlwind.

In the time of distress and perplexity of nations there will be many who have not given themselves wholly to the corrupting influences of the world and the service of Satan, who will humble themselves before God, and turn to him with their whole heart, and find acceptance and pardon.

Those among Sabbath-keepers who have been unwilling to make any sacrifice, but have yielded to the influence of the world, are to be tested and proved. The perils of the last days are upon us, and a trial is before the young which they have not anticipated. They are to be brought into most distressing perplexity. The genuineness of their faith will be proved. They profess to be looking for the coming of the Son of Man, yet some of them have been a miserable example to unbelievers. They have not been willing to give up the world, but have united with them, have attended picnics, and other gatherings of pleasure, flattering themselves that they were engaging in innocent amusement. Yet I was shown that it was just such indulgences that separate them from God, and make them children of the world. God owns not the pleasure or amusement-seeker as his follower. He has given us no such example. Those only who are self-denying, and who live a life of sobriety, humility and holiness, are true followers of Jesus; and such cannot engage in, and enjoy, the frivolous, empty conversation of the lovers of the world.

Isaiah 3 was presented before me. I was shown that this prophecy has its application to these last days; and the reproofs are given to the daughters of Zion who

have thought only of appearance and display. Read verse 25: "Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war." I was shown that this scripture will be strictly fulfilled. Young men and women professing to be Christians, yet having no Christian experience, and having borne no burdens, and felt no individual responsibility, are to be proved. They will be brought low in the dust, and long for an experience in the things of God which they failed to obtain.

May 30, 1871

## **How to Conduct Meetings**

I recently received a letter from a brother I highly respect, making inquiries in regard to meetings, how they should be conducted. He inquires if there should be many prayers offered in succession, and then a relief of a few moments, and quite a number of prayers again.

From the light I have had upon the subject, I have decided that God does not require us, as we assemble for his worship, to make these seasons tedious and wearisome, by being obliged to remain bowed quite a length of time, listening to several lengthy prayers. Those in feeble health cannot endure this taxation without extreme weariness and exhaustion. The body is weary by remaining bowed down so long. And that which is worse still, the mind becomes so wearied by the continuous exercise of prayer that no spiritual refreshment is realized, and the meeting to them is worse than a loss. They have become wearied mentally and physically, and they have obtained no spiritual strength. Meetings for conference and prayer should not be made tedious. All should, if possible, be prompt to the hour appointed; and if there are dilatory ones, who are half an hour or fifteen minutes even behind the time, there should be no waiting. If there are but two present, they can claim the promise. The meeting should open at the appointed hour, if possible, be there few or many present. Formality and cold stiffness should be laid aside, and all be prompt to duty. There should not be, upon any common occasion, prayer of more than ten minutes' duration. If any feel the burden of prayer, after there has been a change of position, and the exercise of singing or exhortation has relieved the sameness, then let them pray.

All should feel it a Christian duty to pray short. Tell the Lord just what you want without going all over the world. In private prayer, all have the privilege of praying as long as they desire, and of being as explicit as they please. They can pray for all their relatives and friends. The closet is the place to tell all their private difficulties, and trials, and temptations. A common meeting to worship God is not the place to open the privacies of the heart.

What is the object of assembling together? Is it to inform God? or to instruct him

by telling him all we know in prayer? We meet together to edify one another by a mutual interchange of thoughts and feelings, thus making one another acquainted with our aspirations, our hopes, and gathering strength, and light, and courage, from one another. By our earnest, heart-felt prayers, offered up in faith, we receive refreshment and vigor from the Source of our strength. These meetings should be most precious seasons, and made interesting to all who have any relish for religious things.

There are some who I fear do not take their troubles to God in private prayer, but reserve them for the prayer-meeting, and then do up their praying for several days in these meetings. Such may be named social conference and prayer-meeting killers. Their cold, frozen prayers and lengthy, backslidden testimonies cast a shadow. They emit no light. They edify no one. All are glad when they get through, and it is almost impossible to throw off the chill and darkness their prayers and exhortations have brought into the meetings. From the light which I have received, our meetings should be spiritual and social, and not too long. Reserve, pride, vanity, and fear of man, should be left at home. Little differences and prejudices should not be taken with us to these meetings. Like a united family, simplicity, meekness, mutual confidence, and love, should exist in the hearts of brethren and sisters who meet to be refreshed and invigorated by bringing their lights together.

Ye are the light of the world, says the heavenly Teacher. All have not the same experience, and the same exercises in their religious life. But those of diverse experiences come together, and with simplicity and humbleness of mind, talk out their experience. All should have, and will have, an experience that is living, that is new and interesting, if they are pursuing the onward Christian course. A living experience is made up of daily trials, conflicts, and temptations, strong efforts and victories, and great peace and joy gained through Jesus. A simple relation of such experiences give light, strength, and knowledge, that will aid others in their advancement in the divine life. The worship of God should be both interesting and instructive to those who have any love for divine and heavenly things.

Jesus, the heavenly teacher, when he was upon the earth, among the children of men, did not hold himself aloof from them, but in order to benefit them, he came from Heaven to earth where they were, that the purity and holiness of his life might shine upon the pathway of all, and light the way to Heaven.



The Redeemer of the world sought to make his lessons of instruction plain and simple, that all might comprehend them. He generally chose the open air for his discourses. There were no walls which could inclose the multitude which followed him. But he had special reasons for choosing the groves and the seaside to give his lessons of instruction, for he could have a commanding view of the landscape and scenery, and make use of objects and scenes with which those in humble life were familiar, to illustrate the important truths he made known to them. The works of God in nature, he associated with his lessons of instruction. He made use of the birds which were caroling forth their songs without a care, and the flowers of the valley glowing in their beauty, and the lily that reposed in its purity upon the bosom of the lake, the lofty trees, the cultivated lands, the waving grains, the barren soil, the tree that bore no fruit, the everlasting hills, the bubbling stream, the setting sun, tinting and gilding the heavens, to impress his hearers with divine truth. He connected the works of God's finger in the heavens and upon the earth with the words of life he wished to impress upon their minds, that as they should look upon the wonderful works of God in nature, his lessons would be fresh in their memories.

Christ, in all his efforts, sought to make his teachings interesting. He knew that a tired, hungry throng could not receive spiritual benefit, and he did not forget their bodily needs. He wrought a miracle to feed five thousand, who had gathered together to listen to the words of life which fell from his lips. Jesus regarded his surroundings, when giving his precious truth to the multitude. The scenery was such as would attract the eye, and awake admiration in the breasts of the lovers of the beautiful. He could extol the wisdom of God in his creative works, and could bind up his sacred lessons by directing their minds through nature up to nature's God.

The landscape, the trees, the birds, the flowers of the valley, the hills, the lake, and the beautiful heavens, were associated in their minds with sacred truths, which would make them hallowed in memory, as they should look upon them after Christ's ascension to Heaven.

When Christ taught the people, he did not devote the time to prayer. He did not enforce upon them, as did the Pharisees, long, tedious ceremonies, and lengthy prayers. He taught his disciples how to pray: "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward.

But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray use not vain repetition, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye."

Christ impressed upon his disciples the idea that their prayers should be short, expressing just what they wanted, and no more. He gives the length and substance of their prayers, expressing their desires for temporal and spiritual blessings, and gratitude for the same. This sample prayer, how comprehensive! It covers the actual need of all. One or two minutes is long enough for any ordinary prayer. There may be instances where prayer, in a special manner, is indited by the Spirit of God, and where supplication is made in the Spirit. The yearning soul becomes agonized, and groans after God. The spirit wrestles as did Jacob, and will not be at rest without special manifestations of the power of God. This is as God would have it.

But there are many prayers offered in a dry, sermonizing manner. These pray to men, not to God. If they were praying to God, and really understood what they were doing, they would be alarmed at their audacity; for they delivered a discourse to the Lord in the mode of prayer, as though the Creator of the universe needed special information upon general questions in relation to the things that were transpiring in the world. All such prayers are as sounding brass, and tinkling cymbal. They are made no account of in Heaven. Angels of God are wearied with them, as well as mortals who are compelled to listen to them.

Jesus was often found in prayer. He resorted to the lonely groves, or to the mountains, to make his requests known to his Father. When the business and cares of the day were ended, and the weary were seeking rest, Jesus devoted the time to prayer. We would not discourage prayer; for there is far too little praying and watching thereunto. And there is still less praying with the Spirit and the understanding also. Fervent and effectual prayer is always in place, and will never weary. Such prayer interests and refreshes all who have a love for devotion.

Secret prayer is neglected, and this is the reason why many offer such long, tedious, backslidden prayers, when assembled to worship God. They go over in their

prayers a week of neglected duties, and pray round and round, hoping to make up for their neglect, and pacify their condemned consciences, which are scourging them. They hope to pray themselves into the favor of God. But frequently these prayers result in bringing other minds down to their own low level in spiritual darkness. If Christians would take home the teachings of Christ in regard to watching and praying, they would become more intelligent in their worship of God.

May 30, 1871

## **How Shall We Keep the Sabbath?**

God is merciful. His requirements are reasonable, in accordance with the goodness and benevolence of his character. The object of the Sabbath was that all mankind might be benefited. Man was not made to fit the Sabbath; for the Sabbath was made after the creation of man, to meet his necessities. God rested, after he had made the world in six days. He sanctified and blessed the day upon which he rested from all his work which he had created and made. He set apart that special day for man to rest from his labor, and reflect, as he should look upon the earth beneath, and the heavens above, that God made all these in six days, and rested upon the seventh; and that his heart might be filled with love and reverence to his Maker, as he should behold the tangible proofs of his infinite wisdom.

In order to keep the Sabbath holy, it is not necessary that we inclose ourselves in walls, shut away from the beautiful scenes of nature, and also deprive ourselves of the free, invigorating air of heaven. We should in no case allow burdens and business transactions to divert our minds upon the Sabbath of the Lord which he has sanctified. We should not allow even our minds to dwell upon things of a worldly character. The mind cannot be refreshed, enlivened, and elevated, by being confined nearly all the Sabbath hours within walls, listening to long sermons and tedious, formal prayers. The Sabbath of the Lord has been put to a wrong use, if thus celebrated. The object is not attained for which the Sabbath was instituted. The Sabbath was made for man, to be a blessing to him, by calling his mind from secular labor, to contemplate the goodness and glory of God. It is necessary that the people of God assemble to talk of him, to interchange thoughts and ideas in regard to the truths contained in the word of God, and to devote a portion of time to appropriate prayer. But these seasons, even upon the Sabbath, should not be made tedious by their length and lack of interest. During a portion of the day, all should have an opportunity to be out of doors.

How can the minds of children become better impressed, and receive a more correct knowledge of God, than in spending a portion of their time out of doors; not in play, but in company with their parents? Surrounded with nature's beautiful scenery, as their minds are associated with God in nature, by their attention being called to the

tokens of God's love to man in his creative works, their young minds will be attracted and interested. They will not be in danger of associating the character of God with everything that is stern and severe. But as they view the beautiful things he has created for the happiness of man, they will be led to regard him as a tender, loving Father. They will see that his prohibitions and injunctions are not made merely to show his power and authority, but that he has the happiness of his children in view. As the character of God puts on the aspect of love, benevolence, beauty, and attraction, they are drawn to love him. You can direct their minds to the lovely birds making the air musical with their happy songs, the spires of grass, and the gloriously tinted flowers in their perfection perfuming the air. All these proclaim the love and skill of the heavenly Artist, and show forth the glory of God. Parents, why not make use of the precious lessons God has given us in the book of nature to give our children the correct idea of his character? Those who sacrifice simplicity to fashion, and shut themselves away from the beauties of nature, cannot be spiritually minded. They cannot understand the skill and power of God as revealed in his creative works, therefore their hearts do not quicken and throb with new love and interest, and are not filled with awe and reverence as they see God in nature.

All who love God should do what they can to make the Sabbath a delight, holy and honorable. They cannot do this by seeking their own pleasure in sinful, forbidden amusements. They can do much to exalt the Sabbath in their families, and make it the most interesting day of the week. We should devote time to interest our children. We can walk out with them in the open air. A change will have a happy influence upon them. We can sit with them in the groves, and in the bright sunshine, and give their restless minds something to feed upon by conversing with them upon the works of God, and inspire them with love and reverence by calling their attention to the beautiful objects in nature. The Sabbath should be made so interesting to our families that its weekly return will be hailed with joy. In no better way can parents exalt and honor the Sabbath than to devise means to impart proper instruction to their families, and to interest them in spiritual things, giving them correct views of the character of God, and what he requires of us, in order to perfect Christian characters and to attain to eternal life. Parents, make the Sabbath a delight, that your children shall look forward to it, and have a welcome in their hearts for it.

May 30, 1871

### **Address to Ministers**

Ephesians 3:6, 7: "That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel; whereof I was made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God, given unto me by the effectual working of his power."

"Whereof I am made a minister:" not merely to present the truth to the people, but to carry it out in your lives.

"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God." Verse 9. It is not merely the words that roll off your tongue, it is not merely to be eloquent in speaking and praying, but it is to make known Christ, to have Christ in you, and make him known to those that hear.

"Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom," not novices, not in ignorance, "that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." Colossians 1:28, 29. It is the work of God, the grace from God, that is to be realized and felt, that is to grace the life and actions, which is to make a sensible impression upon those that hear.

But it is not this only. There are other things that are to be considered; in which some have been negligent, which are of consequence, in the light they have been presented before me. Impressions are made upon the people by the deportment of the speaker in the desk, by his attitude, and by his manner of speaking. If these things are as God would have them, the impression they make will be in favor of the truth, especially will that class be favorably impressed who have been listening to fables. It is important that your manner be modest and dignified, in keeping with the holy, elevating truth you teach, that a favorable impression may be made upon those who are not naturally inclined to religion.

Carefulness in dress is an important item. There has been a lack here with

ministers who believe present truth. The dress of some has been allowed to be even untidy. Not only has there been a lack of taste, and a lack of order to arrange the dress in a becoming manner upon the person, and to have the color suitable and becoming for a minister of Christ, but the apparel has been with some, even slovenly and untidy. Some ministers wear a vest of a light color, while their pants are dark, or the vest dark and pants light, with no taste or orderly arrangement of the dress upon the person in coming before the people. These things are preaching to the people. They give them an example of order and set before them the propriety of neatness and taste in their apparel, or they give them lessons in lack of taste and slackness which they will be in danger of following.

I was pointed back to the children of Israel anciently, and was shown that God had given specific directions in regard to the material and manner of the dress those ministering before him should wear. The God of Heaven, whose arm moves the world, who sustains us, and gives us life and health, has given us evidence that he could be honored or dishonored by the apparel of those who officiated before him. He gave especial directions to Moses in regard to everything connected with his service. He gave instruction even in regard to the arrangements of their houses, and specified the dress those should wear who were to minister in his service. They were to maintain order in everything, and especially to practice cleanliness. Read the directions that were given to Moses to make known to the children of Israel, as God was about to come down upon the mount, to speak in their hearing his holy law. What did he command Moses to have the people do? To be ready against the third day; for on the third day, said he, the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people, upon the mount. They were to set bounds about the mount. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes."

That great and mighty God who created the beautiful Eden, and everything lovely in it, is a God of order; and he wants order and cleanliness with his people. That mighty God spoke to Moses to tell the people to wash their clothes, lest there should be impurity in their clothing and about their persons, as they came up before the Lord. And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and they washed their clothes, according to the command of God.

And to show the carefulness they were to observe in regard to being cleanly, Moses was to put a laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, "and put

water therein to wash withal." And Moses and Aaron that ministered before the Lord, and Aaron's sons, were to wash their hands and their feet thereat when they went into the tent of the congregation, and when they went in before the Lord.

Here was the commandment of the great and mighty God. There was to be nothing slack and untidy about those who appeared before him, when they should come into his holy presence. And what was this for? What was the object of all this carefulness? Was it merely to recommend the people to God? Was it merely to gain his approbation? The reason that was given me was this: that a right impression might be made upon the people. If those who ministered in the sacred office should fail to manifest care and reverence for God in their apparel and their deportment, the people would lose their awe and reverence for God and his sacred service. If the priests showed great reverence for God, by being very careful and very particular as they came into his presence, it gave the people an exalted idea of God and his requirements. It showed them that God was holy, that his work was sacred, and that everything in connection with the work of God must be holy; that it must be free from everything like impurity and uncleanness; and that all defilement must be put away from those that approach nigh to God. From the light that has been given me, there has been a carelessness in this respect. I might speak of it, as Paul presents it. It is carried out in will-worship and neglecting of the body. But this voluntary humility, this will-worship and neglecting of the body, is not the humility that savors of Heaven. That humility that savors of Heaven will be particular to have the person, and actions, and apparel, of all who preach the holy truth of God, right, and perfectly proper, so that every item connected with us will recommend our holy religion. The very dress will be a recommendation of the truth to unbelievers. It will be a sermon in itself.

But things that transpire in the sacred desk are often wrong. One minister conversing with another in the desk before the congregation, laughing and appearing to have no burden of the work, or lacking a solemn sense of their sacred calling, dishonors the truth, and brings the sacred down upon a low level with common things. The example is to remove the fear of God from the people, and to detract from the sacred dignity of the gospel Christ died to magnify. According to the light that has been given me, it would be pleasing to God for them to bow down as soon as they step into the pulpit, and solemnly ask help from God. What kind of an impression would that make? There would be a solemnity and awe upon the people. Why, their minister is communing with God. Their minister is committing himself to God before he dares to



venture to stand before the people. Solemnity rests down upon the people, and angels of God are brought very near. Ministers should look to God the first thing as they come into the desk, thus saying to all, God is the source of my strength. A minister negligent of his apparel often wounds those of refined sensibilities and good taste. Those who are backward in this respect, should correct their errors and be more circumspect. The loss of some souls at last will be traced to the untidiness of the minister. The first appearance affected the people unfavorably because they could not link his appearance in any way with the truths he presented. His dress was against him; and the impression given, was, that they were a careless set anyhow; we see that they do not care anything about their dress, and we do not want anything to do with such a class of people.

Here, according to the light that has been given me, there has been a manifest neglect among our people. Ministers sometimes stand in the desk with their hair in disorder, and looking as if it had been untouched by comb and brush for a week. God is dishonored when they engage in his sacred service so neglectful of their appearance. Anciently the priests were required to have their garments in a particular style to do service in the holy place, and minister in the priest's office. They were to have garments in accordance with their work, and God distinctly specified what these should be. This laver was placed between the altar and the congregation, that before they came into the presence of God, in the sight of the congregation, they might wash their hands and their feet. What impression was this to make upon the people? It was to show them that every particle of dust must be put away before they could go into the presence of God; for he was so high and holy that unless they did comply with these conditions, death would follow.

But look at the manner and style of dress as worn by some of our ministers at the present day. Some who minister in sacred things so arrange their dress upon their persons that it destroys to some extent, to say the least, the influence of their labor. There is an apparent lack of taste in color and neatness of fit. What is the impression given by such a manner of dress? Why, it is, that the work in which they are engaged is considered no more sacred or elevated than common labor, as plowing in the field. The minister, by his example, brings down the sacred upon a level with common things.

The influence of such preachers upon the people is not pleasing to God. If any are brought out to receive the truth from their labors, they frequently imitate their preachers, and come down to the same low level with them. It will be more difficult to remodel

and bring such into a right position, and teach them true order, and love for discipline, than to labor to convert to the truth, men and women out of the world who have never heard it. The Lord requires of his ministers to be pure and holy, and to rightly represent the principles of truth in their own lives, and by their example bring them up upon a high level.

God requires of all who profess to be his chosen people if they are not teachers of the truth, to be careful to preserve cleanliness and purity of their bodies, also cleanliness and order in their houses and upon their premises. We are examples to the world, living epistles known and read of all men. God requires of all who profess godliness, and especially those who teach the truth to others, to abstain from all appearance of evil.

Dark or black material is more becoming a minister in the desk, and will make a better impression upon the people than to have his apparel of two or three different colors.

From the light I have had, the ministry is a sacred and exalted office, and those who accept this position should have Christ in their hearts, and manifest an earnest desire to have him worthily represented before the people, in all their acts, in their dress, in their speaking, and even in their manner of speaking.

They should speak with reverence. Some destroy the solemn impression they may have made upon the people, by raising their voices to a very high pitch, and hallooing and screaming out the truth. Truth loses two-thirds or three-quarters of its sweetness, its force, and solemnity, by being presented in this manner. But if the voice is toned right, if it has in it solemnity, and is so modulated as to be even pathetic, it will have a much better impression. This was the tone in which Christ taught his disciples. He impressed them with solemnity. He spoke in a pathetic manner. But this loud hallooing--what does it do? It does not give them any more exalted views of the truth. It does not impress people any more deeply, but causes a disagreeable sensation to the hearers, and is only wearing out the vocal organs of the speaker.

The tones of the voice have much to do in affecting the hearts of those that hear. And many who might be useful men, are using up their vital forces, and destroying their lungs and vocal organs, by the manner of their speaking. Some ministers have acquired a habit of hurriedly rattling off what they have to say, as though they had a lesson to

repeat and were hastening through it as fast as possible. This is not the best manner of speaking. Every minister can educate himself, by using proper care to speak distinctly and impressively, and not hurriedly crowd the words together without taking time to breathe. He should speak in a moderate manner that the people can get the ideas fastened in their minds as he passes along. But when the matter is rushed through so rapidly, the people cannot get the points in their minds, and they do not have time to get the impression that it is important for them to have; nor is there time for the truth to affect them, as it otherwise would.

Speaking from the throat, letting the words come out from the upper extremity of the vocal organs, all the time fretting and irritating them, is not the best way to preserve health or to increase the efficiency of those organs. You should take a full inspiration and let the action come from the abdominal muscles. Let the lungs be only the channel, but do not depend upon them to do the work. If you let your words come from deep down, exercising the abdominal muscles, you can speak to thousands with just as much ease as you can speak to ten.

Some of our preachers are killing themselves by long, tedious praying, and loudly exercising the voice, when a lower tone would make a better impression, and save their own strength. Now while you go on regardless of the laws of life and health, and follow the impulse of the moment, don't lay it to God if you break down. Many of you waste time and strength as you commence to speak in long preliminaries and excuses. You should commence your labor as though God had something for you to say to the people, instead of apologizing because you are about to address them. Some use up nearly half an hour in making apologies; and time is frittered away; and when they get to their subject where they are desirous to fasten the points of truth, the people are wearied out and cannot see their force or be impressed with them. You should make the essential points of present truth as distinct as mile-posts so that the people will understand them. They will then see the arguments you want to present, and the positions you want to sustain.

There is another class that address the people in a whining tone, not with hearts softened by the Spirit of God; but they think they must make an impression by the appearance of humility. Such a course does not exalt the gospel ministry. It brings it down and degrades it, instead of elevating and exalting it. Ministers should present the truth warm from glory. They should speak in such a manner as to rightly represent

Christ, and preserve the dignity becoming his ministers.

The long prayers made by some ministers have been a great failure. Praying to great length, as some do, is all out of place. They injure the throat and vocal organs, and then talk of breaking down by their hard labor. They injure themselves when it is not called for. Many feel that praying injures their vocal organs more than talking. This is in consequence of the unnatural position of the body, and the manner they hold the head. You can stand and talk, and not feel injured. The position in praying should be a perfectly natural one. Long praying wearies, and is not in accordance with the gospel of Christ. Praying a half or a quarter of an hour is altogether too long. A few minutes' time is long enough to bring your case before God, telling him what you want; and you can take the people with you, and not weary them out, and lessen their interest for devotion and prayer. They may be refreshed and strengthened, instead of exhausted.

There has been a mistake made by many in their religious exercises--in long praying, in long preaching, upon a high key, with a forced voice, in an unnatural strain and an unnatural tone. The minister has needlessly wearied himself, and really distressed the people, by the hard, labored exercise, which is all unnecessary. Ministers should speak in a manner to reach and impress the people. The teachings of Christ were impressive and solemn. His voice was melodious. And should not we, as well as Christ, study to have melody in our voices? He was a man that had a mighty influence--the Son of God. We are so far beneath him and so far deficient that, do the very best we can, our efforts will be poor. We cannot gain and possess the influence that Christ had; but then, I ask you why we should not educate ourselves and bring ourselves just as near to the Pattern as it is possible for us to do, that we may have the greatest possible influence upon the people. Our words, our actions, our deportment, our dress, everything, should preach. Not only with our words should we speak to the people, but everything pertaining to our person should be a sermon to them, that right impressions may be made upon them, and that the truth spoken may be taken by them to their homes; and thus our faith will stand in a better light before the community.

I never realized more than I do today, the exalted character of the work, its sacredness and holiness, and how important that we should be fit for the work. I see it in myself. I must have a new fitting up, a holy unction, or I cannot go any further to instruct others. I must know that I am walking with God. I must know that I understand the mystery of godliness. I must know that the grace of God is in my own heart; that my

own life is in accordance with his will; that I am walking in his footsteps. Then my words will be true, my actions will be right.

But there is a word more I had almost forgotten. It is in regard to the influence the minister should exert in his preaching. It is not merely to stand in the desk. His work is but just begun there. It is to enter into the different families, and carry Christ there; to carry his sermons there; to carry them out in his actions and his words. As he visits a family, he should inquire into the condition of that family. Is he the shepherd of the flock? The work of a shepherd is not all done in the desk. He should talk with all the members of the flock; with the parents, to learn their standing; and with the children, to learn theirs. A minister should feed the flock over which God has made him overseer. It would be agreeable to go into the house and study. But if you do this, to the neglect of the work God has commissioned you to perform, you do wrong. Never enter a family without inviting them together, and bowing down and praying with them before you leave. Inquire into the health of their souls. What does a skillful physician do? He inquires into the particulars of the case, then seeks to administer remedies. Just so the physician of the soul should inquire into the spiritual maladies with which the members of his flock are afflicted, then go to work to administer the proper remedies, and ask the great Physician to come to his aid. But give them the help that they need. Such ministers will receive all that respect and honor which is due them, as ministers of Jesus Christ. And in doing this, their own souls will be kept alive. They must be drawing strength from God in order to impart strength to those they shall minister to.

May the Lord help us to seek him with all the heart. I want to know that I daily gather the divine rays from glory, that emanate from the throne of God, and shine from the face of Jesus Christ, and scatter them in the pathway around me, and be all light in the Lord.

July 25, 1871

## **Christian Recreation**

Christians should be the most cheerful and happy people that live. They may have the consciousness that God is their father, and their everlasting friend. But many professed Christians do not correctly represent the Christian religion. They appear gloomy, as if under a cloud. They often speak of the great sacrifices they have made to become Christians. They appeal to those who have not accepted Christ, representing by their own example and conversation that they must give up everything which would make life pleasant and joyful. They throw a pall of darkness over the blessed Christian hope. The impression is given that God's requirements are a burden even to the willing soul, and that everything that would give pleasure, or that would delight the taste, must be sacrificed.

We do not hesitate to say that this class of professed Christians have not the genuine article. God is love. Whoso dwelleth in God, dwelleth in love. All who have indeed become acquainted, by experimental knowledge, with the love and tender compassion of our Heavenly Father will impart light and joy wherever they may be. Their presence and influence will be to their associates as the fragrance of sweet flowers, because they are linked to God and Heaven, and the purity and exalted loveliness of Heaven are communicated through them to all that are brought within their influence. This constitutes them the light of the world, the salt of the earth. They are indeed saviors of life unto life, but not of death unto death.

It is the privilege and duty of Christians to seek to refresh their spirits and invigorate their bodies by innocent recreation, with the purpose of using their physical and mental powers to the glory of God. Our recreations should not be scenes of senseless mirth, taking the form of the nonsensical. We can conduct them in such a manner as will benefit and elevate those with whom we associate, and better qualify us and them to more successfully attend to the duties devolving upon us as Christians. We cannot be excusable in the sight of God if we engage in amusements which have a tendency to unfit us for the faithful performance of the ordinary duties of life, and thus lessen our relish for the contemplation of God and heavenly things. The religion of Christ is cheering and elevating in its influence. It is above everything like foolish

jesting and joking, vain and frivolous chit-chat. In all our seasons of recreation we may gather from the Divine Source of strength fresh courage and power, that we may the more successfully elevate our lives to purity, true goodness, and holiness.

Even the great God is a lover of the beautiful. He has given us unmistakable evidence of this in the work of his hands. He planted for our first parents a beautiful garden in Eden. Stately trees were caused to grow out of the ground, of every description, for usefulness and ornament. The beautiful flowers are formed, of rare loveliness, of every tint and hue, perfuming the air. The merry songsters, of varied plumage, caroled forth their joyous songs to the praise of their Creator. It was the design of God that man should find happiness in the employment of tending the things he had created, and that his wants should be met with the fruits of the trees of the garden.

God, who made the Eden home of our first parents so surpassingly lovely, has also given the noble trees, the beautiful flowers, and everything lovely in nature, for our happiness. He has given us these tokens of his love, that we may have correct views of his character. He has implanted in the hearts of his children the love of the beautiful. But by many this love has been perverted. The benefits and beauties which God has bestowed upon us have been worshiped; while the glorious Giver has been forgotten. This is stupid ingratitude. We should acknowledge the love of God to us in all his creative works, and our heart should respond to these evidences of his love by giving him the heart's best and holiest affections.

God has surrounded us with nature's beautiful scenery to attract and interest the mind. It is his design that we should associate the glories of nature with his character. If we faithfully study the book of nature, we shall find it a fruitful source for contemplating the infinite love and power of God.

Many extol artistic skill which will produce lovely paintings upon canvas. All the powers of the being are by many devoted to art, yet how far short do these come of the natural. Art can never attain to the perfection seen in nature. Many professed Christians will go into ecstasies over the painting of an evening sunset. They worship the skill of the artist; but they pass by with indifference the actual glorious sunset which it is their privilege to look upon every cloudless evening. Where does the artist obtain his design? From nature. But the great Master Artist has painted upon heaven's shifting, changing canvas the glories of the setting sun. He has tinted and gilded the heavens with gold,

silver, and crimson, as though the portals of high Heaven were thrown open, that we might view its gleamings, and our imagination take hold of the glory within. Many turn carelessly from this heavenly wrought picture. They fail to trace the infinite love and power of God in the surpassing beauties seen in the heavens, but are almost entranced as they view and worship the imperfect paintings, in imitation of the Master Artist.

The Redeemer of the world generally chose the open air in which to give his lessons of instruction, rather than to be inclosed in walls. He could make his teachings more impressive when surrounded with the beauties of nature. He chose the groves and the sea-side, where he could have a commanding view of landscape and varied scenery, that he might illustrate important truths of the kingdom of God, by the works of God in nature. He made use of the birds, caroling forth their songs without a care, and the lilies of the valley in their beauty, outrivaling Solomon in all his glory, and the lily, emblem of purity, reposing upon the bosom of the lake, the lofty trees, the cultivated lands, the waving grain, the barren soil, the tree that bore no fruit, the everlasting hills, the bubbling stream, the setting sun, tinting and gilding the heavens, to impress his hearers with divine truth.

He connected the works of God's fingers in the heavens and upon the earth, with the words of life he wished to impress upon their minds, that as they should look upon the wonderful works of God in nature, his lessons would be fresh in their memories. He could extol the wisdom of God in his creative works, and could bind up his sacred lessons by directing their minds through nature up to nature's God. The landscape, the trees, the birds, the flowers of the valley, the hills, the lake, and the beautiful heavens, were associated in their minds with sacred truths, which would make them hallowed in memory, as they should look upon them after Christ's ascension to Heaven.

As we are attracted to the beautiful in nature, and associate the things which God has created for the happiness of man with his character, we will regard God as a tender, loving Father, rather than merely as a stern judge. As the character of God thus bears the aspect of love, benevolence, beauty and attraction, the mind is drawn to him. The heart is quickened, and throbs with new and deeper love, mingled with awe and reverence, as we contemplate God in nature.

It is for our health and happiness to go out of our houses, and spend as much of our time as possible in the open air. The mind of the invalid should be withdrawn from



self, to the beautiful scenes in nature. We can but be cheerful as we listen to the music of the happy birds, and feast our eyes upon flourishing fields and gardens. We should invite our minds to be interested in all the glorious things God has provided for us with a liberal hand. And in reflecting upon these rich tokens of his love and care, we may forget infirmities, be cheerful, and make melody in our hearts unto the Lord.

September 12, 1871

### **Words to Christian Mothers**

I am sorry to say that there is a strange absence of principle which characterizes the professing Christians of this generation in regard to their health. Christians, above all others, should be awake to this important subject, and should become intelligent in regard to their own organism. Says the psalmist, "I will praise Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." If we would be able to comprehend the truths of God's word, and the object and purpose of our living we must know ourselves, and understand how to relate ourselves rightly to life and to health.

A diseased body causes a disordered brain, and hinders the work of sanctifying grace upon the mind and heart. The apostle says, "With the mind I myself serve the law of God." If then we pursue a course of wrong which weakens or beclouds our mental powers, so that our perceptions are not clear to discern the value of truth, we are warring against our eternal interest. Pride, vanity, and idolatry enslave the thoughts and affections, and blunt the finer feelings of the soul. These resist the sanctifying grace of God. Many do not realize their accountability as parents. A sense of their moral responsibility is not felt in the existence and education of their children who are the dearest objects of their affections.

Children are often made objects of pride rather than sanctified affection. Parents are not excusable if they do not seek knowledge in regard to the origin of human life, and understand what influence their living and dressing will have on their posterity. It is a crime for parents to pursue a course of life which will lessen physical and mental strength, and perpetuate their miseries for their children. If we do the work God would have us perform in this life, we must have sound minds in sound bodies. When wrong habits wage warfare against nature, we are warring against our souls. The Spirit of God cannot come to our help, and assist us in perfecting Christian characters, while we are indulging our appetites to the injury of health, and while the pride of life controls.

Fashionable women, who live for dress and display, for visitors to admire their dress made after the latest style of fashion, and whose chief happiness is in attending parties, theaters, and balls will have an account to render to their Maker for the

responsibilities they assumed in becoming mothers, and then so lightly throwing them off to be controlled by the tyrant fashion.

Health, strength, and happiness, depend upon immutable laws; but these laws cannot be obeyed where there is no anxiety to become acquainted with them. The Creator has given us natural life, and physical laws, which relate to the preservation of the life he has given; and we are under most sacred obligations to become intelligent in regard to the laws of our being, lest we be found unwittingly transgressors and be obliged to pay the penalty of our lawless course by disease and suffering.

All who transgress physical law must sooner or later suffer the penalty of physical suffering. God has not changed, neither does he propose to change, our physical organism, in order that we may violate a single law, without feeling the effects of its violation.

But many willingly close their eyes to the light. They do not wish to become intelligent on the subject of life and health, because they know that if they do become informed, and put that knowledge to a practical use, they have a great work to do. By indulging their inclinations and appetites, they violate the laws of life and health; and if they obey conscience, they must be controlled by principle in their eating and dressing, rather than be led by inclination, fashion, and appetite. Men and women cannot be practical Christians, and close their eyes to the light.

Christians are required to love God with all their heart, with all their mind, with all their soul, and with all their strength, and their neighbors as themselves. The powers of the entire being God claims, to be devoted to his service. In how much higher degree we can render service to God in the vigor of health, than when palsied by disease.

It is not only the privilege, but the sacred duty, of all to understand the laws God has established in their being, and to be so governed by these laws as to bring their habits into harmony with them. And as they more fully understand the human body, the wonderful work of God's hand, formed in the image of the Divine, they will seek to bring their bodies into subjection to the noble powers of the mind. The body will be regarded by them as a wonderful structure, formed by the Infinite Designer, and given in their charge to keep this harp of a thousand strings in harmonious action. By intelligence they may be able to preserve the human machinery as perfect as possible,

that they "may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ." Here is the secret of true happiness.--Health Reformer.

October 17, 1871

## **Words to Christian Mothers**

On the Subject of Life, Health, and Happiness--No. 2

Obedience to the laws of our being should be regarded of great importance, and to every individual, a matter of personal duty. Indifference and ignorance upon this subject is sin. The two great principles of God's moral government are supreme love to the Creator, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. We are under obligations to God to take care of the habitation he has given us, that we may preserve ourselves in the best condition of health, that all the powers of our being may be dedicated to his service, to glorify his name, whose we are, and whom we ought to serve. It is impossible to render to God acceptable service while we, through wrong habits, are diseased physically and mentally.

We are also under obligation to ourselves, to pursue a course which will not bring unnecessary suffering upon ourselves, and make our lives wretched, we groaning under the weight of disease. If we injure unnecessarily our constitution, we dishonor God, for we transgress the laws of our being. We are under obligation to our neighbors to take a course before them which will give them correct views of the right way to pursue to insure health. If we manifest an indifference upon this great subject of reform, and neglect to obtain the knowledge within our reach, and do not put that knowledge to a practical use, we will be accountable before God for the light he has given us, which we would not accept and act upon.

I have heard many say, I know that we have wrong habits that are injuring our health; but our habits have become formed, and it is next to impossible to change, and do even as well as we know. By hurtful indulgences these are working against their own highest interest and happiness in this life, and are, in so doing, disqualifying themselves to obtain the future life. Many who are enlightened still follow in a course of transgression, excusing themselves that it is very inconvenient to be singular. Because the world at large choose to war against themselves and their highest earthly and eternal interest, they who know better venture to do the same, disregarding the light and knowledge which hold them responsible for the result of their violation of nature's laws.

God is not responsible for the suffering which follows the nonconformity to natural law and moral obligations to him. Enlightened transgressors are the worst of sinners, for they choose darkness rather than light. The laws that govern physical life, they may understand if they will; but the desire with them is so strong to follow popular, sensual indulgences of the day that are in opposition to physical and moral health, that they are insensible to its importance, and will not impress it upon others either by precept or example.

Their neglect of this important subject exposes them to a fearful accountability. Not only are they suffering themselves the penalty of nature's violated law, but their example is leading others in the same course of transgression. But if men and women would act in reference to their highest temporal good, untrammelled by fashion, living naturally, we should see fewer pale faces, hear less complaint of suffering, and attend less death-beds and funerals.

Because the majority choose to walk in a path which God has positively forbidden, shall all feel compelled to tread the same path? The question is not, What will the world do? but, What shall we as individuals do? Will we accept light and knowledge, and live simply and naturally, feeling that we are under obligation to society, to our children, and to God, to preserve health and a good constitution, serene tempers, and unimpaired judgment. We have a duty to live for the interest of others. In order to benefit others, many think they must conform to custom, or they will lose the influence they might have upon the world. But when they do this, their influence to reform and elevate is lost, and their example leads away from reform. They are on a level with transgressors, therefore, cannot elevate them while their own example sanctions the customs and enslaving fashions of this age. The only hope of benefiting society is in showing them a better way by proper instruction sustained by a correct course on our part.

Those who have means at their command, can do a good work if governed by religious principles. They can demonstrate, if they will, to rich and poor, that happiness does not consist in outward adornings and needless display. They may show by their own simplicity of dress and unaffected modesty of manners that there are higher and nobler attainments than conformity to the latest styles of fashion.

If we would have happiness in this life, we must live for it, and show to society

that we can preserve firm principles in defiance of extravagant and injurious fashion. If we conform to the world and bring on disease by violating the laws of life and health, fashionable society cannot relieve us of a single pain. We shall have to suffer for ourselves, and if we sacrifice life, we shall have to die for ourselves. We should as individuals seek to do right, and to take care of ourselves by living naturally instead of artificially.

We cannot afford to live fashionably, for in doing thus, we sacrifice the natural to the artificial. Our artificial habits deprive us of many privileges and much enjoyment, and unfit us for useful life. Fashion subjects us to a hard, thankless life. A vast amount of money is sacrificed to keep pace with changing fashion, merely to create a sensation. The votaries of fashion who live to attract the admiration of friends and strangers, are not happy--far from it. Their happiness consists in being praised and flattered, and if they are disappointed in this, they are frequently unhappy, gloomy, morose, jealous, and fretful. As a weather vane is turned by the wind, those who consent to live fashionable lives are controlled by every changing fashion, however inconsistent with health and with real beauty. Very many sacrifice comfort and true elegance, to be in the train of fashion. The most enfeebling and deforming fashions are now enslaving those who bow at her shrine.

Fashion loads the heads of women with artificial braids and pads, which do not add to their beauty, but give an unnatural shape to the head. The hair is strained and forced into unnatural positions, and it is not possible for the heads of these fashionable ladies to be comfortable. The artificial hair and pads covering the base of the brain, heat and excite the spinal nerves centering in the brain. The head should ever be kept cool. The heat caused by these artificials induces the blood to the brain. The action of the blood upon the lower or animal organs of the brain, causes unnatural activity, tends to recklessness in morals, and the mind and heart is in danger of being corrupted. As the animal organs are excited and strengthened, the moral are enfeebled. The moral and intellectual powers of the mind become servants to the animal.

In consequence of the brain being congested its nerves lose their healthy action, and take on morbid conditions, making it almost impossible to arouse the moral sensibilities. Such lose their power to discern sacred things. The unnatural heat caused by these artificial deformities about the head, induces the blood to the brain, producing congestion, and causing the natural hair to fall off, producing baldness. Thus the natural

is sacrificed to the artificial.

Many have lost their reason, and become hopelessly insane, by following this deforming fashion. Yet the slaves to fashion will continue to thus dress their heads, and suffer horrible disease and premature death, rather than be out of fashion.

Pleasure-seeking and frivolity blunt the sensibilities of the professed followers of Christ, and make it impossible for them to place a high estimate upon eternal things. Good and evil, by them, are placed upon a level. The high, elevated attainments in godliness, which God designed his people should reach, are not gained. These lovers of pleasure seem to be pleased with earthly and sensual things, to the neglect of the higher life. The enjoyments of this life, which God has abundantly provided for them in the varied works of nature, which have an elevating influence upon the heart and life, are not attractive to those who are conformed to the fashions of the world. They rush on unmindful of the glories of nature, seen in the works of God's hands, and seek for happiness in fashionable life, and in unnatural excitement which is in direct opposition to the laws of God established in our being.

God has surrounded us with his glories, that the natural eye may be charmed. The splendor of the heavens, the adornments of nature in spring and summer, the lofty trees, the lovely flowers of every tint and hue, should call us out of our houses to contemplate the power and glory of God, as seen in the works of his hands. But many close their senses to these charms. They will not engage in healthful labor among the beautiful things of nature. They turn from shrubs and flowers, and shut themselves in their houses, to labor and toil in closed walls, depriving themselves of the healthful, glorious sunlight, and the pure air, that they may prepare artificial adornments for their houses and their persons. They impose upon themselves a terrible tax. They sacrifice the glow of health God has given in the human face, the blended beauty of the lily and the rose, and tax the physical and mental in preparing the artificial to take the place of the natural. The beauty of the soul, when compared with outward display, is regarded almost valueless. In the anxiety to meet the standard of fashion, beauty of character is overlooked.

The majority of pleasure lovers attend the fashionable night gatherings, and spend in exciting amusements the hours God has given them for quiet rest and sleep in order to invigorate the body. Hours are spent in dancing. The blood becomes heated; the



system is exhausted; and while in this feverish state of excitement, the late suppers are introduced, and the unnatural appetite is indulged, to the injury, not only of the physical, but the moral health. Those things which irritate and burden the stomach, benumb the finer feelings of the heart, and the entire system must feel it, for this organ has a controlling power upon the health of the entire body. If the stomach is diseased, the brain nerves are in strong sympathy with the stomach, and the moral powers are overruled by the baser passions. Irregularity in eating and drinking, and improper dressing, deprave the mind and corrupt the heart, and bring the noble attributes of the soul in slavery to the animal passions.

Many in returning to their homes from these night scenes of dissipation, expose themselves to the damp, chilly air of night. They are thinly clad with thin slippers upon their feet, the chest not properly protected, and health and life are sacrificed. By the limbs and feet becoming chilled the circulation of the blood through the system is unbalanced. Very many have, by pursuing this course, brought upon themselves lung difficulties and various distressing infirmities, which have, in a few months, carried them to an untimely grave.

Many are ignorantly injuring their health and endangering their life by using cosmetics. They are robbing the cheeks of the glow of health, and then to supply the deficiency use cosmetics. When they become heated in the dance the poison is absorbed by the pores of the skin, and is thrown into the blood. Many lives have been sacrificed by this means alone.--Health Reformer.

October 31, 1871

## **Words to Christian Mothers**

On the Subject of Life, Health, and Happiness,--No. 3.

Health is a great blessing, and can be secured only in obedience to natural law. Good health is necessary for the enjoyment of life. A calm, clear brain, and steady nerve, are dependent upon a well-balanced circulation of the blood. In order to have good blood, we must breathe well.

Mothers are accountable, in a great degree, for the health and lives of their children, and should become intelligent in regard to laws upon which life and health depend. Their work does not end here. They should carefully educate their children upon this subject, that they may, by obedience to nature's laws, avoid disease, and secure health and happiness. It is not necessary that all mothers should teach their children all the details of physiology and anatomy. But they should avail themselves of all the means within their reach to give their children instruction relative to the simple principles of hygiene.

It is well that physiology is introduced into the common schools as a branch of education. All children should study it. It should be regarded as the basis of all educational effort. And then parents should see to it that practical hygiene be added. This will make their knowledge of physiology of practical benefit. Parents should teach their children by example that health is to be regarded as the chiefest earthly blessing. They cannot do this while the love of money and of display is made of greater consequence than the health of their children.

Mental and moral power is dependent upon the physical health. Children should be taught that all pleasures and indulgences are to be sacrificed which will interfere with health. If the children are taught self-denial and self-control, they will be far happier than if allowed to indulge their desires for pleasure and extravagance in dress.

The great burden of life with very many is, What shall I eat? What shall I drink? And wherewithal shall I be clothed? Many mothers indulge in pride, and in many things

which are hurtful to the health of the body, in order to be in fashion. What deplorable lessons are they giving their children in this respect. They do not, by precept and example, educate their children to practice self-denial as a sacred duty, in order to possess health, serene tempers goodness, and true beauty. Good health, sound minds, and pure hearts, are not made of the first importance in households.

Many parents do not educate their children for usefulness and duty. They are indulged and petted, until self-denial to them becomes almost an impossibility. They are not taught that to make a success of Christian life, the development of sound minds in sound bodies is of the greatest importance. The dear children should be taught to flee every taint of sin. In order to do this, they must separate from the hurtful fashions of the world.

It is a sad fact that many, even professed Christians, make their pleasures, their amusements, the gratification of pride in dress, the gratification of appetite, almost everything; while the cross of Jesus Christ, and purity of heart and life, are left out of the question. God has claims upon them, but they do not, by their life, show that they have a sense of their duty to him. They acknowledge the claims of the world in their obedience to fashion. They devote time, service, and money, to its friendship, and, in so doing, prove themselves to be not the true friends of God. He demands of his people the first place in their hearts. He requires their best and holiest affections. The Christian religion invites, urges, and claims self-denial, and the bearing of the cross for Christ's sake. And the soul's interest should come first.

The world may clamor for our time and affections, fashion may invite our patronage; but the words of the apostle should be enough to lead Christian mothers from the indulgence of pride in dress and demoralizing amusements. "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" "Whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God."

Christian mothers should take their position on the platform of truth and righteousness; and when urged to unite with the world in patronizing fashions which are health-destroying and demoralizing, they should answer, We are doing a great work, and can not be diverted from it. We are settling the question of our everlasting destiny. We are seeking to develop in our children, sound and worthy and beautiful characters, that they may bless the world with their influence, and have immortal beauty and glory

in the world to come that will never fade. If children had such an example from their parents, it would have a saving influence upon their lives.

But it is a lamentable fact, that many professed Christian women, who are mothers, take the lead in patronizing the fashions, and those who make no pretensions to Christianity follow in the footsteps of professed Christians. Some who are in humble circumstances in life, in their efforts to keep pace with fashion, that they may retain their position in fashionable society, endure privation, and work far beyond their strength, that they may dress equal to the example given them by their more wealthy Christian sisters. Unless they can dress somewhat to compare with their more wealthy sisters, they have no desire to attend church, where there is such a display of costly adorning. The contrast is humiliating, say they, and they can only think of their humble dress.

The temptation is so strong before some to come up to the standard of fashion that they are sometimes led into dishonesty and theft to gain their desired object. Others sell their virtue, that they may have the means to decorate themselves for display. They see this is the great aim of life with many who profess to be righteous. Professed Christians, whose example thus proves a stumbling-block to their weak sisters, will have a fearful account to meet in the day of final reckoning. They have, by their example, opened a door of temptation to the inexperienced, who are charmed with the respect paid to those dressed in fashionable style, and they became so infatuated that they at last sold honor and virtue, woman's greatest adornments, and sacrificed health and happiness for artificial decorations for display. I clip the following pointed remarks from the Marshall Statesman, under the caption of Fashionable Ruin:

"At a fashionable party in Fifth Avenue, New York, a few evenings since, a beautiful young woman turned sharply upon an elderly dowager who was prosing about the magdalens, and the hopelessness of doing anything for these 'lost women,' with the assertion: 'I know a class more hopelessly lost than they. We fashionables, who murder time and squander money, and lead women to become magdalens that they may dress like us, why does nobody send missionaries to us?' The intensity of the utterance was eloquent of better possibilities. No doubt there are more ways than one of being lost. The sirens are not all of one class, or confined to one locality."

The apostle presents the inward adorning, in contrast with the outward, and tells

us what the great God values. The outward is corruptible. But the meek and quiet spirit, the development of a beautifully symmetrical character, will never decay. It is an adornment which is not perishable. In the sight of the Creator of everything that is valuable, lovely, and beautiful, it is declared to be of great price. "Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel. But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner, in the old time, the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands." 1 Peter 3:3-5.

It is of the greatest importance that we, as Christian mothers, show, by precept and example, that we are cultivating that which the Monarch of the universe estimates of great value. In doing this, what an influence for good can we have upon our children; and how important we can make our lessons of instruction, that purity and holiness should be the great aim and object of their lives. The following should be read with attention:

#### "Dress

"Female loveliness never appears to so good advantage as when set off with simplicity of dress. No artist ever decks his angels with towering feathers and gaudy jewelry; and our dear human angels, if they will make good their title to that name, should carefully avoid ornaments, which properly belong to indian squaws and african princesses. These tinselries may serve to give effect on the stage, on the ball-floor, but in daily life there is no substitute for the charm of simplicity. a vulgar taste is not to be disguised by gold or diamonds. The absence of a true taste and refinement of delicacy cannot be compensated for by the possession of the most princely fortune. Mind measures gold, but gold cannot measure mind.

"through dress the mind may be read, as through the delicate tissues of the lettered page. A modest woman will dress modestly; a really refined and intellectual woman will bear the marks of careful selection and faultless taste."

A great amount of time and money is squandered upon needless adornments. Many inventions have been sought out in extra puffings, tucks, and trimmings, which have a direct tendency to lessen vitality and shorten life. Almost every conceivable style

of dress may be seen in crowded cities, and upon the great thoroughfares of travel. There are customs and styles in dress current now, that a few years ago would have been looked upon by Christians as monstrosities.

The corsets which are again being generally worn to compress the waist is one of the most serious features in woman's dress. Health and life are being sacrificed to carry out a fashion that is devoid of real beauty and comfort. The compression of the waist weakens the muscles of the respiratory organs. It hinders the process of digestion. The heart, liver, lungs, spleen, and stomach, are crowded into a small compass, not allowing room for the healthful action of these organs.

The following item is clipped from the Herald of Health:

"A female servant died suddenly a short time since in the east. The doctor could not account for the death, and made a postmortem examination, which showed that the stomach had been reduced to the size of a child's, and the heart pushed out of its proper place through tight-lacing."

Where tight-lacing is practiced, the lower part of the chest has not room sufficient for action. The breathing, therefore, is confined to the upper portion of the lungs, where there is not sufficient room to carry on the work. But the lower part of the lungs should have the greatest freedom possible. The compression of the waist will not allow free action of the muscles.

Alcohol and tobacco pollute the blood of men, and thousands of lives are yearly sacrificed to these poisons. Confinement indoors, shut away from the glorious sunshine, and deprived of the invigorating air of heaven, improper eating, with wrong habits of dressing, corrupt the blood of women. The compression of the waist by tight-lacing prevents the waste matter from being thrown off through its natural channels. The most important of these is the lungs. In order for the lungs to do the work God designed, they must be left free, without the slightest compression. If the lungs are cramped they cannot develop; but their capacity will be diminished, making it impossible to take a sufficient inspiration of air. The abdominal muscles were designed to aid the lungs in their action. Where there is no compression of the lungs, the motion in full breathing will be observed to be mostly of the abdomen. When lacing prevents this, the breathing is restricted to the upper portion of the lungs. Women's dress should be arranged so

loosely upon the person, about the waist, that she can breath without the least obstruction. Her arms should be left perfectly free, that she may raise them above her head with ease.

By lacing, the internal organs of women are crowded out of their positions. There is scarcely a woman that is thoroughly healthy. The majority of women have numerous ailments. Many are troubled with weaknesses of most distressing nature. These fashionably dressed women cannot transmit good constitutions to their children. Some women have naturally small waists. But rather than regard such forms as beautiful, they should be viewed as defective. These wasp waists may have been transmitted to them from their mothers, as the result of their indulgence in the sinful practice of tight-lacing, and in consequence of imperfect breathing. Poor children born of these miserable slaves of fashion have diminished vitality, and are predisposed to take on disease. The impurities retained in the system in consequence of imperfect breathing are transmitted to their offspring.

Very many children are born with their blood tainted with scrofula through the wrong habits of the mother in her eating and dressing. The very many miscarriages that now occur may generally be traced to fashionable dress. Lacing causes displacements, and this character of disease is increasing with each successive generation. Many suffer years without making their condition known. They remain in ignorance of the causes of their difficulties, and endure sufferings, which it is impossible for language to express. Not a few women have strength sufficient to carry them through the period of child-bearing. Either her own life or that of her offspring is frequently sacrificed. If both live, she has not been able to give her offspring physical vitality sufficient to withstand accidents and prevailing epidemics. Any trifling cause may put out the feeble flame of existence. And the Christian mother tries to be resigned to her bereavement, which she believes to be in God's special providence. But could she look back, and trace in her life the true cause, and be convinced that her living and dressing fashionably had put out of the life of her child, she might be wise, and repent of her murderous work.

The following excellent remarks are from The Household:

"The ordinary dress that men wear diminishes their breathing capacity one-fourth; and what woman wears her clothing so loose as that? I call a dress too tight that you hit when you draw in the fullest possible breath.

"'but my waist is naturally slender,' says one woman. She means that she has inherited small lungs. Her ancestors, more or less of them, compressed their lungs in the same way that we do, and it has become in her case a congenital deformity. This leads us to one of the worst aspects in the whole matter--the transmitted results of indulgence in this deadly vice. And it shows itself in diminished vitality and in liability to take on disease of many kinds. a mother may even make her child scrofulous by her imperfect breathing during the period of gestation, and many a mother does so. Almost all the reading public, very possibly all whose eyes fall upon these lines, and have been told again and again how the tightness of clothing about the waist and abdomen (please remember my definition of tightness) displaces the yielding viscera within, pressing them upward upon the lungs and downward upon pelvis, and produces directly or indirectly all the female complaints to which the generation is so largely subject. One medical writer declares that 'this influence upon the organs in the lower part of the abdomen is so great that it furnishes to the medical profession nearly half its business,' notwithstanding the fact that many women and young girls from native delicacy keep their sufferings to themselves. The very list of these complaints is alarming, and there is no question but the public at large, and even women themselves, have very little idea how much they suffer in this way from the effects of tight dress.

"of course, in this form it does not end with the individual, unless she dies before marriage, or so utterly disables herself that she cannot bear children at all, which is not unfrequently the case. If not quite so bad as that, she is still often unable to complete her time, and the little one falls out of being from sheer lack of the vitality which the mother has not been able to give it. She cannot take nearly breath for one, much less for two. a large proportion of the alarming number of miscarriages in respectable society is directly due to tight dressing. I met a lady a few days since who would have been a beautiful and queenly woman but for this deformity (her waist was less than half the circumference of her shoulders), and I was not at all surprised to learn that a few months before she had come within a few minutes of death from this cause.

"in many cases where the child lives, it drags out a feeble existence, ready to be snatched away by any trifling accident, and the mother piously tries to be 'resigned to the will of providence.' She never dreams that it was through any fault of hers. 'I am perfectly healthy,' said such a childless mother to me once, and then she went on with a list of the untoward circumstances that took away one little innocent after another,



without a suspicion of the truth that if she had been 'perfectly healthy' she would have been able to give each child such vitality that it would have brushed aside these accidents as trifles lighter than air. I do not say that all such troubles arise from tight dressing, but I do say that so far as mothers are concerned, it is far the most prolific source of them.

"and this sort of thing will go on, I suppose, until our women acquaint themselves with practical physiology, so as to get some idea what it means to be 'perfectly healthy.' It will be absolutely necessary, too, in order to make them comprehend intelligently the mischief of tight dress, that they should know something about individuality of the organs within, and the importance of keeping them in right places."

Says the Western Rural: "I saw a young lady, not long since, dressed for a party. Her waist was incased in corsets, laced so tightly that she was absolutely deformed, still it wasn'T tight (of course not; it would be absurd to imagine it was); and for fear of looking stout, she wore one thin skirt only. On remarking it, she demanded to know if one hadn'T a right to lace if she pleased. No, said I, emphatically, one has no right to entail misery upon her offspring, nor commit suicide, and then unjustly accuse the Lord of taking them out of the world.

"but what is the use of talking? Ignorance and folly go hand in hand, and stronger brains are wanted before we can hope for reform. The day after the party, the young lady mentioned was forced to wear her dress several inches looser than usual, was unable to take a full inspiration without experiencing a sharp pain in her side, and endured the torture throughout the day from pain in the chest; and I suppose the heroism which enabled her to endure it was sublime."

While on a tour west, we spent some hours in Chicago, at the Massasoit House. Several young ladies waited upon the table, and all of them were deformed by tight lacing. My husband's hands could have spanned their waists. Their shoulders were broad, their hips were large. The artificial paddings over the chest, and the large appendages upon the back of the head, and upon the small of the back, made these girls appear anything but attractive. Their faces were pale, and they moved about languidly. There was nothing like sprightliness or gracefulness in their movements. Their vital organs were pressed in so small a compass that it was impossible for them to fill their lungs. They could not breathe naturally. They could only gasp. They could not walk

naturally and gracefully. They wriggled in their walk, as though every step required an effort. Thought I, this is one of Dame Fashion's tortures. And these poor girls adopt her inventions, although in so doing they appeared like fools going to the correction of stocks. Read what Good Health says of

### "Corsets

"Among the causes which prevent muscular exercise, the compression of the chest by corsets is the most remarkable. Where on the earth, or under the earth, or in the waters, or in the air, in things animate or inanimate, this fashion found its original model, unless it be in the venomous wasp, it would be hard to discover. Tradition insists that corsets were invented by a butcher of the thirteenth century, as a punishment for his wife. Finding nothing to stop her loquacity, he put a pair of stays on her to take away her breath, and so prevent her from going about and talking. This effectual punishment was inflicted by other cruel husbands, till at last there was scarcely a wife in all London who was not tied up in this manner. The punishment became so universal at last, that the ladies, in their defense, made a fashion of it, and so it has continued to the present time. The form given by corsets to the female chest is directly opposed to grecian and roman models of beauty."--Health Reformer.

January 2, 1872

### **Beware of the Spare Bed**

In our itinerant life we have suffered much by sleeping in beds that were not daily used. Beds that are not daily exposed to the air and sunlight, will gather dampness. And there are but very few who understand the necessity of having the sun and air come freely into their sleeping rooms, that bed and bedding may be kept perfectly dry and free from impurities.

Beds that have been left unused for days, and even weeks, in the damp season of the year are dangerous to the health and life of those who sleep in them. When visitors are expected, the parlor stove may be for the first time set up, and a fire kindled in it, and the parlor bedroom opened. And this is considered sufficient preparation to make the friends comfortable. But the bed and bedding, if not carefully separated and aired, are not safe for any one to use.

I have had a very afflicting experience in sleeping in damp beds. I slept with my infant two months old in a north bedroom. The bed had not been used for two weeks. A fire was kindled in the room, and this was considered all that was necessary. Next morning, I felt that I had taken cold. My babe seemed to be in great pain when moved. His face began to swell, and he was afflicted with erysipelas of the most aggravating form. My dear babe was a great sufferer for four weeks, and finally died, a martyr to the damp bed.

A few weeks later, I accompanied my husband to fill appointments in several places. In four of these places we had the misfortune to be assigned the spare bed in rooms opening from the parlor. The stove was set up in the parlor adjoining these bedrooms the very day we were expected. Dampness had entered every part of these unheated, unventilated rooms. The windows had not been raised, and were carefully covered with paper curtains, and outside of these drapery, and the blinds were carefully closed. The air had not been permitted to circulate freely through the house, and the precious sunlight was excluded as though it was an enemy. Why was there need of windows at all when they were not used? It would have saved expense to have made these houses without windows. Our good-hearted friends received us cordially, and we

should have enjoyed our visit, had it not been for the dreaded spare bed.

At the first two places we visited, we took severe colds by sleeping in their damp, unused beds, and we suffered greatly with rheumatism; but tried to fill our appointments. In the third damp bed, we lay nearly one hour trying to get warm; but the clothing was literally wet. We were under the unpleasant necessity of calling our friends; for we felt that it would be positively fatal to life and health to remain in that damp bed. Our friends cheerfully renewed their fires, and the bedding was removed from the bed and thoroughly dried.

We returned home from that journey, and exposure, to suffer for months. I feared that I should be a cripple for life. My husband was afflicted with pain in the chest and lungs, and he had a severe cough for months. After three months of almost helpless suffering, and careful treatment, by the mercy of God, I was able to walk.

We have been exposed on our late journey to "death in the spare bed." We have taken colds, which have settled upon the lungs, causing soreness of the flesh. Since our fears have been aroused, we have been careful, and have been under the necessity of close questioning in regard to our beds. In some cases, we have removed the bed clothing, and have dried it by the fire; before we ventured to sleep. This may have given the impression that we were very particular, and perhaps notional. We own that we are particular. We value life which God has preserved, by a miracle of his mercy, from the death in the spare, damp, and moldy beds.

In the case of all these beds, where the air has not circulated through the rooms daily, the bedding should be removed and thoroughly dried by the fire, before being slept in. Sleeping rooms should have the windows raised every day, and the air should circulate freely through the rooms. The curtains should be withdrawn from the windows. The blinds should be fastened back. And the blessed sunlight should thus be invited in, to brighten and purify every bedroom in the house.

The Northwestern Christian Advocate speaks touchingly upon this subject under the caption of

"Death in the spare bed.

"On one occasion, having need to see a minister early the morning after conference adjourned, I went to his boarding place, one of the choicest in the city. He and his room-mate were making their toilet, and revealed their presence by hoarse and almost incessant coughing. Their entertainment had been most hospitable; but they had been assigned to the 'spare room,' in that case an elegant apartment, reserved for favored guests. The spacious and yielding bed had an inviting look, but a damp and moldy smell. Indeed, the whole apartment revealed an alarming unfamiliarity with sunshine. But it was the 'best room,' and any intimation from them that both room and bed were damp had seemed rude and ungrateful. So they occupied the room and bed, and contracted colds, from the effects of which one has since died, and the other still suffers.

"said a pale and haggard sufferer not long since, 'I think I should be able to visit my appointments at least a few times more, if friends would not persist in putting me away in their chilly spare rooms and damp beds.' When such cases have run their course, doctors may say, 'died of hepatized lungs;' but more will understand them if they say, 'died of sleeping in spare beds.'

"the motives of good people cannot be questioned; but unwittingly they literally 'kill with kindness.' In the name of the brotherhood, I protest if we are to occupy the 'spare room,' and sleep in the 'spare bed,' they should be dry and well aired. We certainly do not elect to be Suicides From Courtesy, and you would not give us Death for a bed-fellow!"

March 12, 1872

## Sentimentalism

"Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

Those who follow the path of wisdom and holiness will not be troubled with vain regrets over misspent hours, neither will they be troubled with gloom or horror of mind, as some are, unless engaged in vain, trifling amusements.

Many cherish the impression that spirituality and devotion to God are detrimental to health. There are many professing Christians with diseased imagination who do not correctly represent the religion of the Bible. They are ever walking under a cloud. They seem to think it a virtue to complain of depression of spirits, great trials, and severe conflicts. The Saviour of men has said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." It is the duty of all to cherish the light, to walk in the light, and to encourage habitual cheerfulness of mind, that they may reflect light rather than shadows of gloom and darkness.

We take the position understandingly that godliness and righteousness do not conflict with the laws of health; but are in harmony with them. Some may teach that vain amusements and cheap nonsense are needful to cheerfulness, and to keep above despondency. This may divert the mind for the time being; but after the excitement is over, and the mind reflects, conscience arouses, and makes her voice heard, that this is not the best way to obtain health, or true happiness.

Amusements excite the mind; but depression is sure to follow. Useful labor and physical exercise will have a more healthful influence upon the mind, and will strengthen the muscles, improve the circulation, and will prove a powerful agent in the recovery of health.

"What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile; depart from evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry. The face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off

the remembrance of them from the earth. The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles."

The consciousness of right-doing is the best medicine for diseased bodies and minds. The special blessing of God resting upon the receiver, is health and strength. A person whose mind is quiet and satisfied in God is in the pathway to health. To have a consciousness that the eyes of the Lord are upon us, and his ears open to hear our prayers, is a satisfaction indeed. To know that we have a never-failing Friend in whom we can confide all the secrets of the soul, is a privilege which words can never express. Those whose moral faculties are beclouded by disease are not the ones to rightly represent the Christian life, or the beauties of holiness. They are too often in the fire of fanaticism, or the water of cold indifference, or stolid gloom.

There are those who do not feel that it is a religious duty to discipline the mind to dwell upon cheerful subjects, that they may reflect light rather than darkness and gloom. This class of minds will either be engaged in seeking their own pleasure, in frivolous conversation, laughing and joking, keeping the mind continually elated with a round of amusements; or they will be depressed, having great trials and mental conflicts, which they think but few have ever experienced or can understand. These persons may profess Christianity, but they deceive their own souls. They have not the genuine article. The religion of Jesus Christ is first pure, then peaceable, full of righteousness and good fruits. Many have fallen into the sad error which is so prevalent in this degenerate age, especially with females. They are too fond of the other sex. They love their society. Their attentions are to them flattering, and they encourage, or permit, a familiarity which does not always accord with the exhortation of the apostle, to "abstain from all appearance of evil."

Some mingle with their religion a romantic, love-sick sentimentalism, which does not elevate, but only lowers. It is not their mind alone that is affected, but others are injured by their example and influence.

Some are naturally devotional. If they would train their mind to dwell upon elevated themes which have nothing to do with self, but are of a heavenly nature, they could yet be of use. But much of their life has been wasted in dreaming of doing some great work in the future, while present duties, though small, are neglected. They have been unfaithful. The Lord will not commit to their trust any larger work until the work

now before them has been seen and performed with a ready, cheerful will.

Unless the heart is put into the work, it will drag heavily, whatever that work may be. The Lord tests our ability by giving us small duties to perform first. If we turn from these with dissatisfaction and murmuring, no more will be intrusted to us until we cheerfully take hold of these small duties, and do them well; then higher and greater responsibilities will be committed to us.

We have been intrusted with talents, not to be squandered, but to be put out to the exchangers, that, at the Master's coming, he may receive his own with usury. God has not distributed these talents indiscriminately. He has dispensed these sacred trusts according to the known powers and capacities of his servants: "To every man his work."

He gives impartially, and he expects corresponding returns. If all do their duty according to the measure of their responsibility, the amount intrusted to them will be doubled, be it large or small. Their fidelity is tested and proved, and their faithfulness is positive evidence of their wise stewardship, and they can be intrusted with the true riches, even the gift of everlasting life.

Many have a self-complacent feeling, flattering themselves that if they had an opportunity, or were circumstanced more favorably, they could and would do some great work. These do not view things from a correct standpoint. Their imagination is diseased, and they have permitted their minds to soar above the common duties of life. Day-dreaming and romantic castle-building have unfitted them for usefulness. They have lived in an imaginary world, and have been imaginary martyrs, and are imaginary Christians. There is nothing real and substantial in their character. This class sometimes imagine that they have an exquisite delicacy of character, and sympathetic nature, which must be recognized and responded to by others. They put on an appearance of languor and indolent ease, and frequently think that they are not appreciated. Their sick fancy is not helping themselves or others. Appropriate labor, and healthy exercise of all their powers, would withdraw their thoughts from themselves.

Despondent feelings are frequently the result of too much leisure. The hands and mind should be occupied in useful labor, lightening the burdens of others; and in doing this, they will benefit themselves. Idleness gives time to brood over imaginary sorrows. If they do not in reality have hardships and trials, they will be sure to borrow them from



the future. God, by his prophet Ezekiel, addresses Jerusalem thus: "Behold this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness, was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy."

Invalids should not allow themselves to drop down into an inactive state. This is detrimental to health. The power of the will should be brought into action. And, even if some dread exercise, which involves responsibility, they should train their minds to it. Exertion is what they most need to recover health. They can never obtain health unless they overcome this listless, dreamy condition of mind, and arouse themselves to action.

There is much deception carried on under the cover of religion. Passion controls the minds of many who have become depraved through perversion of thought and feeling. These deceived souls flatter themselves that they are spiritually minded, and especially consecrated, when their religious experience is composed of a lovesick sentimentalism, rather than of purity, true goodness, and humiliation of self. The mind should be drawn away from self, and exercised in blessing others, and being elevated by good works. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." True religion ennobles the mind, refines the taste, sanctifies the judgment, and makes it possessor partaker of the purity, and the influence of Heaven, brings angels near, and separates more and more from the spirit and influence of the world.

December 17, 1872

## **The First Advent of Christ**

The Son of God was next in authority to the great Lawgiver. He knew that his life alone could be sufficient to ransom fallen man. He was of as much more value than man as his noble, spotless character, and exalted office as commander of all the heavenly host, were above the work of man. He was in the express image of his Father, not in features alone, but in perfection of character.

The blood of beasts could not satisfy the demands of God as an atoning sacrifice for the transgression of his law. The life of a beast was of less value than the life of the offending sinner, therefore could not be a ransom for sin. It could only be acceptable with God as a figure of the offering of his Son.

Man could not atone for man. His sinful, fallen condition would constitute him an imperfect offering, an atoning sacrifice of less value than Adam before his fall. God made man perfect and upright, and after his transgression there could be no sacrifice acceptable to God for him, unless the offering made should in value be superior to man as he was in his state of perfection and innocency.

The divine Son of God was the only sacrifice of sufficient value to fully satisfy the claims of God's perfect law. The angels were sinless, but of less value than the law of God. They were amenable to law. They were messengers to do the will of Christ, and before him to bow. They were created beings, and probationers. Upon Christ no requirements were laid. He had power to lay down his life, and to take it again. No obligation was laid upon him to undertake the work of atonement. It was a voluntary sacrifice that he made. His life was of sufficient value to rescue man from his fallen condition.

The Son of God was in the form of God, and he thought it not robbery to be equal with God. He was the only one, who as a man walked the earth, who could say to all men, Who of you convinceth me of sin? He had united with the Father in the creation of man, and he had power through his own divine perfection of character to atone for man's sin, and to elevate him, and bring him back to his first estate.

The sacrificial offerings, and the priesthood of the Jewish system, were instituted to represent the death and mediatorial work of Christ. All those ceremonies had no meaning, and no virtue, only as they related to Christ, who was himself the foundation of, and who brought into existence, the entire system. The Lord had made known to Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and the ancient worthies, especially Moses, that the ceremonial system of sacrifices and the priesthood, of themselves, were not sufficient to secure the salvation of one soul.

The system of sacrificial offerings pointed to Christ. Through these, the ancient worthies saw Christ, and believed in him. These were ordained of Heaven to keep before the people the fearful separation which sin had made between God and man, requiring a mediating ministry. Through Christ, the communication which was cut off because of Adam's transgression was opened between God and the ruined sinner. But the infinite sacrifice that Christ voluntarily made for man remains a mystery that angels cannot fully fathom.

The Jewish system was symbolical, and was to continue until the perfect Offering should take the place of the figurative. The Mediator, in his office and work, would greatly exceed in dignity and glory the earthly, typical priesthood. The people of God, from Adam's day down to the time when the Jewish nation became a separate and distinct people from the world, had been instructed in regard to the Redeemer to come, which their sacrificial offerings represented. This Saviour was to be a mediator, to stand between the Most High and his people. Through this provision, a way was opened whereby the guilty sinner might find access to God through the mediation of another. The sinner could not come in his own person, with his guilt upon him, and with no greater merit than he possessed in himself. Christ alone could open the way, by making an offering equal to the demands of the divine law. He was perfect, and undefiled by sin. He was without spot or blemish. The extent of the terrible consequences of sin could never have been known, had not the remedy provided been of infinite value. The salvation of fallen man was procured at such an immense cost that angels marveled, and could not fully comprehend the divine mystery that the majesty of Heaven, equal with God, should die for the rebellious race.

As the time drew near for the Son of God to make his first advent, Satan became more vigilant in preparing the hearts of the Jewish people to be steeled against the

evidences he should bring of his Messiahship. The Jews had become proud and boastful. The purity of the priesthood had not been preserved, but was fearfully corrupted. They retained the forms and ceremonies of their system of worship, while their hearts were not in the work. They did not sustain personal piety and virtuous characters. And the more they were wanting in the qualifications necessary to the sacred work, as priests of the most high God, the more tenacious were they of outward show of piety, zeal, and devotion.

They were hypocritical. They loved the honors of the world, and were ambitious to become exalted through riches. In order to obtain their desire, they improved every opportunity to take advantage of the poor, especially of the widow and fatherless. They exacted heavy sums of money of those who were conscientious, on various pretenses, for the Lord's treasury, and used the means thus dishonestly obtained for their own advantage. They were themselves rigorous to outwardly keep the law. They appeared to show great respect for traditions and customs, in order to obtain money from the people to gratify their corrupt ambition.

Traditions, customs, and needless ceremonies, were repeated to the people, which God had not given them through Moses or any other one. These originated from no higher source than man. The chief priests, scribes, and elders, forced these upon the people as the commandments of God. Their hearts were hard and unfeeling. They showed no mercy to the poor and unfortunate. Yet, at the same time, while praying in the market-places, and giving alms to be seen of men, and thus putting on the outward semblance of goodness, they were devouring widows' houses by their heavy taxes which they laid upon them. They were apparently exact in outward forms when observed of men; for they wished to give impressions of their importance. They wished the people to have exalted ideas of their zeal and devotion to religious duties, while they were daily robbing God by appropriating the offerings of the people to themselves.

The priesthood had become so corrupt that the priests had no scruples in engaging in the most dishonest and criminal acts to accomplish their designs. Those who assumed the office of high priest prior to, and at, the time of Christ's first advent, were not men divinely appointed to the sacred work. They had eagerly aspired to the office through love of power and show. They desired a position where they could have authority, and practice fraud under a garb of piety, and thereby escape detection. The high priest held a position of power and importance. He was not only counselor and mediator, but judge;

and there was no appeal from his decision. The priests were held in restraint by the authority of the Romans, and were not allowed the power of legally putting any one to death. This power rested with those who bore rule over the Jews. Men of corrupt hearts sought the distinguished office of high priest, and frequently obtained it by bribery and assassination. The high priest, clad in his consecrated and expensive robes, with the breastplate upon his breast, the light flashing upon the precious stones inlaid in the breastplate, presented a most imposing appearance, and struck the conscientious, true-hearted people with admiration, reverence, and awe. The high priest was designed in an especial manner to represent Christ, who was to become a high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. This order of priesthood was not to pass to another, or be superseded by another.

The Jewish nation had corrupted their religion by useless ceremonies and customs. This laid a heavy tax upon the people, especially the poorer classes. They were also under bondage to the Romans, and required to pay tribute to them. The Jews were unreconciled to their bondage, and looked forward to the triumph of their nation through the Messiah, the powerful deliverer foretold in prophecy. Their views were narrow. They thought the Coming One would, at his appearing, assume kingly honors, and, by force or arms, subdue their oppressors, and take the throne of David. Had they, with humble minds and spiritual discernment, studied the prophecies, they would not have been found in so great error as to overlook the prophecies which pointed to his first advent in humility, and misapply those which spoke of his second coming with power and great glory. The Jewish people had been striving for power. They were ambitious for worldly honors. They were proud and corrupt, and could not discern sacred things. They could not distinguish between those prophecies which pointed to the first advent of Christ, and those that described his second, glorious appearing. The power and glory described by the prophets as attending his second advent, they looked for at his first advent. Their national glory was to them their greatest anxiety. Their ambitious desire was the establishment of a temporal kingdom, which they supposed would reduce the Romans to subjection, and exalt themselves with authority and power to reign over them. They had made the proud boast to those to whom they were in subjection, that they were not to oppress them long; for their reign would soon commence, which would be more exalted and glorious than even that of Solomon.

When the time was fulfilled, Christ was born in a stable, and cradled in a manger, surrounded by the beasts of the stall. And is this indeed the Son of God, to all outward

appearance a frail, helpless babe, so much resembling other infants? His divine glory and majesty were veiled by humanity, and angels heralded his advent. The tidings of his birth were borne with joy to the heavenly courts, while the great men of the earth knew it not. The proud Pharisees and scribes, with their hypocritical ceremonies, and apparent devotion to the law, knew nothing of the Babe of Bethlehem. They were ignorant of the manner of his appearing, notwithstanding all their boasted learning and wisdom in expounding the law and the prophecies in the schools of the prophets. They were devising means to advantage themselves. Their study was as to the most successful manner to obtain riches and worldly honor, and they were wholly unprepared for the revelation of the Messiah. They looked for a mighty prince, who should reign upon David's throne, and whose kingdom should endure forever. Their proud and lofty ideas of the coming of the Messiah were not in accordance with the prophecies which they professed to be able to expound to the people. They were spiritually blind, and were leaders of the blind.

In Heaven it was understood that the time had come for the advent of Christ to the world, and angels leave glory to witness his reception by those he came to bless and save. They had witnessed his glory in Heaven, and they anticipate that he will be received with honor in accordance with his character, and the dignity of his mission. As angels approach the earth, they first come to the people God had separated from the nations of the world as his peculiar treasure. They see no especial interest among the Jews, no eager waiting and watching that they may be the first to receive the Redeemer, and acknowledge his advent.

In the temple, which had been hallowed by daily sacrificial offerings, prefiguring his coming, and symbolizing his death, no preparations are being made to welcome the Saviour of the world. The Pharisees continue to repeat their long, meaningless prayers in the streets, to be heard of men, in order to obtain the reputation of great piety and devotion.

The angels from Heaven behold with astonishment the indifference of the people, and their ignorance in regard to the advent of the Prince of Life. The proud Pharisees, claiming to be God's chosen people, in their hypocritical devotions, are proclaiming the law, and exalting traditions, while men of other nations are dealing in fables, and are worshiping false gods. All alike were ignorant of the great event which prophecy had foretold would transpire.

Angels behold the weary travelers, Joseph and Mary, making their way to the city of David, to be taxed, according to the decree of Caesar Augustus. Here, in the providence of God, Joseph and Mary had been brought; for this was the place prophecy had predicted that Christ should be born. They seek a place of rest at the inn, but are turned away because there is no room. The wealthy and honorable have been welcomed, and find refreshment and room, while these weary travelers are compelled to seek refuge in a coarse building which shelters the dumb beasts.

Here the Saviour of the world is born. The majesty of glory, who filled all Heaven with admiration and splendor, is humiliated to a bed in a manger. In Heaven, he was surrounded by holy angels; but now his companions are the beasts of the stall. What humiliation is this! Wonder, O Heavens! and be astonished, O earth!

As there are none among the sons of men to herald the advent of the Messiah, angels must now do that work which it was the honored privilege of men to do. But the angels, with the glad tidings of the birth of the Saviour, are sent to the humble shepherds, and not the learned Jews, who profess to be the expounders of prophecy; for they have no heart to receive it.

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo! the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid." Humble shepherds, who are guarding their flocks by night, are the ones who joyfully receive their testimony. Suddenly the heavens are lighted up with a brightness which alarms the shepherds. They know not the reason of this grand display. They do not at first discern the myriads of angels that are congregated in the heavens. The brightness and glory from the heavenly host illuminate and glorify the entire plain. While the shepherds are terrified at the glory of God, the leading angel of the throng quiets their fears by revealing himself to them, saying, "Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good-will toward men."

As their fears are dispelled, joy takes the place of astonishment and terror. They could not, at first, bear the radiance of glory, which attended the whole heavenly host, to break upon them suddenly. One angel only appears to the gaze of the watching shepherds to dissipate their fears, and make known their mission. As the light of the angel encircles them, the glory rests upon them, and they are strengthened to endure the greater light and glory attending the myriads of heavenly angels. "And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into Heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."

The shepherds are filled with joy, and, as the bright glory disappears, and the angels return to Heaven, they are all aglow with the glad tidings, and hasten in search of the Saviour. They find the infant Redeemer, as the celestial messengers had testified, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in the narrow confines of a manger.

The events which had but just transpired, have made indelible impressions upon their minds and hearts, and they are filled with amazement, love, and gratitude, for the great condescension of God to man in sending his Son into the world. The shepherds spread the joyful tidings everywhere, of the wondrous glory they had seen, and the celestial praises they had heard from the lips of the heavenly host.



December 24, 1872

## **The First Advent of Christ**

The King of glory stooped low to take humanity; and angels, who had witnessed his splendor in the heavenly courts, as he was worshiped by all the heavenly hosts, were disappointed to find their divine Commander in a position of so great humiliation.

The Jews had separated themselves so far from God by their wicked works, that angels could not communicate to them the tidings of the advent of the infant Redeemer. God chooses the wise men of the East to do his will.

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." These men were not Jews; but they had been waiting for the predicted Messiah. They had studied prophecy, and knew the time was at hand when Christ would come; and they were anxiously watching for some sign of this great event, that they might be among the first to welcome the infant heavenly King, and worship him. These wise men were philosophers, and had studied the works of God in nature. In the wonders of the heavens, in the glories of the sun, moon, and stars, they traced the finger of God. They were not idolaters. They lived up to the dim light which shone upon them. These men were regarded by the Jews as heathen; but they were more pure in the sight of God than the Jews who had been privileged with great light, and who made exalted professions, yet did not live up to the light God had given them. These wise men had seen the heavens illuminated with light, which enshrouded the heavenly host who heralded the advent of Christ to the humble shepherds. And after the angels returned to Heaven, a luminous star appeared, and lingered in the heavens.

This light was a distant cluster of flaming angels, which appeared like a luminous star. The unusual appearance of the large, bright star which they had never seen before, hanging as a sign in the heavens, attracted their attention. They were not privileged to hear the proclamation of the angels to the shepherds. But the Spirit of God moved them out to seek this heavenly Visitor to a fallen world. The wise men directed their course where the star seemed to lead them. And as they drew nigh to the city of Jerusalem, the

star was enshrouded in darkness, and no longer guided them. They reasoned that the Jews could not be ignorant of the great event of the advent of the Messiah, and they made inquiries in the vicinity of Jerusalem.

The wise men are surprised to see no unusual interest upon the subject of the coming of the Messiah. They fear that after all they may not have read the prophecies correctly. Uncertainty beclouds their minds, and they become anxious. They hear the priests repeating and enforcing their traditions, and expounding the law, and exalting their religion, and their own piety. They point to their phylacteries, and the borders of their garments, upon which the precepts of the law and their traditions are inscribed, as evidences of their devotion, while they denounce the Romans and the Greeks as heathen and sinners above all men. The wise men leave Jerusalem not as confident and hopeful as when they entered it. They marvel that the Jews are not interested and joyful in prospect of this great event of the advent of Christ.

The churches of our time are seeking worldly aggrandizement, and are as unwilling to see the light of the prophecies, and receive the evidences of their fulfillment which show that Christ is soon to come, as were the Jews in reference to his first appearing. They were looking for the temporal and triumphant reign of Messiah in Jerusalem. Professed Christians of our time are expecting the temporal prosperity of the church, in the conversion of the world, and the enjoyment of the temporal millennium.

The wise men plainly stated their errand. They were in search of Jesus, the king of the Jews, for they had seen his star in the east and had come to worship him.

The city of Jerusalem was thrown into great excitement by the sayings of the wise men. The news was immediately carried to Herod. He was exceedingly troubled, yet disguised the discomfiture, and received the men with apparent courtesy.

The advent of Christ was the greatest event which had taken place since the creation of the world. The birth of Christ, which gave joy to the angels of Heaven, was not welcome to the kingly powers of the world. Suspicion and envy were aroused in king Herod, and his wicked heart was planning his dark purposes for the future. The Jews manifested a stupid indifference to the story of the wise men. But Herod is intensely interested and excited. He summons the scribes, and the chief priests, and urges upon them to search carefully prophetic history, and tell him where the infant king

was to be born. The careless indifference and apparent ignorance of the scribes and chief priests, as they turn to their books for the words of prophecy, irritate the fully aroused king. He thinks they are trying to conceal from him the real facts in regard to the birth of the Messiah. He authoritatively commands them to make close search in relation to their expected king.

"And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.'

Although Herod received the wise men with apparent respect, yet the intimation by them of the birth of a King to reign in Jerusalem, excited his envy and hatred against the infant whom he thought might prove his rival, and drive him, or his descendants, from the throne. A storm of opposition and satanic fury took possession of Herod, and he determined to destroy this infant king. Yet he put on a calm exterior, and requested a private interview with the wise men. He then inquired particularly the exact time the star appeared. He apparently hailed the supposition of the birth of Christ with joy, expressing a desire to be immediately informed by the wise men, that he might be among the first to show him true honor by worshiping him also. The wise men were not able to read the heart of the tyrant Herod; but God, who is acquainted with every emotion of the soul, with the intents and purposes of the heart, was not deceived by his hypocritical pretenses. His power will protect and preserve the precious infant Saviour from Satan's devices, until his mission on earth is accomplished. "When they had heard the king, they departed; and lo! the star which they saw in the east went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy."

After the wise men had left Jerusalem, they again saw, to their great joy, the guiding star in the heavens, which directed them to the birthplace of our Saviour. "And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshiped him. And when they had opened their treasures, they

presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." The wise men found no loyal guard to debar their entrance to the presence of Christ. The honorable of the world are not in attendance. In place of the people who should have welcomed with grateful homage the Prince of life, he is surrounded with dumb, beasts.

The glory of God attending the angelic host had scarcely disappeared from the plains of Bethlehem when the malice of envious Herod was aroused in opposition to the infant Saviour. This king understood that Christ was to reign over a temporal kingdom, and he was utterly averse to the idea of a Jewish king. The chief priests and scribes had professed to understand the prophecies in reference to the appearing of Christ. They had repeated to the people the prophecies which relate to the second appearing of Christ in power and great glory, to put down all authority, and to rule over the whole earth. They had in a boastful, resentful manner, asserted that Christ was to be a temporal prince, and that every kingdom and nation was to bow in submission to his authority.

The priests had not searched the prophecies with an eye single to the glory of God, or with a desire to confirm there lives to the high standard marked out by the prophets. They searched the Scriptures to find ancient prophecies which they could in some way interpret to sustain their lofty pride, and to show with what contempt God regarded all the nations of the world except the Jews. They declared that the power and authority they were then compelled to respect and obey, would soon come to an end; for Messiah would take the throne of David, and, by force of arms, restore the Jews to their liberty, and their exalted privileges. The understanding of the Jews was darkened. They had no light in themselves. They were seeing the prophecies through their own perverse understanding. Satan was leading them on to their own ruin. And Herod was determined to defeat the purposes of the Jews, and to humble these proud boasters, by destroying Christ as soon as he should be found.

After the mission of the wise men had been accomplished, they were proposing to return and bear the joyful news to Herod of the success of their journey. But God sent his angel in the night season to turn the course of the wise men. In a vision of the night, they were plainly told not to return to Herod. They obeyed the heavenly vision. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. And when they were departed, behold the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word; for Herod will

seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt."

The Lord moved upon the wise men to go in search of Jesus, and he directed their course by a star. This star, leaving them when near Jerusalem, led them to make inquiries in Judah; for they thought it was not possible for the chief priests and scribes to be ignorant of this great event. The coming of the wise men made the whole nation acquainted with the object of their journey, and directed their attention to the important events which were transpiring. God well knew that the advent of his Son to earth would stir the powers of darkness. Satan did not want that light should come into the world. The eye of God was upon his Son every moment. The Lord had fed his prophet Elijah by a miracle when upon a long journey. He could obtain food from no other source. He rained manna from heaven for the children of Israel. The Lord provided a way for Joseph to preserve his own life, and the life of Jesus, and that of the mother, by their fleeing into Egypt. He provided for the necessities of their journey, and for their sojourn in Egypt, by moving upon the wise men of the East to go in search of the infant Saviour, and to bear him valuable offerings as a token of honor. The Lord is acquainted with the hearts of all men. He directed the course of Joseph into Egypt, that he might there find an asylum from the wrath of a tyrannical king, and the life of the infant Saviour be preserved. The earthly parents of Jesus were poor. The gifts brought to them by the wise men sustained them while in the land of strangers.

Herod waited anxiously for the return of the wise men; for he was impatient to carry out his determined purpose to destroy the infant King of Israel. After he had waited long for the knowledge he desired, he feared his purpose might be thwarted. He reasoned thus: Could those men have read the dark deed I premeditated? Could they have understood my design, and purposely avoided me? This he thought was insult and mockery. His impatience, envy, and hatred, increased. He was stirred by his father, the devil, to seek the accomplishment of his purpose by a most cruel act. If he should fail in carrying out his murderous intent by pretense and subtlety, he would, by power and authority, strike terror to the hearts of all the Jews. They should have an example of what their king would meet, should they seek to place one upon the throne in Jerusalem.

And here was a favorable opportunity to humble the pride of the Jews and bring upon them a calamity which should discourage them in their ambition to have a separate government, and become the glory of the whole earth, as they had proudly boasted.

Herod issued a proclamation to a large body of soldiers, whose hearts were hardened by crime, war, and bloodshed, to go throughout Bethlehem and all the coasts thereof and massacre all the children from two years old and under. Herod designed in this cruel act to accomplish a double purpose: first, to exercise, by his bold act, his power and authority over the Jews; and, second, to silence their proud boastings in regard to their king, and also make his own kingdom secure, by murdering the infant Prince whom he envied and feared. This cruel work was accomplished. The sword of unfeeling soldiers carried destruction everywhere. The horror and distress of parents were beyond description. The wailing cries of bereaved mothers, as they clasped their expiring infants to their breasts, rose above the coarse jests and imprecations of the soldiers, while they cried to Heaven for vengeance on the tyrant king.

All this terrible calamity was suffered of God, to humble the pride of the Jewish nation. Their crimes and wickedness had been so great that the Lord permitted the wicked Herod to thus punish them. Had they been less boastful and ambitious, their lives pure, their habits simple and sincere, God would have preserved them from being thus humiliated and afflicted by their enemies. God would, in a signal manner, have made the wrath of the king harmless to his people, had they been faithful and perfect before him. But he could not especially work for them, for their works were abhorred by him.

The Jews had excited the envy and hatred of Herod against Christ, through their false interpretation of the prophets. They taught that Christ was to reign over an earthly empire, in unsurpassed glory. Their proud boasting presented the Saviour of the world, and his mission to the earth, altogether in a false light. Their lofty ideas and their proud boasting did not result as Satan had at first purposed they should, in the destruction of the infant Saviour, but rebounded back upon themselves, filling their homes with mourning. Jeremiah, in prophetic vision, says: "In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." But Herod did not long survive his cruel work. He died a fearful death. He was compelled to yield to a power he could not turn aside or overcome.

After Herod was cut off from the earth, the angel again warned Joseph to return to the land of Israel. He was desirous to make his home in Judah or Bethlehem; but when he heard that the son of the tyrannical Herod reigned upon his father's throne, he

was afraid that the purposes of the father might be carried out by the son in murdering Christ. While in his perplexity, not knowing where to locate, the Lord, through his angel, again selected for him a place of safety. "And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene."

This was the reception the Saviour met as he came to a fallen world. He left his heavenly home, his majesty, and riches, and high command, and took upon himself man's nature, that he might save the fallen race. Instead of men glorifying God for the honor he had conferred upon them in thus sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, by giving him a place in their affections, there seemed to be no rest nor safety for the infant Saviour. Jehovah could not trust to the inhabitants of the world his Son, who came into the world that through his divine power he might redeem fallen man. He who came to bring life to man, met, from the very ones he came to benefit, insult, hatred, and abuse. God could not trust his beloved Son with men while carrying on his benevolent work for their salvation, and final exaltation to his own throne. He sent angels to attend his Son and preserve his life, till his mission on earth should be accomplished, and he should die by the hands of the very men he came to save.

December 31, 1872

## **The Life of Christ**

From his childhood, Jesus conformed his life strictly to the Jewish laws. He manifested great wisdom in his youth. The grace and power of God were upon him. The word of the Lord, by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah, describes the office and work of Christ, and shows the sheltering care of God over his Son in his mission to earth, that the relentless hatred of men, inspired by Satan, should not be permitted to thwart the design of the great plan of salvation.

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him. He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench. He shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth."

The voice of Christ was not heard in the street, in noisy contention with those who were opposed to his doctrine. Neither was his voice heard in the street, in prayer to his Father, to be heard of men. His voice was not heard in joyful mirth. His voice was not raised to exalt himself, and to gain the applause and flattery of men. When engaged in teaching, he withdrew his disciples away from the noise and confusion of the busy city to some retired place more in harmony with the lessons of humility, piety, and virtue, which he would impress upon their minds. He shunned human praise, and preferred solitude and peaceful retirement to the noise and confusion of mortal life. His voice was often heard in earnest, prevailing intercessions to his Father; yet for these exercises he chose the lonely mountain, and frequently spent whole nights in prayer for strength to sustain him under the temptations he should meet, and to accomplish the important work he came to do for the salvation of man. His petitions were earnest, and mingled with strong cries and tears. And notwithstanding the labor of soul during the night, he ceased not his labor through the day. In the morning he would quietly resume his work of mercy and disinterested benevolence. The life of Christ was in marked contrast to that of the Jews, and for this very reason they wished to destroy him.

The chief priests, and scribes, and elders, loved to pray in the most public places;



not only in the crowded synagogues, but in the corners of the streets, that they might be seen of men, and praised for their devotion and piety. Their acts of charity were done in the most public manner, and for the purpose of calling the attention of the people to themselves. Their voices were indeed heard in the streets, not only in exalting themselves, but in contention with those who differed with them in doctrine. They were resentful and unforgiving, proud, haughty, and bigoted. The Lord, through his faithful prophet, shows the life of Christ in marked contrast to the hypocritical chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees.

The parents of Jesus yearly visited Jerusalem, in accordance with the Jewish law. Their son, Jesus, then twelve years old, accompanied them. In returning to their home, after they had gone a day's journey, their anxiety was aroused, as they missed Jesus. He had not been seen of them since they left Jerusalem. They supposed he was with the company. Inquiry and search were made among their acquaintances and relatives for their much-loved son; but no trace could be found of him. They hastened back to Jerusalem, their hearts heavy with sorrow. For one day of neglect they lost their son, Jesus, from their company which cost them three days of anxious search, with sorrowful hearts, before they found him. This should be a lesson to those who are following Christ. If they neglect watchfulness and prayer, and become careless, they may, in one day, lose Christ; but it may take many days of anxious, sorrowful search to find him again, and to enjoy the peace of mind and consolation of his grace that they lost through vain talking, jesting, joking, and evil speaking, or even neglect of prayer.

"And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed; and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them; but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

The doctors and expounders of the law, always taught the people publicly upon especial occasions. It was upon one of these occasions that Jesus gave manifest proofs of superior wisdom, penetration, and mature judgment. The people were more surprised

because the parents of Christ were poor, and he had not received the advantages of education. The question passed from lip to lip, Whence has this youth such wisdom, having never learned? While the parents of Christ were in search of him, they saw large numbers flocking to the temple; and as they entered it, the well-known voice of their son arrested their attention. They could not get sight of him for the crowd; but they knew that they were not mistaken, for no voice was like his, marked with solemn melody. The parents gazed in astonishment at the scene. Their son, in the midst of the grave and learned doctors and scribes, was giving evidence of superior knowledge by his discreet questions and answers. His parents were gratified to see him thus honored. But the mother could not forget the grief and anxiety she had suffered because of his tarry at Jerusalem, and she, in a reproving manner, inquired why he had thus dealt with them, relating her fears and sorrow on his account.

Said Jesus, "How is it that ye sought me?" This pointed question was to lead them to see that if they had been mindful of their duty, they would not have left Jerusalem without him. He then adds, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" While they had been unmindful of the responsible charge intrusted to them, Jesus was engaged in the work of his Father. Mary knew that Christ did not refer to his earthly father, Joseph, but to Jehovah. She laid these things to heart, and profited by them.

In returning from Jerusalem with the crowd, talking and visiting engrossed their minds, and Jesus was forgotten for an entire day. His absence was not observed until the close of the day. Joseph and Mary had been honored of God in an especial manner, in being intrusted with the responsible charge of the Saviour. Angels had heralded his birth to the shepherds, and God had directed the course of Joseph, to preserve the life of the infant Saviour. But the confusion of much talk had led to the neglect of their sacred trust, and Jesus was not brought to mind for an entire day by those who should not have forgotten him for a moment. They returned their weary way, sad and fearful, to Jerusalem. They recalled the terrible massacre of innocent children by the cruel Herod in hope of destroying the king of Israel. When their anxiety was relieved by finding Jesus, they did not acknowledge their own neglect of duty, but their words reflected on Christ--"Why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." Jesus in most respectful language, inquires, "How is it that ye sought me?" But these words modestly reflect back the censure upon themselves, in reminding them that, if they had not permitted themselves to be engrossed with matters of no special importance, they would not have had the trouble of searching for him. He then justifies

his course: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" While he was engaged in the work he came to the earth to perform, they had neglected the work his Father had especially intrusted to them. They could not fully comprehend the words of Christ; yet Mary, in a great measure, understood their import, and laid them away in her heart to ponder over in the future.

It was so natural for the parents of Christ to look upon him as their own child, as parents commonly regard their children, that they were in danger of losing the precious blessing which daily attended them in the presence of Jesus, the world's redeemer. As Christ was daily with them, his life in many respects as other children, it was difficult to keep before them his sacred mission, and the daily blessing of having committed to their charge and parental care, for awhile, the Son of God, whose divinity was veiled with humanity. His tarry in Jerusalem was designed of him as a gentle reminder to them of their duty, lest they should become indifferent in a greater degree, and lose the sense of the high favor God had conferred upon them.

Not one act in the life of Christ was unimportant. Every event of his life was for the benefit of his followers in future time. This circumstance of the tarry of Christ in Jerusalem teaches an important lesson to those who should believe on him. Many had come a great distance to keep the passover, instituted that the Hebrews might keep in memory their wonderful deliverance from Egypt. This ordinance was designed to call their minds from their world-loving interests, and from their cares and anxieties in relation to temporal concerns, and to review the works of God. They were to call to mind his miracles, his mercies and loving-kindness, to them, that their love and reverence for him might increase, and lead them to ever look to him, and trust in him in all their trials, and not turn to other gods.

The observance of the passover possessed a mournful interest to the Son of God. He saw in the slain lamb a symbol of his own death. The people who celebrated this ordinance were instructed to associate the slaying of the lamb with the future death of the Son of God. The blood, marking the door-posts of their houses, was the symbol of the blood of Christ, which was to be efficacious for the believing sinner, in cleansing him from sin, and sheltering him from the wrath of God which was to come upon the impenitent and unbelieving world, as the wrath of God fell upon the Egyptians. But none could be benefited by this special provision made by God for the salvation of man unless they should perform the work the Lord left them to do. They had a part to act

themselves, and by their acts to manifest their faith in the provision made for their salvation.

Jesus was acquainted with hearts. He knew that, as the crowd returned in company from Jerusalem, there would be much talking and visiting which would not be seasoned with humility and grace, and the Messiah and his mission would be nearly forgotten. It was his choice to return from Jerusalem with his parents alone; for in being retired, his father and mother would have more time for reflection, and for meditation upon the prophecies which referred to his future sufferings and death. He did not wish that the painful events which they were to experience in his offering up his life for the sins of the world, to be new and unexpected to them. He was separated from them in their return from Jerusalem. After the celebration of the passover, they sought him sorrowing three days. When he should be slain for the sins of the world, he would be separated from them, lost to them, for three days. But after that, he would reveal himself to them, and be found of them, and their faith rely upon him as the redeemer of the fallen race, the advocate with the Father in their behalf.

Here is a lesson of instruction to all the followers of Christ. He designed that none of these lessons should be lost, but be written for the benefit of future generations. There is necessity of carefulness of words and actions when Christians are associated together, lest Jesus be forgotten of them, and they pass along careless of the fact that Jesus is not among them. When they are aroused to their condition, they discover that they have journeyed without the presence of Him who could give peace and joy to their hearts, and days are occupied in returning, and searching for him whom they should have retained with them every moment. Jesus will not be found in the company of those who are careless of his presence, and who engage in conversation having no reference to their Redeemer, in whom they profess their hopes of eternal life are centered. Jesus shuns the company of such, so also do the angels who do his commands. These heavenly messengers are not attracted to the crowd where minds are diverted from heavenly things. These pure and holy spirits cannot remain in the company where Jesus' presence is not desired and encouraged, and his absence not marked. For this reason, great mourning, grief, and discouragement exist. Through lack of meditation, watchfulness, and prayer, they have lost all that is valuable. The divine rays of light emanating from Jesus are not with them, cheering them with their loving, elevating influence. They are enshrouded in gloom, because their careless, irreverent spirit has separated Jesus from their company, and driven the ministering angels from them.

Many who attend meetings of devotion, and have been instructed by the servants of God, and been greatly refreshed and blessed in seeking Jesus, have returned to their homes no better than they left them, because they did not feel the importance of praying and watching thereunto, as they returned to their homes. They frequently feel inclined to complain of others, because they realize their loss. Some murmur against God, and do not reproach themselves as being the cause of their own darkness, and sufferings of mind. These should not reflect upon others. The fault is in themselves. They talked and jested, and visited away the heavenly Guest, and themselves they have only to blame. It is the privilege of all to retain Jesus with them. If they do this, their words must be select, seasoned with grace. The thoughts of their hearts must be disciplined to meditate upon heavenly and divine things.

The love of God, manifested toward fallen man in the gift of his beloved Son, amazed the holy angels. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The Son was the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. He possessed divine excellence and greatness. He was equal with God. It pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell. He "thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Yet he "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

In Christ were united the human and the divine. His mission was to reconcile God to man, and man to God. His work was to unite the finite with the Infinite. This was the only way in which fallen men could be exalted, through the merits of the blood of Christ, to be partakers of the divine nature. Taking human nature fitted Christ to understand the nature of man's trials and all the temptations wherewith he is beset. Angels, who were unacquainted with sin, could not sympathize with man in his peculiar trials.

Before Christ left Heaven and came into the world to die, he was taller than any of the angels. He was majestic and lovely. But when his ministry commenced, he was but little taller than the common size of men then living upon the earth. Had he come among men with his noble, heavenly form, his outward appearance would have attracted the minds of the people to himself, and he would have been received without the

exercise of faith.

It was in the order of God that Christ should take upon himself the form and nature of fallen man, that he might be made perfect through suffering, and himself endure the strength of Satan's fierce temptations, that he might understand how to succor those who should be tempted. The faith of men in Christ as the Messiah was not to rest on the evidences of sight, and they believe on him because of his personal attractions, but because of the excellence of character found in him, which never had been found, neither could be, in another. All who loved virtue, purity, and holiness, would be drawn to Christ, and would see sufficient evidence of his being the Messiah foretold by prophecy that should come. Those who thus trusted in the word of God, would receive the benefits of the teachings of Christ, and finally of his atonement.

Christ came to call the attention of all men to his Father, teaching them repentance toward God. His work was to reconcile man to God. Although Christ did not come as he was expected, yet he came just as prophecy had marked out that he would come. Those who wished to believe, had sufficient grounds for their faith by referring to prophecy which predicted the coming of the Just One, and described the manner of his coming.

The ancient Jewish church were the highly favored people of God, brought out of Egypt and acknowledged as his own peculiar treasure. The many and exceeding great and precious promises to them as a people, were the hope and confidence of the Jewish church. Herein they trusted, and believed their salvation sure. No other people professed to be governed by the commandments of God. Our Saviour came first to his own people, but they received him not.

The self-righteous, unbelieving Jews expected their Saviour and King would come into the world clothed with majesty and power, compelling all Gentiles to yield obedience to him. They did not expect any humiliation and suffering would be manifested in him. They would not receive the meek and lowly Jesus, and acknowledge him to be the Saviour of the world. Had he appeared in splendor, and assumed the authority of the world's great men, instead of taking the form of a servant, they would have received and worshiped him.

January 7, 1873

## **Life and Mission of John**

About the time of the birth of John, the Jews were in a deplorable condition. And in order to keep down insurrection, they were allowed to have a separate government, in name, while the Romans virtually ruled them. The Jews saw that their power and liberty were restricted, and that, in reality, they were under the Roman yoke. The Romans claimed the right to appoint men to the priesthood, and to remove them from office at will. Thus was there a door opened for the priesthood to become corrupt. The priests, not being divinely appointed, abused their office, and were unfaithful in their ministrations. Men of corrupt morals, with money and influence, obtained the favor of those in power, and succeeded in attaining to the priesthood. The whole country felt their oppression, and revolt and dissension were the result of this state of things.

The pious Jews were looking, believing, and earnestly praying, for the coming of the Messiah. God could not manifest his glory and power to his people through a corrupt priesthood. The set time to favor his people had come. The faith of the Jews had become clouded, in consequence of their departure from God. Many of the leaders of the people brought in their own traditions, and enforced them upon the Jews, as the commandments of God. The pious Jews believed, and trusted in God that he would not leave his people in this condition, to be a reproach to the heathen. He had, in time past, raised them up a deliverer when in their distress they had called upon him. From the predictions of the prophets, they thought the time appointed of God had arrived when Messiah would come. And when he should come, they would have a clear revelation of the divine will, and that their doctrines would be freed from the traditions and needless ceremonies which had confused their faith. The pious, aged Jews waited day and night for the coming Messiah, praying that they might see the Saviour before they died. They longed to see the cloud of ignorance and bigotry dispelled from the minds of the people.

"Zacharias and Elizabeth were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." They were far advanced in years. Zacharias ministered in the holy office of the priesthood. "And it came to pass that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went

into the temple of the Lord. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense."

And when Zacharias saw the angel of God, he was surprised and troubled. This conscientious, God fearing soul questioned whether he had himself offended God, and whether this divine messenger had come to reprove, or in judgment, to condemn. The heavenly messenger cheered him with these words:

"Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

In the above words, the angel Gabriel enjoined upon Zacharias that John should be brought up with strictly temperate habits. This was to secure to him physical, mental, and moral health, that he should be qualified for the important mission of making ready a people for the Lord. In order to accomplish this great work, the Lord must work with him. The Spirit of God would be with John if he should be obedient to the requirement of the angel.

A great work was before John, and in order for him to have a sound physical constitution, and mental and moral power, to do this work, he must control appetite and passion. John was to lead out as a reformer, and by his abstemious life, and plain dress, rebuke the intemperate habits, and the sinful extravagance, of the people. The indulgence of appetite in luxurious food, and the use of wine, were lessening physical strength, and weakening the intellect, so that crime and grievous sins did not appear sinful. The angel Gabriel gave special directions to the parents of John in regard to temperance. A lesson was given upon health reform by one of the exalted angels from the throne of Heaven. John was to reform the children of Israel, and turn them to the Lord. He had the promise that God would work with him. He was "to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready



a people prepared for the Lord."

John was a representative of the people of God in the last days, to whom God has committed important and solemn truths. The world at large are given to gluttony and the indulgence of base passions. The light of health reform is opened before the people of God at this day, that they may see the necessity of holding their appetites and passions under control of the higher powers of the mind. This is also necessary, that they may have mental strength and clearness to discern the sacred chain of truth, and turn from the bewitching errors and pleasing fables that are flooding the world. Their work is to present before the people the pure doctrine of the Bible. Hence health reform finds its place in the preparatory work for the second appearing of Christ.

Zacharias was as much astonished at the words of the angel, as he was at his appearance. He had so humble an opinion of himself that he thought it could not be possible that he was thus to be honored of the Lord. He inquired, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. Zacharias for a moment forgot the unlimited power of God, and that nothing was impossible with him. He did not call to mind the case of Abraham and Sarah, and the fulfillment of the promise of God to them.

Zacharias received a confirmation of the angel's message: "Behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words which shall be fulfilled in their season." He was soon made to realize the verity of the divine mission. The angel had no sooner departed than he was struck dumb.

The particular office of Zacharias was to pray in behalf of the people, for pardon of public and national sins, and to earnestly pray for the coming of the long-expected Saviour, whom they believed must redeem his people. When Zacharias attempted to pray, he could not utter a word. The people waited long for the appearance of Zacharias, to learn whether God had given them any visible token of his approbation. They began to fear from his long tarry that God had manifested his displeasure. When Zacharias came out of the temple, his countenance was shining with the light which the heavenly angel had reflected upon him. But he could not speak to the people. He made signs to them that an angel had appeared to him in the temple, and because of his unbelief he was deprived of the power of speech, until the prediction of the angel should be

fulfilled.

Soon after the birth of John, "the tongue of Zacharias was loosed, and he spake, and praised God. And fear came on all that dwelt round about them; and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all that heard them, laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be? And the hand of the Lord was with him; and his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied. And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts until the day of his showing unto Israel."

The prophet John separated himself from his friends and kindred, and made his home in the wilderness. He denied himself of the ordinary comforts of life. His food was simple. His clothing was a garment made of hair-cloth confined about the waist with a leather girdle. His parents had in a most solemn manner dedicated him to God from his birth.

The life of John, although passed in the wilderness, was not inactive. His separation from society did not make him gloomy and morose, neither was he unreconciled with his lonely life of hardship and privation. It was his choice to be secluded from the luxuries of life, and from depraved society. Pride, envy, jealousy, and corrupt passions, seemed to control the hearts of men. But John was separated from the influence of these things, and, with discerning eye and wonderful discrimination, read the characters of men. He lived in the quiet retreat of the wilderness, and occasionally he mingled in society; but would not remain long where the moral atmosphere seemed to be polluted. He feared that the sight of his eyes and the hearing of his ears would so pervert his mind that he would lose a sense of the sinfulness of sin. A great work was before him, and it was necessary that he should form a character unbiased by any surrounding influence. It was necessary that his physical, mental, and moral conditions should be of that high and noble type that would qualify him for a work which required firmness and integrity, that when he should appear among men he could enlighten them, and be instrumental in giving a new direction to their thoughts, and awakening them to the necessity of forming righteous characters. John would bring the people up to the standard of divine perfection. He studied the peculiarities of minds, that he might know how to adapt his instructions to the people.

John did not feel strong enough to stand the great pressure of temptation he

would meet in society. He feared his character would be molded according to the prevailing customs of the Jews, and he chose the wilderness as his school, in which his mind could be properly educated and disciplined from God's great book of nature. In the wilderness, John could the more readily deny himself and bring his appetite under control, and dress in accordance with natural simplicity. And there was nothing in the wilderness that would take his mind from meditation and prayer. Satan had access to John, even after he had closed every avenue in his power through which he would enter. But his habits of life were so pure and natural that he could discern the foe, and had strength of spirit and decision of character to resist him.

The book of nature was open before John with its inexhaustible store of varied instruction. He sought the favor of God, and the Holy Spirit rested upon him, and kindled in his heart a glowing zeal to do the great work of calling the people to repentance, and to a higher and holier life. John was fitting himself, by the privations and hardships of his secluded life, to so control all his physical and mental powers that he could stand among the people as unmoved by surrounding circumstances as the rocks and mountains of the wilderness that had surrounded him for thirty years.

The state of public affairs when John's work commenced, was unsettled. Discord and insurrection were prevailing, when the voice of John was first lifted up, like the sound of a trumpet pealing forth from the wilderness, thrilling the hearts of all who heard with a new and strange power. John fearlessly denounced the sins of the people, saying, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Multitudes answered to the voice of the prophet, and flocked to the wilderness. They saw, in the singular dress and appearance of this prophet, a resemblance to the description of the ancient seers; and the opinion prevailed that he was one of the prophets risen from the dead.

It was the purpose of John to startle and arouse the people, and cause them to tremble because of their great wickedness. In simplicity and plainness, he pointed out the errors and crimes of men. A power attended his words, and, reluctant as the people were to hear the denunciation of their unholy lives, they could not resist his words. He flattered none; neither would he receive flattery of any. The people, as if with common consent, came to him repenting, and confessing their sins, and were baptized of him in Jordan.

Kings and rulers came to the wilderness to hear the prophet, and were interested

and deeply convicted as he fearlessly pointed out their particular sins. His discernment of character and spiritual sight read the purposes and hearts of those who came to him, and he fearlessly told, both rich and poor, the honorable and the lowly, that without repentance of their sins, and a thorough conversion, although they might claim to be righteous, they could not enjoy the favor of God, and have part in the kingdom of the Messiah, whose coming he announced.

In the spirit and with the power of Elijah, John denounced the corruptions of the Jews, and raised his voice in reproofing their prevailing sins. His discourses were plain, pointed, and convincing. Many were brought to repentance of their sins, and, as evidence of their repentance, were baptized of him in Jordan. This was the preparatory work for the ministry of Christ. Many were convicted because of the plain truths uttered by this faithful prophet; but, by rejecting the light, they became enshrouded in deeper darkness, so that they were fully prepared to turn from the evidences attending Jesus, that he was the true Messiah.

January 14, 1873

## Life and Mission of John

As John looked forward to the ministry and miracles of Christ, he appealed to the people, "saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." He was successful in his ministry. Persons of all rank, high and low, rich and poor, submitted to the requirements of the prophet, as necessary for them in order to participate in the kingdom he came to declare. Many of the scribes and Pharisees came to him, confessing their sins, and were baptized of him in Jordan. The confessions made by the Pharisees astonished the prophet; for they had exalted themselves as better than other men, and had maintained a high opinion of their own piety and worthiness. As they sought to obtain remission of their sins, and revealed the secrets of their lives, which had been covered from the eyes of men, the prophet was amazed. "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance. And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."

The whole Jewish nation seemed to be affected by the mission of John. The threatenings of God on account of their sins, repeated by the prophet, for a time alarmed them. John knew that they cherished the idea that, because they were of the seed of Abraham, they were securely established in the favor of God, while their course of action was abhorred of him. Their conduct was, in many respects, even worse than that of the heathen nations to whom they felt so much superior. The prophet faithfully presented to them the ability of God to raise up those who would take their place, and would become more worthy children of Abraham. He told them plainly that God was not dependent upon them to fulfill his purposes; for he could provide ways and means independent of them to carry forward his great work which was to be accomplished in purity and righteousness. John further adds: "And now also the ax is laid unto the root of the trees; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." He impresses upon them that the value of the tree is ascertained by the fruit it produces. Though a tree may bear an exalted name, yet if it produces no fruit, or if its fruit is unworthy of the name, the name will avail nothing in saving the tree

from destruction. "Of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes."

The prophet of God was impressed by the Holy Spirit that many of the Pharisees and Sadducees who asked baptism had no true convictions of their sins. They had selfish motives. They thought that if they should become friends of the prophet, they would stand a better chance to be personally favored of the coming Prince. In their blindness they believed that he was to set up a temporal kingdom, and bestow honors and riches upon his subjects.

John rebuked their selfish pride and avarice. He warned them of their unbelief, and condemned their hypocrisy. He told them that they had not fulfilled the conditions of the covenant on their part, which would entitle them to the promises God made to a faithful and obedient people. Their proud boasts of being children of Abraham did not make them really such. Their exhibitions of pride, their arrogance, jealousy, selfishness, and cruelty, stamped their characters as a generation of vipers, rather than the children of obedient and just Abraham. Their wicked works had disqualified them to claim the promises God made to the children of Abraham. John assured them that God would raise up children unto Abraham from the very stones, to whom he could fulfill his promise, rather than to depend on the natural children of Abraham who had neglected the light God had given them, and had become hardened by selfish ambition and wicked unbelief. He told them that if they were really the children of Abraham, they would do the works of their father Abraham. They would have Abraham's faith, love, and obedience. But they did not bear this fruit. They had no claim to Abraham as their father, or the promises God made to the seed of Abraham. "Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." While they were professing to be God's commandment keeping people, their works denied their faith, and without true repentance for their sins they would have no part in the kingdom of Christ. Justice, benevolence, mercy, and the love of God would characterize the lives of his commandment-keeping people. Unless these fruits were seen in their daily life, all their profession was of no more value than chaff which would be devoted to the fire of destruction.

The Jews had deceived themselves by misinterpreting the words of the Lord through his prophets, of his eternal favor to his people Israel.

"Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the Lord of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever. Thus saith the Lord: If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord." Jeremiah 31:35-37.

These words the Jews applied to themselves. And because God had shown them so great favor and mercy, they flattered themselves that, notwithstanding their sins and iniquities, he would still retain them as his favored people, and shower especial blessings upon them. They misapplied the words of Jeremiah, and depended for their salvation upon being called the children of Abraham. If they had indeed been worthy of the name of Abraham's children, they would have followed the righteous example of their father Abraham, and would have done the works of Abraham.

This has been the danger of the people of God in all ages; and especially is this the danger of those living near the close of time. We are cited by the apostle to the unbelief, blindness, rebellion, and repeated sins of the Hebrews, as a warning. Paul plainly states that "all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." If, in these last days of peril, for the encouragement of persons in responsible positions, God in mercy gives them a testimony of favor, they frequently become lifted up, and lose sight of their frailties and weaknesses, and rely upon their own judgment, flattering themselves that God cannot accomplish his work without their especial aid. They trust in their own wisdom; and the Lord permits them, for a time, to apparently prosper, to reveal the weakness and folly of the natural heart. But the Lord will, in his own time, and in his own way, bring down the pride and folly of these deceived ones, and show to them their true condition. If they will accept the humiliation, and by confession and sincere repentance, turn unto the Lord, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, he will renew his love to them. But if they shut their eyes to their own sins, as did the Jews, and choose their own ways, the Lord will give them up to blindness of mind, and hardness of heart, that they cannot discern the things of the Spirit of God.

God cannot do much for man, because he misinterprets his blessings, and concludes that he is favored on account of some goodness in himself. It is not safe to

speak in the praise of mortals; for they cannot bear it. Satan has the special work to do of flattering poor souls, and he needs not the help of the Lord's servants in this matter. How few realize the weakness of human nature and the subtlety of Satan. Many in these last days are preparing themselves for affliction and sorrow, or for complete separation from the favor of God, because of their pride and self-righteousness. They will fall, through self-exaltation.

The prophet John impressed upon the people the necessity of their profession being accompanied with good works. Their words and actions would be their fruit, and would determine the character of the tree. If their works were evil, the truth of God would testify against them. God would in no wise excuse sin in a people who had been enlightened, even if he had, in their days of faithfulness and purity, loved them, and given them especial promises. These promises and blessings were always upon condition of obedience upon their part.

The Lord pronounced, by the mouth of Moses, blessings upon the obedient, and curses upon the disobedient. "Ye shall make you no idols," was the command of God. "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary. I am the Lord. If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them; then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit." Many and great blessings are enumerated, which God would bestow; and then, above all the other blessings, he promised, "I will set my tabernacle among you; and my soul shall not abhor you. And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people." "But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments; and if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant, I also will do this unto you: I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart; and ye shall sow your seed in vain; for your enemies shall eat it. And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies. They that hate you shall reign over you, and ye shall flee when none pursueth you."

The Jews were experiencing the fulfillment of the threatened curse of God for their departure from him, and for their iniquity; yet they did not lay these things to heart, and afflict their souls before God. A people that hated them ruled over them. They were claiming the blessings God had promised to confer upon them should they be obedient



and faithful. But at the very time they were suffering under the curse of God because of disobedience. John declared to them that unless they bore fruit, they would be hewn down and cast into the fire.

He specified the fruit they were required to bear in order to become the subjects of Christ's kingdom; which were works of love, mercy, and benevolence. They must have virtuous characters. These fruits would be the result of genuine repentance and faith. If blessed with plenty, and they saw others destitute, they should divide with them. They must be workers. "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages."

John gave his disciples lessons in practical godliness. He showed them that true goodness, honesty, and fidelity, must be seen in their daily life, and that they should be actuated by unselfish principles, or they would be no better than common sinners.

Unless others should be made better within the sphere of their influence, they would be like the fruitless tree. Their wealth was not to be used merely for selfish purposes. They were to relieve the wants of the destitute, and to make free-will offerings to God to advance the interests of his cause. They should not abuse their privileges, to oppress, but should shield the defenseless, redress the wrongs of the injured, and thus give a noble example of benevolence, compassion, and virtue, to those who were inferior and dependent. If they made no change in their conduct, but continued to be extravagant, selfish, and void of principle, they would correctly represent the tree bearing no good fruit. This lesson is applicable to all Christians. The followers of Christ should evidence to the world a change in their life for the better, and by their good works show the transforming influence of the Spirit of God upon their hearts. But there are many who bear no fruit to the glory of God; they give no evidence of a radical change in their life. Although they make high profession, they have not felt the necessity of obtaining a personal experience for themselves, by engaging in Christian duties with hearts of love, intensified by their new and holy obligations, feeling a weight of their responsibility in doing their Master's work with readiness and diligence.

The people thought that John might be the promised Messiah. His life was unselfish, and marked with humility and self-denial. His teachings, exhortations, and reproofs, were fervent, sincere, and courageous. In his mission, he turned not to the right or to the left to court the favors or applause of any. He did not aspire to worldly honor or worldly dignity, but was humble in heart and life, and did not assume honors that did not belong to him. He assured his followers that he was not the Christ.

John, as a prophet, stood forth as God's representative, to show the connection between the law and prophets, and the Christian dispensation. His work and ministry pointed back to the law and the prophets, while he, at the same time, pointed the people forward to Christ, as the Saviour of the world. He raised his voice and cried to the people, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Multitudes followed this singular prophet from place to place, and many sacrificed all to obey his instruction. Kings, and the noble of the earth, were attracted to this prophet of God, and heard him gladly. As John saw that the attention of the people was directed to him, thinking that he might be the Coming One, he sought every opportunity to direct the attention of the people to One mightier than himself.

January 21, 1873

## **Life and Mission of John**

Christ's life had been so retired and secluded at Nazareth that John had not a personal acquaintance with him, and he did not positively know that he was the Messiah. He was acquainted with the circumstances of his birth, and he believed him to be the promised One. The secluded life of Christ for thirty years at Nazareth, in which he gave no special evidence of his Messiahship, suggested doubts to John whether he was indeed the One for whose coming he was to prepare the way. John, however, rested the matter in faith, fully believing that God would in due time make it plain. The Lord had shown him that the Messiah would be pointed out to him by a distinct sign; when this should be done, then John could present him to the world as the long-expected Messiah, the Lamb of God that was to take away the sin of the world.

John had heard of the sinless character and spotless purity of Christ. His life was in harmony with what the Lord had revealed to him respecting one that was among them whose life was without the taint of sin. John had also seen that he should be the example for every repenting sinner. When Christ presented himself for baptism, John recognized him at once as the superior one revealed to him. He discerned, in the person and deportment of Christ, a character above every other man he had ever seen. The very atmosphere of his presence was holy and awe-inspiring. Although he knew him not as the Messiah, yet never had such a holy influence been realized by John from any one as when in the presence of Christ. He felt the superiority of Christ at once, and shrank from performing the rite of baptism to one whom he knew to be sinless. Many had come to him to receive the baptism of repentance, confessing their sins and crimes; but John could not understand why the only sinless One upon the earth should ask for an ordinance implying guilt, virtually confessing, by the symbol of baptism, pollution to be washed away. He remonstrated with Christ, acknowledging his superiority, and refused to administer the ordinance, saying, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" With firm and gentle authority, Jesus waives the refusal of John and his plea of unworthiness, saying, "Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."

Christ came not confessing his own sins; but guilt was imputed to him as the

sinner's substitute. He came not to repent on his own account; but in behalf of the sinner. As man had transgressed the law of God, Christ was to fulfill every requirement of that law, and thus show perfect obedience. "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God!" Christ honored the ordinance of baptism by submitting to this rite. In this act he identified himself with his people as their representative and head. As their substitute, he takes upon him their sins, numbering himself with the transgressors, taking the steps the sinner is required to take, and doing the work the sinner must do. His life of suffering and patient endurance after his baptism were an example to converted sinners of what they should endure and patiently suffer in consequence of their transgressions and sins. John finally yielded to the request of Christ, notwithstanding his feelings of unworthiness to baptize him, and performed the service. He led the Saviour of the world down into the river Jordan in the presence of a large concourse of people, and buried him in the water.

After Christ rose up from the water and from the hand of John, he walked out to the bank of Jordan, and bowed in the attitude of prayer. The eyes of John were fastened upon Christ with the deepest interest and amazement. His heart was stirred with emotion as he looked upon him thus bowed as a suppliant. Christ's hands were raised upward, and his gaze seemed to penetrate Heaven. As the believer's example, his sinless humanity supplicated support and strength from his Heavenly Father, as he was about to commence his public labor as the Messiah. Jesus poured out his soul in earnest prayer. A new and important era was opening before him. His former peaceful, quiet life is to here end. He had been happy in a life of industry and toil, while fulfilling the duties devolving on a son. He was an example to those in childhood, youth, and manhood. His deportment showed that he felt the importance and solemnity of the hour. He knew that trials, toils, conflicts, suffering and death, were in the path his feet had entered. He felt the weight of the responsibilities he must bear. He was about to engage in new and arduous duties. A sense of the sinfulness of men, and the hardness of their hearts, which separated them from God, convinced him that but few would discern his merciful mission, and accept the salvation he came from Heaven to bring them.

Never before had angels listened to such a prayer as Christ offered at his baptism, and they were solicitous to be the bearers of the message from the Father to his Son. But, no! direct from the Father issues the light of his glory. The heavens were opened, and beams of glory rested upon the Son of God and assumed the form of a dove, in appearance like burnished gold. The dove-like form was emblematical of the meekness

and gentleness of Christ. While the people stood spell-bound with amazement, their eyes fastened upon Christ, from the opening heavens came these words: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The words of confirmation that Christ is the Son of God were given to inspire faith in those who witnessed the scene, and to sustain the Son of God in his arduous work. Notwithstanding the Son of God was clothed with humanity, yet Jehovah, with his own voice, assures him of his sonship with the Eternal. In this manifestation to his Son, God accepts humanity as exalted through the excellence of his beloved Son.

As John had now witnessed the heavenly dove resting upon Jesus, which was the promised token of the Messiah, he stretched forth his hand, and with assurance proclaimed before the multitude, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" From this time John had no doubt in regard to Jesus' being the true Messiah.

After this, Jesus withdrew into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil forty days. His long fast ended, the victory won, he returns to the banks of the Jordan, mingling again with the disciples of John, yet giving no outward evidence of his special work, and taking no measures to bring himself to notice.

Men were sent from the highest authority in Jerusalem to inquire in regard to the great agitation John was creating. He was calling whole cities and towns to listen to his voice of warning; and they would know the prophet's authority for thus claiming the attention of the people, and turning the world upside down. These messengers challenged John to tell them certainly if he was the Messiah. John confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. John is then questioned as to his authority for baptizing, and thus agitating the people, when he does not claim to be Christ, or Elias, neither that prophet. The words, "That prophet," have reference to Moses. The Jews had been inclined to the belief that Moses would be raised from the dead, and taken to Heaven. They did not know that Moses had already been resurrected.

When John came, baptizing with water, the Jews thought that he might be the

prophet Moses raised from the dead; for he seemed to have a thorough knowledge of the prophecies, and to understand the history of the Hebrews and their wanderings in the wilderness in consequence of their unjust murmurings and continual rebellion. They also called to mind the peculiar circumstances of John's birth, and wonderful manifestation of God to Zacharias, his father, in the temple, by the visitation of the angel from the presence of God, and the power of speech being taken from Zacharias, because he did not believe the words of the angel, and the unloosing of his tongue at the birth of John. These important facts had in the past thirty years been measurably forgotten. But when John appeared as a prophet, the manifestation of the Spirit of God at his birth was called to mind.

When the messengers of the highest authority in Jerusalem were communing with John in reference to his mission and work, he could have taken honor to himself, had he been so disposed. But he would not assume honors that did not belong to him. While conversing with the messengers, suddenly his eye kindled, his countenance lighted up, and his whole being seemed stirred with deep emotion, as he discovered the person of Jesus in the concourse of people. He raised his hand, pointing to Christ, saying, There standeth one among you whom we know not. I have come to prepare the way before him whom ye now see. He is the Messiah. He it is who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for he was before me. And I knew him not; but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not. But he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record, that this is the Son of God. Again, the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!" And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? The disciples confessed that they were seeking Christ, and that they desired to become acquainted with him, and to be instructed by him at his home. These two disciples were charmed with the deeply impressive, yet simple and practical, lessons of Christ. Their hearts had never been so

moved before. Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of these disciples. He was interested for his friends and relatives, and was anxious that they also should see Christ, and hear for themselves his precious lessons. Andrew went in search of his brother Simon, and with assurance claimed to have found Christ, the Messiah, the Saviour of the world. He brought his brother to Jesus, and as soon as Jesus looked upon him, he said, Thou art Simon, the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation a stone. The next day Christ selected another disciple, Philip, and bade him follow him. Philip fully believed that Christ was the Messiah, and began to search for others to bring them to listen to the teachings of Christ, which had so charmed him. Then Philip found Nathanael. He was one of the number who heard John proclaim, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." He felt deeply convicted, and retired to a grove, concealed from every human eye, and there meditated upon the announcement of John, calling to his mind the prophecies relating to the coming of the Messiah and his mission. He queried thus: Could this indeed be the Messiah for whom they had so long waited, and were so desirous to see? Hope sprang up in the heart of Nathanael that this might be the one that would save Israel. He bowed before God and prayed that if the person whom John had declared to be the Redeemer of the world was indeed the promised deliverer, that it might be made known to him. The Spirit of the Lord rested upon Nathanael in such a special manner that he was convinced that Christ was the Messiah. While Nathanael was praying, he heard the voice of Philip calling him, saying, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee."

Nathanael's wavering faith was now strengthened, and he answered and said, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee, under the fig-tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these. And he said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see Heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

In these first few disciples the foundation of the Christian church was being laid

by individual effort. John first directed two of his disciples to Christ. Then one of these finds a brother, and brings him to Christ. He then calls Philip to follow him, and he went in search of Nathanael. Here is an instructive lesson for all the followers of Christ. It teaches them the importance of personal effort making direct appeals to relatives, friends, and acquaintances. There are those who profess to be acquainted with Christ for a life time who never make personal effort to induce one soul to come to the Saviour. They have left all the work with the minister. He may be well qualified for his work; but he cannot do the work which God has left upon the members of the church. Very many excuse themselves from being interested in the salvation of those who are out of Christ, and are content to selfishly enjoy the benefits of the grace of God themselves, while they make no direct effort to bring others to Christ. In the vineyard of the Lord there is a work for all to do, and unselfish, interested, faithful workers will share largely of his grace here, and of the reward he will bestow hereafter. Faith is called into exercise by good works, and courage and hope are in accordance with working faith. The reason many professed followers of Christ have not a bright and living experience, is because they do nothing to gain it. If they would engage in the work which God would have them do, their faith would increase, and they would advance in the divine life.

Jesus was pleased with the earnest faith of Nathanael that asked for no greater evidence than the few words he had spoken. And he looked forward with pleasure to the work he was to do in relieving the oppressed, healing the sick, and in breaking the bands of Satan. In view of these blessings which Christ came to bestow, he says to Nathanael, in the presence of the other disciples, "Hereafter ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

Christ virtually says, On the bank of Jordan the heavens were opened before me, and the Spirit descended like a dove upon me. That scene at Jordan was but a token to evidence that I was the Son of God. If you believe in me as such, your faith shall be quickened, and you shall see that the heavens will be opened, and shall never be closed. I have opened them for you, and the angels of God, that are united with me in the reconciliation between earth and Heaven, uniting the believers on the earth with the Father above, will be ascending, bearing the prayers of the needy and distressed from the earth to the Father above, and descending, bringing blessings of hope, courage, health, and life, for the children of men.

The angels of God are ever moving up and down from earth to Heaven, and from



Heaven to earth. All the miracles of Christ performed for the afflicted and suffering were, by the power of God, through the ministration of angels. Christ condescended to take humanity, and thus he unites his interests with the fallen sons and daughters of Adam here below, while his divinity grasps the throne of God. And thus Christ opens the communication of man with God, and God with man. All the blessings from God to man are through the ministration of holy angels.

March 4, 1873

## John's Mission and Death

Disciples were being daily added to Christ, and people flocked from cities and villages to hear him. Many came to him for baptism; but Christ baptized none. His disciples performed this ordinance. And while Christ's disciples were baptizing large numbers, there arose a question among the Jews and the disciples of John, whether the act of baptism purified the sinner from the guilt of sin. The disciples of John answered that John baptized only unto repentance, but Christ's disciples unto a new life. John's disciples were jealous of the popularity of Christ, and said to John, referring to Christ, "He that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou bearest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing except it be given him from Heaven."

In this answer, John virtually says, Why should you be jealous on my account? "Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. This my joy therefore is fulfilled."

John, so far from being jealous of the prosperity of Christ's mission, rejoices as he witnesses the success of the work he came to do. He assures his disciples that his special mission was to direct the attention of the people to Christ. "He must increase; but I must decrease. He that cometh from above is above all. He that is of the earth is earthy, and speaketh of the earth. He that cometh from Heaven is above all. And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony."

John assured his disciples that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the Saviour of the world. As his work was closing, he taught his disciples to look to Jesus, and follow him as the great teacher. John's life, with the exception of the joy he experienced in witnessing the success of his mission, was without pleasure. It was one of sorrow and self-denial. He who heralded the first advent of Christ, was not permitted personally to hear him, nor to witness the power manifested by him. John's voice was seldom heard, except in the wilderness. His life was lonely. Multitudes had flocked to the wilderness

to hear the words of the wonderful prophet. He had laid the ax at the root of the tree. He had reproved sin, fearless of the consequences, and prepared the way for the ministry of Christ.

Herod was affected as he listened to the pointed testimony of John, and, with deep interest, he inquired what he must do to become his disciple. He was convicted by the plain truths uttered by John. His conscience condemned him, for a woman of vile passions had gained his affections and controlled his mind. This unprincipled woman was ambitious for power and authority, and thought if she became the wife of Herod, her object would be gained. As Herod listened to the practical truths proclaimed by John, reproofing the transgression of the law of God, and setting forth the future punishment which the guilty must suffer, he trembled, and greatly desired to break the chain of lust which held him. He opened his mind to John, who brought Herod to the law of God, face to face, and told him it would be impossible for him to have part in the kingdom of the Messiah unless he should break away from the unlawful connections with his brother's wife, and, with his whole heart, obey the commandments of God.

Herod was inclined to act upon the advice of John, and stated to Herodias that he could not marry her in defiance of the law of God. But this determined woman would not be thwarted in her designs. Intense hatred was awakened in her heart toward John. Herod was weak in principle, vacillating in mind, and Herodias had no great difficulty in re-establishing herself in his favor, and holding her influence over him. Herod yielded to the pleasures of sin, rather than submit to the restrictions of the law of God.

When Herodias had gained influence over Herod, she determined to be revenged upon the prophet for his daring to reprove their course of crime. And she influenced him to imprison John. But Herod intended to release him. While confined in prison, John heard, through his disciples, of the mighty works of Jesus. He could not personally listen to his gracious words; but the disciples informed him, and comforted him with a relation of what they had seen and heard.

John having spent his life in the open air, in active, persevering labor, enduring privations, hardship, and toil, he had never before experienced the trials of confined living. He therefore became desponding, and even doubts troubled him whether Christ was indeed the Messiah. His disciples had brought to him accounts of the wonderful things they had witnessed in the ministry of Christ. But he concluded that if Christ was

indeed the Messiah, he would publicly proclaim himself as the Saviour of the world.

John had indistinct ideas of the kingdom Christ came to establish, as also had the disciples of Christ. They thought Christ would establish a temporal kingdom, and reign upon the throne of David in Jerusalem. He became impatient because Christ did not immediately make himself known, assume kingly authority, and subdue the Romans. He hoped that if Christ established his kingdom, he would be brought out of prison. He decided that if Jesus was really the Son of God, and could do all things, he would exercise his power and set him at liberty.

John sent his disciples to inquire of Christ, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" The disciples sought the presence of Christ; but they could not communicate with him immediately, because of the crowd who were bearing the sick to Jesus. The afflicted, blind, and lame, were passing through the throng. The disciples of John saw the miracles of Christ, and that at his word the lifeless clay became animate, and the glow of health took the place of the pallor of death. Jesus said to the disciples of John, "Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see. The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me."

In these words, John is gently reproofed for his impatience. The cautious reproof returned to John was not lost upon him. He then better understood the character of Christ's mission. And with submission and faith, he yielded himself into the hands of God, to live, or to die, as should best advance his glory.

After the disciples of John had departed, Jesus addressed the multitude concerning John, "What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?" Jesus knew that a reed trembling in the wind was the very opposite of John's character. John could not be moved by flattery, nor be deceived by prevailing errors. Neither could he be turned aside from the work he came to do, by rewards, or worldly honors. He would preserve his integrity at the expense of his life. Steadfast as a rock stood the prophet of God, faithful to rebuke sin and crime in all their forms, in kings and nobles, as readily as in the unhonored and unknown. He swerved not from duty. Loyal to his God, in noble dignity of moral character, he stood firm as a rock, faithful to principle.

"But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet. For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than he. And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."

The people whom Christ addressed well knew that the apparel worn by John was the opposite of that worn in royal palaces. Christ virtually inquires, What motive induced you to flock to the wilderness to hear the preaching of John? The wilderness is not the place to find those who live delicately, and who clothe themselves in rich, soft apparel. Christ would have them observe the contrast between the clothing of John and that of the Jewish priests. The prophet wore a plain, rough garment, possessing no beauty, but answering the purpose for which clothing was first designed. In marked contrast to the clothing of John, was the gorgeous apparel of the Jewish priests. The burden of the priests and elders was outward display, thinking that they would be revered in accordance with their external appearance. They were more anxious for the admiration of men, than for spotless purity of character and holiness of life, that they might meet the approval of God.

Christ admonished his disciples, and also the multitude, to follow that which was good in the teachings of the scribes and Pharisees, but not to imitate their wrong example, and not be deceived by their ambitious pretension.

He says, "All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do to be seen of men; they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi."

John saw that the Jews who made high pretensions to piety, were exalting and

glorifying themselves. Portions of the law were printed and bound upon their foreheads, and about their wrists. God had commanded the children of Israel to have a ribbon of blue in the border of their garments, upon which was embroidered words of the law, which expressed in short the ten commandments, to remind them of their duty to love God supremely, and to love their neighbor as themselves. The farther they departed from their primitive purity, and simplicity in their words and example, and the more their works were directly contrary to the law of God, the more particular were they to make broad their phylacteries, and add to the words that God had specified that they should have in the ribbon of blue. In their outward appearance, they were expressing exalted devotion and sanctity, while their works were in the widest contrast.

The spirit of reform was stirring the soul of John. The spirit of wisdom and the power of God were upon him. Inspiration from Heaven and holy zeal led him to denounce the Jewish priests, and pronounce the curse of God upon them. They made high pretensions to godliness by their gorgeous apparel, while they were strangers to mercy and the love of God. And while the Pharisees were very exact in their dress to inspire awe and command respect of men, they were abhorred of God. They did not conform their heart and life to the will and word of God. They deceived themselves with the vain supposition that eternal blessings were theirs by virtue of the promises made to Abraham, the father of the faithful. They were not clothed with humility. They bore no resemblance to the faith and piety of Abraham. They had not earned by integrity and purity of life, moral worth, which would ally them to Abraham as his children, to share with him the promises.

March 11, 1873

## **John's Mission and Death**

John's preaching aroused intense interest everywhere. His earnest appeals and denunciations stirred the consciences of men. People flocked from towns, cities and villages, attracted to the wilderness by his earnest and fervent exhortations, his courageous warnings and reproofs, such as they had never listened to before. There was no outward display in the dress of John to attract or to awaken admiration. He resembled the prophet Elijah in the coarseness of his apparel, and in his plain and simple diet, locusts and wild honey, which the wilderness afforded, drinking the pure water flowing from the eternal hills.

Herod's purpose to release John from prison was delayed from time to time through fear of displeasing Herodias, who was determined he should be put to death. While Herod was delaying, she was active, planning the most effectual manner to be revenged on the prophet John, because he had ventured to tell Herod the truth, and reprove their unlawful life. Herodias was acquainted with the character of Herod, and she knew that her best course to accomplish her purpose was through the gratification of intemperate appetite. She knew that although Herod kept John in prison, he designed to release him, for he honored and feared John, because he believed him to be a true prophet of God. John had made known to Herod the secrets of his heart and life. The reproofs he had given him, had struck terror to his guilty conscience.

In many things Herod had reformed his dissolute life. But the use of luxurious food and stimulating drinks was constantly enervating and deadening the moral as well as the physical powers, and warring against the earnest appeals of the Spirit of God, which had struck conviction to the heart of Herod, arousing his conscience to put away his sins. Herodias was acquainted with the weak points in the character of Herod. She knew that under ordinary circumstances, while his intelligence controlled him, she could not obtain the death of John.

She had tried, but unsuccessfully, to gain the consent of Herod to have John slain. Her revengeful spirit was at work to accomplish her inhuman design by strategy. She covered her hatred as best she could, looking forward to the birth day of Herod, which

she knew would be an occasion of gluttony and intoxication. Herod's love of luxurious food and wine would give her an opportunity to throw him off his guard. She would entice him to indulge his appetite, which would arouse passion and lower the tone of the mental and moral character, making it impossible for his deadened sensibilities to see facts and evidences clearly, and make right decisions. She had the most costly preparations made for feasting, and voluptuous dissipation. She was acquainted with the influence of these intemperate feasts upon the intellect and morals. She knew that Herod's indulgence of appetite, pleasure and amusement, would excite the lower passions, and make him spiritless to the nobler demands of effort and duty.

The unnatural exhilaration which intemperance gives to the mind and spirits, lowers the sensibilities to moral improvement, making it impossible for holy impulses to affect the heart, and hold government over the passions, when public opinion and fashion sustain them. Festivities and amusements, dances, and free use of wine, becloud the senses, and remove the fear of God.

Herodias had prepared everything within her reach, which would flatter his pride and vanity, and indulge his passions. "And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee; and when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom."

As Herod and his lords were feasting and drinking in the pleasure saloon or banqueting hall, Herodias, debased with crime and passion, sent her daughter, dressed in a most enchanting manner, into the presence of Herod and his royal guests. Salome was decorated with costly garlands and flowers. She was adorned with sparkling jewels and flashing bracelets. With little covering and less modesty she danced for the amusement of the royal guests. To their perverted senses, the enchanting appearance of this, to them, vision of beauty and loveliness charmed them. Instead of being governed by enlightened reason, refined taste, or sensitive consciences, the lower qualities of the mind held the guiding reins. Virtue and principle had no controlling power.

The false enchantment of the dizzy scene seemed to take away reason and dignity from Herod and his guests, who were flushed with wine. The music and wine and



dancing, had removed the fear and reverence of God from them. Nothing seemed sacred to Herod's perverted senses. He was desirous to make some display which would exalt him still higher before the great men of his kingdom. And he rashly promised, and confirmed his promise with an oath, to give the daughter of Herodias whatever she might ask. "And she went forth and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist."

Having obtained so wonderful a promise, she ran to her mother, desiring to know what she should ask. The mother's answer was ready, The head of John the Baptist in a charger. Salome at first was shocked. She did not understand the hidden revenge in her mother's heart. She refused to present such an inhuman request; but the determination of that wicked mother prevailed. Moreover, she bade her daughter make no delay, but hasten to prefer her request before Herod would have time for reflection, and to change his mind. Accordingly, Salome returned to Herod with her terrible petition, "I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist. And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her."

Herod was astonished and confounded. His riotous mirth ceased, and his guests were thrilled with horror at this inhuman request. The frivolities and dissipation of that night cost the life of one of the most eminent prophets that ever bore a message from God to men. The intoxicating cup prepared the way for this terrible crime. "And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel, and the damsel gave it to her mother."

April 8, 1873

### **John's Mission and Death**

Herod had been exalted by his lordly guests for constancy and superior judgment. And he did not wish to appear fickle or rash in character. The oath had been made on the account of Herod's guests. And had one of them offered a word of remonstrance, to deter him from the fulfillment of his promise, he would gladly have saved the life of John. Herod gave them opportunity to speak in behalf of John. They had traveled long distances to the mountains in the wilderness to listen to his earnest, intelligent, and powerful discourses. Herod told them if it would not be considered a special mark of dishonor to them, he would not abide by his oath. It was on their account he carried out his promise. Why was there no voice to be heard in that company to keep Herod from fulfilling his mad vow? They were intoxicated with wine, and to their benumbed senses there was nothing to be revered.

Although the royal guests virtually had an invitation to release him from his oath, their tongues seemed paralyzed. Herod himself was under the delusion that he must, in order to save his own reputation, keep an oath made under the influence of intoxication. Moral principle, the only safeguard of the soul, was paralyzed. Herod and his guests were slaves, held in the lowest bondage to brute appetite. The guardians of the people, men in authority, upon whose decision the life of eminent men have hung, should have been condemned to death if found guilty of intemperance and crime. Those who have power to enforce laws, should be law-keepers. They should be men of self-government, fully enlightened in regard to the laws governing their physical, mental, and moral being, that their vigor of intellect may not be clouded, and that their standard of refinement and moral feeling may be exalted.

Herod commanded the executioner to perform the terrible act of taking the life of John. This request was carried out, which branded Herod forever with dishonor. The very act which he thought, while his reason and judgment were perverted, was maintaining his honor and dignity, made his name detestable. The head of the honored prophet of God was soon brought in before Herod and his guests. Those lips that had answered the inquiry of Herod why he could not be his disciple, and which faithfully declared the necessity of reform in his life, were now sealed. Never more would his

voice be heard in trumpet tones calling the sinner to repentance. The reproofs of John had stirred Herod's conscience, and had caused his proud heart to tremble. But now he, himself, had commanded the head of this remarkable prophet to be severed from his body, to gratify the revenge of a licentious woman.

Herodias received the bloody head of John with fiendish satisfaction. She exulted that she had her revenge, and that Herod's conscience would no more be disturbed. But this inhuman act on her part made her name notorious and abhorred. She had, by this satanic conduct, enshrined this good and self-sacrificing prophet in the hearts not only of his disciples, but very many who had listened to his warning message, who had been aroused and convinced by his teachings, yet had not moral courage to take their stand openly as his disciples. His reproofs and his example in reform were remembered, and this inhuman act of Herod, in taking the life of John, rejoiced Herodias, but brought sorrow and regret to many hearts. But Herodias could not silence the influence of John's reproofs. They were to extend down through every generation to the close of time, and her corrupt life, and her satanic revenge, stand upon the page of sacred history, making her name infamous.

In the martyrdom of John, we have the result of intemperance. This eventful birthday of Herod should carry an earnest and faithful lesson of warning, and exhortation to Christian temperance. The lovers of pleasure should look upon the birthday feast of Herod as a warning to beware of self-indulgences and popular pleasure. Herod and his guests were partly intoxicated. Reason was servant to the baser passions. And after Herod and his guests had gorged themselves, like beasts, with luxurious food, they added to their surfeiting, drunkenness. The mental powers were enervated by the pleasure of sense, which perverted their ideas of justice and mercy. Satan seized upon this opportunity, in the person of Herodias, to lead them to rush into decisions which cost the precious life of one of God's prophets.

The minds of Herod and his guests, under the effects of intemperance in eating and in drinking, were in a state of animal excitement. Herod was under the delusion that his oath, made under the excitement of feasting, dancing, and revelry, when nothing was too sacred for them to profane, must be kept. The life of one of the greatest prophets that God had sent as a messenger to the earth, was in the balance, and this company of great men pronounced sentence of death after the intellect and manhood had been sacrificed to sensual indulgence.

Herod was brought to the test before his guests. Would he lift himself up against the Lord of Heaven, and exalt his oath above the commandment of God, which saith, "Thou shalt not kill"? Would he preserve his honor and dignity as a king, and violate the law of God in sacrificing the life of an innocent man? Or would he humble himself to ask his guests to release him from his rash oath. If Herod and his guests had preserved the vigor of their intellect, their minds would have been awake to sense the noble demands of justice and duty. Calm reason would have borne sway, and they would have recoiled with horror at the thought of beheading an innocent man, and he an exalted prophet of God.

When Herod commenced his feast of revelry, if one had suggested to him the part he would act before its close, in taking the life of John, he would have answered, "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this?" But, under the excitement of wine, his rash vow was made, that led to results that he would not cease to regret as long as life should last.

After the feast of Herod had ended, the effects of his intoxication and revelry had passed away, and reason had resumed her throne, the king was filled with remorse. He was constantly seeking to find relief from the sting of a guilty conscience. His faith in John as an honored prophet of God, was unshaken. As he reflected upon his life of self-denial, his powerful discourses, his solemn, earnest appeals, his sound judgment as a counselor, and then reflected that he had put him to death, his conscience was fearfully troubled. While engaged in the affairs of the nation, receiving honors from men, he bore a smiling face and dignified mien, while he concealed an anxious, aching heart, and was constantly terrified with fearful forebodings that the curse of God was upon him.

When Herod heard of the wonderful works of Christ in healing the sick, casting out devils, and in raising the dead, he was exceedingly troubled and perplexed. His convictions were that God, whom John preached, was indeed present in every place, and that he had witnessed the wild mirth and wicked dissipation in the banqueting room, and that his ear had heard his command to the executioner to behead John. His eye had seen the exultation of Herodias, and the taunting and insult with which she reproached the severed head of her enemy. And many things which he had heard from the lips of the prophet, seemed now to speak to his conscience in louder tones than his preaching in the wilderness. He had heard from the lips of the prophet that nothing could be hid from God.

When Herod heard of the works of Christ, he thought that God had resurrected John, and sent him forth with still greater power to condemn sin. He was in constant fear that John would avenge his death by passing condemnation upon him and his house. "And king Herod heard of him [Christ] (for his name was spread abroad); and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him. Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets. But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead."

The Lord followed Herod as is described in Deuteronomy, "The Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind. And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee, and thou shalt fear, day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see."

The life and mission of John were ended. Christ had said of him that he was more than a prophet. Again he said, "Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist." He had been executed as a criminal, not because of any guilt resting upon him, but for the reason that he had fearlessly reprov'd crime. His spotless life, his practical piety, his virtue and justice, condemned the dishonest and sinful lives of the Jews as well as the Gentiles.

Said Christ, in vindication of John, "But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet." Not only was John a prophet to foretell future events, but he was a child of promise, filled with the Holy Spirit from his birth, and was ordained of God to execute a special work as a reformer, in preparing a people for the reception of Christ. The prophet John was the connecting link between the two dispensations.

The religion of the Jews, in consequence of their departure from God, consisted mostly in ceremony. John was the lesser light, which was to be followed by a greater light. He was to shake the confidence of the people in their traditions, and call their sins to their remembrance, and lead them to repentance; that they might be prepared to appreciate the work of Christ. God communicated to John by inspiration, illuminating

the prophet that he might remove the superstition and darkness from the minds of the honest Jews, which had been, through false teachings for generations, gathering upon them.

The least disciple that followed Jesus, that witnessed his miracles, and listened to his divine lessons of instruction, and heard the comforting words which fell from his lips, was more privileged than John the Baptist, for he had a clearer light. No other light has shone, or ever will shine, upon the intellect of sinful, fallen man, save that which was, and is, communicated through Him who is the light of the world. Christ and his mission had been but dimly understood through the shadowy sacrifices. Even John thought that the reign of Christ would be in Jerusalem, and that he would set up a temporal kingdom, the subjects of which would be holy.

While John was in prison, he had contemplated Christ's taking his power and authority, and subduing the kingdoms of the world under his rule. Then he expected to be released from prison. As his expectations were not realized, he became impatient. Unbelief took possession of his mind, and he sent his disciples to inquire of Christ, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" John did not clearly discern the character of Christ's kingdom. The future immortal life through Christ was not distinctly understood by him. Christ's first advent to the world was to dispel the dense moral darkness and blindness of fallen man, in consequence of sin. "The light shone in the midst of darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not." The lessons of practical instruction which Christ gave the people shed a flood of light on the prophecies.

Although not one of the prophets had a higher mission or greater work to perform than had John, yet he was not to see even the result of his own mission. He was not privileged to be with Christ and witness the divine power attending the greater light, which was manifested in the recovery of health to the sick, of sight to the blind, of hearing to the deaf. He did not see the light which shone through every word of Christ, reflecting glory upon the promises in prophecy. The world was illuminated with pure light from the brightness of the Father's glory in the person of his Son; but John was denied the privilege of seeing the display of wisdom and power of God in the unsearchable riches of the knowledge of Christ.

Those who were privileged with being with Christ when he walked a man among men, and listened to his divine teachings under a variety of circumstances while

preaching in the temple--walking in the streets, teaching the multitudes by the way side, and in the open air by the sea-side, and while an invited guest seated at the table, ever giving words of instruction to meet the cases of all who needed his help; healing, comforting, and reproofing, as circumstances required--were more exalted than John the Baptist.

July 29, 1873

## **Moses and Aaron**

Upon Mount Hor Aaron died and was buried. Moses, Aaron's brother, and Eleazar, his son, accompanied him. The painful duty was laid upon Moses to remove from his brother Aaron the sacerdotal robes and place them upon Eleazar, for God had said he should succeed Aaron in the priesthood. Moses and Eleazar witnessed the death of Aaron; and Moses buried him in the mount. This scene upon Mount Hor carries our minds back and connects it with some of the most striking events in the life of Aaron.

Aaron was a man of amiable disposition, whom God selected to stand with Moses and speak for him, in short, to be mouthpiece for Moses. God might have chosen Aaron as leader; but he who is acquainted with hearts, who understands character, knew that Aaron was yielding, and lacked moral courage to stand in defense of the right under all circumstances irrespective of consequences. Aaron's desire to have the good will of the people sometimes led him to commit great wrongs. He too frequently yielded to their entreaties, and in so doing dishonored God. The same want of standing firmly for the right in his family resulted in the death of two of his sons. Aaron was eminent for piety and usefulness, but he neglected to discipline his family. Rather than perform the task of requiring respect and reverence of his sons, he allowed them to follow their inclinations. He did not discipline them in self-denial, but yielded to their wishes. They were not disciplined to respect and reverence parental authority. The father was the proper ruler of his own family as long as he lived. His authority was not to cease, even after his children were grown up and had families of their own. God himself was the monarch of the nation, and from the people he claimed obedience and honor.

The order and prosperity of the kingdom depended upon the good order of the church. And the prosperity, harmony, and order of the church were dependent upon the good order and thorough discipline of families. God punishes the unfaithfulness of parents to whom he has intrusted the duty to maintain the principles of parental government, which lie at the foundation of church discipline, and the prosperity of the nation. One undisciplined child has frequently marred the peace and harmony of the church, and incited to murmuring and rebellion, a nation. God has enjoined, in the most solemn manner upon children, their duty to affectionately respect and honor their



parents. God required, on the other hand, of parents to train up their children, and with unceasing diligence to educate them in regard to the claims of his law, and to instruct them in the knowledge and fear of God. These injunctions which God laid with so much solemnity upon the Jews, rests with equal weight upon Christian parents. Those who neglect the light and instruction given of God in his word, in regard to training their children and commanding their household after them, will have a fearful account to settle. Aaron's criminal neglect to command respect and reverence of his sons resulted in their death.

God distinguished Aaron in choosing him and his male posterity for the priesthood. His sons ministered in the sacred office. Nadab and Abihu failed to reverence the command of God, to offer sacred fire upon their censers with the incense before him. God had forbidden them to use the common fire to present before him with the incense, upon pain of death.

Here was seen the result of loose discipline. As Aaron's sons had not been educated to respect and reverence the commands of their father, as they disregarded parental authority, they did not realize the necessity of explicitly following the requirements of God. When indulging their appetite for wine, while under its exciting stimulus their reason was beclouded. They could not discern difference between the sacred and the common. Contrary to God's express direction they dishonored him by offering common fire instead of sacred. God visited them with his wrath--fire went forth from his presence and destroyed them.

Aaron bore his severe affliction with patience and humble submission. Sorrow and keen agony wrung his soul. He was convicted of his neglect of duty. He was priest of the Most High God, to make atonement for the sins of the people. He was priest of his household, yet he had been inclined to pass over the folly of his children. He neglected his duty to train and educate his children to obedience, self-denial, and reverence for parental authority. Through feelings of misplaced indulgence he failed to mold the characters of his children with high reverence for eternal things. Aaron did not see any more than many Christian parents now see that their misplaced love and the indulgence of their children in wrong, is preparing them for the certain displeasure of God, and for his wrath to break forth upon them to their destruction.

While Aaron neglected to exercise his authority, the justice of God awakened

against them. Aaron had to learn that gentle remonstrance, without exercising, with firmness, parental restraint, and his imprudent tenderness toward his sons, were cruelty in the extreme. God took the work of justice into his own hands and destroyed the sons of Aaron.

When God called for Moses to come up into the mountain, it was six days before he was received into the cloud, to the immediate presence of God. The top of the mountain was all aglow with the glory of God. And even while the children of Israel had in their very sight the glory of God upon the mount, unbelief was so natural to them, because Moses was absent they begun to murmur with discontent. While the glory of God signified his sacred presence upon the mountain, and their leader was in close converse with God, they should have been sanctifying themselves to God by close searching of heart, humiliation, and godly fear. God had left Aaron and Hur, to take the place of Moses. The people were to consult and advise with these men of God's appointment in the absence of Moses.

Here Aaron's deficiency as a leader or governor of Israel was seen. The people beset him to make them gods to go before them into Egypt. Here was an opportunity for Aaron to show his faith and unwavering confidence in God, and in firmness and with decision meet the proposition of the people. But the natural love of Aaron to please, and to yield to the people, led him to sacrifice the honor of God. He requested them to bring their ornaments to him, and he wrought out for them a golden calf, and proclaimed before the people, "These be thy gods O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." And to this senseless god, Aaron made an altar, and proclaimed on the morrow a feast to the Lord. All restraint seemed to be removed from the people. They offered burnt-offerings to the golden calf, and a spirit of levity took possession of them. They ate, they drank, and rose up to play. They indulged in shameful rioting and drunkenness.

A few weeks only had passed since they had made a solemn covenant with God to obey his voice. They had listened to the words of God's law, spoken in awful grandeur from Sinai's mount, amid thunderings and lightnings and earthquakes. They had heard the declaration from the lips of God himself, "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I

the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments."

Aaron had been exalted, also his sons, in being called into the mount, to there witness the glory of God. "And they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness."

God had appointed Nadab and Abihu to a most sacred work, therefore he honored them in a most wonderful manner. God gave them a view of his excellent glory, that the scenes they should witness in the mount would abide upon them, and the better qualify them to minister in his service, and render to him that exalted honor and reverence before the people, which would give them clearer conceptions of his character, and awaken in them due obedience and reverence for all his requirements.

Moses, before he left his people for the mount, read to them the words of the covenant God had made with them, and they with one voice answered, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." How great must have been the sin of Aaron, how aggravating in the sight of God!

While Moses was receiving the law of God in the mount, the Lord informed him of the sin of rebellious Israel, and requested him to let them go, that he might destroy them. But Moses plead before God for the people. Although Moses was the meekest man that lived, yet when the interests of the people were at stake over whom God had appointed him as leader, he loses his natural timidity, and with singular persistency and wonderful boldness, pleads with God for Israel. He will not consent that God shall destroy his people, although God promised that in their destruction he would exalt Moses, and raise up a better people than Israel. Moses prevailed. God granted his earnest petition not to blot out his people. Moses took the tables of the covenant, the law of ten commandments, and descended from the mount. The boisterous, drunken revelry of the children of Israel reached his ears, long before he came to the camp of Israel. When he saw their idolatry, and that they had broken in a most marked manner the words of the covenant, he became overwhelmed with grief and indignation at their base idolatry. Confusion and shame on their account took possession of him, and he there threw down the tables and broke them. As they had broken their covenant with God,

Moses, in breaking the tables, signified to them, so, also, God had broken his covenant with them. The tables, whereupon was written the law of God, were broken.

Aaron, with his amiable disposition, so very mild and pleasing, sought to conciliate Moses, as though no very great sin had been committed by the people that he should feel thus deeply over. Moses asked in anger, "What did this people unto thee that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?" "And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my Lord wax hot; thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief. For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what has become of him. And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it me; then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf."

Aaron would have Moses think that some wonderful miracle had transformed their golden ornaments into the shape of a calf. He did not relate to Moses that he had, with other workmen, wrought out this image.

Aaron had thought that Moses had been too unyielding to the wishes of the people. And if he had been less firm, less decided at times; if he had made a compromise with them, and gratified their wishes, he would have had less trouble, and there would have been more peace and harmony in the camp of Israel. He, therefore, had been trying this new policy. He carried out his natural temperament of yielding to the wishes of the people, to save dissatisfaction and preserve their good-will, and thereby prevent a rebellion, which he thought would certainly come if he withstood their wishes. But had Aaron stood unwaveringly for God; had he met the intimation of the people for him to make them gods to go before them to Egypt, with the just indignation and horror their proposition deserved; had he cited them to the terrors of Sinai, where God had spoken his law in such glory and majesty; had he reminded them of their solemn covenant with God to obey all he should command them; had he told them that he would not at the sacrifice of his life yield to their entreaties, he would have had influence with the people to prevent a terrible apostasy. But when his influence was required to be used in the right direction in the absence of Moses, when he should have stood as firm and unyielding as did Moses to prevent them from pursuing a course of sin, his influence was exerted on the wrong side. He was powerless to make his influence felt in vindication of God's honor in keeping his holy law. But on the wrong side he had swayed a powerful influence. He directed, and the people obeyed. When

Aaron took the first step in the wrong direction, the spirit which had actuated the people imbued him, and he took the lead, and directed as a general, and the people were singularly obedient. Here Aaron gave decided sanction to the most aggravating sins, because it was attended with less difficulty than to stand in vindication of the right. When he swerved from his integrity in giving sanction to the people in their sins, he seemed inspired with decision, earnestness, and zeal, new to him. His timidity seemed suddenly to disappear. He seized the instruments to work out the gold into the image of a calf with a zeal he had never manifested in standing in defense of the honor of God against wrong. He ordered an altar to be built, and with assurance, worthy of a better cause, he proclaimed to the people that on the morrow would be a feast to the Lord. The trumpeters took the word from the mouth of Aaron and sounded the proclamation from company to company of the armies of Israel.

Aaron's calm assurance in a wrong course gave him greater influence than Moses could have had in leading them in a right course, and subduing their rebellion. What terrible spiritual blindness had come upon Aaron that he should put light for darkness, and darkness for light. What presumption in him to proclaim a feast to the Lord over their idolatry of a golden image! Here is seen the power that Satan has over minds that are not fully controlled by the Spirit of God. Satan had set up his banner in the midst of Israel, and it was exalted as the banner of God.

"These," said Aaron (without hesitation or shame), be thy gods O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Aaron influenced the children of Israel to go to greater lengths in idolatry than had entered their minds. They were no longer troubled lest the burning glory like flaming fire upon the mount had consumed their leader. They thought they had a general who just suited them. They were ready to do anything he suggested. They offered peace offerings, and sacrificed to their golden god, and gave themselves up to pleasure, rioting, and drunkenness. They were then decided in their own minds that it was not because they were wrong, that they had so much trouble in the wilderness; but the difficulty, after all, was with their leader. He was not a right kind of a man. He was too unyielding, and was continually keeping their sins before them, warning and reproofing them, and threatening them with God's displeasure. A new order of things had come, and they were pleased with Aaron, and pleased with themselves. They thought, if Moses had only been as amiable and mild as Aaron, what peace and harmony would have prevailed in the camp of Israel. They cared not now whether Moses ever came down from the Mount or not.

When Moses saw the idolatry of Israel, and his indignation was so aroused at their shameful forgetfulness of God, that he threw down the tables of stone and broke them, Aaron stood meekly by, bearing the censure of Moses with commendable patience. The people were charmed with Aaron's lovely spirit, and were disgusted with Moses' rashness. But God seeth not as man seeth. He condemned not the ardor and indignation of Moses against the base apostasy of Israel.

The true general, then takes his position for God. He has come direct from the presence of the Lord, where he plead with him to turn away his wrath from his erring people. Now he has another work to do as God's minister, to vindicate his honor before the people, and let them see that sin is sin, and righteousness is righteousness. He has a work to do to counteract the terrible influence of Aaron. "Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? Let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man, his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses; and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men. For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves today to the Lord, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother; that he may bestow upon you a blessing this day."

Here Moses defines genuine consecration as obedience to God, to stand in vindication of the right, and to show a readiness to carry out the purpose of God in the most unpleasant duties, showing the claims of God are higher than the claims of friends, or the lives of the nearest relatives. The sons of Levi consecrated themselves to God to execute his justice against crime and sin.

Aaron and Moses both sinned in not giving glory and honor to God at the waters of Meribah. They were both wearied and provoked with the continual complaining of Israel, and at a time when God was to mercifully display his glory to the people to soften and subdue their hearts and lead them to repentance. Moses and Aaron claimed the power of opening the rock for them. "Hear now, ye rebels: must we fetch you water out of this rock?" Here was a golden opportunity to sanctify the Lord in their midst, to show them the long-suffering of God and his tender pity for them. They had murmured against Moses and Aaron because they could not find water. Moses and Aaron took

these murmurings as a great trial and dishonor to them. They forgot that it was God whom they were grieving. It was God they were sinning against and dishonoring, not they who were men appointed of God to carry out his purpose. They were insulting their best friend in charging their calamities upon Moses and Aaron; they were murmuring at God's providence.

This sin of these noble leaders was great. Their lives might have been illustrious to the close. They had been greatly exalted and honored; yet God does not excuse sin in those in exalted position, any sooner than in the more humble.

Many professed Christians look upon men who do not reprove and condemn wrong, as men of piety, and Christians indeed, while men who stand boldly in the defense of right, and will not yield their integrity to unconsecrated influences, they think lack piety and a Christian spirit.

Those who stand in defense of the honor of God, and maintain the purity of truth at any cost, will have manifold trials, as did our Saviour in the wilderness of temptation. The yielding temperaments, who have not courage to condemn wrong, but keep silent when their influence is needed to stand in the defense of right against any pressure, may avoid many heartaches, and escape many perplexities, and lose a very rich reward, if not their own souls.

Those who in harmony with God, and through faith in him, receive strength to resist wrong, and stand in defense of the right, will always have severe conflicts, and will frequently have to stand almost alone. But precious victories will be theirs while they make God their dependence. His grace will be their strength. Their moral sense will be keen, clear, and sensitive. Their moral powers will be equal to withstand wrong influences. Their integrity, like that of Moses, of the purest character.

The mild and yielding spirit of Aaron to please the people, blinded his eyes to their sins, and to the enormity of the crime he was sanctioning. His course in giving influence to wrong and sin in Israel cost the lives of three thousand men. The course of Moses, in what contrast! After he had evidenced to the people that they could not trifle with God with impunity; after he had shown them the just displeasure of God for their sins, in giving the terrible decree to slay friends or relatives who persisted in their apostasy, after the work of justice to turn away the wrath of God, irrespective of their

feelings of sympathy for loved friends and relatives who continued obstinate in their rebellion, Moses was now prepared for another work. He evidenced who was the true friend of God, and the friend of the people.

"And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin; and now I will go up unto the Lord; per-adventure I shall make an atonement for your sin. And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray, thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee; behold; mine Angel shall go before thee; nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them. And the Lord plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made."

Moses supplicated God in behalf of sinning Israel. He did not try to lessen their sin before God. He did not excuse them in their sin. He frankly acknowledged they had sinned a great sin, and had made them gods of gold. Then he loses his timidity, and the interest of Israel is so closely interwoven with his life, that he comes with boldness to God, and prays for him to forgive his people. If their sin, he pleads, is so great that God cannot forgive them, if their names must be blotted from his book, he prayed the Lord to blot out his name also. When the Lord renewed his promise to Moses, that his Angel should go before him in leading the people to the promised land, Moses knew that his request was granted. But the Lord assured Moses that if he was provoked to visit the people for their transgressions, he would surely punish them for this grievous sin also. If they were henceforth obedient, he would blot out this great sin out of his book.



September 16, 1873

## **The Laodicean Church**

The message to the church of the Laodiceans is a startling denunciation, and is applicable to the people of God at the present time.

"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write: These things saith the Amen, the faithful and True Witness, the beginning of the creation of God: I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

The Lord here shows us that the message to be borne to his people by ministers whom he has called to warn the people, is not a peace-and-safety message. It is not merely theoretical, but practical in every particular. The people of God are represented in the message to the Laodiceans in a position of carnal security. They are at ease, believing themselves in an exalted condition of spiritual attainments.

"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

What greater deception can come upon human minds than a confidence that they are right, when they are all wrong? The message of the True Witness finds the people of God in a sad deception, yet honest in that deception. They know not that their condition is deplorable in the sight of God. While those addressed are flattering themselves that they are in an exalted spiritual condition, the message of the True Witness breaks their security by the startling denunciation of their true situation of spiritual blindness, poverty, and wretchedness. The testimony, so cutting and severe, cannot be a mistake; for it is the True Witness who speaks, and his testimony must be correct.

It is difficult for those who feel secure in their attainments, who are believing themselves to be rich in spiritual knowledge, to receive the message which declares that

they are deceived and in need of every spiritual grace. The unsanctified heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.

God leads his people on, step by step. The Christian life is a constant battle, and a march. There is no rest from the warfare. It is by constant, unceasing effort that we maintain the victory over the temptations of Satan. We are, as a people, triumphing in the clearness and strength of the truth. We are fully sustained in our positions by an overwhelming amount of plain scriptural testimony. But we are very much wanting in Bible humility, patience, faith, love, self-denial, watchfulness, and a spirit of sacrifice. We need to cultivate Bible holiness. Sin prevails among the people of God. The plain message of rebuke to the Laodiceans is not received. Many cling to their doubts and their darling sins, while they are in so great a deception as to talk and feel that they are in need of nothing. They think the testimony of the Spirit of God in reproof is uncalled for, or that it does not mean them. Such are in the greatest need of the grace of God and spiritual discernment, that they may discover their deficiency in spiritual knowledge. They lack almost every essential qualification necessary to perfect Christian character. They have not a practical knowledge of Bible truth, which leads to lowliness of life, and a conformity of their will to the will of Christ. They are not living in obedience to all God's requirements.

It is not enough to merely profess to believe the truth. All the soldiers of the cross of Christ virtually obligate themselves to enter a crusade against the adversary of souls, to condemn wrong, and sustain righteousness. But the message of the True Witness reveals the fact that a terrible deception is upon our people, which makes it necessary to come to them with warnings, to break their spiritual slumber, and arouse them to decided action.

This message of the True Witness has not accomplished the design of God. The people slumber on in their sins. They continue to declare themselves "rich, and having need of nothing." Many inquire, Why are all these reproofs given? Why do the testimonies continually charge us with backsliding and grievous sins? We love the truth. We are prospering. We are in no need of these testimonies of warning and reproof. But let these murmurers see their hearts, and compare their lives with the practical teachings of the Bible; let them humble their souls before God; let the grace of God illuminate the darkness, and the scales will fall from their eyes, and they will sense their true spiritual poverty and wretchedness. They will feel the necessity of buying gold, which is pure

faith and love; white raiment, which is a spotless character, made pure in the blood of their dear Redeemer, and eye-salve, which is the grace of God, and will give clear discernment of spiritual things, and detect sin. These attainments are more precious than the gold of Ophir.

I am very sure that the greatest reason why the people of God are now found in this state of spiritual blindness, is because they will not receive correction. Many have despised the reproofs and warnings given them. The True Witness condemns the lukewarm condition of the people of God, which gives Satan great power over them in this waiting, watching time. The selfish, and proud, and lovers of sin, are ever assailed with doubts. Satan has ability to suggest doubts and devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue and mark of intelligence in them to be unbelieving and questioning, and quibbling. Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and teachable spirit. All should decide from the weight of evidence.

Eternal life is of infinite value, and will cost us all that we have. It is evident that we do not place a proper estimate upon eternal things. Everything worth possessing, even in this world, must be secured by effort, and sometimes by most painful sacrifice. And this is merely for a perishable treasure. Shall we be less willing to endure conflict and toil, and to make earnest efforts and great sacrifices for the infinite treasure, which passes all estimate in value, and the duration of life which will measure with the Infinite? Can Heaven cost us too much? Faith and love are golden treasures, elements that are greatly wanting among God's people.

Faith in the soon coming of Christ is waning. "My Lord delayeth his coming" is said not only in the heart, but expressed in words, and most decidedly in works. Stupidity in this watching time is sealing the senses of God's people as to the signs of the times.

The terrible iniquity abounding calls for the greatest diligence, and for the living testimony, to keep sin out of the church. Faith has been decreasing to a fearful degree. Faith can only increase by exercise.

In the first rise of the third angel's message, those who engaged in the work of

God had something to venture. They had sacrifices to make. They started this work in poverty, and suffered the greatest deprivations and reproach. They met determined opposition, which drove them to God in their necessity, and kept their faith alive. Our present plan of Systematic Benevolence amply sustains our ministers. And there is no want and no call for the exercise of faith as to a support. Those who start out now to preach the truth have nothing to venture. They have no risks to run, no especial sacrifices to make. The system of truth is made ready to their hand. Publications are provided for them, vindicating the truths they advance.

Some young men start out with no real sense of the exalted character of the work. They have not privations, and hardships, and severe conflicts to meet, which call for the exercise of faith. They do not cultivate practical self-denial, and cherish a spirit of sacrifice. Some are becoming proud and lifted up, and have no real burden of the work upon them. The True Witness speaks to these ministers, "Be zealous, therefore, and repent." These ministers are some of them so lifted up in pride that they are really a hindrance and a curse to the precious cause of God. They do not exert an influence which is saving upon others. There is need of these men being thoroughly converted to God themselves, and sanctified by the truths they present to others.

Very many feel impatient and jealous because they are frequently disturbed with warning and reproofs which keep their sins before them. Says the True Witness, "I know thy works." The motives, the purposes, and the unbelief, suspicions, and jealousies may be hid from men, but not from Christ. The True Witness comes as a counselor; "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous, therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

Those who heed the testimony of warning, and zealously go about the work of separating their sins from them, in order to have the needed graces, will be opening the door of their hearts that the dear Saviour may come in and dwell with them. This class you will ever find in perfect harmony with the testimony of the Spirit of God.

Ministers who are preaching present truth should not neglect the solemn message to the Laodiceans. The testimony of the True Witness is not a smooth message. The Lord does not say to them, You are about right, you have borne chastisement and reproof that you never deserved, you have been discouraged unnecessarily by severity, you are not guilty of the wrongs and sins of which you have been reproved.

The True Witness declares that when you suppose you are really in a good condition of prosperity you are in need of everything. It is not enough for ministers to present theoretical subjects. They need to study the practical lessons Christ gave his disciples, and make a close application of the same to their own souls and to the people. Because Christ bears this rebuking testimony, shall we suppose that he is destitute of tender love to his people? Oh, no! He who died to redeem man from death, loves with a divine love. He rebukes those he loves. "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." But many will not receive the message Heaven in mercy sends them. They cannot endure to be told of their wrongs, and of their neglect of duty, of their selfishness, their pride, and love of the world.

The servants of the Lord should bear a plain testimony. They should cry aloud and spare not, and show the people their transgressions, and the house of Israel their sins. But there is a class who will not receive the message of reproof, and they raise their hands to shield those whom God would reprove and correct. They will ever be found sympathizing with those whom God would make to feel their true poverty.

The word of the Lord spoken through his servants, is received by many with questionings and fears. And many will defer their obedience to the warnings and reproofs given, waiting till every shadow of uncertainty is removed from their minds. The unbelief that demands perfect knowledge will never yield to the evidence God is pleased to give. God requires of his people faith that rests upon the weight of evidence, not perfect knowledge. The followers of Jesus Christ, those who accept of the light God sends them, must obey the voice of God speaking to them, when there are many other voices crying out against it. It requires discernment to distinguish the voice of God.

Those who will not act when the Lord calls upon them, waiting for more certain evidence, and more favorable opportunities, will walk in darkness, for the light will be withdrawn. The evidence given one day, if rejected, may never be repeated.

Tempted souls, whose hearts have ever been at war with the faithful reproving of sin, would cry, Speak unto us smooth things. What disposition will these make of the message of the True Witness to the Laodiceans? There can be no deception here. This message must be borne to a lukewarm church by God's servants. This message must arouse the people of God from their security and dangerous deception in regard to their real standing before God. This testimony, if received, will arouse to action, and lead to self-abasement, and confessions of sins. The True Witness says, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot." And again, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent." Then comes the promise, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." "To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

These wrongs and sins, which have brought the people of God in their state of wretchedness, blindness, and poverty, must be seen, and they arouse to zealous repentance, and a putting away of these sins which have brought them into such a deplorable condition of blindness and fearful deception. The pointed testimony must live in the church. And this alone will answer to the message to the Laodiceans. Wrongs must be reproved, sins must be called sins, and iniquity must be met promptly and decidedly, and put away from us as a people.

Those whom God has chosen for an important work, have ever been received with distrust and suspicion. Anciently, when Elijah was sent with a message from God to the people, they did not heed the warning. They thought Elijah unnecessarily severe. He must, they thought, have lost his senses, that he would denounce them, the favored people of God, as sinners, and their crimes, so aggravating, that the judgments of God would awaken against them.

Satan and his host have ever been arrayed against those who bear the message of warning and reprove sins. The unconsecrated will be united with the adversary of souls, to make the work of God's faithful servants as hard as possible. Elijah, one of God's great and mighty prophets, as he fled for his life from the rage of Jezebel, an infuriated woman, a fugitive, weary and travel worn, desired to die rather than live. His bitter disappointment in regard to Israel's faithfulness crushed his spirits, and he felt that he could no longer put confidence in man. In the day of Job's affliction and darkness, he utters these words: "Let the day perish wherein I was born."

When Ahab ruled Israel, the people departed from God and corrupted their ways before him under his perverted rule. "And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him. And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshiped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all of the kings that were before him."

Ahab was weak in moral power. He did not have a high sense of sacred things. He was selfish and unprincipled. His union by marriage with a woman of decided character, and positive temperament, devoted to idolatry, made them both special agents of Satan to lead the people of God into idolatry and terrible apostasy. The determined spirit of Jezebel molded the character of Ahab. His selfish nature was incapable of appreciating the mercies of God to his people, his obligation to God, as the guardian and leader of Israel. The fear of God was daily growing less in Israel. The blasphemous tokens of their blind idolatry were to be seen among the Israel of God. There were none who dared to expose their lives by openly standing forth in opposition to the prevailing blasphemous idolatry. The altars of Baal, and the priests of Baal who sacrificed to the sun, moon, and stars, were conspicuous everywhere. They had consecrated temples and groves, wherein was placed the work of men's hands to worship. The benefits which God gave to this people called forth from them no gratitude to the Giver. For all the bounties of Heaven, the running brooks, and streams of living waters, the gentle dew, and showers of rain to refresh the earth, and to cause their fields to bring forth abundantly, they ascribed to the favor of their gods.

Elijah's faithful soul was grieved. His indignation was aroused, and he was jealous for the glory of God. He saw that Israel was plunged into fearful apostasy. He was overwhelmed with amazement and grief at the apostasy of the people when he called to mind the great things that God had wrought for them. But all this was forgotten by the majority of the people. He went before God, and with his soul wrung with anguish, plead for him to save his people if it must be by judgments. He plead with God to withhold from his ungrateful people dew and rain, the treasures of heaven, that apostate Israel might look in vain to their idols of gold, wood, and stone, the sun, moon, and stars, their gods, to water the earth and enrich it, and cause it to bring forth

plentifully. God told Elijah he had heard his prayer. He would withhold from his people dew and rain, until they should turn unto him with repentance.

God had especially guarded his people from mingling with the idolatrous nations around them, lest their hearts should be deceived by their attractive groves and shrines, temples, and altars, all of which were arranged in the most expensive, alluring manner, to pervert the senses, so that God would be supplanted in their minds.

Jericho was a city devoted to the most extravagant idolatry. The inhabitants were very wealthy. All the riches that God had given them they accredited to the gifts of their gods. Gold and silver were in abundance. Like the people before the flood, they were corrupt and blasphemous. They insulted and provoked the God of Heaven by their wicked works. God's judgments awakened against Jericho. It was a stronghold. But the Captain of the Lord's host came himself from Heaven to lead the armies of Heaven in the attack upon the city. Angels of God laid hold of the massive walls and brought them to the ground. God had said that the city of Jericho should be accursed, and that all should perish except Rahab and her household. They should be saved because of the favor that Rahab showed the messengers of the Lord. The word of the Lord to the people was, "And ye in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it." "And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the Lord, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho; he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it." Joshua 6:18, 26.

God was very particular in regard to Jericho, lest the people should be charmed with the things that the inhabitants had worshiped, and their hearts be diverted from him. He guards his people by most positive commands. Notwithstanding the solemn injunction from God by the mouth of Joshua, Achan ventured to transgress. His covetousness led him to take the treasures God had forbidden him to touch, because his curse was upon it. And because of this man's sin, the Israel of God were as weak as water before their enemies.

Joshua and the elders of Israel were in great affliction. They lay before the ark of God in most abject humility, because the Lord was wroth with his people. Joshua and the elders of Israel prayed and wept before God. The Lord spoke to Joshua, "Get thee



up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them; for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed; neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you."

September 23, 1873

### **The Laodicean Church**

In the case of the sin of Achan, God has shown how he regards sin among those who profess to be his commandment-keeping people. Those whom he has especially honored with witnessing the remarkable exhibitions of his power, as did ancient Israel, and that will venture to disregard his express directions, will be subjects of his wrath. God would teach his people that disobedience and sin are exceedingly offensive to him, and not to be lightly regarded. He shows us that when his people are found in sin, they should at once take decided measures to put the sin from them, that his frown should not rest upon all his people. But if those in responsible positions pass over the sins of the people, his frown will be upon them, and the people of God, as a body, will be held responsible for the sins that exist in their midst. God, in his dealings with his people in the past, shows the necessity of purifying the church from wrongs that exist among them. One sinner may diffuse darkness which will exclude the light of God from the entire congregation. When the people realize that darkness is settling upon them, and they do not know the cause, then they should earnestly seek God in great humility and self-abasement, until the wrongs which grieve God's Spirit are searched out and put away from among them.

If wrongs exist among the people, and the servants of God pass on indifferent to them, they virtually sustain and justify the sinner, and are guilty alike with the sinner, and will receive the displeasure of God just as surely as the sinner; for they will be made responsible for the sins of the guilty. Those men who have excused wrongs have been thought by the people to be very amiable, and of lovely disposition, simply because they shunned to discharge a plain and scriptural, duty. The task was not agreeable to their feelings; therefore they avoided it.

The spirit of hatred which has existed with some because the wrongs among God's people have been reprov'd, has brought blindness and a fearful deception upon their own souls, making it impossible for them to discriminate between right and wrong. They have put out their own spiritual eyesight. They may witness wrongs, but they do not feel as did Joshua, and humble their souls in humiliation because the burden of souls is felt by them.

The true people of God, who have the spirit of the work of the Lord and the salvation of souls at heart, will ever view sin in its real, sinful character. They will always be on the side of faithful and plain dealing with sins which easily beset the people of God. Especially in the closing work for the church, in the sealing time of the one hundred and forty-four thousand, who are to stand without fault before the throne of God, will they feel most deeply the wrongs of God's professed people. This is forcibly set forth by the prophet's illustration of the last work under the figure of the men, each having a slaughter weapon in his hand. One man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side. "And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for the abominations that be done in the midst thereof."

Who are standing in the counsel of God at this time? Is it those who virtually excuse wrongs among the professed people of God, and murmur in their hearts, if not openly, against those who would reprove sin? Is it those who take their stand against them, and sympathize with those who commit wrong? No, indeed! These, unless they repent, and leave the work of Satan in oppressing those who have the burden of the work, and holding up the hands of sinners in Zion, will never receive the mark of God's sealing approval. They will fall in the general destruction of all the wicked, represented by the five men bearing slaughter weapons. Mark this point with care: Those who receive the pure mark of truth, wrought in them by the power of the Holy Ghost, represented by a mark by the man in linen, are those "that sigh and cry for all the abominations that are done" in the church. Their love for purity and the honor and glory of God is such, and they have so clear a view of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, that they are represented as being in an agony, even sighing and crying. Read Ezekiel, chapter nine.

But the general slaughter of all those who do not thus see the wide contrast between sin and righteousness, and do not feel as those do who stand in the counsel of God and receive the mark, is described in the order to the five men with slaughter weapons: "Go ye after him through the city, and smite; let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity; slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary."

God said to Joshua (in the case of Achan's sins), "Neither will I be with you any

more except ye destroy the accursed from among you." How does this instance compare with the course pursued by those who will not raise their voice against sin and wrong; but whose sympathies are ever found with those who trouble the camp of Israel with their sins? Said God to Joshua, "Thou canst not stand before thine enemies until ye take away the accursed thing from among you." He pronounced the punishment which should follow the transgression of his covenant.

Joshua then began a diligent search to find out the guilty one. He took Israel by their tribes, and then by their families, and next, individually. Achan was designated as the guilty one. But that the matter might be plain to all Israel, that there should be no occasion given them to murmur, and to say that the guiltless was made to suffer, Joshua used policy. He knew that Achan was the transgressor, and that he had concealed his sin, and provoked God against his people. Joshua discreetly induced Achan to make confession of his sin, that God's honor and justice should be vindicated before Israel. "And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done. Hide it not from me."

"And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done: When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it. So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it. And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the Lord. And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones."

God said to Joshua, that not only had Achan taken the things which he had positively charged them not to take, lest they be accursed, but had stolen, and also had dissembled. The Lord said that Jericho and all its spoils should be consumed, except the

gold and silver, which was to be reserved for the treasury of the Lord. The victory obtained in taking Jericho was not through warfare, or the exposure of the people. The Captain of the Lord's host had led the armies of Heaven. The battle was the Lord's. The children of Israel did not strike a blow. It was the Lord who fought the battle. The victory and glory were the Lord's. The spoils were his. He directed it all to be consumed, except the gold and silver which he reserved for his treasury. Achan understood well the reserve made, and that the treasures of gold and silver which he coveted were the Lord's. He stole from God's treasury for his own benefit.

There are many who profess to keep the commandments of God who are appropriating to their own use the means which the Lord has intrusted to them, and which should come into his treasury. They rob God in tithes and in offerings. They dissemble, and withhold from God to their own hurt. They bring leanness and poverty upon themselves, and darkness upon the church, because of their covetousness, and in dissembling, in robbing God in tithes and in offerings.

Those who work in the fear of God to rid the church of hindrances, and to correct grievous wrongs, that the people of God may see the necessity of abhorring sin, and that they may prosper in purity, and the name of God be glorified, will ever meet with resisting influences from the unconsecrated. Zephaniah describes the true state of this class, and the terrible judgments that will come upon them.

"And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees; that say in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil." "The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord; the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon men that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord; and their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy; for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land."

It is in time of conflict when the true colors should be flung to the breeze. It is

then the standard-bearers need to be firm and let their true position be known. It is then the skill of every true soldier for the right is tested; shirks can never wear the laurels of victory. Those who are true and loyal will not conceal the fact, but will put heart and might in the work, and venture their all in the struggle, let the battle turn as it will. God is a sin-hating God. And those who will encourage the sinner, saying, It is well with thee, God will curse.

Confessions of sin made at the right time to relieve the people of God will be accepted of him. But there are those among us who will make confessions, as did Achan, too late to save themselves. God may prove them and give them another trial, for the sake of his people to evidence to them that they will not endure one test, one proving of God. They are not in harmony with right. They despise the straight testimony that reaches the heart, and they would rejoice to see every one silenced that gives reproof.

The people of Israel had been gradually losing their fear and reverence for God, until his word through Joshua had no weight with them. "In his days did Hiel the Bethelite build Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun."

While Israel was apostatizing, Elijah was a true prophet of God. He remained loyal and true to God. His faithful soul was greatly distressed as he saw that unbelief and infidelity were fast separating the children of Israel from God. Elijah prayed that God would save his people. He entreated that the Lord would not wholly cast away his sinning people, but by his judgments, if necessary, arouse them to repentance, and not permit them to go on to still greater lengths in sin, and thus provoke him to destroy them as a nation.

The message of the Lord came to Elijah to go to Ahab, with the denunciations of his judgments, because of the sins of Israel. Elijah traveled day and night until he reached the palace of Ahab. He solicited no admission, and waited not to be formally announced. All unexpectedly to Ahab, Elijah stands before the astonished king of Samaria in the coarse garments usually worn by the prophets. He made no apology for his abrupt appearance, without invitation. He raised his hands to heaven, and solemnly affirmed by the living God, who made the heavens and the earth, the judgments which

would come upon Israel: "There shall be neither dew nor rain these years, but according to my word."

This startling denunciation of God's judgments because of the sins of Israel fell like a thunderbolt upon the apostate king. He seemed to be paralyzed with amazement and terror; and before he could recover from his astonishment, Elijah, without waiting to see the effect of his message, left as suddenly as he came. His work was to speak the word of woe from God, and he instantly withdrew. His word had locked up the treasures of heaven, and his word was the only key which could open them again.

The Lord knew that there was no safety for his servant among the children of Israel. He would not trust him with apostate Israel; but sent Elijah to find an asylum among a heathen nation. He directed him to a woman that was a widow, who was in such poverty that she could barely sustain life with the most meager fare. A heathen woman, living up to the best light she had, was in a more acceptable state with God than the widows of Israel who had been blessed with especial privileges, and great light, and who did not live according to the light which God had given them. As the Hebrews rejected light, they were left in darkness. God would not trust his servant among his people who had provoked his divine anger.

Now there is an opportunity for apostate Ahab and pagan Jezebel to test the power of their gods, and to prove the word of Elijah false. Jezebel's prophets are numbered by hundreds. Against them all, stands Elijah, alone. His word has locked heaven. If Baal can give dew and rain, and cause the vegetation to flourish, if he can cause the brooks and streams of water to flow on as usual, independent of the treasures of heaven, in the showers of rain, then let the king of Israel worship him, and the people say he is God.

Elijah was a man subject to like passions as ourselves. His mission to Ahab, and the terrible denunciation to him of the judgments of God, required courage and faith. On his way to Samaria, the perpetually flowing streams, the hills covered with verdure, the forests of stately, flourishing trees, everything his eye rested upon, flourishing in beauty and glory, would naturally suggest unbelief. How can all these things in nature so flourishing be burned with drought? How can these streams that water the land, and that have never been known to cease their flow, become dry? But Elijah did not cherish unbelief. He went forth on his mission at the peril of his life. He fully believed that God

would humble his apostate people, and through the visitation of his judgments would bring them to humiliation and repentance. He ventured everything in the mission before him.

When Ahab recovers in a degree from his astonishment at the words of Elijah, the prophet was gone. He made diligent inquiry for him; but no one had seen him or could give any information respecting him. Ahab informed Jezebel of the word of woe that Elijah had uttered in his presence, and her hatred against the prophet was expressed to the priests of Baal. They unite with her in denouncing and cursing the prophet of Jehovah. The news of the prophet's denunciations are spread all through the land, arousing the fears of some and the wrath of many.

After a few months, the earth, unrefreshed by dew or rain, becomes dry, and vegetation withers. The streams of water that have never been known to cease their flow, decrease, and the brooks of water dry up. Jezebel's prophets offer their sacrifices to their gods, and call upon them night and day to refresh the earth by dews and rain. But their incantations and deceptions formerly practiced to deceive the people do not answer the purpose now. The priests have done everything to appease the anger of their gods, and with a perseverance and zeal worthy of a better cause, have they lingered around their pagan altars, while the flames of sacrifice burn on all the high places, and the fearful cries and entreaties of the priests of Baal are heard night after night through doomed Samaria. But the clouds do not appear in the heavens to cut off the burning rays of the sun. The word of Elijah stands firm, and nothing that Baal's priests can do will change the word spoken by Elijah.

An entire year passes, and another has commenced, and yet there is no rain. The earth is parched, as though a fire had passed over it. The flourishing fields become as the scorched desert. The air becomes dry and suffocating, the dust storm blinds the eyes, and nearly stops the breath. The groves of Baal are leafless, and the forest trees give no shade, but appear as skeletons. Hunger and thirst are telling upon man and beast with fearful mortality.

All this evidence of God's justice and judgment does not awaken Israel to repentance. Jezebel is filled with insane madness. She will not bend or yield to the God of Heaven. Baal's prophets, Ahab, Jezebel, and nearly the whole of Israel, charge their calamity upon Elijah. Ahab had sent to every kingdom and nation in search of Elijah,



and he required an oath of the kingdoms and nations of Israel, that they knew nothing in regard to the strange prophet. Elijah locked heaven with his word, and had taken the key with him, and he could not be found.

Jezebel then decided, as she could not make Elijah feel her murderous power, that she would be revenged by destroying the prophets of God in Israel. No one who professed to be a prophet of God should live. This determined, infuriated woman executed her work of madness in slaying the Lord's prophets. Baal's priests and nearly all of Israel were so far deluded that they thought if the prophets of God were slain the calamity under which they were suffering would cease.

But the second year passes, and the pitiless heavens give no rain. Drought and famine are doing their sad work, and yet the apostate Israelites do not humble their sinful, proud hearts before God. But they murmur and complain against the prophet of God who has brought this dreadful state of things upon them. Fathers and mothers see their children perish with no power to relieve them. And yet they were in such terrible darkness that they could not see that the justice of God was awakened against them because of their sins; and that this terrible calamity was sent in mercy to them, to save them from fully denying and forsaking the God of their fathers.

It will cost Israel suffering and great affliction to bring them to that repentance necessary in order to recover their lost faith, and a clear sense of their responsibility to God. Their apostasy was more dreadful than drought or famine. Elijah waited and prayed in faith through the long years of drought and famine, that the hearts of Israel through their afflictions might be turned from their idolatry, to allegiance to God. Notwithstanding all their sufferings, they stood firm in their idolatry, and looked upon the prophet of God as the cause of their calamity. And if they could have had Elijah in their power they would have delivered him to Jezebel, that she might satisfy her revenge by taking his life. Because Elijah dared to utter the word of woe which God had bidden him, he has made himself the object of their hatred. They could not see God's hand in the judgments under which they were suffering because of their sins. They charged them to the man Elijah. They abhorred not the sins which had brought them under the chastening rod, but hated the faithful prophet, God's instrument, to denounce their sins and calamity. "And it came to pass after many days that the word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go show thyself unto Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth."

Elijah hesitated not to start on his perilous journey. He had been hated, and hunted from city to city by the mandate of the king, for three years, and the whole nation had given their oath that the prophet could not be found. And now Elijah, by the word of God, is to present himself before Ahab. Through the apostasy of all Israel, the governor of Ahab's house has proved faithful to God while his master is a worshiper of Baal. He had, at the risk of his own life, preserved the prophets of God, by hiding them by fifties in a cave, and feeding them. While the servant of Ahab is searching throughout the kingdom for springs and brooks of water, Elijah presents himself before him. Obadiah revered the prophet of God, and as Elijah sends him with a message to the king, he is greatly terrified. He sees danger and death to himself and also Elijah. He pleads earnestly that his life might not be sacrificed; but Elijah assures Obadiah with an oath that he will see Ahab that day. The prophet will not go to Ahab, but as one of God's messengers to command respect, he sends by Obadiah a message, "Behold, Elijah is here." If Ahab wants to see Elijah, he has now the opportunity to come to him. Elijah will not go to Ahab.

September 30, 1873

## The Laodicean Church

The king heard the message with astonishment, mingled with terror, that Elijah, whom he feared and hated, was coming to meet him. He had long sought for the prophet, that he might destroy him, and he knew that Elijah would not expose his life to come to him, unless guarded, or with some terrible denunciation. He remembered the withered arm of Jeroboam, and he decides that it is not safe to lift up his hand against the messenger of God. And with fear and trembling, and with a large retinue, he hastened with imposing display of armies to meet Elijah. And as he meets the man he has so long sought for, face to face, he dared not harm him. The king, so passionate, and filled with hatred against Elijah, seems to be powerless and unmanned in his presence. As he met the prophet, he could not refrain from speaking the language of his heart, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" Elijah, indignant and jealous for the honor and glory of God, answers the charge of Ahab with boldness, "I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord."

The prophet, as God's messenger, had reproved their sins, and denounced the judgments of God because of their wickedness. Elijah, standing alone in conscious innocence, firm in his integrity, surrounded by the train of armed men, shows no timidity, neither does he show the least reverence to the king. The man whom God has talked with, who has a clear sense of how God regards man in his sinful depravity, has no apology to make to Ahab, nor homage to give him. Elijah, now as God's messenger, commanded, and Ahab obeyed at once the command, as though Elijah was monarch, and he subject.

Elijah demands a convocation of all Israel at Carmel, and also all the prophets of Baal. The awful solemnity in the looks of the prophet gives him the appearance of one standing in the presence of the Lord God of Israel. The condition of Israel in their apostasy demanded a firm demeanor, stern speech, and commanding authority. God prepares the message to fit the time and occasion. Sometimes God puts his Spirit upon his messengers to send an alarm day and night, as did his messenger John, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." Then, again, men of action are needed, who will not be swerved from duty, but whose energy will arouse, and demand, "Who will be on the Lord's side,"

let him come over with us. God will have a fitting message to meet his people in their various conditions.

Swift messengers are sent throughout the kingdom with the message from Elijah. Representatives are sent from towns, villages, cities, and families. All seem in haste to answer the call as though some wonderful miracle was to be performed. Ahab, according to Elijah's command, gathers the prophets of Baal at Carmel. The heart of Israel's apostate leader is overawed, and he tremblingly follows the direction of the stern prophet of God.

The assembly was upon Mount Carmel, a place of beauty when the dew and rain fall upon it, causing it to flourish. But now the beauty of Carmel has languished under the curse of God. Upon Mount Carmel, which was the excellency of groves and of flowers, Baal's prophets had erected their altars for their pagan worship. This mountain was conspicuous, and overlooked the surrounding countries. As upon Mount Carmel God had been signally dishonored by idolatrous worship, Elijah chose this as the place most conspicuous for the display of God's power and to vindicate his honor. It was in sight of a large portion of the kingdom. Jezebel's prophets, eight hundred and fifty in number, like a regiment of soldiers prepared for battle, march out in a body with instrumental music, and imposing display. But there was trembling in their hearts as they considered that, at the word of this prophet of Jehovah, the land of Israel had been destitute of dew and rain three years. They felt that some fearful crisis was at hand. They had trusted in their gods, but could not unsay the words of Elijah, and prove him false. But their gods were indifferent to their frantic cries, prayers, and sacrifices.

Elijah, early in the morning, stands upon Mount Carmel, surrounded by apostate Israel and the prophets of Baal. He stands undaunted, he, a lone man, in that vast multitude. The man whom the whole kingdom has charged with its weight of woe is before them, unterrified, unattended by visible armies and imposing display. He stands, clad with his coarse garment, with awful solemnity in his countenance, as though fully aware of his sacred commission, as the servant of God, to execute his commands. Elijah fastened his eyes upon the highest ridge of mountains, where had once stood the altar of Jehovah, when the mountain was covered with flourishing trees and flowers. The blight of God was now upon it, and all the desolation of Israel was in full view of the neglected and torn-down altar of Jehovah, and in sight were the altars of Baal. Ahab stands at the head of the priests of Baal, and all wait in anxious, fearful expectation for

the words of Elijah.

In the full light of the sun, surrounded by thousands, men of war, the prophets of Baal, and the monarch of Israel, stands the defenseless man, Elijah, apparently alone, yet not alone. The most powerful host of Heaven surround him. Angels that excel in strength have come from Heaven to shield the faithful and righteous prophet.

Elijah, with stern and commanding voice, cries out, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word." Not one in that vast assembly dare utter one word for God, and show their loyalty to Jehovah.

What astonishing deception and fearful blindness had, like a dark cloud, covered Israel. This blindness and apostasy had not closed about them suddenly, but it had come upon them gradually, as they had not heeded the word of reproof and warning which the Lord had sent to them because of their pride and their sins. They, in this fearful crisis, in the presence of the idolatrous priests and the apostate king, remain neutral. If God abhors one sin above another, of which his people are guilty, it is of doing nothing in a case of emergency. Indifference or neutrality in a religious crisis is regarded of God as a grievous crime; and equal to the very worst type of hostility against God.

### False Teachers Exposed

All Israel is silent. Again the voice of Elijah is heard addressing them, "I only am a prophet of the Lord, whilst Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks; and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it in pieces, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under; and I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on wood, and put no fire under; and call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the Lord; and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people answered and said, It is well spoken. And Elijah said unto the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under. And they took the bullock which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made."

The proposition of Elijah is reasonable. The people dare not evade it, and they find courage to answer, "The word is good." The prophets of Baal dare not dissent or evade the matter. God has directed this trial, and has prepared confusion for the authors of idolatry, and a signal triumph for his name. The priests of Baal dare not do otherwise than accept the conditions. With terror and guiltiness in their hearts, but outwardly bold and defiant, they rear their altar, lay on the wood and the victim, and then begin their incantations, their chanting and howling, characteristic of pagan worship. Their shrill cries re-echo through forests and mountains, "O Baal, hear us." The priests gather in an army about their altars, and with leaping and unnatural gestures, and writhing and screaming, and stamping, and tearing their hair, and cutting themselves, they manifest apparent sincerity.

But the morning is gone, and noon has come, and yet there has been no move of their gods in pity to Baal's priests, the deluded worshipers of idols. No voice answers their frantic cries. The priests are continually devising how, by deception, they can kindle the fire upon the altars, and give the glory to Baal. But the firm eye of Elijah watches every motion. Eight hundred voices become hoarse. Their garments are covered with blood, and yet their frantic excitement does not abate. Their pleadings are mingled with cursings to their sun-god that he does not send fire for their altar. Elijah stands by, watching with eagle eye lest any deception should be practiced; for he knew if they could, by any device, kindle their altar-fire, he would be torn in pieces upon the spot. He wishes to show the people the folly of their doubts, and their halting between two opinions, when they have the wonderful works of God's majestic power in their behalf, and innumerable evidences of his infinite mercies and loving-kindness toward them. "And it came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said, Cry aloud; for he is a god: either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. And it came to pass when midday was past, and they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded."

How gladly would Satan, who fell like lightning from Heaven, come to the help of those whom he had deceived, and whose minds he had controlled, and who were fully devoted to his service. Gladly would he have sent the lightning and kindled their sacrifices; but Jehovah had set Satan's bounds. He had restrained his power, and all his

devices could not convey one spark to Baal's altars. Evening draws on. The prophets of Baal are wearied, faint, and confused. One suggests one thing, and one, another, until they cease their efforts. Their shrieks and curses no longer resound over Mount Carmel. With weakness and despair, they retire from the contest.

The people have witnessed the terrible demonstrations of the unreasonable, frantic priests. They have witnessed their leaping upon the altar, as though they would grasp the burning rays from the sun to serve their altars. They have become tired of the exhibitions of demonism, of pagan idolatry; and they feel earnest and anxious to hear what Elijah will speak.

Elijah's turn has now come. "And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down. And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name; and with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord; and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water. And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

Elijah, at the hour of evening sacrifice, repairs the altar of God which the apostasy of Israel has allowed the priests of Baal to tear down. He does not call upon one of the people to aid him in his laborious work. The altar of Baal are all prepared; but Elijah turns to the broken-down altar of God which is more sacred and precious to him in its unsightly ruins than all the magnificent altars of Baal.

Elijah respected the Lord's covenant with his people, although they had apostatized. With calmness and solemnity, he repaired the broken-down altar with twelve stones, according to the number of the twelve tribes of Israel. The disappointed priests of Baal, wearied with their vain, frenzied efforts, were sitting or lying prostrate on the ground, waiting to see what Elijah would do. They were filled with fear and hatred toward the prophet for proposing the test which had exposed their weakness and the inefficiency of their gods.

The people of Israel stand spell-bound, pale, anxious, and almost breathless with awe, while Elijah calls upon Jehovah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. The people have witnessed the fanatical, unreasonable frenzy of the prophets of Baal. Now they are privileged to witness the calm and awe-inspiring deportment of Elijah, in contrast. He reminded the people of their degeneracy, which had awakened the wrath of God against them, and then calls upon them to humble their hearts, and turn to the God of their fathers, that his curse may be removed from them. Ahab and his idolatrous priests are looking on with amazement mingled with terror. They await the result with anxious, solemn silence.

After the victim was laid upon the altar, he commanded the people to flood with water the sacrifice, and the altar, and fill the trench round about the altar. Elijah then reverentially bows before the unseen God, raises his hands toward Heaven, and offers a calm and simple prayer, unattended with violent gestures, or contortions of the body. No shrieks resound over Carmel's height. A solemn silence, which is oppressive to the priests of Baal, rests upon them all. In his prayer, Elijah makes use of no extravagant expressions. He prays to Jehovah as though he was nigh, witnessing the whole scene, and hearing his sincere, fervent, yet simple prayer. Baal's priests had screamed, and foamed, and leaped, and prayed, very long--from morning until near evening. Elijah's prayer was very short, earnest, reverential, and sincere. No sooner had his prayer been uttered, than flames of fire in a distinct manner, like a brilliant flash of lightning, descended from Heaven, kindling the wood for sacrifice, and consuming the victim, licking up the water in the trench, and consuming even the stones of the altar. The brilliancy of the blaze is painful to the eyes of the multitude, and illumines the mountain. The people of the kingdom of Israel, not gathered upon the mount, are watching with interest the gathering of the people upon the mount. As the fire descends, they witness it, and are amazed at the sight. It resembles the pillar of fire at the Red Sea, which by



night separated the children of Israel from the Egyptian host.

October 7, 1873

## **The Laodicean Church**

The people upon the mountain prostrate themselves in terror and awe before the unseen God. They cannot look upon the bright, consuming fire sent from Heaven. They fear that they will be consumed in their apostasy and sins. They cry out with one voice, which resounds over the mountain, and echoes to the plains below them with terrible distinctness, "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God." Israel is at last aroused and undeceived. They see their sin and how greatly they have dishonored God. Their anger is aroused against the prophets of Baal. With fearful terror, Ahab and Baal's priests witnessed the wonderful exhibition of Jehovah's power. Again is heard, in startling words of command, the voice of Elijah to the people, "Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape." And the people were ready to obey the word of Elijah. They seized the false prophets who had deluded them, and brought them to the brook Kishon, and there Elijah, with his own hand, slew these idolatrous priests.

The judgments of God have been executed upon the false priests; the people have confessed their sins, and have acknowledged their fathers' God; and now the withering curse of God is to be withdrawn, and he will again refresh the earth with dew and rain, renewing his blessings unto his people.

Elijah addressed Ahab, "Get thee up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of abundance of rain." While Ahab went up to feast, Elijah went up from the fearful sacrifice to the top of Mount Carmel to pray. His work of slaying the pagan priests did not unfit him for the solemn exercise of prayer. He had performed the will of God. After he had, as God's instrument, done what he could to remove the cause of Israel's apostasy, in slaying the idolatrous priests, he could do no more. He then intercedes in behalf of sinning, apostate Israel. In the most painful position, he bowed with his face between his knees, and most earnestly supplicated God to send rain. Six times successively he sent his servant to see if there was any visible token that God had heard his prayer. He would not become impatient and faithless because the Lord did not immediately give the token that his prayer was heard. He continued in earnest prayer, sending his servant seven times, to see if God had granted any signal. His servant returned the sixth time from his outlook toward the sea, with the discouraging report

that there was no sign of clouds forming in the brassy heavens. The seventh time he informed Elijah that there was a small cloud to be seen, about the size of a man's hand. This was enough to satisfy the faith of Elijah. He did not wait for the heavens to gather blackness, to make the matter sure. In that small, rising cloud, his faith hears the sound of abundance of rain. Elijah's works are in accordance with his faith. He sends a message to Ahab by his servant, "Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not."

### Elijah's Humility

Here Elijah ventured something upon his faith. He did not wait for sight. "And it came to pass in the meanwhile, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel."

Elijah had passed through great excitement and labor through the day; but the Spirit of the Lord came upon him because he had been obedient, and had done his will in executing the idolatrous priests. Some would be ready to say, What a hard, cruel man Elijah must have been! And any one who shall defend the honor of God at any risk, will bring censure and condemnation upon himself from a large class. The rain began to descend. It was night, and the blinding rain prevented Ahab from seeing his course. Elijah, nerved by the Spirit and power of God, girded his coarse garment about him, and ran before the chariot of Ahab, guiding his course to the entrance of the city. The prophet of God had humiliated Ahab before his people. He had slain his idolatrous priests, and now he wished to show to Israel that he acknowledges Ahab as his king. As an act of special homage, he guided his chariot, running before it to the entrance of the gate of the city.

Here is a lesson for young men who profess to be servants of God, bearing his message, who are exalted in their own estimation. There is nothing remarkable they can trace in their experience, as could Elijah, yet they feel above performing duties which appear to them menial. They will not come down from their ministerial dignity to do needful service, fearing they are doing the work of a servant. All such should learn from the example of Elijah. His word locked the treasures of heaven, the dew and rain, from the earth, three years. His word alone was the key to unlock heaven, and bring showers

of rain. He was honored of God as he offered his simple prayer in the presence of the king and the thousands of Israel, and, in answer, fire flashes from heaven, and kindles the fire upon the altar of sacrifice. His hand executed the judgment of God in slaying eight hundred and fifty priests of Baal; and yet, after the exhausting toil of the day, he who could bring down fire from heaven, and bring the clouds and the rain, after a day of most signal triumph, was willing to perform the service of a menial, and run before the chariot of Ahab in the darkness, and wind, and rain, to serve the sovereign he had not feared to rebuke to his face because of his crimes and sins. The king passed within the gates. Elijah wrapped himself in his mantle and lay upon the bare earth.

After Elijah had shown such undaunted courage in contest between life and death, after he had triumphed over the king, priests, and people, we would naturally suppose that he would never give way to despondency, or be awed into timidity.

After his first appearance to Ahab, denouncing upon him the judgments of God because of his and Israel's apostasy, God directed his course from Jezebel's power to a place of safety in the mountains, by the brook Cherith. He honored Elijah by sending food to him morning and evening, by an angel of Heaven. Then as the brook became dry he sent him to the widow of Sarepta and wrought a miracle daily, to keep the widow's family and Elijah in food. After he had been blessed with evidences of such love and care from God, we would suppose Elijah would never distrust God. But the apostle tells us he was a man of like passions as we, and subject, as we are, to temptations.

Ahab related to Jezebel the wonderful events of the day, and the wonderful exhibitions of the power of God, showing that Jehovah, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, was God, and that Elijah had slain the prophets of Baal. This woman was hardened in sin, and she became infuriated. Jezebel, bold, determined, and defiant in her idolatry, declared to Ahab that Elijah should not live.

That night a messenger aroused the weary prophet, and delivered the word of Jezebel, in the name of her pagan gods, that she would, in the presence of Israel, do to Elijah as he had done to the priests of Baal. Elijah should have met this threat and oath of Jezebel with an appeal for protection to the God of Heaven, who had commissioned him to do the work he had done. He should have told the messenger that the God in whom he trusted would be his protector against the hatred and threats of Jezebel. But

the faith and courage of Elijah seemed to forsake him. He starts up from his slumbers bewildered. The rain is pouring from the heavens, and darkness is on every side. He loses sight of God. He flees for his life as though the avenger of blood was close behind him. He leaves his servant behind him, on the way, and in the morning, he is far from the habitation of man, upon a dreary desert alone.

"And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horab the mount of God. And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?"

Elijah should have trusted in God who had warned him when to flee, and where to find an asylum from the hatred of Jezebel, secure from the diligent search of Ahab. The Lord had not warned him, at this time, to flee. He had not waited for the Lord to speak to him. He moved rashly. God would have shielded his servant, and would have given him another signal victory in Israel, in sending his judgments upon Jezebel, had he waited with faith and patience.

Weary and prostrate, Elijah sat down to rest. He was discouraged, and felt like murmuring. He said, "Now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers." He feels that life is no more desirable. He expected, after the signal display of God's power in the presence of Israel, that they would be true and faithful to God. He expected that Jezebel would no longer have influence over the mind of Ahab, and that there would be a general revolution in the kingdom of Israel. When the threatening message which has come from Jezebel is delivered to him, he forgets that God is the same all-powerful and pitiful God that he was when he prayed to him for fire from Heaven, and it came, and for rain, and it came. God had granted every request; yet

Elijah is a fugitive, far from the homes of men, and wishing never to look upon man again.

How did God look upon his suffering servant? Did he forsake him because despondency and despair had seized him? Oh! no. Elijah was prostrated with discouragement. All day had he toiled without food. When he guided the chariot of Ahab, running before it to the gate of the city, he was strong of courage. He had high hopes of Israel, that, as a nation, they would return to their allegiance to God, and again be reinstated in his favor. But the reaction which frequently follows elevation of faith, marked and glorious success, was pressing upon Elijah. He was exalted to Pisgah's top, to be humiliated in the lowliest valley in faith and feeling. But God's eye is still upon his servant. He loves him no less while he is feeling broken-hearted and forsaken of God and man, than when, in answer to his prayer, the fire flashed from Heaven, illuminating Carmel.

Those who have not borne weighty responsibilities, who have not been accustomed to feel very deeply, cannot understand the feelings of Elijah, and be prepared to give him the tender sympathy he deserves. God knows, and can read, the heart's sore anguish under temptation and severe conflict. As Elijah slept under the juniper tree, a soft touch and pleasant voice aroused him. He starts at once in his terror, as if to flee, as though his enemy, in pursuit of his life, had indeed found him. But in the pitying face of love bent upon him, he sees not the face of an enemy, but a friend. An angel of God has been sent with food from Heaven to sustain the faithful servant of God. His voice says to Elijah. "Arise and eat." After Elijah had partaken of the refreshment prepared for him, he again slumbered. The second time the angel of God ministers to the wants of Elijah. He touches the exhausted, weary man, and in pitying tenderness says to him, "Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee." Elijah was strengthened, and pursued his journey to Horeb. He was in a wilderness. He lodged in a cave for protection at night from the wild beasts.

Here God met with Elijah through one of his angels, and inquired of him, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" I sent thee to the brook Cherith, I sent thee to the widow of Sarepta, I sent thee to Samaria with a message to Ahab, but who sent you this long journey into the wilderness? And what errand have you here? Elijah mourns out his bitterness of soul to the Lord. "And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars,

and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and break in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

Then the Lord manifests himself to Elijah, showing him that quiet trust, and firm reliance upon him, will ever find him a present help in time of need.

The servant of God may have courage, knowing that he has a pitying Heavenly Father who reads the motives and understands the purposes of the soul. Those who stand in the front of the conflict, who are reined up by the Spirit of God to do a special work for him, will frequently feel the reaction, when the pressure is removed, and despondency may press them hard, and shake the most heroic faith, and weaken the most steadfast minds. God understands all our weaknesses. He can pity and love when the hearts of men may be as hard as flint. To wait patiently and trust in God when everything looks dark, is the lesson his servants must learn more fully. God will not fail them in integrity.

February 24, 1874

## **Redemption--No. 1**

After the baptism of Jesus in Jordan, he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. When he had come up out of the water, he bowed upon Jordan's banks, and plead with the great Eternal for strength to endure the conflict with the fallen foe. The opening of the heavens, and the descent of the excellent glory, attested his divine character. The voice from the Father declared the close relation of Christ to his Infinite Majesty: "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." The mission of Christ was soon to begin. But he must first withdraw from the busy scenes of life to a desolate wilderness for the express purpose of bearing the three-fold test of temptation in behalf of those he had come to redeem.

Satan, who was once an honored angel in Heaven, had been ambitious for the more exalted honors which God had bestowed upon his Son. He became envious of Christ, and represented to the angels who honored him as covering cherub that he had not the honor conferred upon him which his position demanded. He asserted that he should be exalted equal in honor with God. Satan obtained sympathizers. Angels in Heaven joined him in his rebellion, and fell with their leader from their high and holy estate, and were therefore expelled with him from Heaven.

God, in counsel with his Son, formed the plan of creating man in their own image. He was placed upon probation. Man was to be tested and proved, and if he should bear the test of God, and remain loyal and true after the first trial, he was not to be beset with continual temptations; but was to be exalted equal with the angels, and henceforth immortal.

Adam and Eve came forth from the hand of their Creator in the perfection of every physical, mental, and spiritual endowment. God planted for them a garden, and surrounded them with everything lovely and attractive to the eye, and that which their physical necessities required. This holy pair looked out upon a world of unsurpassed loveliness and glory. A benevolent Creator had given them evidences of his goodness and love in providing them with fruits, vegetables, and grains, and had caused to grow out of the ground trees of every variety for usefulness and beauty.



The holy pair looked upon nature as a picture of unsurpassed loveliness. The brown earth was clothed with a carpet of living green, diversified with an endless variety of self-propagating, self-perpetuating flowers. Shrubs, flowers, and trailing vines, regaled the senses with their beauty and fragrance. The many varieties of lofty trees were laden with fruit of every kind, and of delicious flavor, adapted to please the taste and meet the wants of the happy Adam and Eve. This Eden home God provided for our first parents, giving them unmistakable evidences of his great love and care for them.

Adam was crowned as king in Eden. To him was given dominion over every living thing that God had created. The Lord blessed Adam and Eve with intelligence such as he had not given to the animal creation. He made Adam the rightful sovereign over all the works of his hands. Man made in the divine image could contemplate and appreciate the glorious works of God in nature.

Adam and Eve could trace the skill and glory of God in every spire of grass, and in every shrub and flower. The natural loveliness which surrounded them, like a mirror reflected the wisdom, excellence, and love of their Heavenly Father. And their songs of affection and praise rose sweetly and reverentially to Heaven, harmonizing with the songs of the exalted angels, and with the happy birds who were caroling forth their music without a care. There was no disease, decay, nor death anywhere. Life, life was in everything the eye rested upon. The atmosphere was impregnated with life. Life was in every leaf, in every flower, and in every tree.

The Lord knew that Adam could not be happy without labor, therefore he gave him the pleasant employment of dressing the garden. And, as he tended the things of beauty and usefulness around him, he could behold the goodness and glory of God in his created works. Adam had themes for contemplation in the works of God in Eden, which was Heaven in miniature. God did not form man merely to contemplate his glorious works, therefore he gave him hands for labor, as well as a mind and heart for contemplation. If the happiness of man consisted in doing nothing, the Creator would not have given Adam his appointed work. In labor, man was to find happiness as well as in meditation. Adam could reflect that he was created in the image of God, to be like him in righteousness and holiness. His mind was capable of continual cultivation, expansion, refinement and noble elevation; for God was his teacher, and angels were his

companions.

The Lord placed man upon probation, that he might form a character of steadfast integrity for his own happiness and for the glory of his Creator. He had endowed Adam with powers of mind superior to any living creature that he had made. His mental powers were but little lower than those of the angels. He could become familiar with the sublimity and glory of nature, and understand the character of his Heavenly Father in his created works. Everything that his eye rested upon in the immensity of the Father's works, provided with a lavish hand, testified of his love and infinite power. Amid the glories of Eden the goodness and wisdom of God were traced in everything the eye rested upon.

The first great moral lesson given Adam was that of self-denial. The reins of self-government were placed in his hands. Judgment, reason, and conscience, were to bear sway. "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Adam and Eve were permitted to partake of every tree in the garden save one. There was only a single prohibition. The forbidden tree was as attractive and lovely as any of the trees in the garden. It was called the tree of knowledge, because in partaking of that tree, of which God had said "Thou shalt not eat of it," they would have a knowledge of sin, an experience in disobedience. Eve went from the side of her husband, viewing the beautiful things of nature in God's creation, delighting her senses with the colors and fragrance of the flowers and the beauty of the trees and shrubs. She was thinking of the restrictions God had laid upon them in regard to the tree of knowledge. She was pleased with the beauties and bounties which the Lord had furnished for the gratification of every want. All these, said she, God has given us to enjoy. They are all ours; for God has said, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it."

Eve had wandered near the forbidden tree, and her curiosity was aroused to know how death could be concealed in the fruit of this fair tree. She was surprised to hear her queries taken up and repeated by a strange voice. "Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden." Eve was not aware that she had revealed her thoughts by

conversing to herself aloud; therefore, she was greatly astonished to hear her queries repeated by a serpent. She really thought the serpent had a knowledge of her thoughts, and that he must be very wise. She answered him, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

Here the father of lies made his assertion in direct contradiction to the expressed word of God. Satan assured Eve that she was created immortal, and that there was no possibility of her dying. He told her that God knew that if they ate of the tree of knowledge their understanding would be enlightened, expanded, and ennobled, making them equal with himself. And the serpent answered Eve, that the command of God forbidding them to eat of the tree of knowledge was given them to keep them in a state of subordination, that they should not obtain knowledge, which was power. He assured her that the fruit of this tree was desirable above every other tree in the garden to make one wise and exalt them equal with God. He has, said the serpent, refused you the fruit of the tree which is of all the trees the most desirable for its delicious flavor and exhilarating influence. Eve thought the discourse of the serpent very wise. She viewed the prohibition of God unjust. She looked with longing desire upon the tree laden with fruit which appeared very delicious. The serpent was eating it with apparent delight. She longed for this fruit above all the fruit of every variety which God had given her a perfect right to use.

Eve had overstated the words of God's command. He had said to Adam and Eve, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." In Eve's controversy with the serpent, she added the clause, "Neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." Here the subtlety of the serpent was seen. This statement of Eve gave him advantage, and he plucked the fruit, and placed it in her hand, and used her own words, "He hath said, 'If ye touch it, ye shall die.' You see no harm comes to you from touching the fruit, neither will you receive any harm by eating it." Eve yielded to the lying sophistry of the devil in the form of a serpent. She ate the fruit, and realized no immediate harm. She then plucked the fruit for herself and for her husband. "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did

eat."

Adam and Eve should have been perfectly satisfied with the knowledge of God in his created works, and by the instruction of the holy angels. But their curiosity was aroused to become acquainted with that of which God designed they should have no knowledge. It was for their happiness to be ignorant of sin. The high state of knowledge to which they thought to attain by eating of the forbidden fruit plunged them into the degradation of sin and guilt.

The angels who had been appointed to guard Adam in his Eden home before his transgression and expulsion from paradise were now appointed to guard the gates of paradise and the way of the tree of life, lest he should return and gain access to the tree of life and sin be immortalized.

Sin drove man from paradise. And sin was the cause of paradise being removed from the earth. In consequence of transgression of God's law, Adam lost paradise. In obedience to the Father's law and through faith in the atoning blood of his Son, paradise may be regained. "Repentance toward God," because his law has been transgressed, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, as man's only Redeemer, will be acceptable with God. The merits of God's dear Son in man's behalf will avail with the Father, notwithstanding his sinfulness.

Satan was determined to succeed in his temptation with the sinless Adam and Eve. And he could reach even the holy pair more successfully through the medium of appetite than in any other way. The fruit of the forbidden tree seemed pleasant to the eye and desirable to the taste. They ate and fell. They transgressed God's just command and became sinners. Satan's triumph was complete. He then had the vantage-ground over the race. He flattered himself that he had through his subtlety thwarted the purpose of God in the creation of man.

Satan made his exulting boasts to Christ and to loyal angels that he had succeeded in gaining a portion of the angels in Heaven to unite with him in his daring rebellion. And now that he had succeeded in overcoming Adam and Eve, he claimed that their Eden home was his. He proudly boasted that the world which God had made was his dominion. Having conquered Adam, the monarch of the world, he had gained the race as his subjects, and he should now possess Eden, and make that his head-quarters. And

he would there establish his throne, and be monarch of the world.

But measures were immediately taken in Heaven to defeat Satan in his plans. Strong angels, with beams of light representing flaming swords turning in every direction, were placed as sentinels to guard the way of the tree of life from the approach of Satan and the guilty pair. Adam and Eve had forfeited all right to their beautiful Eden home, and were now expelled from it. The earth was cursed because of Adam's sin, and was ever after to bring forth briers and thorns. Adam was to be exposed to the temptations of Satan while he lived, and was to finally pass through death to dust again.

A council was held in Heaven, which resulted in God's dear Son undertaking to redeem man from the curse and from the disgrace of Adam's failure, and to conquer Satan. Oh, wonderful condescension! The Majesty of Heaven, through love and pity for fallen man, proposed to become his substitute and surety. He would bear man's guilt. He would take the wrath of his Father upon himself, which otherwise would have fallen upon man because of his disobedience.

The law of God was unalterable. It could not be abolished, nor yield the smallest part of its claim to meet man in his fallen state. Man was separated from God by transgression of his expressed command, notwithstanding he had made known to Adam the consequences of such transgression. The sin of Adam brought a deplorable state of things. Satan would now have unlimited control over the race, unless a mightier being than Satan was before his fall should take the field and conquer him and ransom man.

Christ's divine soul was exercised with pity that was infinite for ruined man. As his wretched, helpless condition came up before him, and as he saw that by transgression of God's law he had fallen under the power and control of the prince of darkness, he proposed the only means that could be acceptable with God, that would give man another trial, and place him again on probation. Christ consented to leave his honor, his kingly authority, his glory with the Father, and humble himself to humanity, and engage in contest with the mighty prince of darkness in order to redeem man. Through his humiliation and poverty Christ would identify himself with the weaknesses of the fallen race, and by firm obedience show man how to redeem Adam's disgraceful failure, that man by humble obedience might regain lost Eden.

The great work of redemption could be carried out only by the Redeemer taking

the place of fallen Adam. With the sins of the world laid upon him, he would go over the ground where Adam stumbled. He would bear the test which Adam failed to endure, and which would be almost infinitely more severe than that brought to bear upon Adam. He would overcome on man's account, and conquer the tempter, that through his obedience, his purity of character and steadfast integrity, his righteousness might be imputed to man, that through his name man might overcome the foe on his own account.

What love! What amazing condescension! The King of glory proposed to humble himself to fallen humanity! He would place his feet in Adam's steps. He would take man's fallen nature and engage to cope with the strong foe who triumphed over Adam. He would overcome Satan, and in thus doing he would open the way for the redemption of those who would believe on him from the disgrace of Adam's failure and fall.

Angels on probation had been deceived by Satan, and had been led on by him in the great rebellion in Heaven against Christ. They failed to bear the test brought to bear upon them, and they fell. Adam was then created in the image of God and placed upon probation. He had a perfectly developed organism. All his faculties harmonized. In all his emotions, words, and actions there was a perfect conformity to the will of his Maker. After God had made every provision for the happiness of man, and had supplied his every want, he tested Adam's loyalty. If the holy pair should be obedient, the race would after a time be made equal to the angels. As Adam and Eve failed to bear this test, Christ proposed to become a voluntary offering for man.

Satan knew that if Christ was indeed the Son of God, the world's Redeemer, it was for no good to himself, that the Lord had left the royal courts of Heaven to come to a fallen world. He feared that his own power was henceforth to be limited, and that his deceptive wiles would be discerned and exposed, which would lessen his influence over man. He feared that his dominion and his control of the kingdoms of the world was to be contested. He remembered the words Jehovah addressed to him when he was summoned into his presence with Adam and Eve, whom he had ruined by his lying deceptions, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." This declaration contained the first gospel promise to man.

But these words at the time they were spoken were not fully understood by Satan.

He knew that they contained a curse for him, because he had seduced the holy pair. And when Christ was manifested on the earth, Satan feared that he was indeed the One promised which should limit his power and finally destroy him.

Satan had peculiar interest to watch the development of events immediately after the fall of Adam to learn how his work had affected the kingdom of God, and what the Lord would do with Adam because of his disobedience. The Son of God, undertaking to become the Redeemer of the race, placed Adam in a new relation to his Creator. He was still fallen; but a door of hope was opened to him. The wrath of God still hung over Adam, but the execution of the sentence of death was delayed, and the indignation of God was restrained, because Christ had entered upon the work of becoming man's Redeemer. Christ was to take the wrath of God which in justice should fall upon man. He became a refuge for man, and although man was indeed a criminal, deserving the wrath of God, yet he could by faith in Christ run into the refuge provided and be safe. In the midst of death there was life if man chose to accept it. The holy and infinite God, who dwelleth in light unapproachable, could no longer talk with man. No communication could now exist directly between man and his Maker.

God forbears for a time the full execution of the sentence of death pronounced upon man. Satan flattered himself that he had forever broken the link between Heaven and earth. But in this he was greatly mistaken and disappointed. The Father had given over the world into the hands of his Son for him to redeem from the curse and the disgrace of Adam's failure and fall. Through Christ alone can man now find access to God. And through Christ alone will the Lord hold communication with man.

Christ volunteered to maintain and vindicate the holiness of the divine law. He was not to do away the smallest part of its claims in the work of redemption for man, but in order to save man and maintain the sacred claims and justice of his Father's law, he gave himself a sacrifice for the guilt of man. Christ's life did not in a single instance detract from the claims of his Father's law, but through firm obedience to all its precepts, and by dying for the sins of those who had transgressed it, he established its immutability.

After the transgression of Adam, Satan saw that the ruin was complete. The human race was brought into a deplorable condition. Man was cut off from intercourse with God. It was Satan's design that the state of man should be the same with that of the

fallen angels in rebellion against God, uncheered by a gleam of hope. He reasoned that if God pardoned sinful man whom he had created, he would also pardon and receive into favor him and his angels. But he was disappointed.

The divine Son of God saw that no arm but his own could save fallen man. He determined to help man. He left the fallen angels to perish in their rebellion, but stretched forth his hand to rescue perishing man. The angels who were rebellious were dealt with according to the light and experience they had abundantly enjoyed in Heaven. Satan, the chief of the fallen angels, once had an exalted position in Heaven. He was next in honor to Christ. The knowledge which he, as well as the angels who fell with him, had of the character of God, of his goodness, his mercy, wisdom, and excellent glory, made their guilt unpardonable.

There was no possible hope for those ever to be redeemed, who had witnessed and enjoyed the inexpressible glory of Heaven and had seen the terrible majesty of God, and, in presence of all this glory, had rebelled against him. There were no new and more wonderful exhibitions of God's exalted power that could ever impress them as deeply as those they had already experienced. If they could rebel in the very presence of the weight of glory inexpressible, they could not be placed in any more favorable condition to be proved. There was no reserve force of power, nor were there any greater heights and depths of infinite glory to overpower their jealous doubts and rebellious murmuring. Their guilt and their punishment must be in proportion to their exalted privileges in the heavenly courts.



March 3, 1874

## **Redemption--No. 2**

Fallen man, because of his guilt, could no longer come directly before God with his supplications, for his transgression of the divine law had placed an impassable barrier between the holy God and the transgressor. But a plan was devised that the sentence of death should rest upon a substitute of superior value to the law of God. In the plan of redemption there must be the shedding of blood, for death must come in consequence of man's sin. The beasts for sacrificial offerings were to prefigure Christ. In the slain victim, man was to see the fulfillment for the time being of God's word, "Ye shall surely die." And the flowing of the blood from the victim would also signify an atonement. There was no virtue in the blood of animals; but the shedding of the blood of beasts was to point forward to a Redeemer who would one day come to the world and die for the sins of men. And thus Christ would fully vindicate his Father's law.

Satan with intense interest watched every event in regard to the sacrificial offerings. The devotion and solemnity connected with the shedding of the blood of the victim caused him great uneasiness. This ceremony to him was clothed with mystery; but he was not a dull scholar, and he soon learned that the sacrificial offerings typified some future atonement for man. He saw that these offerings signified repentance for sin. This did not agree with his purposes, and he at once commenced to work upon the heart of Cain to lead him to rebellion against the sacrificial offering which prefigured a Redeemer to come.

Adam's repentance, evidenced in his sorrow for his transgression, and his hope of salvation through Christ shown by his works in the sacrifices offered, was a disappointment to Satan. He hoped forever to gain Adam to unite with him in murmuring against God, and in rebelling against his authority. Here were the representatives of the two great classes. Abel as priest offered in solemn faith his sacrifice. Cain was willing to offer the fruit of his ground, but refused to connect with his offering the blood of beasts. His heart refused to show his repentance for sin and his faith in a Saviour by offering the blood of beasts. He refused to acknowledge his need of a Redeemer. This to his proud heart was dependence and humiliation.

But Abel by faith in a future Redeemer offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain. His offering the blood of beasts signified that he was a sinner and had sins to wash away, and that he was penitent and believed in the efficacy of the blood of the future great offering. Satan is the parent of unbelief, murmuring, and rebellion. He filled Cain with doubt and with madness against his innocent brother and against God, because his sacrifice was refused and Abel's accepted. And he slew his brother in his insane madness.

The sacrificial offerings were instituted to be a standing pledge to man of God's pardon through the great offering to be made, typified by the blood of beasts. Through this ceremony man signified repentance, obedience, and faith in a Redeemer to come. That which made Cain's offering offensive to God was his lack of submission and obedience to the ordinance of his appointment. He thought his own plans in offering to God merely the fruit of the ground was nobler, and not as humiliating as the offering of the blood of beasts which showed a dependence upon another, thus expressing his own weakness and sinfulness. Cain slighted the blood of the atonement.

Adam in transgressing the law of Jehovah had opened the door for Satan, and he had planted his banner in the midst of his own family. He was made to feel indeed that the wages of sin is death. Satan designed to gain Eden by deceiving our first parents; but in this he was disappointed. Instead of securing to himself Eden, he now feared that he would lose all he had claimed out of Eden. His sagacity could trace the signification of these offerings, that they pointed man forward to a Redeemer, and were a typical atonement for the time being for the sin of fallen man, opening a door of hope to the race.

The rebellion of Satan against God was most determined. He worked to war against the kingdom of God with perseverance and fortitude worthy of a better cause.

The world had become so corrupt through indulgence of appetite and debased passions in the days of Noah that God was provoked to destroy its inhabitants by the waters of the flood. As men again multiplied upon the earth, the indulgence of wine to intoxication perverted the senses, and prepared the way for excessive meat-eating and the strengthening of the animal passions. Men lifted themselves up against the God of Heaven. And their faculties and opportunities were devoted to glorifying themselves rather than honoring their Creator. Satan found easy access to the hearts of men. He is a

diligent student of the Bible, and is much better acquainted with the prophecies than many religious teachers. He knows that it is for his interest to keep well informed in the revealed purposes of God, that he may defeat the plans of the Infinite. So infidels study the Scriptures frequently more diligently than some who profess to be guided by them. Some of the ungodly search the Scriptures that they may become familiar with Bible truth, and furnish themselves with arguments to make it appear that the Bible contradicts itself. And many professed Christians are so ignorant of the word of God, through neglect of its study, that they are blinded by the deceptive reasoning of those who pervert sacred truth, that they may turn souls away from the counsel of God in his word.

Satan saw in the typical offerings an expected Redeemer who was to ransom man from his control. He laid his plans deep to rule the hearts of men from generation to generation, and to blind their understanding of the prophecies, that when Jesus should come, the people would refuse to accept him as their Saviour.

God appointed Moses to lead out his people from their bondage in the land of Egypt, that they might consecrate themselves to serve him with perfect hearts, and be to him a peculiar treasure. Moses was their visible leader, while Christ stood at the head of the armies of Israel, their invisible leader. If they could have always realized this, they would not have rebelled and provoked God in the wilderness by their unreasonable murmurings. God said to Moses, "Behold I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions; for my name is in him."

When Christ as the guiding, guarding angel condescended to lead the armies of Israel through the wilderness to Canaan, Satan was provoked, for he felt that his power could not so well control them. But as he saw that the armies of Israel were easily influenced and incited to rebellion by his suggestions, he hoped to lead them to murmuring and sin which would bring upon them the wrath of God. And as he saw that his power was submitted to by men, he became bold in his temptations, inciting to crime and violence. Through Satan's devices, each generation was becoming more feeble in physical, mental, and moral power. This gave him courage to think that he might succeed in his warfare against Christ in person when he should be manifested. He has the dominion of death.

Some few in every generation from Adam resisted his every artifice and stood forth as noble representatives of what it was in the power of man to do and to be--Christ working with human efforts, helping man in overcoming the power of Satan. Enoch and Elijah are the correct representatives of what the race might be through faith in Jesus Christ if they chose to be. Satan was greatly disturbed because these noble, holy men stood untainted amid the moral pollution surrounding them, perfected righteous characters, and were accounted worthy for translation to Heaven. As they had stood forth in moral power in noble uprightness, overcoming Satan's temptations, he could not bring them under the dominion of death. He triumphed that he had power to overcome Moses with his temptations, and that he could mar his illustrious character and lead him to the sin of taking glory to himself before the people which belonged to God.

Christ resurrected Moses and took him to heaven. This enraged Satan, and he accused the Son of God of invading his dominion by robbing the grave of his lawful prey. Jude says of the resurrection of Moses, "Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee."

When Satan succeeds in tempting men, whom God has especially honored, to commit grievous sins, he triumphs; for he has gained to himself a great victory and done harm to the kingdom of Christ.

At the birth of Christ, Satan saw the plains of Bethlehem illuminated with the brilliant glory of a multitude of heavenly angels. He heard their song, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men." The prince of darkness saw the amazed shepherds filled with fear as they beheld the illuminated plains. They trembled before the exhibitions of bewildering glory which seemed to entrance their senses. The rebel chief himself trembled at the proclamation of the angel to the shepherds, "Fear not; for, behold, I bring to you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." He had met with so good success in devising a plan to ruin men that he had become bold and powerful. He had controlled the minds and bodies of men from Adam down to the first appearing of Christ. But now Satan was troubled and alarmed for his kingdom and his life.

The song of the heavenly messengers proclaiming the advent of the Saviour to a fallen world, and the joy expressed at this great event Satan knew boded no good to himself. Dark forebodings were awakened in his mind as to the influence this advent to the world would have upon his kingdom. He queried if this was not the coming One who would contest his power and overthrow his kingdom. He looked upon Christ from his birth as his rival. He stirred the envy and jealousy of Herod to destroy Christ by insinuating to him that his power and his kingdom were to be given to this new king. Satan imbued Herod with the very feelings and fears that disturbed his own mind. He inspired the corrupt mind of Herod to invent a plan which he thought would succeed in ridding the earth of the infant king, by slaying all the children from two years old and under in Bethlehem.

But against his plans, Satan sees a higher power at work. Angels of God protected the life of the infant Redeemer. Joseph was warned in a dream to flee into Egypt, that in a heathen land he may find an asylum for the world's Redeemer. Satan followed him from infancy to childhood and from childhood to manhood, inventing means and ways to allure him from his allegiance to God, and overcome him with his subtle temptations. The unsullied purity of the childhood, youth, and manhood, of Christ which Satan could not taint annoyed him exceedingly. All his darts and arrows of temptation fell harmless before the Son of God. And when he found that all his temptations prevailed nothing in moving Christ from his steadfast integrity, or in marring the spotless purity of the youthful Galilean, he was perplexed and enraged. He looked upon this youth as an enemy that he must dread and fear.

That there should be one who walked the earth with moral power to withstand all his temptations, who resisted all his attractive bribes to allure him to sin, and over whom he could obtain no advantage to separate from God, chafed and enraged his Satanic majesty.

The childhood, youth, and manhood, of John, who came in the spirit and power of Elijah to do a special work in preparing the way for the world's Redeemer, was marked with firmness and moral power. Satan could not move him from his integrity. When the voice of this prophet was heard in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." Satan was afraid for his kingdom. He felt that the voice sounding forth in trumpet tones in the wilderness caused sinners under his control to tremble. He saw that his power over many was broken. The sinfulness of sin was

revealed in such a manner that men became alarmed, and some, by repentance of their sins, found the favor of God and gained moral power to resist his temptations.

He was on the ground at the time when Christ presented himself to John for baptism. He heard the majestic voice resounding through heaven and echoing through the earth like peals of thunder. He saw the lightnings flash from the cloudless heavens, and heard the fearful words from Jehovah, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." He saw the brightness of the Father's glory overshadowing the form of Jesus, thus, with unmistakable assurance, pointing out the One in that crowd whom he acknowledged as his Son. The circumstances connected with this baptismal scene had aroused the most intense hatred in the breast of Satan. He knew then for a certainty that, unless he could overcome Christ, from henceforth there would be a limitation of his power. He understood that the communication from the throne of God signified that Heaven was more directly accessible to man.

As Satan had led man to sin, he had hoped that God's abhorrence of sin would forever separate him from man, and break the connecting link between Heaven and earth. But the opening heavens in connection with the voice of God addressing his Son was like a death-knell to Satan. He feared that God was now to unite man more fully to himself, and give him power to overcome his devices. And for this purpose, Christ had come from the royal courts to the earth. Satan was well acquainted with the position of honor Christ had held in Heaven as the Son of God, the beloved of the Father. And that he should leave Heaven and come to this world as a man filled him with apprehension for his own safety. He could not comprehend the mystery of this great sacrifice for the benefit of fallen man. He knew well the value of Heaven far exceeded the anticipation and appreciation of fallen man. The most costly treasures of the world he knew would not compare with its worth. As he had lost through his rebellion all the riches and pure glories of Heaven, he was determined to be revenged by causing as many he could to undervalue Heaven and to place their affections upon earthly treasures.

It was incomprehensible to the selfish soul of Satan that there could exist benevolence and love for the deceived race so great as to induce the Prince of Heaven to leave his home and come to a world marred with sin and seared with the curse. He had knowledge of the inestimable value of eternal riches that man had not. He had experienced the pure contentment, the peace and exalted holiness of unalloyed joys of the heavenly abode. He had realized before his rebellion the satisfaction of the full

approval of God. He had once a full appreciation of the glory that enshrouded the Father, and knew that there was no limit to his power.

Satan knew what he had lost. He now feared that his empire over the world was to be contested, his right disputed, and his power broken. He knew through prophecy, that a Savior was predicted and that his kingdom would not be established in earthly triumph and with worldly honor and display. He knew that ancient prophecies foretold a kingdom to be established by the Prince of Heaven upon the earth, which he claimed as his dominion. His kingdom would embrace all the kingdoms of the world, and then his power and his glory would cease and he receive his retribution for the sins he had introduced into the world and for the misery he had brought upon man. He knew that everything which concerned his prosperity was pending upon his success or failure in overcoming Christ with his temptations in the wilderness. He brought to bear upon Christ every artifice and force of his powerful temptations to allure him from his allegiance.

July 28, 1874

## **The Temptation of Christ**

Christ was not in as favorable a position in the desolate wilderness to endure the temptations of Satan as was Adam when he was tempted in Eden. The Son of God humbled himself and took man's nature after the race had wandered four thousand years from Eden, and from their original state of purity and uprightness. Sin had been making its terrible marks upon the race for ages; and physical, mental, and moral degeneracy prevailed throughout the human family.

When Adam was assailed by the tempter in Eden he was without the taint of sin. He stood in the strength of his perfection before God. All the organs and faculties of his being were equally developed, and harmoniously balanced.

Christ, in the wilderness of temptation, stood in Adam's place to bear the test he failed to endure. Here Christ overcame in the sinner's behalf, four thousand years after Adam turned his back upon the light of his home. Separated from the presence of God, the human family had been departing every successive generation, farther from the original purity, wisdom, and knowledge which Adam possessed in Eden. Christ bore the sins and infirmities of the race as they existed when he came to the earth to help man. In behalf of the race, with the weaknesses of fallen man upon him, he was to stand the temptations of Satan upon all points wherewith man would be assailed.

Adam was surrounded with everything his heart could wish. Every want was supplied. There was no sin, and no signs of decay in glorious Eden. Angels of God conversed freely and lovingly with the holy pair. The happy songsters caroled forth their free, joyous songs of praise to their Creator. The peaceful beasts in happy innocence played about Adam and Eve, obedient to their word. Adam was in the perfection of manhood, the noblest of the Creator's work. He was in the image of God, but a little lower than the angels.

In what contrast is the second Adam as he entered the gloomy wilderness to cope with Satan single-handed. Since the fall the race had been decreasing in size and physical strength, and sinking lower in the scale of moral worth, up to the period of



Christ's advent to the earth. And in order to elevate fallen man, Christ must reach him where he was. He took human nature, and bore the infirmities and degeneracy of the race. He, who knew no sin, became sin for us. He humiliated himself to the lowest depths of human woe, that he might be qualified to reach man, and bring him up from the degradation in which sin had plunged him.

"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

"Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."

"For we have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Satan had been at war with the government of God, since he first rebelled. His success in tempting Adam and Eve in Eden, and introducing sin into the world, had emboldened this arch foe, and he had proudly boasted to the heavenly angels that when Christ should appear, taking man's nature, he would be weaker than himself, and he would overcome him by his power. He exulted that Adam and Eve in Eden could not resist his insinuations when he appealed to their appetite. The inhabitants of the old world he overcame in the same manner, through the indulgence of lustful appetite and corrupt passions. Through the gratification of appetite he had overthrown the Israelites. He boasted that the Son of God himself who was with Moses and Joshua was not able to resist his power, and lead the favored people of his choice to Canaan; for nearly all who left Egypt died in the wilderness. Also the meek man, Moses, he had tempted to take to himself glory which God claimed. David and Solomon, who had been especially favored of God, he had induced, through the indulgence of appetite and passion, to incur God's displeasure. And he boasted that he could yet succeed in thwarting the purpose of God in the salvation of man through Jesus Christ.

In the wilderness of temptation Christ was without food forty days. Moses had, on especial occasions, been thus long without food. But he felt not the pangs of hunger. He was not tempted and harassed by a vile and powerful foe, as was the Son of God. He was elevated above the human. He was especially sustained by the glory of God which enshrouded him.

Satan had succeeded so well in deceiving the angels of God, and in the fall of noble Adam, that he thought that in Christ's humiliation he should be successful in overcoming him. He looked with pleased exultation upon the result of his temptations and the increase of sin in the continued transgression of God's law for more than four thousand years. He had worked the ruin of our first parents, and brought sin and death into the world, and had led to ruin multitudes of all ages, countries, and classes. He had, by his power, controlled cities and nations until their sin provoked the wrath of God to destroy them by fire, water, earthquakes, sword, famine and pestilence. By his subtlety and untiring efforts he had controlled the appetite and excited and strengthened the passions, to so fearful a degree, that he had defaced, and almost obliterated the image of God in man. His physical and moral dignity were in so great a degree destroyed, that he bore but a faint resemblance in character, and noble perfection of form, to dignified Adam in Eden.

At the first advent of Christ, Satan had brought man down from his original, exalted purity, and had dimmed the fine gold with sin. He had transformed the man, created to be a sovereign in Eden, to a slave in the earth, groaning under the curse of sin. The halo of glory, which God had given holy Adam, covering him as a garment, departed from him after his transgression. The light of God's glory could not cover disobedience and sin. In the place of health and plentitude of blessings, poverty, sickness, and suffering of every type, were to be the portion of the children of Adam.

Satan had, through his seductive power, led men to vain philosophy to question and finally to disbelieve in divine revelation and the existence of God. He could look abroad upon a world of moral wretchedness, and a race exposed to the wrath of a sin-avenging God, with fiendish triumph that he had been as successful in darkening the pathway of so many, and had led them to transgress the law of God. He clothed sin with pleasing attractions to secure the ruin of many.

But his most successful scheme in deceiving man has been to conceal his real purposes, and his true character, by representing himself as man's friend and a benefactor of the race. He flatters men with the pleasing fable that there is no rebellious foe, no deadly enemy that they need to guard against, and that the existence of a personal devil is all a fiction. While he thus hides his existence, he is gathering thousands under his control. He is deceiving them, as he tried to deceive Christ, that he is an angel from Heaven doing a good work for humanity. And the masses are so blinded by sin that they cannot discern the devices of Satan, and they honor him as they would a heavenly angel, while he is working their eternal ruin.

August 4, 1874

## **The Temptation of Christ**

Christ had entered the world as Satan's destroyer, and the Redeemer of the captives bound by his power. He would leave an example in his own victorious life for man to follow and overcome the temptations of Satan. As soon as Christ entered the wilderness of temptation, his visage changed. The glory and splendor reflected from the throne of God which illuminated his countenance when the heavens opened before him, and the Father's voice acknowledged him as his Son in whom he was well pleased, was now gone. The weight of the sins of the world was pressing his soul, and his countenance expressed unutterable sorrow, a depth of anguish that fallen man had never realized. He felt the overwhelming tide of woe that deluged the world. He realized the strength of indulged appetite and of unholy passion that controlled the world, which had brought upon man inexpressible suffering. The indulgence of appetite had been increasing, and strengthening with every successive generation since Adam's transgression, until the race was so feeble in moral power that they could not overcome in their own strength. Christ, in behalf of the race, was to overcome appetite, by standing the most powerful test upon this point. He was to tread the path of temptation alone, and there must be none to help him, none to comfort or uphold him. He was to wrestle with the powers of darkness.

As man could not, in his human strength resist the power of Satan's temptations, Jesus volunteered to undertake the work, and bear the burden for man, and overcome the power of appetite in his behalf. He must show in man's behalf, self-denial and perseverance, and firmness of principle that is paramount to the gnawing pangs of hunger. He must show a power of control over appetite stronger than hunger and even death.

When Christ bore the test of temptation upon the point of appetite, he did not stand in beautiful Eden, as did Adam, with the light and love of God seen in everything his eye rested upon. But he was in a barren, desolate wilderness, surrounded with wild beasts. Everything around him was repulsive, and from which human nature would be inclined to shrink. With these surroundings he fasted forty days and forty nights, "and in those days he ate nothing." He was emaciated through long fasting, and felt the keenest

sense of hunger. His visage was indeed marred more than the sons of men.

Christ thus entered upon his life of conflict to overcome the mighty foe, in bearing the very test Adam failed to endure, that, through successful conflict, he might break the power of Satan, and redeem the race from the disgrace of the fall.

All was lost when Adam yielded to the power of appetite. The Redeemer, in whom was united both the human and the divine, stood in Adam's place, and endured a terrible fast of nearly six weeks. The length of this fast is the strongest evidence of the extent of the sinfulness and power of debased appetite upon the human family.

The humanity of Christ reached to the very depths of human wretchedness, and, identified itself with the weaknesses and necessities of fallen man, while his divine nature grasped the Eternal. His work in bearing the guilt of man's transgression was not to give him license to continue to violate the law of God, which made man a debtor to the law, which debt Christ was himself paying by his own suffering. The trials and sufferings of Christ were to impress man with a sense of his great sin in breaking the law of God, and to bring him to repentance and obedience to that law, and through obedience to acceptance with God. His righteousness he would impute to man, and thus raise him in moral value with God, so that his efforts to keep the divine law would be acceptable. Christ's work was to reconcile man to God through his human nature, and God to man through his divine nature.

As soon as the long fast of Christ commenced in the wilderness, Satan was at hand with his temptations. He came to Christ, enshrouded in light, claiming to be one of the angels from the throne of God, sent upon an errand of mercy to sympathize with him, and to relieve him of his suffering condition. He tried to make Christ believe that God did not require him to pass through self-denial and the sufferings he anticipated; that he had been sent from Heaven to bear to him the message that God only designed to prove his willingness to endure.

Satan told Christ that he was only to set his feet in the blood-stained path, but not to travel it. Like Abraham he was tested to show his perfect obedience. He also stated that he was the angel that stayed the hand of Abraham as the knife was raised to slay Isaac, and he had now come to save his life; that it was not necessary for him to endure the painful hunger and death from starvation; he would help him bear a part of the work

in the plan of salvation.

The Son of God turned from all these artful temptations, and was steadfast in his purpose to carry out in every particular, in the spirit and in the very letter, the plan which had been devised for the redemption of the fallen race. But Satan had manifold temptations prepared to ensnare Christ, and obtain advantage of him. If he failed in one temptation, he would try another. He thought he would succeed, because Christ had humbled himself as a man. He flattered himself that his assumed character, as one of the heavenly angels, could not be discerned. He feigned to doubt the divinity of Christ, because of his emaciated appearance and unpleasant surroundings.

Christ knew that in taking the nature of man he would not be in appearance equal to the angels of Heaven. Satan urged that if he was indeed the Son of God he should give him evidence of his exalted character. He approached Christ with temptations upon appetite. He had overcome Adam upon this point and he had controlled his descendants, and through indulgence of appetite led them to provoke God by iniquity, until their crimes were so great that the Lord destroyed them from off the earth by the waters of the flood.

Under Satan's direct temptations the children of Israel suffered appetite to control reason, and they were, through indulgence, led to commit grievous sins which awakened the wrath of God against them, and they fell in the wilderness. He thought that he should be successful in overcoming Christ with the same temptation. He told Christ that one of the exalted angels had been exiled to the world, and that his appearance indicated that, instead of his being the king of Heaven, he was the angel fallen, and this explained his emaciated and distressed appearance.

He then called the attention of Christ to his own attractive appearance, clothed with light and strong in power. He claimed to be a messenger direct from the throne of Heaven, and asserted that he had a right to demand of Christ evidences of his being the Son of God. Satan would fain disbelieve, if he could, the words that came from Heaven to the Son of God at his baptism. He determined to overcome Christ, and, if possible, make his own kingdom and life secure. His first temptation to Christ was upon appetite. He had, upon this point almost entire control of the world, and his temptations were adapted to the circumstances and surroundings of Christ, which made his temptations upon appetite almost overpowering.

Christ could have worked a miracle on his own account; but this would not have been in accordance with the plan of salvation. The many miracles in the life of Christ show his power to work miracles for the benefit of suffering humanity. By a miracle of mercy he fed five thousand at once with five loaves and two small fishes. Therefore he had power to work a miracle, and satisfy his own hunger. Satan flattered himself that he could lead Christ to doubt the words spoken from Heaven at his baptism. And if he could tempt him to question his sonship, and doubt the truth of the word spoken by his Father, he would gain a great victory.

He found Christ in the desolate wilderness without companions, without food, and in actual suffering. His surroundings were most melancholy and repulsive. Satan suggested to Christ that God would not leave his Son in this condition of want and real suffering. He hoped to shake the confidence of Christ in his Father, who had permitted him to be brought into this condition of extreme suffering in the desert, where the feet of man had never trod. Satan hoped to insinuate doubts as to his Father's love that would find a lodgment in the mind of Christ, and that under the force of despondency and extreme hunger he would exert his miraculous power in his own behalf, and take himself out of the hands of his Heavenly Father. This was indeed a temptation to Christ. But he cherished it not for a moment. He did not for a single moment doubt his Heavenly Father's love, although he seemed to be bowed down with inexpressible anguish. Satan's temptations, though skillfully devised, did not move the integrity of God's dear Son. His abiding confidence in his Father could not be shaken.

August 18, 1874

## **The Temptation of Christ**

Jesus did not condescend to explain to his enemy how he was the Son of God, and in what manner, as such, he was to act. In an insulting, taunting manner Satan referred to the present weakness and the unfavorable appearance of Christ in contrast with his own strength and glory. He taunted Christ that he was a poor representative of the angels, much more of their exalted Commander, the acknowledged King in the royal courts. His present appearance indicated that he was forsaken of God and man. He said if Christ was indeed the Son of God, the monarch of Heaven, he had power equal with God, and he could give him evidence by working a miracle, and changing the stone just at his feet into bread, and relieve his hunger. Satan promised that, if Christ would do this, he would at once yield his claims of superiority, and that the contest between himself and Christ should there be forever ended.

Christ did not appear to notice the reviling taunts of Satan. He was not provoked to give him proofs of his power. He meekly bore his insults without retaliation. The words spoken from Heaven at his baptism were very precious, evidencing to him that his Father approved the steps he was taking in the plan of salvation as man's substitute and surety. The opening heavens, and descent of the heavenly dove, were assurances that his Father would unite his power in Heaven with that of his Son upon the earth, to rescue man from the control of Satan, and that God accepted the effort of Christ to link earth to Heaven, and finite man to the infinite.

These tokens, received from his Father, were inexpressibly precious to the Son of God through all his severe sufferings, and terrible conflict with the rebel chief. And while enduring the test of God in the wilderness, and through his entire ministry, he had nothing to do in convincing Satan of his own power, and of his being the Saviour of the World. Satan had sufficient evidence of his exalted station. His unwillingness to ascribe to Jesus the honor due to him, and manifest submission as a subordinate, ripened into rebellion against God, and shut him out of Heaven.

It was not any part of the mission of Christ to exercise his divine power for his own benefit, to relieve himself from suffering. This he had volunteered to take upon



himself. He had condescended to take man's nature, and he was to suffer the inconveniences, and ills, and afflictions, of the human family. He was not to perform miracles on his own account. He came to save others. The object of his mission was to bring blessings, and hope, and life, to the afflicted and oppressed. He was to bear the burdens and griefs of suffering humanity.

Although Christ was suffering the keenest pangs of hunger, he withstood the temptations. He repulsed Satan with Scripture, the same he had given Moses in the wilderness to repeat to rebellious Israel when their diet was restricted, and they were clamoring for flesh-meats, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." In this declaration, and also by his example, Christ would show man that hunger for temporal food was not the greatest calamity that could befall him. Satan flattered our first parents that eating of the fruit of the tree of life of which God had forbidden them would bring to them great good, and would insure them against death, the very opposite of the truth which God had declared to them. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." If Adam had been obedient, he would never have known want, sorrow, nor death.

If the people who lived before the flood had been obedient to the word of God, they would have been preserved, and would not have perished by the waters of the flood. If the Israelites had been obedient to the words of God, he would have bestowed upon them special blessings. But they fell in consequence of the indulgence of appetite and passion. They would not be obedient to the words of God. Indulgence of perverted appetite led them into numerous and grievous sins. If they had made the requirements of God their first consideration, and their physical wants secondary, in submission to God's choice of proper food for them, not one of them would have fallen in the wilderness. They would have been established in the goodly land of Canaan a holy, healthy people, with not a feeble one in all their tribes.

The Saviour of the world became sin for the race. In becoming man's substitute, Christ did not manifest his power as the Son of God. He ranked himself among the sons of men. He was to bear the trial of temptation as a man, in man's behalf, under the most trying circumstances, and leave an example of faith and perfect trust in his Heavenly Father. Christ knew that his Father would supply him food when it would gratify him to do so. He would not in this severe ordeal, when hunger pressed him beyond measure,

prematurely diminish one particle of the trial allotted to him by exercising his divine power.

Fallen man, when brought into straightened places, could not have the power to work miracles on his own behalf, to save himself from pain or anguish, or to give himself victory over his enemies. It was the purpose of God to test and prove the race, and give them an opportunity to develop character by bringing them frequently into trying positions to test their faith and confidence in his love and power. The life of Christ was a perfect pattern. He was ever, by his example and precept, teaching man that God was his dependence, and that in God should be his faith and firm trust.

Christ knew that Satan was a liar from the beginning, and it required strong self-control to listen to the propositions of this insulting deceiver, and not instantly rebuke his bold assumptions. Satan expected to provoke the Son of God to engage in controversy with him; and he hoped that thus, in his extreme weakness and agony of spirit, he could obtain advantage, over him. He designed to pervert the words of Christ and claim advantage, and call to his aid his fallen angels to use their utmost power to prevail against and overcome him.

The Saviour of the world had no controversy with Satan, who was expelled from Heaven because he was no longer worthy of a place there. He who could influence the angels of God against their Supreme Ruler, and against his Son, their loved commander, and enlist their sympathy for himself, was capable of any deception. Four thousand years he had been warring against the government of God, and had lost none of his skill or power to tempt and deceive.

Because man fallen could not overcome Satan with his human strength, Christ came from the royal courts of Heaven to help him with his human and divine strength combined. Christ knew that Adam in Eden, with his superior advantages, might have withstood the temptations of Satan, and conquered him. He also knew that it was not possible for man, out of Eden, separated from the light and love of God since the fall, to resist the temptations of Satan in his own strength. In order to bring hope to man, and save him from complete ruin, he humbled himself to take man's nature, that, with his divine power combined with the human, he might reach man where he is. He obtains for the fallen sons and daughters of Adam that strength which it is impossible for them to gain for themselves, that in his name they may overcome the temptations of Satan.

The exalted Son of God in assuming humanity draws himself nearer to man by standing as the sinner's substitute. He identifies himself with the sufferings and afflictions of men. He was tempted in all points as a man is tempted, that he might know how to succor those who should be tempted. Christ overcame on the sinner's behalf.

Jacob, in the night vision, saw earth connected with Heaven by a ladder reaching to the throne of God. He saw the angels of God, clothed with garments of heavenly brightness, passing down from Heaven and up to Heaven upon this shining ladder. The bottom of this ladder rested upon the earth, while the top of it reached to the highest Heavens, and rested upon the throne of Jehovah. The brightness from the throne of God beamed down upon this ladder, and reflected a light of inexpressible glory upon the earth.

This ladder represented Christ who had opened the communication between earth and Heaven. In Christ's humiliation he descended to the very depth of human woe in sympathy and pity for fallen man, which was represented to Jacob by one end of the ladder resting upon the earth, while the top of the ladder, reaching unto Heaven, represents the divine power of Christ, who grasps the Infinite, and thus links earth to Heaven, and finite man to the infinite God. Through Christ the communication is opened between God and man. Angels may pass from Heaven to earth with messages of love to fallen man, and to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation. It is through Christ alone that the heavenly messengers minister to men.

Adam and Eve in Eden were placed under most favorable circumstances. It was their privilege to hold communion with God and angels. They were without the condemnation of sin. The light of God and angels was with them, and around about them. The Author of their existence was their teacher. But they fell beneath the power and temptations of the artful foe. Four thousand years had Satan been at work against the government of God, and he had obtained strength and experience from determined practice. Fallen men had not the advantages of Adam in Eden. They had been separating from God for four thousand years. The wisdom to understand, and power to resist, the temptations of Satan had become less and less, until Satan seemed to reign triumphant in the earth. Appetite and passion, the love of the world and presumptuous sins, were the great branches of evil out of which every species of crime, violence, and corruption grew.

Satan was defeated in his object to overcome Christ upon the point of appetite; and here in the wilderness Christ achieved a victory in behalf of the race upon the point of appetite, making it possible for man in all future time in his name to overcome the strength of appetite on his own behalf. Satan was not willing to cease efforts until he had tried every means to obtain victory over the world's Redeemer. He knew that with himself all was at stake, whether he or Christ should be victor in the contest. And, in order to awe Christ with his superior strength, he carried him to Jerusalem and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and continued to beset him with temptations.

He again demanded of Christ, if he was indeed the Son of God, to give him evidence by casting himself from the dizzy height upon which he had placed him. He urged Christ to show his confidence in the preserving care of his Father by casting himself down from the temple. In Satan's first temptation upon the point of appetite, he had tried to insinuate doubts in regard to God's love and care for Christ as his Son, by presenting his surroundings and his hunger as evidence that he was not in favor with God. He was unsuccessful in this. He next tried to take advantage of the faith and perfect trust Christ had shown in his Heavenly Father to urge him to presumption. "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Jesus promptly answered, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

The sin of presumption lies close beside the virtue of perfect faith and confidence in God. Satan flattered himself that he could take advantage of the humanity of Christ to urge him over the line of trust to presumption. Upon this point many souls are wrecked. Satan tried to deceive Christ through flattery. He admitted that Christ was right in the wilderness in his faith and confidence that God was his Father, under the most trying circumstances. He then urged Christ to give him one more proof of his entire dependence upon God, one more evidence of his faith that he was the Son of God, by casting himself from the temple. He told Christ that if he was indeed the Son of God he had nothing to fear; for angels were at hand to uphold him. Satan gave evidence that he understood the Scriptures by the use he made of them.

The Redeemer of the world wavered not from his integrity and showed that he had perfect faith in his Father's promised care. He would not put the faithfulness and

love of his Father to a needless trial, although he was in the hands of the enemy, and placed in a position of extreme difficulty and peril. He would not, at Satan's suggestion, tempt God by presumptuously experimenting on his providence. Satan had brought in scripture which seemed appropriate for the occasion, hoping to accomplish his designs by making the application to our Saviour at this special time.

Christ knew that God could indeed bear him up if he had required him to throw himself from the temple. But to do this unbidden, and to experiment upon his Father's protecting care and love, because dared by Satan to do so, would not show his strength of faith. Satan was well aware that if Christ could be prevailed upon, unbidden by his Father, to fling himself from the temple to prove his claim to his Heavenly Father's protecting care, he would in the very act show the weakness of his human nature.

Christ came off victor in the second temptation. He manifested perfect confidence and trust in his Father during his severe conflict with the powerful foe. Our Redeemer, in the victory here gained, has left man a perfect pattern, showing him that his only safety is in firm trust and unwavering confidence in God in all trials and perils. He refused to presume upon the mercy of his Father by placing himself in peril that would make it necessary for his Heavenly Father to display his power to save him from danger. This would be forcing providence on his own account: and he would not then leave for his people a perfect example of faith and firm trust in God.

Satan's object in tempting Christ was to lead him to daring presumption, and to show human weakness that would not make him a perfect pattern for his people. Satan thought that should Christ fail to bear the test of his temptations, there could be no redemption for the race, and his power over them would be complete.

August 25, 1874

## **Tithes and Offerings**

Divine wisdom has appointed, in the plan of salvation, the law of action and reaction, making the work of beneficence, in all its branches, twice blessed.

He that gives to the needy blesses others, and is blessed himself in a still greater degree. God could have reached his object in saving sinners without the aid of man; but he knew that he could not be happy without acting a part in the great work in which he should be cultivating self-denial and benevolence.

That man might not lose the blessed results of benevolence, our Redeemer formed the plan of enlisting him as his co-worker. By a chain of circumstances which would call forth his charities, he brings man under the best means of cultivating benevolence, and keeps him habitually giving to help the poor, and to advance his cause. He sends his poor as the representatives of himself. A ruined world is drawing forth from us by their necessities talents of means and of influence to present to them the truth, of which they are in perishing need. And as we heed these calls, by labor and acts of benevolence, we are assimilated into the image of him who for our sakes became poor. In bestowing, we bless others, and thus accumulate the true riches.

There has been a great lack of Christian benevolence in the church. Those who were the best able to do in the cause of God for its advancement have done but little.

God has mercifully brought a class to the knowledge of the truth, that they might appreciate its priceless value in comparison with earthly treasures. Jesus has said to these, "Follow me." He is testing them with the invitation to the supper which he has prepared. He is watching to see what characters they will develop, whether their own selfish interests will be considered of greater value than eternal riches. Many of these dear brethren are now by their actions framing the excuses mentioned in the parable.

"Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many, and sent his servant at supper-time to say to them that were bidden, Come, for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto

him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind."

This parable correctly represents the condition of many professing to believe the present truth. The Lord has sent them an invitation to come to the supper which he has prepared for them at great cost to himself, but worldly interests look to them of greater importance than the heavenly treasure. They are invited to take part in the things of eternal value; but their farms, their cattle, and their home interest, seem of so much greater importance than obedience to the heavenly invitation that they overpower every divine attraction, and these earthly things are made the excuse for their disobedience to the heavenly command, "Come; for all things are now ready." These brethren are blindly following the example of those represented in the parable. They look at their worldly possessions, and say, No, Lord, I cannot follow thee, "I pray thee have me excused."

The very blessings which God has given to these men, to prove them, to see if they will render "unto God the things that are God's," they use as an excuse that they cannot obey the claims of truth. They have grasped their earthly treasure in their arms, and say, I must take care of these things; I must not neglect the things of this life; these things are mine. Thus the hearts of these men have become as unimpressible as the beaten highway. They close the door of their hearts to the heavenly messenger, who says, "Come; for all things are now ready," and throw it open, inviting the passage of the world's burden and business cares, and Jesus knocks in vain for admittance.

Their hearts are so overgrown with thorns and cares of this life that heavenly things can find no place. Jesus invites the weary and heavy laden, with promises of rest if they will come to him. He invites them to exchange the galling yoke of selfishness and covetousness, which makes them slaves to mammon, for his yoke, which he declares is easy, and his burden, which is light.

He says, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." He would have them lay aside the heavy burdens of worldly cares and

perplexities, and take his yoke, which is self-denial and sacrifice for others. This burden will prove to be light. Those who refuse to accept the relief Christ offers them, and will continue to wear the galling yoke of selfishness, tasking their souls to the utmost in plans to accumulate money for selfish gratification, have not experienced the peace and rest found in bearing the yoke of Christ, and lifting the burdens of self-denial and disinterested benevolence which Christ has borne in their behalf.

When the love of the world takes possession of the heart, and becomes a ruling passion, there is left no room for adoration to God; for the higher powers of the mind submit to the slavery of mammon, and cannot retain thoughts of God and of Heaven. The mind loses its remembrance of God, and is narrowed and dwarfed to the accumulation of money.

Through selfishness and love of the world these men have been passing on with less and less sense of the magnitude of the work for these last days. They have not educated their minds to make a business of serving God. They have not an experience in that direction. Their property has absorbed their affections and eclipsed the magnitude of the plan of salvation. While they are improving and enlarging their worldly plans they see no necessity for the enlargement and extension of the work of God. They invest their means in temporal things, but not in the eternal. Their hearts are ambitious for more means. God has made them the depositaries of his law, that they might let the light so graciously given them shine forth to others. But they have so increased their cares and anxieties that they have no time to bless others with their influence, to converse with their neighbors, to pray with them, and for them, and to seek to bring them to the knowledge of the truth.

These men are responsible for the good they might do, but from which they excuse themselves because of worldly cares, and burdens, which engross their minds and absorb their affections. Souls for whom Christ died might be saved by their personal effort and godly example. Precious souls are perishing for the light which God has given to men to be reflected upon the pathway of others. But the precious light is hid under a bushel, and it gives no light to those who are in the house. Every man is a steward of God. To each the Master has committed his means which man claims as his own. He says, "Occupy till I come." A time is coming when Christ will require his own with usury. He will say to his stewards, "Give an account of thy stewardship." Those who have hid their Lord's money in a napkin in the earth, instead of putting it out to the



exchangers, or those who have squandered their Lord's money by expending it for needless things, instead of putting it out to usury by investing it in his cause, will receive no approval of the Master, but decided condemnation. The unprofitable servant in the parable brought back the one talent to God, and said, "I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed, and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast that is thine." His Lord takes up his words: "Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strewed; thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury."

This unprofitable servant was not ignorant of God's plans, but he set himself firmly to thwart the purpose of God, charging him with unfairness in requiring improvement upon the money intrusted to him. This very complaint and murmuring is made by a large class of wealthy men, professing to believe the truth. They are like the unfaithful servant afraid that the increase of the talents God has lent them will be called for to advance the spread of truth; therefore they tie it up, by investing it in earthly treasures, and burying it in the world, thus making it so fast that they have nothing, or next to nothing, to invest in the cause of God. They have buried it, fearing that God would call for some of the principal or increase. When at the demand of their Lord they bring the amount given them, they come with ungrateful excuses why they have not put the means, lent them by God, out to the exchangers, by investing it in his cause, to carry on his work.

He who embezzles his Lord's goods not only loses the talent lent him of God, but loses eternal life. Of him it is said, "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness." The faithful servant who invests his money in the cause of God to save souls, employs his means to the glory of God, and will receive the commendation of the Master, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

What will be this joy of our Lord? It will be in seeing souls saved in the kingdom of glory. "Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

The idea of stewardship should have a practical bearing upon all the people of God. This parable of the talents rightly understood will bar out covetousness, which

God calls idolatry. Practical benevolence will give spiritual life to thousands of nominal professors of the truth who now mourn over their darkness. It will transform them from selfish, covetous worshipers of mammon, to earnest, faithful co-workers with Christ in the salvation of sinners.

The foundation of the plan of salvation was laid in a sacrifice. Jesus left the royal courts, and became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. Every one who will share this salvation, purchased for them by such an infinite sacrifice by the Son of God, will follow the example of the true pattern. Jesus Christ was the chief corner stone, and we must build upon this foundation. Each must have a spirit of self-denial and self-sacrifice. The life of Christ upon earth was unselfish, marked with humiliation and sacrifice. And shall men, partakers of the great salvation which Jesus came from Heaven to bring them, refuse to follow their Lord, and to share in his self-denial and sacrifice? Says Christ, "I am the vine, ye are the branches. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away. And every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit;" The very vital principle, the sap which flows through the vine, nourishes the branches, that they may flourish and bear fruit. Is the servant greater than his Lord? Shall the world's Redeemer practice self-denial and sacrifice on our account, and the members of Christ's body practice self-indulgence? Self-denial is an essential condition of discipleship.

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." I lead the way in the path of self-denial. I require nothing of you my followers but that of which I your Lord give you an example in my own life.

The Saviour of the world conquered Satan in the wilderness of temptation. He overcame to show man how he may overcome. He announced in the synagogue of Nazareth, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

The great work which Jesus announced that he came to do was intrusted to his followers upon the earth. Christ as our head led out in the great work of salvation, and bids us follow his example. He has given us a world-wide message. This truth must be

extended to all nations, tongues, and people. Satan's power was to be contested, and he was to be overcome by Christ and also by his followers.

An extensive war was to be maintained against the powers of darkness. And in order to do this work successfully, means were required. God does not propose to send means direct from Heaven, but he gives into the hands of his followers talents of means to use for the very purpose of sustaining this warfare.

He has given his people a plan for raising sums sufficient to make the enterprise self-sustaining. God's plan in the tithing system is beautiful in its simplicity and equality. All may take hold of it in faith and courage, for it is divine in its origin. Here are simplicity and utility combined, which it requires not depth of learning to understand and execute. All may feel that they can act a part in carrying forward the precious work of salvation. Every man, and woman, and youth, may become a treasurer for the Lord. They may be agents to meet the demands upon the treasury. Says the apostle, "Let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him."

Great objects are accomplished by this system; for if one and all accept it, each is made a vigilant and faithful treasurer for God; and there would be no want of means to carry forward the great work of sounding the last message of warning to the world. The treasury will be full if all adopt this system, and the contributors will not be left the poorer. Through every investment made, they will become more wedded to the cause of present truth. They will be "laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

As the persevering, systematic workers see that the tendency of their benevolent efforts is to nourish love to God and their fellow-men, and that their personal efforts are extending their sphere of usefulness, they will realize that it is a great blessing to be co-workers with Jesus Christ. The Christian church as a general thing are disowning the claims of God upon them to give alms of the things which they possess to support the warfare against the moral darkness which is flooding the world. Never can the work of God advance as it should until the followers of Christ become active, zealous workers.

Every individual of the church should feel that the truth which they profess is a reality, and they should be disinterested workers. Some rich men feel like murmuring because the work of God is extending, and there is a demand for money. They say there

is no end of the calls for means. One object after another is continually rising demanding help. We would say to such that we hope the cause of God will so extend that there will be greater occasions, and more frequent and urgent calls for supplies from the treasury to prosecute the work.

If the plan of systematic benevolence was fully adopted, and carried out to a man, there would be a constant supply in the treasury. The income would flow in like a steady stream constantly supplied by overflowing springs of benevolence.

Almsgiving is a part of gospel religion. Does not the consideration of the infinite price paid for our redemption leave upon us solemn obligations pecuniarily, as well as lay claim upon all our power to be devoted to the work of the Master?

We shall have a debt to settle with the Master by-and-by, when he shall say, Give an account of thy stewardship. If men prefer to set aside the claims of God, and grasp and selfishly retain all that he gives them, he will hold his peace at present, and continue frequently to test them by increasing his bounties, and by letting his blessings flow on, and these men pass on receiving honor of men, and without censure in the church, but by-and-by he will say, "Give an account of thy stewardship." Says Christ, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price," and are under obligation to glorify God with your means as well as in your body, and in your spirit, which are his.

"Ye are bought with a price," not "with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." He asks the return of the gifts, he has intrusted to us, to aid in the salvation of souls. He has given his blood; he asks our silver.

It is through his poverty that we are made rich, and yet, will we refuse to give back to him his own gifts?

God is not dependent upon man for the support of his cause. He could have sent means direct from Heaven to supply his treasury, if his providence had seen that this was the best for man. He might have devised means whereby angels would have been sent to publish the truth to the world without the agency of men. He might have written the truth upon the heavens, and let that declare to the world his requirements in living characters. God is not dependent upon any man's gold or silver. He says, "Every beast

of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof." Whatever necessity there is for our agency in the advancement of the cause of God, he has purposely arranged for our good. He has honored us by making us co-workers with him. He has ordained that there should be a necessity for the co-operation of men, that they may keep in exercise their benevolent affections.

God has in his wise providence placed the poor always with us, that while we shall witness the various forms of suffering and of necessity in the world, we should be tested and proved, and brought into positions to develop Christian character. The poor God has placed among us to call out from us Christian sympathy and love.

Sinners, who are perishing for lack of knowledge, must be left in ignorance and darkness, unless men shall carry to them the light of truth. God will not send angels from Heaven to do the work which he has left for man. He has given all a work to do, for the very reason that he might prove them and that they might reveal their true character. Christ places the poor in our midst as his representatives. "I was an hungered," he says, "and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink." Christ identifies himself with suffering humanity in the persons of the suffering children of men. He makes their necessities his own, and takes to his bosom the woes of the children of men.

The moral darkness of a ruined world pleads to Christian men and women to put forth individual effort, to give of their means, and of their influence, that they may be assimilated into the image of Him who, though he possessed infinite riches, yet for our sakes became poor. The Spirit of God cannot abide with those to whom he has sent the message of his truth, who need to be urged before they can have any sense of their duty to be co-workers with Christ. The apostle enforces the duty of giving from higher grounds than merely human sympathy, because the feelings are moved. He enforces the principle that we should labor unselfishly with an eye single to the glory of God.

Christians are required by the Scriptures to enter upon a plan of active benevolence which will keep in constant exercise an interest in the salvation of their fellow-men. The moral law enjoined the observance of the Sabbath which was not a burden, except when that law was transgressed, and they were bound by the penalties involved in breaking it. The tithing system was no burden to those who did not depart

from the plan. The system enjoined upon the Hebrews has not been repealed or relaxed by the One who originated this plan. Far from its being of no force now, it was to be more fully carried out, and more extended, as salvation through Christ alone should be more fully brought to light in the Christian age.

Jesus made known to the lawyer that the condition of his having eternal life was to carry out in his life the special requirement of the law, which consisted in his loving God with all his heart, and all his soul, and all his mind and strength, and his neighbor as himself. When the typical sacrifices ceased at the death of Christ, the original law, engraved in tables of stone, stood immutable, holding its claims upon man in all ages. And in the Christian age the duty of man was not limited, but more especially defined and simply expressed.

The gospel, extending and widening, required greater provisions to sustain the warfare since the death of Christ, and this made the law of almsgiving a more urgent necessity than under the Hebrew government. Now God requires, not less gifts, but greater than at any other period of the world. The principle laid down by Christ is that the gifts and offerings should be in proportion to the light and blessings enjoyed. He has said, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."

The blessings of the Christian age were responded to by the first disciples in works of charity and benevolence. The outpouring of the Spirit of God, after Christ left his disciples and ascended to Heaven, led to self-denial, and self-sacrifice for the salvation of others. When the poor saints at Jerusalem were in distress, Paul writes to the Gentile Christians in regard to works of benevolence, and says, "Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also." Here benevolence is placed by the side of faith, love, and Christian diligence. Those who think that they can be good Christians, and close their ears and hearts to the calls of God for their liberalities, are in a fearful deception. There are those who abound in a profession of great love for the truth, and as far as words are concerned, have an interest to see the truth advance, but do nothing for its advancement. The faith of such is dead, not being made perfect by works. The Lord never made such a mistake as to convert a soul, and leave it under the power of covetousness.

The tithing system reaches back beyond the days of Moses. Men were required to

offer to God gifts for religious purposes before the definite system was given to Moses, even as far back as the days of Adam. In complying with God's requirements they were to manifest in offerings their appreciation of his mercies and blessings to them. This was continued through successive generations, and was carried out by Abraham who gave tithes to Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God. The same principle existed in the days of Job. Jacob, when at Bethel an exile and penniless wanderer, lay down at night solitary and alone with a rock for his pillow, and there promised the Lord, "Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." God does not compel men to give. All that they give must be voluntary. He will not have his treasury replenished with unwilling offerings.

God designed to bring man into close relationship with himself, and in sympathy and love with his fellow-men, by placing upon him responsibilities in deeds that would counteract selfishness, and strengthen his love for God and man. The plan of system in benevolence, God designed for the good of man, who was inclined to be selfish, and to close his heart to generous deeds and actions. The Lord required gifts to be made at stated times, being so arranged that giving would become habit, and benevolence felt to be a Christian duty. The heart opened by one gift was not to have time to become selfishly cold, and to close, before it bestowed the next. The stream was to be continually flowing, thus keeping open the channel by acts of benevolence.

As to the amount required God had specified one-tenth of the increase. This is left to the conscience and benevolence of men, whose judgment in this tithing system should have free play. And while it is left free to the conscience, a plan has been laid out definite enough for all. No compulsion is required.

God called for men in the Mosaic dispensation to give the tenth of all their increase. He committed to their trust the things of this life, talents to be improved and returned to him again. He has required a tenth, and this he claims as the very least that man should return to him. He says, I give you nine-tenths, while I require one-tenth; that is mine. When men withhold the one-tenth they rob God. Sin offerings, peace offerings, and thank offerings, were also required in addition to the tenth of the increase.

All that is withheld of the tenth which God claims of the increase is recorded in the books of Heaven as robbery against God. Such defraud their Creator, and when this sin of neglect shall be brought before them, it is not enough to change their course and

begin to work from that time upon the right principle. This will not correct the figures in the heavenly record for embezzling the property committed to them in trust to be returned to the lender. Repentance for unfaithful dealing with God, and for base ingratitude, is required.

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

A promise is here given, if all the tithes shall be brought into the store-house a blessing from God will be poured upon the obedient.

"And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed; for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts." If all who profess the truth will come up to the claims of God, in giving the tenth which God says is his, the treasury will be abundantly supplied with means to carry forward the great work of the salvation of man.

God gives man nine-tenths, while he has claimed one-tenth for sacred purposes, as he has given man six days for his own work, and has reserved and set apart the seventh day to himself. For, like the Sabbath, a tenth of the increase is sacred. God has reserved it for himself. He will carry forward his work upon the earth with the increase of means he has intrusted to man.

God required of his ancient people three yearly gatherings. "Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the Lord empty. Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee." No less than one-third of their income was devoted for sacred and religious purposes.

Whenever God's people, in any period of the world, have cheerfully and willingly



carried out his plan in systematic benevolence, and in gifts and offerings, there has been a standing promise that prosperity should attend all their labors just in proportion as they obeyed his requirements. When they acknowledged the claims of God, and complied with his requirements, honoring him with their substance, their barns were filled with plenty. But when they robbed God in tithes and in offerings, they were made to realize that they were not only robbing him, but themselves; for God limited his blessings to them, just in proportion as they limited their offerings to him.

Some will pronounce this as one of the rigorous laws binding upon the Hebrews. But this was not a burden to the willing heart that loved God. It was only when their selfish natures strengthened by withholding, that men have lost sight of eternal considerations, and valued their earthly treasures above that of souls. There are even more urgent necessities upon the Israel of God in these last days than were upon ancient Israel. There is a great and important work to be accomplished in a very short time, and God never designed that the law of the tithing system should be of no account among his people, but that instead of this, the spirit of sacrifice should widen and deepen for the closing work.

September 1, 1874

## **The Temptation of Christ**

The humiliation and agonizing sufferings of Christ in the wilderness of temptation were for the race. In Adam all was lost through transgression. Through Christ was man's only hope of restoration to the favor of God. Man had separated himself at such a distance from God by transgression of his law, that he could not humiliate himself before God proportionate to his grievous sin. The Son of God could fully understand the aggravating sins of the transgressor, and in his sinless character he alone could make an acceptable atonement for man in suffering the agonizing sense of his Father's displeasure. The sorrow and anguish of the Son of God for the sins of the world were proportionate to his divine excellence and purity, as well as to the magnitude of the offense.

Christ was our example in all things. As we see his humiliation in the long trial and fast in the wilderness to overcome the temptations of appetite in our behalf, we are to take this lesson home to ourselves when we are tempted. If the power of appetite is so strong upon the human family, and its indulgence so fearful that the Son of God subjected himself to such a test, how important that we feel the necessity of having appetite under the control of reason. Our Saviour fasted nearly six weeks, that he might gain for man the victory upon the point of appetite. How can professed Christians with an enlightened conscience, and Christ before them as their pattern, yield to the indulgence of those appetites which have an enervating influence upon the mind and heart? It is a painful fact that habits of self-gratification at the expense of health, and the weakening of moral power, is holding in the bonds of slavery at the present time a large share of the Christian world.

Many who profess godliness do not inquire into the reason of Christ's long period of fasting and suffering in the wilderness. His anguish was not so much from enduring the pangs of hunger as from his sense of the fearful result of the indulgence of appetite and passion upon the race. He knew that appetite would be man's idol, and would lead him to forget God, and would stand directly in the way of his salvation.

Our Saviour showed perfect confidence in his Heavenly Father, that he would not

suffer him to be tempted above what he should give him strength to endure, and would bring him off conqueror if he patiently bore the test to which he was subjected. Christ had not, of his own will, placed himself in danger. God had suffered Satan, for the time being, to have this power over his Son. Jesus knew that if he preserved his integrity in this extremely trying position, an angel of God would be sent to relieve him if there was no other way. He had taken humanity, and was the representative of the race.

Satan saw that he prevailed nothing with Christ in his second great temptation. "And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, all this power will I give thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me: and to whomsoever I will, I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine."

In the first two great temptations Satan had not revealed his true purposes or his character. He claimed to be an exalted messenger from the courts of Heaven, but he now throws off his disguise. In a panoramic view he presented before Christ all the kingdoms of the world in the most attractive light, while he claimed to be the prince of the world.

This last temptation was the most alluring of the three. Satan knew that Christ's life must be one of sorrow, hardship, and conflict. And he thought he could take advantage of this fact to bribe Christ to yield his integrity. Satan brought all his strength to bear upon this last temptation, for this last effort was to decide his destiny as to who should be victor. He claimed the world as his dominion, and he was the prince of the power of the air. He bore Jesus to the top of an exceeding high mountain, and then in a panoramic view presented before him all the kingdoms of the world that had been so long under his dominion, and offered them to him in one great gift. He told Christ he could come into possession of the kingdoms of the world without suffering or peril on his part. Satan promises to yield his scepter and dominion, and Christ shall be rightful ruler for one favor from him. All he requires in return for making over to him the kingdoms of the world that day presented before him, is, that Christ shall do him homage as to a superior.

The eye of Jesus for a moment rested upon the glory presented before him; but he turned away and refused to look upon the entrancing spectacle. He would not endanger his steadfast integrity by dallying with the tempter. When Satan solicited homage,

Christ's divine indignation was aroused, and he could no longer tolerate the blasphemous assumption of Satan, or even permit him to remain in his presence. Here Christ exercised his divine authority, and commanded Satan to desist. "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Satan, in his pride and arrogance, had declared himself to be the rightful and permanent ruler of the world, the possessor of all its riches and glory, claiming homage of all who lived in it, as though he had created the world and all things that were therein. Said he to Christ: "All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will give it." He endeavored to make a special contract with Christ, to make over to him at once the whole of his claim, if he would worship him.

This insult to the Creator moved the indignation of the Son of God to rebuke and dismiss him. Satan had flattered himself in his first temptation that he had so well concealed his true character and purposes that Christ did not recognize him as the fallen rebel chief whom he had conquered and expelled from Heaven. The words of dismissal from Christ, "Get thee hence, Satan," evidenced that he was known from the first, and that all his deceptive arts has [had] been unsuccessful upon the Son of God. Satan knew that if Jesus should die to redeem man, his power must end after a season, and he would be destroyed. Therefore, it was his studied plan to prevent, if possible, the completion of the great work which had been commenced by the Son of God. If the plan of man's redemption should fail, he would retain the kingdom which he then claimed. And if he should succeed, he flattered himself that he would reign in opposition to the God of Heaven.

When Jesus left Heaven, and there left his power and glory, Satan exulted. He thought that the Son of God was placed in his power. The temptation took so easily with the holy pair in Eden, that he hoped he could with his satanic cunning and power overthrow even the Son of God, and thereby save his life and kingdom. If he could tempt Jesus to depart from the will of his Father, as he had done in his temptation with Adam and Eve, then his object would be gained.

The time was to come when Jesus should redeem the possession of Satan by giving his own life, and, after a season, all in Heaven and earth should submit to him. Jesus was steadfast. He chose his life of suffering, his ignominious death, and, in the way appointed by his Father, to become a lawful ruler of the kingdoms of the earth, and

have them given into his hands as an everlasting possession. Satan also will be given into his hands to be destroyed by death, never more to annoy Jesus, nor the saints in glory.

Jesus said to this wily foe, "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, thou, shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Satan had asked Christ to give him evidence that he was the Son of God, and he had in this instance the proof he had asked. At the divine command of Christ he was compelled to obey. He was repulsed and silenced. He had no power to enable him to withstand the peremptory dismissal. He was compelled without another word to instantly desist and to leave the world's Redeemer.

The hateful presence of Satan was withdrawn. The contest was ended. With immense suffering Christ's victory in the wilderness was complete as was the failure of Adam. And for a season he stood freed from the presence of his powerful adversary, and from his legions of angels.

After Satan had ended his temptations he departed from Jesus for a little season. The foe was conquered, but the conflict had been long and exceedingly trying. And after it was ended Christ was exhausted and fainting. He fell upon the ground as though dying. Heavenly angels who had bowed before him in the royal courts, and who had been with intense, yet painful, interest watching their loved Commander, and with amazement had witnessed the terrible contest he had endured with Satan, now came and ministered unto him. They prepared him food and strengthened him, for he lay as one dead. Angels were filled with amazement and awe, as they knew the world's Redeemer was passing through inexpressible suffering to achieve the redemption of man. He who was equal with God in the royal courts, was before them emaciated from nearly six weeks of fasting. Solitary and alone he had been pursued by the rebel chief, who had been expelled from Heaven. He had endured a more close and severe test than would ever be brought to bear upon man. The warfare with the power of darkness had been long and intensely trying to Christ's human nature in his weak and suffering condition. The angels brought messages of love and comfort from the Father to his Son, and also the assurance that all Heaven triumphed in the full and entire victory he had gained in behalf of man.

The cost of the redemption of the race can never be fully realized until the

redeemed shall stand with the Redeemer, by the throne of God. And as they have capacity to appreciate the value of immortal life, and the eternal reward, they will swell the song of victory and immortal triumph, "Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." "And every creature," says John, "which is in Heaven and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

Although Satan had failed in his strongest efforts, and most powerful temptations, yet he had not given up all hope that he might, at some future time, be more successful in his efforts. He looked forward to the period of Christ's ministry, when he should have opportunities to try his power and artifices against him. Satan laid his plans to blind the understanding of the Jews, God's chosen people, that they would not discern in Christ the world's Redeemer. He thought he could fill their hearts with envy, jealousy, and hatred against the Son of God, so that they would not receive him, but make his life upon earth as bitter as possible.

Satan held a council with his angels as to the course they should pursue to prevent the people from having faith in Christ as the Messiah whom the Jews had so long been anxiously expecting. He was disappointed and enraged that he had prevailed nothing against Jesus in the manifold temptations in the wilderness. He thought if he could inspire unbelief in the hearts of Christ's own people as to his being the promised One, he might discourage Jesus in his mission, and secure the Jews as his agents to carry out his purposes.

September 8, 1874

## **The Temptation of Christ**

Satan comes to man with his temptations as an angel of light, as he came to Christ. He has been working to bring man into a condition of physical and moral weakness, that he may overcome him with his temptations, and then triumph over his ruin. And he has been successful in tempting man to indulge appetite, regardless of the result. He well knows that it is impossible for man to discharge his obligations to God, and to his fellow-men, while he impairs the faculties God has given him. The brain is the capital of the body. If the perceptive faculties become benumbed through intemperance of any kind, eternal things are not discerned.

God gives no permission to man to violate the laws of his being. But man, through yielding to Satan's temptations to indulge intemperance, brings the higher faculties in subjection to the animal appetites and passions. When these gain the ascendancy, man, who was created a little lower than the angels, with faculties susceptible of the highest cultivation, surrenders to be controlled by Satan. And he gains easy access to those who are in bondage to appetite. Through intemperance, some sacrifice one-half, and others two-thirds, of their physical, mental, and moral powers, and become playthings for the enemy. Those who would have clear minds to discern Satan's devices, must have their physical appetites under the control of reason and conscience. The moral and vigorous action of the higher powers of the mind are essential to the perfection of Christian character. And the strength or weakness of the mind has very much to do with our usefulness in this world, and with our final salvation. The ignorance that has prevailed in regard to God's law in our physical nature is deplorable. Intemperance of any kind is a violation of the laws of our being. Imbecility is prevailing to a fearful extent. Sin is made attractive by the covering of light which Satan throws over it, and he is well pleased when he can hold the Christian world in their daily habits under the tyranny of custom, like the heathen, and allow appetite to govern them.

If men and women of intelligence have their moral powers benumbed through intemperance of any kind, they are, in many of their habits, elevated but little above the heathen. Satan is constantly drawing the people from saving light, to custom and

fashion, irrespective of physical, mental, and moral health. The great enemy knows that if appetite and passion predominate, health of body and strength of intellect are sacrificed upon the altar of self-gratification, and man is brought to speedy ruin. If enlightened intellect holds the reins, controlling the animal propensities, keeping them in subjection to the moral powers, Satan well knows that his power to overcome with his temptations is very small.

In our day people talk of the dark ages, and boast of progress. But with this progress wickedness and crime do not decrease. We deplore the absence of natural simplicity, and the increase of artificial display. Health, strength, beauty, and long life, which were common in the so-called "dark ages," are rare now. Nearly everything desirable is sacrificed to meet the demands of fashionable life.

A large share of the Christian world have no right to call themselves Christians. Their habits, their extravagance, and general treatment of their own bodies, are in violation of physical law, and contrary to the Bible standard. They are working out for themselves, in their course of life, physical suffering, mental and mortal feebleness.

Through his devices, Satan has, in many respects, made domestic life one of care and complicated burdens, in order to meet the demands of fashion. His purpose in doing this is to keep minds occupied so fully with the things of this life that they can give but little attention to their highest interest. Intemperance in eating and in dressing has so engrossed the minds of the Christian world that they do not take time to become intelligent in regard to the laws of their being, that they may obey them. To profess the name of Christ is of but little account, if the life does not correspond with the will of God, revealed in his word.

In the wilderness of temptation Christ overcame on man's behalf on the point of appetite. His example of self-denial, and self-control, when suffering the gnawing pangs of hunger, is a rebuke to the Christian world for their dissipation and gluttony. There is at this time nine times as much money expended for the gratification of appetite, and to indulge foolish and hurtful lusts, as there is given to advance the gospel of Christ. Were Peter upon the earth now, he would exhort the professed followers of Christ to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul. And Paul would call upon the churches in general to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. And Christ would drive from the temple those who are



defiled by the use of tobacco, polluting the sanctuary of God by their tobaccoed breaths. He would say to these worshipers, as he did to the Jews, "My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." We would say to such, your unholy offerings of ejected quids of tobacco defile the temple, and are abhorred of God. Your worship is not acceptable, for your bodies which should be the temple for the Holy Ghost are defiled. You also rob the treasury of God of thousands of dollars through the indulgence of unnatural appetite.

If we would see the standard of virtue and godliness exalted, as Christians, we have a work devolving upon us individually to control appetite, the indulgence of which counteracts the force of truth, and weakens moral power to resist and overcome temptation. As Christ's followers we should, in eating and drinking, act from principle. When we obey the injunction of the apostle, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," thousands of dollars which are now sacrificed upon the altar of hurtful lust will flow into the Lord's treasury, multiplying publications in different languages to be scattered like the leaves of autumn. Missions will be established in other nations, and then will the followers of Christ be indeed the light of the world.

The adversary of souls is working in these last days with greater power than ever before to accomplish the ruin of man through the indulgence of appetite and passions. And many who are held by Satan under the power of slavish appetite are the professed followers of Christ. They profess to worship God, while appetite is their god. Their unnatural desires for these indulgences are not controlled by reason or judgment. Those who are slaves to tobacco will see their families suffering for the conveniences of life, and for necessary food, yet they have not the power of will to forego their tobacco. The clamors of appetite prevail over natural affection. Appetite, which they have in common with the brute, controls them. The cause of Christianity, and even humanity, would not in any case be met, if dependent upon those in the habitual use of tobacco and liquor. If they had means to use only in one direction, the treasury of God would not be replenished, but they would have their tobacco and liquor. The tobacco idolater will not deny his appetite for the cause of God.

It is impossible for these to realize the binding claims and holiness of the law of God. The brain and nerves are deadened by the use of this narcotic. They cannot value the atonement or appreciate the worth of immortal life. The indulgence of fleshly lusts

wars against the soul. The apostle in the most impressive manner addresses Christians, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." If the body is saturated with liquor and the defilement of tobacco, it is not holy and acceptable to God. Satan knows that it cannot be, and for this reason he brings his temptations to bear upon men upon the point of appetite, that he may bring them into bondage to this propensity and thus work their ruin.

The Jewish sacrifices were all examined with careful scrutiny to see if any blemish was upon them, or if they were tainted with disease. The least defect or impurity was sufficient reason for the priests to reject them. The offering must be sound and valuable. The apostle has in view the requirements of God upon the Jews in their offerings when he in the most earnest manner appeals to his brethren to present their bodies a living sacrifice. Not a diseased, decaying offering, but a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God.

How many come to the house of God in feebleness, and how many come defiled by the indulgence of their own appetite! Those who have degraded themselves by wrong habits, when they assemble for the worship of God, give forth such emanations from their diseased bodies as to be disgusting to those around them. And how offensive must this be to a pure and holy God.

A large proportion of all the infirmities that afflict the human family are the results of their own wrong habits, because of their willing ignorance, or of their disregard of the light which God has given in relation to the laws of their being. It is not possible for us to glorify God while living in violation of the law of life. The heart cannot possibly maintain consecration to God while the lustful appetite is indulged. A diseased body and disordered intellect, because of continual indulgence in hurtful lust, make sanctification of the body and spirit impossible. The apostle understood the importance of the healthful conditions of the body for the successful perfection of Christian character. He says, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." He mentions the fruit of the Spirit, among which is temperance. "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

Men and women indulge appetite at the expense of health and the enfeebling of

the intellect, so that they cannot appreciate the plan of salvation. What appreciation can such have of the temptation of Christ in the wilderness, and the victory he gained upon the point of appetite. It is impossible for them to have exalted views of God, and to realize the claims of his law. The proposed followers of Christ are forgetful of the great sacrifice made by him on their account. The Majesty of Heaven, in order to bring salvation within their reach was smitten, bruised, and afflicted. He became a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. In the wilderness of temptation he resisted Satan, although the tempter was clothed with the livery of Heaven. Christ, although brought to great physical suffering, refused to yield on a single point, notwithstanding the most flattering inducements were presented to bribe and influence him to yield his integrity. All this honor, all this riches and glory, said the deceiver, will I give thee if thou wilt only acknowledge my claims.

Christ was firm. Oh! where would now be the salvation of the race if Christ had been as weak in moral power as man? No wonder that joy filled Heaven as the fallen chief left the wilderness of temptation a conquered foe. Christ has power from his Father to give his divine grace and strength to man--making it possible for him through his name, to overcome. There are but few professed followers of Christ who choose to engage with him in the work of resisting Satan's temptation as he resisted and overcame.

Professed Christians, who enjoy gatherings of gaiety, pleasure and feasting, cannot appreciate the conflict of Christ in the wilderness. This great example of their Lord in overcoming Satan is lost to them. This infinite victory which Christ achieved for them in the plan of salvation is meaningless. They see no special interest in the wonderful humiliation of our Saviour and the anguish and sufferings he endured for sinful man, while Satan was pressing him with his manifold temptations. The scene of trial with Christ in the wilderness was the foundation of the plan of salvation, and gives to fallen man the key whereby he, in Christ's name, may overcome.

Many professed Christians look upon this portion of the life of Christ as they would upon a common warfare between two kings, and as having no special bearing upon their own life and character. Therefore the manner of warfare, and the wonderful victory gained, have but little interest for them. Their perceptive powers are blunted by Satan's artifices, so that they cannot discern that he who afflicted Christ with manifold temptations in the wilderness, determining to rob him of his integrity as the Son of the Infinite, is to be their adversary to the end of time. Although he failed to overcome

Christ, his power is not weakened over man. All are personally exposed to the temptations that Christ overcame, but strength is provided for them in the all-powerful name of the great Conqueror. And all must, for themselves, individually overcome. Many are assailed and fall under the very same temptations wherewith Satan assailed Christ.

October 13, 1874

## **The Temptation of Christ**

Professed Christians engage in feasting and in scenes of amusement which degrade the religion of Jesus Christ. It is impossible for those who find pleasure in church socials, festivals and numerous gatherings for pleasure, to have ardent love and sacred reverence for Jesus. His words of warning and instruction have not weight upon their minds. Should Christ come among the assembly who were absorbed in their plays and frivolous amusements, would the solemn melody of his voice be heard in benediction, saying, "Peace be to this house"? How would the Saviour of the world enjoy these scenes of gaiety and folly?

Christians and the world unite, one in heart, one in spirit, in these festal occasions. The Man of sorrows, who was acquainted with grief, would find no welcome in these places of amusement. The lovers of pleasure and luxury--the thoughtless and the gay--are collected in these rooms, and the glitter and tinsel of fashion are seen everywhere. The ornament of crosses of gold and pearl, which represent a Redeemer crucified, adorn their persons. But the One whom these highly prized jewels represent finds no welcome--no room. His presence would be a restraint upon their mirth, their gaiety, and their sensual amusements, and would remind them of neglected duty, and bring to their remembrance hidden sins which caused that sorrowful countenance, and made those eyes so sad and tearful.

The presence of Christ would be positively painful in these gatherings for pleasure. Surely, none could invite him there, for his countenance is marred with sorrows more than the sons of men, because of these very amusements which put God out of mind, and make the broad road attractive to the sinner. The enchantment of these exciting scenes perverts reason, and destroys reverence for sacred things. Ministers, who profess to be Christ's representatives, frequently take the lead in these frivolous amusements. "Ye are," says Christ, "the light of the world." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

In what manner is the light of truth shining from that thoughtless, pleasure-

seeking company? Professed followers of Jesus Christ who indulge in gaiety and feasting cannot be partakers with Christ of his sufferings. They have no sense of his sufferings. They do not care to meditate upon self-denial and sacrifice. They find but little interest in studying the marked points in the history of the life of Christ upon which the plan of salvation rests, but imitate ancient Israel who ate and drank and rose up to play. In order to copy a pattern correctly, we must carefully study its design. If we are indeed to overcome as Christ overcame, that we may mingle with the bloodwashed, glorified company before the throne of God, it is of the highest importance that we become acquainted with the life of our Redeemer and deny self as did Christ. We must meet temptations and overcome obstacles, and through toil and suffering in the name of Jesus overcome as he overcame.

The great trial of Christ in the wilderness on the point of appetite was to leave man an example of self-denial. This long fast was to convict men of the sinfulness of the things in which professed Christians indulge. The victory which Christ gained in the wilderness was to show man the sinfulness of the very things in which he takes such pleasure. The salvation of man was in the balance, and to be decided by the trial of Christ in the wilderness. If Christ was a victor on the point of appetite, then there was a chance for man to overcome. If Satan gained the victory through his subtlety, man was bound by the power of appetite in chains of indulgence which he could not have moral power to break. Christ's humanity alone could never have endured this test, but his divine power combined with humanity gained in behalf of man an infinite victory. Our Representative in this victory, raised humanity in the scale of moral value with God.

Christians, who understand the mystery of godliness, who have a high and sacred sense of the atonement, who realize in the sufferings of Christ in the wilderness a victory gained for them, would see such marked contrast between these things and the church gatherings for pleasure and the indulgence of appetite as would turn them in disgust from these scenes of revelry. Christians would be greatly strengthened by earnestly and frequently comparing their lives with the true standard, the life of Christ. The numerous socials, festivals, and picnics to tempt the appetite to overindulgence, and the amusements which lead to levity and forgetfulness of God, can find no sanction in the example of Christ, the world's Redeemer, the only safe pattern for man to copy if he would overcome as Christ overcame.

Although Christ gained a priceless victory in behalf of man in overcoming the

temptations of Satan in the wilderness, this victory will not benefit man unless he also gains the victory on his own account.

Man now has the advantage over Adam in his warfare with Satan; for he has Adam's experience in disobedience and his consequent fall to warn him to shun his example. Man also has Christ's example in overcoming appetite, and the manifold temptations of Satan, and in vanquishing the mighty foe upon every point, and coming off victor in every contest. If man stumbles and falls under the temptations of Satan, he is without excuse; for he has the disobedience of Adam as a warning, and the life of the world's Redeemer as an example of obedience and self-denial, and the promise of Christ that "to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

In professedly Christian gatherings, Satan throws a religious garment over delusive pleasures and unholy revelings to give them the appearance of sanctity, and the consciences of many are quieted because means are raised to defray church expenses. Men refuse to give for the love of God; but for the love of pleasure, and the indulgence of appetite for selfish considerations, they will part with their money.

Is it because there is not power in the lessons of Christ upon benevolence, and in his example, and the grace of God upon the heart to lead men to glorify God with their substance, that such a course must be resorted to in order to sustain the church? The injury sustained to the physical, mental, and moral health in these scenes of amusement and gluttony is not small. And the day of final reckoning will show souls lost through the influence of these scenes of gaiety and folly.

It is a deplorable fact that sacred and eternal considerations do not have that power to open the hearts of the professed followers of Christ to make free-will offerings to sustain the gospel, as the tempting bribes of feasting and general merriment. It is a sad reality that these inducements will prevail when sacred and eternal things will have no force to influence the heart to engage in works of benevolence.

The plan of Moses in the wilderness to raise means was highly successful. There was no compulsion necessary. Moses made no grand feast. He did not invite the people to scenes of gaiety, dancing, and general amusement. Neither did he institute lotteries or anything of this profane order to obtain means to erect the tabernacle of God in the

wilderness. God commanded Moses to invite the children of Israel to bring the offerings. Moses was to accept gifts of every man that gave willingly from his heart. These free-will offerings came in so great abundance that Moses proclaimed it was enough. They must cease their presents; for they had given abundantly, more than they could use.

Satan's temptations succeed with the professed followers of Christ on the point of indulgence of pleasure and appetite. Clothed as an angel of light, he will quote Scripture to justify the temptations he places before men to indulge the appetite, and in worldly pleasures which suit the carnal heart. The professed followers of Christ are weak in moral power, and are fascinated with the bribe which Satan has presented before them, and he gains the victory. How does God look upon churches that are sustained by such means? Christ cannot accept these offerings, because they were not given through their love and devotion to him, but through their idolatry of self. But what many would not do for the love of Christ, they will do for the love of delicate luxuries to gratify the appetite, and for love of worldly amusements to please the carnal heart.



December 15, 1874

## **Tithes and Offerings**

Systematic benevolence should not be made systematic compulsion. It is free-will offerings that are acceptable to God. True Christian benevolence springs from the principle of grateful love. Love of Christ cannot exist without corresponding love to those whom he came into the world to redeem. Love to Christ must be the ruling principle of the being, controlling all its emotions and directing all its energies. Redeeming love should awaken all that tender affection and self-sacrificing devotion that is possible to exist in the heart of man. When this is the case, no heart-stirring appeals will be needed to break through their selfishness and awaken their dormant sympathies, to call forth benevolent offerings for the precious cause of truth.

Jesus has purchased us at an infinite sacrifice. All our capabilities and all our influence are indeed our Saviour's, and should be dedicated to his service. By doing this, we show our gratitude that we have been ransomed from the slavery of sin by the precious blood of Christ. Our Saviour is ever working for us. He has ascended up on high and pleads in behalf of the purchase of his blood. He pleads before his Father the agonies of the crucifixion. He raises his wounded hands and intercedes for his church, that they may be kept from falling under temptation.

If our senses could be quickened to take in this wonderful work of our Saviour for our salvation, love, deep and ardent, would burn in our hearts. Our apathy and cold indifference would then alarm us. Entire devotion and benevolence, prompted by grateful love, will impart to the smallest offering and willing sacrifice a divine fragrance, making the gift of priceless value. But, after all that we can bestow is yielded willingly to our Redeemer, be it ever so valuable to us, if we view the debt of gratitude we owe to God as it really is, all we may offer will seem to us very insufficient and meager. But the angels take these offerings, which to us seem poor, and present them as a fragrant offering before the throne, and they are accepted.

We do not, as followers of Christ, realize our true position. We do not have correct views of our responsibilities as hired servants of Christ. He has advanced us the wages in his suffering life and his spilled blood, to bind us in willing servitude to

himself. All the good things we have are a loan from our Saviour. He has made us stewards. Our smallest offerings, our humblest services, presented in faith and love, may be consecrated gifts to win souls to the service of the Master, to promote his glory. The interest and prosperity of Christ's kingdom should be paramount to every other consideration. Those who make their pleasure and selfish interest the chief objects of their lives are not faithful stewards.

Those who deny self to do others good, and devote themselves and all they have to Christ's service, will realize the happiness which the selfish man seeks for in vain. Said our Saviour, "Whosoever forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be my disciple." "Charity seeketh not her own." This is the fruit of that disinterested love and benevolence which characterized the life of Christ. The law of God, in our hearts, will bring our own interests in subordination to high and eternal considerations. We are enjoined by Christ to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. This is our first and highest duty. Our Master expressly warned his servants not to lay up treasures upon the earth, for in doing so their hearts would be upon earthly, rather than heavenly, things. Here is where many poor souls have made shipwreck of faith. They have gone directly contrary to the express injunction of our Lord, and have allowed the love of money to become the ruling passion of their lives. They are intemperate in their efforts to acquire means. They are as much intoxicated with their insane desire for riches as the inebriate for his liquor.

Christians forget that they are servants of the Master, that they themselves, their time, and all that they have, belong to him. Many are tempted, and the majority are overcome, by the delusive inducements which Satan presents to invest their money where it will yield them the greatest profit in dollars and cents. There are but few who consider the binding claims that God has upon them to make it their first business to meet the necessities of his cause, and let their own desires be served last. There are but few who invest in God's cause in proportion to their means. Many have fastened their money in property which they must sell before they can invest it in the cause of God, and thus put it to a practical use. They make this an excuse for doing but little in their Redeemer's cause. They have as effectually buried their money in the earth as the man in the parable. They rob God of the tenth which he claims as his own, and in robbing him they rob themselves of the heavenly treasure.

The plan of systematic benevolence does not press heavily upon any one man.

"Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." The poor are not excluded from the privilege of giving. They may act a part in this work, as well as the wealthy. The lesson Christ gave in regard to the widow's two mites shows us that the smallest willing offerings of the poor, if given from a heart of love, are as acceptable as the largest donations of the rich.

In the balances of the sanctuary, the gifts of the poor, made from love to Christ, are not estimated according to the amount given, but according to the love which prompts the sacrifice. The promises of Jesus will as surely be realized by the liberal poor man, who has but little to offer, but who gives that little freely, as by the wealthy man who gives of his abundance. The poor man makes a sacrifice of his little which he really feels. He really denies himself of some things that he needs for his own comfort, while the wealthy man gives of his abundance, and feels no want, and denies himself nothing that he really needs. Therefore, there is a sacredness in the poor man's offering that is not found in the rich man's gift; for the rich give of their abundance. God's providence has arranged the entire plan of systematic benevolence for the benefit of man. His providence never stands still. If God's servants follow his opening providence all will be active workers.

Those who withhold from the treasury of God, and hoard their means for their children, endanger the spiritual interest of their children. They place their property, which is a stumbling-block to themselves, in the pathway of their children, that they may stumble over it to perdition. Many are making a great mistake in regard to the things of this life. They economize, withholding from themselves and others the good they might receive from a right use of the means which God has lent them, and become selfish, and avaricious. They neglect their spiritual interests, and become dwarfs in religious growth, all for the sake of accumulating wealth which they cannot use. They leave their property to their children, and nine times out of ten it is even a greater curse to their heirs than it has been to themselves. Children relying upon the property of their parents, often fail to make a success of this life, and generally utterly fail to secure the life to come. The very best legacy parents can leave their children is a knowledge of useful labor and the example of a life characterized by disinterested benevolence, showing by their works that the true value of money is only to be appreciated in the good that it will accomplish in relieving their own wants, the necessities of others, and

in advancing the cause of God.

Some are willing to give according to what they have, and feel that God has no further claims upon them, because they have not a great amount of means. They have no income that they can spare from the necessities of their families. But there are many of this class who might ask themselves the question; am I giving according to what I might have had? God designed that their powers of body and mind should be put to use. Some have not improved to the best account the ability that God has given them. Labor is apportioned to man. It was connected with the curse, because made necessary by sin. The physical, mental, and moral well-being of man makes a life of useful labor necessary. "Be not slothful in business," is the injunction of the inspired apostle.

No person, whether rich or poor, can glorify God by a life of indolence. All the capital that many poor men have is time and physical strength and this is so frequently wasted in love of ease, and in careless indolence, that they have nothing to bring to their Lord in tithes and in offerings. If Christian men lack wisdom to labor to the best account, and to make a judicious appropriation of their physical and mental powers, they should have meekness and lowliness of mind to receive advice and counsel of their brethren, that their better judgment may supply their own deficiencies. Many poor men who are now content to do nothing for the good of their fellow-men, and for the advancement of the cause of God, might do much if they would. They are as accountable to God for their capital of physical strength as is the rich man for his capital of money.

Some who ought to put means into the treasury of God will be receivers from it. There are those who are now poor who might improve their condition by a judicious use of their time, by avoiding patent rights, and restraining their inclination to engage in speculations in order to obtain means in some easier way than by patient, persevering labor.

If those who have not made life a success were willing to be instructed, they could train themselves to habits of self-denial and strict economy, and have the satisfaction of being distributors, rather than receivers, of charity. There are many slothful servants. If they would do what it is in their power to do, they would experience so great a blessing in helping others that they would indeed realize that it is "more blessed to give than to receive."

Rightly directed benevolence draws upon the mental and moral energies of men, and excites them to most healthful action in blessing the needy and in advancing the cause of God. If those who have means should realize that they are accountable to God for every dollar that they expend, their supposed wants would be much less. If conscience was alive, she would testify of needless appropriations in the gratification of the appetite, and in ministering to pride, to vanity, and to amusements, and report the squandering of their Lord's money, which should have been devoted to his cause. Those who waste their Lord's goods will have to give an account of it to the Master, by-and-by.

If professed Christians would use less of their wealth in the adorning of the body, and in beautifying their own houses, and would consume less in the extravagant, health-destroying luxuries upon their tables, they could place much larger sums into the treasury of God. They would thus imitate their Redeemer, who left Heaven, his riches, and his glory, and for our sakes became poor, that we might have eternal riches. If we are too poor to faithfully render to God in the tithes and offerings as he requires, we are certainly too poor to dress expensively; and to eat luxuriously; for we are wasting our Lord's money in hurtful indulgences to please and glorify ourselves. We should inquire diligently of ourselves, What treasure have we secured in the kingdom of God? Are we rich toward God?

Jesus gave his disciples a lesson upon covetousness. "And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

The length and happiness of life consist not in the amount of our earthly possessions. This foolish rich man in his supreme selfishness had laid up for himself treasures that he could not use. He had lived only for himself. He had overreached in trade, had made sharp bargains, and had not been exercised by mercy or the love of

God. He had robbed the fatherless and widow, and defrauded his fellow-men to add to his increasing stock of worldly possessions. He might have laid up his treasure in Heaven in bags that wax not old. Through his covetousness he lost both worlds.

Those who humbly use to the glory of God the means that he has intrusted to them, will receive their treasure by-and-by from the Master's hand with the benediction, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

When we consider the infinite sacrifice made for the salvation of men, we are lost in amazement. When selfishness clamors for the victory in the hearts of men, and they are tempted to withhold their due proportion in any good work, they should strengthen their principles of right by the thought that he who was rich in Heaven's priceless treasure turned away from it all, and became poor, He had not where to lay his head. And all this sacrifice was in our behalf, that we might have eternal riches.

Christ set his own feet in the path of self-denial and sacrifice, which all his disciples must travel, if they would be exalted with him at last. He took to his own heart the sorrows which man must suffer. The minds of worldly men frequently become gross. They can only see earthly things, which eclipse the glory and value of the heavenly. Men will compass land and sea for earthly gain, and endure privation and suffering to obtain their object, yet will turn away from Heaven's attractions and not regard eternal riches. Men who are in comparative poverty are usually the ones who do the most to sustain the cause of God. They are generous with their little. They have strengthened their generous impulses by continual liberalities. When their expenditures pressed close upon the income, their passion for earthly riches had no room or chance to strengthen. But many, when they begin to gather earthly riches, commence to calculate how long it will be before they can be in possession of a certain sum. In their anxiety to amass wealth for themselves, they fail to become rich toward God. Their benevolence does not keep pace with their accumulation. As their passion for riches increases, their affections are bound up with their treasure. The increase of their property strengthens the eager desire for more, until their giving to the Lord a tenth is considered by some a severe and unjust tax. Inspiration has said, "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." Many have said, "If I were as rich as such an one, I would multiply my gifts in the treasury of God. I would do nothing else with my wealth but use it in the advancement of the cause of God." God has tested some of these by giving them riches; but with the riches came the fiercer temptation, and their benevolence was far less than

in the days of their poverty. A grasping desire for greater riches absorbed their minds and hearts, and they committed idolatry.

He who presents to men infinite riches, and an eternal life of blessedness in his kingdom as the reward of faithful obedience, will not accept a divided heart. We are living amid the perils of the last days, where there is everything to divert the mind and allure the affections from God. Our duty will only be discerned, and appreciated when viewed in the light which shines from the life of Christ. As the sun rises in the east and passes toward the west, filling the world with light, so the true follower of Christ will be a light unto the world. He will go forth into the world as a bright and shining light, that those who are in darkness may be lightened and warmed by the rays shining forth from him. Christ says of his followers, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid."

Our great Exemplar was self-denying, and shall the course of his professed followers be in such marked contrast to his? The Saviour gave all for a perishing world, not withholding even himself. The church of God are asleep. They are enfeebled by inaction. Voices come to us from every part of the world, "Come over and help us;" but there is no answering movement. There is a feeble effort now and then; a few show that they would be co-workers with their Master; but such are frequently left to toil almost alone. There is but one missionary from our people in all the wide field in foreign countries.

The truth is mighty, but it is not carried into practice. Money alone is not sufficient to be laid upon the altar. God calls for men, volunteers, to carry the truth to other nations, and tongues, and people. It is not our numbers or our wealth that will give us a signal victory; but it is devotion to the work, moral courage, ardent love for souls, and untiring zeal, that never flags.

There are many who have looked upon the Jewish nation as a people to be pitied, because they were constantly taxed for the support of their religion; but God, who created man and provided him with all the blessings he enjoys, knew what was for his best good. And he has, through his blessing, made their nine-tenths worth more to them than the entire amount without his blessing. If any through their selfishness robbed God or brought to him an offering not perfect, disaster and loss were sure to follow them. God reads the motives of the heart. He is acquainted with the purposes of men, and will

mete out to them in his own good time as they have merited.

The special system of tithing was founded upon a principle which was as enduring as the law of God. This system of tithing was a blessing to the Jews, else God would not have given it them. So also will it be a blessing to those who carry it out to the end of time. Our Heavenly Father did not originate the plan of systematic benevolence to enrich himself, but to be a great blessing to man. He saw that this system of beneficence was just what man needed.

Those churches who are the most systematic and liberal in sustaining the cause of God, are the most prosperous spiritually. True liberality in the follower of Christ identifies his interest with that of his Master. In God's dealing with the Jews and his people to the end of time, he requires systematic benevolence proportionate to their income. The plan of salvation was laid by the infinite sacrifice of the Son of God. The light of the gospel shining from the cross of Christ rebukes selfishness, and encourages liberality and benevolence. It is not to be a lamented fact that there are increasing calls to give. God, in his providence, is calling his people out from their limited sphere of action, to enter upon greater enterprises. Unlimited effort is demanded at this time when moral darkness is covering the world. Worldliness and covetousness are eating out the vitals of God's people. They should understand that it is his mercy which multiplies the demands for their means. The angel of God places benevolent acts close beside prayer. He said to Cornelius, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God."

In the teachings of Christ, he said, "If ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" The spiritual health and prosperity of the church is dependent in a great degree upon her systematic benevolence. It is like the life blood which must flow through the whole being, vitalizing every member of the body. It increases love for the souls of our fellow-men; for by self-denial and self-sacrifice we are brought into a closer relation to Jesus Christ, who for our sakes became poor.

The more we invest in the cause of God to aid in the salvation of souls, the closer to our hearts they will be brought. Were our numbers half as large, and all of these devoted workers, we should have a power that would make the world tremble. To the active workers, Christ has addressed these words, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto



the end of the world."

We shall meet opposition arising from selfish motives and from bigotry and prejudice, yet with undaunted courage and living faith, we should sow beside all waters. The agents of Satan are formidable; we shall meet them and must combat them. Our labors are not to be confined to our own country. The field is the world; the harvest is ripe. The command given the disciples just before he ascended was, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." We feel pained beyond measure to see some of our ministers hovering about the churches, apparently putting forth some little effort, but having next to nothing to show for their labors. The field is the world. Let them go out to the unbelieving world and labor to convert souls to the truth. We refer our brethren and sisters to the example of Abraham going up to Mount Moriah to offer his only son at the command of God. Here was obedience and sacrifice. Moses was in king's courts, and a prospective crown was before him. But he turned away from the tempting bribe and "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt."

The apostles counted not their lives dear unto themselves, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ. Paul and Silas suffered the loss of all things. They suffered scourging, and were in no gentle manner thrown upon the cold floor of a dungeon in a most painful position, their feet elevated and fastened in the stocks. Then did repinings and complaints reach the ear of the jailor? Oh! no. From the inner prison, voices broke the silence of midnight with songs of joy and praise to God. Deep and earnest love for the cause of their Redeemer, for which Paul and Silas suffered, cheered them.

And as the truth of God fills our hearts, absorbs our affections, and controls our lives, we also shall count it joy to suffer for the truth's sake. No prison walls, no martyr's stake, can then daunt or hinder us in the great work.

"Come, O my soul, to Calvary."

Mark the humble life of the Son of God. He was a "man of sorrow and acquainted with grief." Behold his ignominy, his agony in Gethsemane, and learn what self-denial is. Are we suffering want? so was Christ, the majesty of Heaven. But his poverty was

for our sakes. Are we ranked among the rich? so was he. But he consented "for our sakes to become poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich." In Christ we have self-denial exemplified. The sacrifice of Christ consisted, not merely in leaving the royal courts of Heaven, and in being tried by wicked men as a criminal and pronounced guilty, and being delivered up to die as a malefactor, but in bearing the weight of the sins of the world. The life of Christ rebukes our indifference and coldness. We are near the close of time, when Satan has come down, having great wrath, knowing that his time is short. He is working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them which perish. The warfare has been left in our hands by our great Leader for us to carry forward with vigor. We are not doing a twentieth part of what we might do if we were awake. The work is retarded by love of ease and a lack of the self-denying spirit of which our Saviour has given us an example in his life.

Co-workers with Christ, men who feel the need of extended effort, are wanted. The work of our presses should not be lessened, but doubled. Schools should be established in different places to educate our youth preparatory to their laboring to advance the truth.

Already a great deal of time has been wasted, and angels bear to Heaven the record of our neglects. Our sleepy and unconsecrated condition has lost to us precious opportunities which God has sent to us in the persons of those who were qualified to help us in our present need. Oh! how much we need our Hannah More to aid us at this time in reaching those of other nations. Her extensive knowledge of missionary fields would give us access to those of other tongues that now we cannot approach. God brought this gift among us to meet our present emergency; but we prized not the gift, and he took her from us. She is at rest from her labors, but her self-denying works follow her. It is to be deplored that our missionary work should be retarded for the want of knowledge how to gain access to the different nations and localities in the great harvest field.

We feel anguish of spirit because some gifts are lost to us that we might now have if we had only been awake. Laborers have been kept back from the whitening harvest. It becomes the people of God to humble their hearts before him, and in the deepest humiliation to pray the Lord to pardon our apathy and selfish indulgence, and to blot out the shameful record of duties neglected, and privileges unimproved. In contemplation of the cross of Calvary the true Christian will abandon the thought of

restricting his offerings to that which costs him nothing, and will hear in trumpet tones,

"Go, labor in my vineyard, There's resting by-and-by."

When Jesus was about to ascend on high, he pointed to the harvest fields, and said to his followers, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel." "Freely ye have received, freely give." Shall we deny self that the wasting harvest may be gathered?

God calls for talents of influence and of means. Shall we refuse to obey? Our Heavenly Father bestows gifts and solicits a portion back, that he may test us whether we are worthy to have the gift of everlasting life.

January 1, 1875

## **Systematic Benevolence**

Should all whom God has prospered with earthly riches carry out his plan in faithfully giving a tenth of all their increase, and if they should not withhold their trespass offerings and their thank offerings, the treasury would be constantly replenished. The simplicity of the plan of systematic benevolence does not detract from its merits, but extols the wisdom of God in its arrangement. Everything bearing the divine stamp unites simplicity with utility.

If systematic benevolence was universally adopted, according to God's plan, and the tithing system carried out as faithfully by the wealthy as it is by the poorer classes, there would be no need of repeated and urgent calls for means at our large religious gatherings. There has been a neglect, in the several churches, of keeping up the plan of systematic benevolence, and the result has been an impoverished treasury and a backslidden church.

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offering. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the store house, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed; for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts."

God has been robbed in tithes and in offerings. It is a fearful thing to be guilty of withholding from the treasury, or of robbing God. Ministers who preach the word at our large gatherings feel the sinfulness of neglecting to render to God the things that are his. They know that God will not bless his people while disregarding his plan of benevolence. They seek to arouse the people to their duty by pointed, practical discourses, showing the danger and sinfulness of selfishness and covetousness. Conviction fastens upon minds, and the icy chill of selfishness is broken. And when the

call is made for donations to the cause of God, some, under the stirring influence of the meetings, are aroused to give who otherwise would do nothing. As far as this class is concerned, good results have been realized. But under pressing calls many feel the deepest who have not had their hearts frozen up with selfishness. They have conscientiously kept their means flowing out to advance the cause of God. Their whole being is stirred by the earnest appeals made, and the very ones respond who may have given all their circumstances in life would justify.

But these whole-hearted, liberal believers, prompted by their zealous love for the cause, in their desire to do promptly for the cause, judge themselves capable of doing more than God requires them to do, for their usefulness is crippled in other directions. These willing ones sometimes pledge to raise sums when they know not from what source they are coming, and some are placed in distressing circumstances to meet their pledges. Some are obliged to sell their produce at great disadvantage. Some have actually suffered for the conveniences and necessities of life, in order to meet their pledges.

There was a time at the commencement of our work when such sacrifice would have been justified, when God would have blessed all who thus ventured out to do for his cause. The friends of truth were few, and means were very limited. But the work has been widening and strengthening until there are means enough in the hands of believers to amply sustain the work in all its departments without embarrassing any, if all would bear their proportional part. The cause of God need not be crippled in the slightest degree. The precious truth has been made so plain that many have taken hold of it, who have in their hands means which God has intrusted to them for the purpose of using to advance the interests of the truth. If these men of means do their duty, there need not be a pressure brought upon the poorer brethren.

We are in a world of plenty. If the gifts and offerings were proportionate to the means which each has received of God, there would be no need of the urgent call for means at these large gatherings. I am fully convinced it is not the best plan to bring a pressure upon the point of means at our camp-meetings. Men and women who love the cause of God as they do their lives will pledge upon these occasions when their families must suffer for the very means that they have promised to give to advance the cause. Our God is not a taskmaster, requiring the poor man to give means to the cause that belong to his family to keep them in comfort and above pinching want.

The call for means at our large camp-meetings has been attended hitherto with apparently good results so far as the wealthy are concerned. But we fear the result of the continued effort to thus replenish the treasury. There will be, we fear, a re-action. Greater effort should be put forth, by responsible men in the different churches, to have all follow the plan of God's arrangement. If systematic benevolence is carried out, the urgent calls for means at the camp-meetings for various enterprises will not be necessary.

God has devised a plan by which all may give as he has prospered them, and which will make giving a habit without waiting for special calls. Those who can do this, and will not because of their selfishness, are robbing their Creator, who has bestowed upon them means to invest in his cause to advance its interests. Until all shall carry out the plan of systematic benevolence, there will be a failure in coming up to the apostolic rule. Those who minister in word and doctrine should be men of discrimination. They should, while they make general appeals, become acquainted with the ability of those who respond to their appeals, and should not allow the poor to pay large pledges. After a man has once consecrated a certain sum to the Lord, he feels that it is sacred and consecrated to a holy use. This is true, and therefore our preaching brethren should be well informed of whom they accept pledges.

Each member of the different families in our churches who believe the truth may act a part in its advancement by cheerfully adopting systematic benevolence. "Let every one of you lay by him in store [margin, by himself at home], ... that there be no gatherings when I come." The burden of urging and pressing individuals to give of their means was not designed to be the work of God's ministers. The responsibility should rest upon every individual who enjoys the belief of the truth. "Let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him." Every member of the family, from the oldest down to the youngest, may take part in this work of benevolence.

The offerings of little children may be acceptable and pleasing to God. In accordance with the spirit that prompts the gifts will be the value of the offering. The poor, by following the rule of the apostle in laying by every week a small sum, help to swell the treasury, and the gifts are wholly acceptable with God; for they are making just as great sacrifices as their more wealthy brethren, and even greater. The plan of systematic benevolence will prove a safeguard to every family against temptations to

spend means for needless things, and especially will it prove a blessing to the rich in guarding them from indulging in extravagances.

Every week the demands of God upon each family are brought to mind by each of its members fully carrying out the plan, and as its members have denied themselves some superfluity in order to have means to put into the treasury, lessons of value in self-denial for the glory of God have been impressed upon the heart. Once a week, each is brought face to face with the doings of the past week--the income that he might have had if he had been economical, and the means he has not because of indulgence. His conscience is reined up, as it were, before God, and either commends or accuses him. He learns that if he retains peace of mind and the favor of God, he must eat, and drink, and dress, to his glory.

Systematic action in giving in accordance with the plan keeps open the channel of the heart in liberal gifts. We place ourselves in connection with God, that he may use us as channels that his gifts may flow through us to others. The poor will not complain of systematic benevolence; for it touches them lightly. They are not neglected and passed by, but are favored with acting a part in being co-workers with Christ, and will receive the blessing of God as well as the wealthy. In the very process of laying aside the littles as they can spare them, they are denying self and cultivating liberality of heart. They are educating themselves to good works, and are meeting the design of God in the plan of systematic benevolence as effectually as the more wealthy who give of their abundance.

In the days of the apostles, men went everywhere preaching the word. New churches were raised up. Their love and zeal for Christ led them to acts of great denial and sacrifice. Many of these Gentile churches were very poor; yet the apostle declares that their deep poverty abounded to the riches of their liberality. Their gifts were extended beyond their power. Men periled their lives and suffered the loss of all things for the truth's sake.

The apostle suggests the first day of the week as a proper time to review the course of Providence and the prosperity experienced, and in the fear of God, with true gratitude of heart for the blessings he has bestowed, decide how much, according to his own devised plan, shall be rendered back to him.

God has designed that the exercise of benevolence should be purely voluntary,

not having recourse even to eloquent appeals to excite sympathy. "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." He is not pleased to have his treasury replenished with forced supplies. The loyal hearts of the people of God, rejoicing in the saving truth for this time, will, through love and gratitude to him for this precious light, be earnest and anxious to aid with their means in sending the truth to others. The very best manner to give expression to our love for our Redeemer, is to give and make offerings to bring souls to the knowledge of the truth.

The plan of redemption was entirely voluntary on the part of our Redeemer, and it is the purpose of Christ that all our benevolence should be free-will offerings.



January 28, 1875

## **Cannot Come Down**

"I am doing a great work," says Nehemiah, "so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease whilst I leave it, and come down to you?"

God's people, in this important time for the church, should not relax their watchfulness or vigilance for one moment. Satan is upon our track. He is determined to overcome God's commandment-keeping people, with his temptations. If we give no place to the devil, but resist his devices steadfast in the faith, we shall have strength to depart from all iniquity. Those who keep the commandments of God will be a power in the land, if they live up to their light and their privileges. They may be patterns of piety, holy in heart and in conversation. We shall not have ease, that we may cease watchfulness and prayer. As the time draws near for Christ to be revealed in the clouds of Heaven, Satan's temptations will be brought to bear with greater power upon those who keep God's commandments, for he knows that his time is short.

The work of Satan will be carried on through agents. Ministers who hate the law of God will employ any means to lead souls from their loyalty. Our bitterest foes will be among this class of persons. Their hearts are fully determined to make war against those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. This class feel that it is a virtue to talk, to write, and act out, the most bitter hatred against us. We need not look for fair dealing, or for justice, at their hands. Many of them are inspired by Satan with insane madness against those who are keeping the commandments of God. We will be maligned and misrepresented, all our motives and actions will be misjudged, and our characters will be attacked. The wrath of the dragon will be manifested in this manner. But I saw that we should not be in the least discouraged. Our strength is in Jesus, our advocate. If we, in humility and humble trust, hold fast to God, he will give us grace and heavenly wisdom to withstand all the wiles of Satan, and to come off victors.

It will not increase our influence, or bring us into favor with God, to come down from our great work to their level in meeting their slanders. There are those who will resort to any species of deception and gross falsehood, to gain their object and deceive souls, and to cast stigma upon the law of God and those who love to obey his

commandments. They will repeat the most inconsistent and vile falsehoods, over and over, until they make themselves believe that they are truth. These are the strongest arguments they have to use against the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. We should not allow our feelings to control us, and divert us from the work of warning the world.

The case of Nehemiah is a forcible illustration. He was engaged in building the walls of Jerusalem, and the enemies of God were determined that the walls should not be built. "But it came to pass, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth, and conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it."

In this case, a spirit of hatred and opposition to the Hebrews formed the bond of union, and created the mutual sympathy among different bodies of men, who otherwise might war against each other. This will illustrate what we frequently witness in our day in the existing union of men of different denominations to oppose the present truth, whose only bond seems to be that which is dragonic in its nature, manifesting hatred and bitterness against the remnant who keep the commandments of God. This is especially seen among those who seem to be famous in hating and slandering each other, when they can spare time from their efforts to misrepresent, slander, and in every way abuse Seventh-day Adventists. "Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them."

We are in constant danger of becoming self-sufficient, relying upon our own wisdom, and not making God our strength. Nothing disturbs Satan so much as our not being ignorant of his devices. If we feel our dangers, we shall feel the need of prayer as did Nehemiah, and, like him, we shall obtain that sure defense that will give us security in peril. If we are careless and indifferent, we shall surely be overcome by Satan's devices. We must be vigilant. While, like Nehemiah, we resort to prayer, taking all our perplexities and burdens to God, we should not feel that we have nothing to do. We are to watch as well as pray. We should watch the work of our adversaries, lest they gain advantage in deceiving souls. We should, in the wisdom of Christ, make efforts to defeat their purposes, while, at the same time, we do not suffer them to call us from our great work. Truth is stronger than error. Righteousness will prevail over wrong.

The Lord's people are seeking to heal the breach which has been made in the law

of God. "And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places; thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

This disturbs the enemies of our faith, and every means is employed to hinder us in our work. And yet the broken-down wall is going steadily up. The world is being warned, and many are turning away from trampling under their feet the Sabbath of Jehovah. God is in this work, and man cannot stop it. The angels of God are working with the efforts of God's faithful servants, and steadily the work advances.

We shall meet with opposition of every description, as did the builders of the walls of Jerusalem; but if we watch and pray, and work as they did, God will fight our battles for us and give us precious victories. Nehemiah "clave unto the Lord and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments which the Lord commanded Moses, and the Lord was with him."

Messengers were sent repeatedly, soliciting a conference with Nehemiah, but he refused to meet them. Bold threats were made of what they proposed to do, and messengers were sent to harangue the people engaged in their work of building. They presented flattering inducements, and promised them a freedom from restraint, and wonderful privileges, if they would unite their interest with them, and cease their work of building the walls of Jerusalem.

But the people were commanded not to engage in controversy with their enemies, and to answer them not a word, that no advantage of words might be given them. Threatenings and ridicule were resorted to. They said, "Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he will even break down their stone wall." Sanballat "was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews." Nehemiah prays, "Hear, O our God; for we are despised; and turn their reproach upon their own head."

"And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I

cannot come down. Why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you? Yet they sent unto me four times after this sort; and I answered them after the same manner. Then sent Sanballet his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand."

We shall receive the most fierce opposition from that class who oppose the law of God. But like the builders of the walls of Jerusalem, we should not be diverted and hindered from our work by reports, by messengers desiring discussion or controversy, or by intimidating threats, the publication of falsehoods, or any of the devices Satan may instigate. Our answer should be, We are engaged in a great work, and we cannot come down. We shall sometimes be perplexed to know what course we should pursue, to preserve the honor of the cause of God, and to vindicate his truth.

The course of Nehemiah should have a strong bearing upon our minds, as to the manner of meeting this kind of opponents. We should take all these things to the Lord in prayer, as Nehemiah made his supplication to God while his own spirit was humbled. He clung to God with unwavering faith. This is the course we should pursue. Time is too precious for the servants of God to devote to vindicating their character blackened by those who hate the Sabbath of the Lord. We should move forward with unwavering confidence, believing that God will give to his truth great and precious victories. In humility, meekness, and purity of life, relying upon Jesus, we shall carry a convincing power with us that we have the truth.

We do not understand the faith and confidence we may have in God, the great blessings which faith will give us, as is our privilege. An important work is before us. We are to obtain a moral fitness for Heaven. Our words and our example are to tell upon the world. Angels of God are actively engaged in ministering to the children of God. Precious promises are upon record on condition of our obedience to God's requirements. Heaven is full of the richest of blessings, all waiting to be communicated to us. If we feel our need, and come to God in sincerity and in earnest faith, we shall be brought into close connection with Heaven, and shall be channels of light to the world.

The warning needs to be often sounded, "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

March 4, 1875

## **Temptation of Christ**

The conflict of Christ with Satan in the wilderness will be regarded with sacred interest by every true follower of Christ. We should have feelings of the deepest gratitude to our Redeemer for teaching us by his own example how to resist and overcome Satan. Jesus did not visit scenes of gaiety and feasting to attain the victory so essential to our salvation; but he went into a desolate wilderness. Many do not even contemplate this scene of Christ in conflict with the fallen chief. They do not enter into sympathy with their Redeemer. Some even doubt whether Christ really felt the pangs of hunger in his abstinence from food during the period of forty days and forty nights.

He who suffered death for us on Calvary's cross, just as surely suffered the keenest pangs of hunger as that he died for us. And no sooner did this suffering commence than Satan was at hand with his temptations. We have a foe no less vigilant to contend with. Satan adapts his temptations to our circumstances. In every temptation he will present some bribe, some apparent good to be gained. But in the name of Christ we may have complete victory in resisting his devices.

It is more than eighteen hundred years since Christ walked upon the earth as a man among men. He found suffering and wretchedness abounding everywhere. What humiliation on the part of Christ! For, though he was in the form of God, he took upon himself the form of a servant. He was rich in Heaven, crowned with glory and honor, and for our sakes he became poor. What an act of condescension on the part of the Lord of life and glory, that he might lift up fallen man.

Jesus did not come to men with commands and threatenings, but with love that is without a parallel. Love begets love; and thus the love of Christ displayed upon the cross woos and wins the sinner, and binds him, repenting, to the cross, believing and adoring the matchless depths of a Saviour's love. Christ came to the world to perfect a righteous character for many, and to elevate the fallen race. But only a few of the millions in our world will accept the righteousness and excellency of his character, and fulfill the requirements given to secure their happiness.

His lessons of instruction and his holy life, if followed, would stay the tide of physical and moral wretchedness that has so defiled the moral image of God in man that he bears scarcely a resemblance to the noble Adam as he stood in Eden in his holy innocence. Every prohibition of God is for the health and eternal well-being of man. In obedience to all the requirements of God, there will be peace and happiness unaccompanied with shame or reproaches of conscience.

But very few of the Christian world are following their Master in a course of humble obedience, progressing in holiness and perfection of Christian character. Intemperance and licentiousness are greatly increasing, and are practiced to a large extent under the cloak of Christianity. This deplorable state of things is not because men are obedient to God's law, but because their hearts rise in rebellion to his holy precepts.

Repentance toward God, because his law has been transgressed, and faith in Jesus Christ, are the only means whereby we may be elevated to purity of life and reconciliation with God. Were all the sins, which have brought the wrath of God upon cities and nations, fully understood, their woes and calamities would be found to be the results of uncontrolled appetites and passions.

### More Than One Fall

If the race had ceased to fall when Adam was driven from Eden, we should now be in a far more elevated condition physically, mentally, and morally. But while men deplore the fall of Adam, which has resulted in such unutterable woe, they disobey the express injunctions of God, as did Adam, although they have his example to warn them from doing as he did in violating the law of Jehovah. Would that man had stopped falling with Adam. But there has been a succession of falls. Men will not take warning from Adam's experience. They will indulge appetite and passion in direct violation of the law of God, and at the same time continue to mourn Adam's transgression, which brought sin into the world.

From Adam's day to ours there has been a succession of falls, each greater than the last, in every species of crime. God did not create a race of beings so devoid of health, beauty, and moral power as now exists in the world. Disease of every kind has been fearfully increasing upon the race. This has not been by God's especial providence, but directly contrary to his will. It has come by man's disregard of the very means which

God has ordained to shield him from the terrible evils existing. Obedience to God's law in every respect would save men from intemperance, licentiousness, and disease of every type. No one can violate natural law without suffering the penalty.

What man would, for any sum of money, deliberately sell his mental capabilities? Should one offer him money if he would part with his intellect, he would turn with disgust from the insane suggestion. Yet thousands are parting with health of body, vigor of intellect, and elevation of soul, for the sake of gratifying appetite. Instead of gain, they experience only loss. This they do not realize because of their benumbed sensibilities. They have bartered away their God-given faculties. And for what? Answer. Groveling sensualities and degrading vices. The gratification of taste is indulged at the cost of health and intellect.

Christ commenced the work of redemption just where the ruin began. He made provision to re-instate man in his God-like purity if he accepted the help brought him. Through faith in his all-powerful name--the only name given under Heaven whereby we may be saved--man could overcome appetite and passion, and through his obedience to the law of God, health would take the place of infirmities and corrupting diseases. Those who overcome will follow the example of Christ by bringing bodily appetites and passion under the control of enlightened conscience and reason.

If ministers who preach the gospel would do their duty, and would also be ensamples to the flock of God, their voices would be lifted up like a trumpet to show the people their transgressions and the house of Israel their sins. Ministers who exhort sinners to be converted should distinctly define what sin is and what conversion from sin is. Sin is the transgression of the law. The convicted sinner must exercise repentance toward God for the transgression of his law, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

The apostle gives us the true definition of sin. "Sin is the transgression of the law." The largest class of Christ's professed ambassadors are blind guides. They lead the people away from the path of safety by representing the requirements and prohibitions of the ancient law of Jehovah as arbitrary and severe. They give the sinner license to overstep the limits of God's law. In this they are like the great adversary of souls, opening before them a life of freedom in violation of God's commandments. With this lawless freedom the basis of moral responsibility is gone.

Those who follow these blind leaders close the avenues of their souls to the reception of truth. They will not allow the truth with its practical bearings to affect their hearts. The largest number brace their souls with prejudice against new truths, and also against the clearest light which shows the correct application of an old truth, the law of God, which is as old as the world. The intemperate and licentious delight in the oft repeated assertion that the law of the ten commandments is not binding in this dispensation. Avarice, thefts, perjuries, and crimes of every description, are carried on under the cloak of Christianity.



March 18, 1875

## **Health and Happiness**

And why should not men do these things if the law forbidding them is abolished? No message from earth or Heaven can forcibly impress the intemperate and the licentious who are deluded with the theory that the law of ten commandments is abolished. Many professed ministers of Christ exhort the people to holiness of life, while they themselves yield to the power of appetite, and the defilement of tobacco. These teachers, who are leading the people to despise physical and moral law, will have a fearful record to meet by-and-by.

Health, truth, and happiness, can never be advanced without an intelligent knowledge of, and full obedience to, the law of God, and perfect faith in Jesus Christ. The Lord uses no other medium through which to reach the human heart. Many professed Christians acknowledge that in the use of tobacco they are indulging a filthy, expensive, and hurtful practice. But they excuse themselves by saying that the habit is formed, and they cannot overcome it. In this acknowledgment they yield homage to Satan, saying, by their actions, if not in words, that "although God is powerful, Satan has greater power." By profession they say, "We are the servants of Jesus Christ," while their works say that they yield subjection to Satan's sway, because it costs them the least inconvenience. Is this overcoming as Christ overcame? or is it being overcome by temptation? And the above apology is urged by men in the ministry, who profess to be Christ's ambassadors.

Many are the temptations and besetments on every side to ruin the prospects of young men, both for this world and the next. But the only path of safety is for young and old to live in strict conformity to the principles of physical and moral law. The path of obedience is the only path that leads to Heaven. Alcohol and tobacco inebriates would, at times, give any amount of money if they could by so doing overcome their appetite for these body-and-soul-destroying indulgences. And they who will not subject the appetites and passions to the control of reason, will indulge them at the expense of physical and moral obligations.

The victims of a depraved appetite, goaded on by Satan's continual temptations,

will seek indulgence at the expense of health and even life, and will go to the bar of God as self-murderers. Many have so long allowed habit to master them that they have become slaves to appetite. They have not the moral courage to persevere in self-denial, and to endure suffering for a time through restraint and denial of the taste, in order to master the vice. This class refuse to overcome as did their Redeemer. Did not Christ endure physical suffering and mental anguish on man's account in the wilderness?

Many have so long allowed appetite and taste to control reason that they have not moral power to persevere in self-denial, and endure suffering for a time, until abused nature can take up her work, and healthy action be established in the system. Very many with perverted tastes, shrink at the thought of restricting their diet, and they continue their unhealthful indulgences. They are not willing to overcome as did their Redeemer.

What a scene of unexampled suffering was that fast of nearly six weeks, while Jesus was assailed with the fiercest temptations! How few can understand the love of God for the fallen race in that he withheld not his divine Son from taking upon him the humiliation of humanity! He gave up his dearly beloved to shame and agony, that he might bring many sons and daughters to glory.

When sinful man can discern the inexpressible love of God in giving his Son to die upon the cross, we shall better understand that it is infinite gain to overcome as Christ overcame. And we shall understand that it is eternal loss if we gain the whole world, with all its pleasure and glory, and yet lose the soul. Heaven is cheap enough at any cost.

On Jordan's banks the voice from Heaven, attended by the manifestation from the excellent glory, proclaimed Christ to be the Son of the Eternal. Satan was to personally encounter the Head of the kingdom which he came to overthrow. If he failed, he knew that he was lost. Therefore, the power of his temptations was in accordance with the greatness of the object which he would lose or gain. For four thousand years, ever since the declaration was made to Adam that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, he had been planning his manner of attack.

He put forth his strongest efforts to overcome Christ on the point of appetite at a time when he was enduring the keenest pangs of hunger. The victory gained was designed, not only to set an example to those who have fallen under the power of

appetite, but to qualify the Redeemer for his special work of reaching to the very depths of human woe. By experiencing in himself the strength of Satan's temptation, and of human sufferings and infirmities, he would know how to succor those who should put forth efforts to help themselves.

No amount of money can buy a single victory over the temptations of Satan. But that which money is valueless to obtain, which is integrity, determined effort, and moral power, will, through the name of Christ, obtain noble victories upon the point of appetite. What if the conflict should cost man even his life? What if the slaves to these vices do really die in the struggle to free themselves from the controlling power of appetite? they die in a good cause. And if the victory be gained at the cost of human life, it is not too dearly earned if the victor can come up in the first resurrection, and have the overcomer's reward.

Everything, then, is gained. But life will not be sacrificed in the struggle to overcome depraved appetites. And it is a certainty that unless we do overcome as Christ overcame we cannot have a seat with him upon his throne. Those who in the face of light and truth destroy mental, moral, and physical health, by indulgence of any kind, will lose Heaven. They sacrifice their God-given powers to idols. God deserves and claims our first and highest thoughts and our holiest affections.

At an infinite cost, Christ our Redeemer has purchased every faculty and our very existence, and all our blessings in life have been purchased for us with the price of his blood. Shall we accept the blessings, and forget the claims of the Giver? Can any of us consent to follow our inclination, indulge appetites and passions, and live without God? Shall we eat and drink like the beast, and no more associate the thought of God with every good we enjoy than the dumb animals?

Those who make determined efforts in the name of the Conqueror to overcome every unnatural craving of appetite will not die in the conflict. In their efforts to control appetite, they are placing themselves in right relations to life, so that they may enjoy health and the favor of God, and have a right hold on the immortal life.

Thousands are continually selling physical, mental, and moral vigor for the pleasure of taste. Each of the faculties has its distinctive office, and yet they all have a mutual dependence upon each other. And if the balance is carefully preserved, they will

be kept in harmonious action. Not one of these faculties can be valued by dollars and cents. And yet, for a good dinner, for alcohol, or tobacco, they are sold. And while paralyzed by the indulgence of appetite, Satan controls the mind, and leads to every species of crime and wickedness. God has enjoined upon us to preserve every faculty in healthful vigor, that we may have a clear sense of his requirements, and that we may perfect holiness in his fear.

March 25, 1875

## **Strange Fire**

Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, who ministered in the holy office of priesthood, partook freely of wine, and, as was their usual custom, went in to minister before the Lord. The priests who burned incense before the Lord were required to use the fire of God's kindling, which burned day and night, and was never extinguished. God gave explicit directions how every part of his service should be conducted, that all connected with his sacred worship might be in accordance with his holy character. And any deviation from the express directions of God in connection with his holy service was punishable with death. No sacrifice would be acceptable to God which was not salted nor seasoned with divine fire, which represented the communication between God and man that was opened through Jesus Christ alone. The holy fire which was to be put upon the censer was kept burning perpetually. And while the people of God were without, earnestly praying, the incense kindled by the holy fire was to arise before God, mingled with their prayers. This incense was an emblem of the mediation of Christ.

Aaron's sons took the common fire which God did not accept, and they offered insult to the infinite God by presenting this strange fire before him. God consumed them by fire for their positive disregard of his express directions. All their works were as the offering of Cain. There was no divine Saviour represented. Had these sons of Aaron been in full command of their reasoning faculties they would have discerned the difference between the common and sacred fire. The gratification of appetite debased their faculties and so beclouded their intellect that their power of discernment was gone. They fully understood the holy character of the typical service, and the awful solemnity and responsibility assumed of presenting themselves before God to minister in sacred service.

Some may inquire, How could the sons of Aaron have been accountable when their intellects were so far paralyzed by intoxication that they were not able to discern the difference between sacred and common fire? It was when they put the cup to their lips that they made themselves responsible for all their acts committed while under the influence of wine. The indulgence of appetite cost those priests their lives. God expressly forbade the use of wine that would have an influence to becloud the intellect.

"And the Lord spake unto Aaron, saying, Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations; and that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean; and that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses."

The special injunction of God to the Hebrews in reference to the use of intoxicating liquors should be regarded in this dispensation. But many who are holding the highest responsibilities in our country are, in too many cases, liquor-and-tobacco slaves.

Jurors in our courts, by whose verdict the innocence or guilt of their fellow-men is decided, are many of them liquor-drinkers and tobacco-inebriates. And, while under the influence of these, which becloud the intellect and debase the soul, judgment is given upon the liberty and life of their fellow-men.

Perverted judgment in many cases clears from all punishment the greatest criminals, when the safety of society demands they should receive the full penalty of the law which they have violated.

The men who are legislating and those who are executing the laws of our government, while they are violating the laws of their being in debasing appetites, which stupefy and paralyze the intellect, are not fitted to decide the destiny of their fellow-men. Those only who feel the necessity of keeping soul, body, and spirit, in conformity to natural law, to the end that they may preserve the right balance of their mental powers, are fitted to decide important questions in reference to the execution of the law of our land. This was the mind of God by decrees to the Hebrews that wine should not be used by those who ministered in holy office.

Here we have the most plain directions of God, and his reasons for prohibiting the use of wine; that their power of discrimination and discernment might be clear, and in no way confused; that their judgment might be correct, and they be ever able to discern between the clean and unclean. Another reason of weighty importance why they should abstain from anything which would intoxicate, is also given. It would require the full

use of unclouded reason to present to the children of Israel all the statutes which God had spoken to them.

Anything in eating and drinking which disqualifies the mental powers for healthful and active exercise is an aggravating sin in the sight of God. Especially is this the case with those who minister in holy things, who should at all times be examples to the people, and be in a condition to properly instruct them.

Notwithstanding they have this striking example before them, some professed Christians will desecrate the house of God with breaths polluted with the fumes of liquor and tobacco. And the spittoons are sometimes filled with the ejected spittle and quids of tobacco. The effluvia is constantly arising from these receptacles, polluting the atmosphere. Men professing to be Christians bow to worship God, and dare to pray to him with their lips stained by tobacco, while their half-paralyzed nerves tremble from the exhausting use of this powerful narcotic. And this is the devotion they offer to a holy, and sin-hating God. Ministers in the sacred desk, with mouth and lips defiled, dare to take the sacred word of God in their polluted lips. They think God does not notice their sinful indulgence. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." God will no more receive a sacrifice from the hands of those who thus pollute themselves, and offer with their service the incense of tobacco and liquor, than he would receive the offering of the sons of Aaron, who offered incense with strange fire.

God has not changed. He is as particular and exact in his requirements now as he was in the days of Moses. But in the sanctuaries of worship in our day, with the songs of praise, the prayers, and the teaching from the pulpit, there is not merely strange fire, but positive defilement. Instead of truth's being preached with holy unction from God, it is sometimes spoken under the influence of tobacco and brandy. Strange fire indeed! Bible truth and Bible holiness are presented to the people, and prayers are offered to God, mingled with the stench of tobacco! Such incense is most acceptable to Satan! A terrible deception is this! What an offense in the sight of God! What an insult to him who is holy, dwelling in light unapproachable!

If the faculties of the mind were in healthful vigor, professed Christians would discern the inconsistency of such worship. Like Nadab and Abihu, their sensibilities are so blunted that they make no difference between the sacred and common. Holy and

sacred things are brought down upon a level with their tobacconized breaths, benumbed brains, and their polluted souls, defiled through indulgence of appetite and passion. Professed Christians eat and drink, smoke and chew tobacco, and become gluttons and drunkards, to gratify appetite, and still talk of overcoming as Christ overcame!!



April 1, 1875

## **Sin of Presumption**

There are many who fail to distinguish between the rashness of presumption and the intelligent confidence of faith. Satan thought that by his temptations he could delude the world's Redeemer, to make one bold move in manifesting his divine power, to create a sensation, and to surprise all by the wonderful display of the power of his Father in preserving him from injury. He suggested that Christ should appear in his real character, and by this masterpiece of power, establish his right to the confidence and faith of the people, that he was indeed the Saviour of the world. If Christ had been deceived by Satan's temptations, and had exercised his miraculous power to relieve himself from difficulty, he would have broken the contract made with his Father, to be a probationer in behalf of the race.

It was a difficult task for the Prince of Life to carry out the plan which he had undertaken for the salvation of man, in clothing his divinity with humanity. He had received honor in the heavenly courts, and was familiar with absolute power. It was as difficult for him to keep the level of humanity as it is for men to rise above the low level of their depraved natures, and be partakers of the divine nature.

Christ was put to the closest test, requiring the strength of all his faculties to resist the inclination when in danger, to use his power to deliver himself from peril, and triumph over the power of the prince of darkness. Satan showed his knowledge of the weak points of the human heart, and put forth his utmost power to take advantage of the weakness of the humanity which Christ had assumed in order to overcome his temptations on man's account.

God has given man precious promises upon conditions of faith and obedience; but they are not to sustain him in any rash act. If men needlessly place themselves in peril, and go where God does not require them to go, and self-confidently expose themselves to danger, disregarding the dictates of reason, God will not work a miracle to relieve them. He will not send his angels to preserve any from being burned if they choose to place themselves in the fire.

Adam was not deceived by the serpent, as was Eve, and it was inexcusable in Adam to rashly transgress God's positive command. Adam was presumptuous because his wife had sinned. He could not see what would become of Eve. He was sad, troubled, and tempted. He listened to Eve's recital of the words of the serpent, and his constancy and integrity began to waver. Doubts arose in his mind in regard to whether God did mean just as he said. He rashly ate the tempting fruit.

### Spiritualism

Spiritualists make the path to hell most attractive. Spirits of darkness are clothed by these deceptive teachers in pure robes of Heaven, and they have power to deceive those not fortified with Bible truth. Vain philosophy is employed in representing the path to hell as a path of safety. With the imagination highly wrought, and voices musically tuned, they picture the broad road as one of happiness and glory. Ambition holds before deluded souls, as Satan presented to Eve, a freedom and bliss for them to enjoy which they never conceived was possible. Men are praised who have traveled the broad path to hell, and after they die are exalted to the highest positions in the eternal world. Satan, clothed in robes of brightness, appearing like an exalted angel, tempted the world's Redeemer without success. But as he comes to man robed as an angel of light he has better success. He covers his hideous purposes, and succeeds too well in deluding the unwary who are not firmly anchored upon eternal truth.

Riches, power, genius, eloquence, pride, perverted reason, and passion, are enlisted as Satan's agents in doing his work in making the broad road attractive, strewing it with tempting flowers. But every word they have spoken against the world's Redeemer will be reflected back upon them, and will one day burn into their guilty souls like molten lead. They will be overwhelmed with terror and shame as they behold the exalted one coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Then shall the bold defier, who lifted himself up against the Son of God, see himself in the true blackness of his character. The sight of the inexpressible glory of the Son of God will be intensely painful to those whose characters are stained with sin. The pure light and glory emanating from Christ will awaken remorse, shame, and terror. They will send forth wails of anguish to the rocks and mountains, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him who sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"

Spiritualists claim superior light and power. They have opened the door and invited the prince of darkness in, and have made him their honored guest. They have allied themselves to the powers of darkness which are developing in these last days in signs and wonders, that if it were possible they would deceive the very elect. Spiritualists claim that they can do greater miracles than Christ did. Satan made the same boasts to Christ. Because the Son of God had linked himself to the weakness of humanity, to be tempted in all points like as man should be tempted, Satan triumphed over him, and taunted him. He boasted of his superior strength, and dared him to open a controversy with him.

Spiritualists are increasing in numbers. They will come to men who have the truth as Satan came to Christ, tempting them to manifest their power and work miracles, and give evidence of their being favored of God, and of their being the people who have the truth. Satan said to Christ, "If thou be the Son of God, command these stones that they be made bread." Herod and Pilate asked Christ to work miracles when he was on trial for his life. Their curiosity was aroused, but Christ did not work a miracle to gratify them.

Spiritualists will press the matter to engage in controversy with ministers who teach the truth. If they decline, they will dare them. They will quote Scripture, as did Satan to Christ. "Prove all things," say they. But their idea of proving is to listen to their deceptive reasonings, and to attend their circles. But in their gatherings, the angels of darkness assume the forms of dead friends, and communicate with them as angels of light.

Their loved ones will appear in robes of light, as familiar to the sight as when they were upon the earth. They will teach them, and converse with them. And many will be deceived by this wonderful display of Satan's power. The only safety for the people of God is to be thoroughly conversant with their Bibles, and be intelligent upon the reasons of our faith in regard to the sleep of the dead.

Satan is a cunning foe. And it is not difficult for the evil angels to represent both saints and sinners who have died, and make these representations visible to human eyes. These manifestations will be more frequent, and developments of a more startling character will appear as we near the close of time. We need not be astonished at anything in the line of deceptions to allure the unwary, and deceive, if possible, the very

elect. Spiritualists quote, "Prove all things." But God has, for the benefit of his people who live amid the perils of the last days, proved this class, and given the result of his proving.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12: "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

April 15, 1875

## **Temptation of Christ**

John upon the Isle of Patmos, saw the things which should come upon the earth in the last days, Revelation 13:13; 16:14: "And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men." "For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

The apostle Peter distinctly points out the class which will be manifested in these days. 2 Peter 2:10-14: "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. But these, as natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption, and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the daytime. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls; a heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children."

God, in his word, has placed his stamp upon the heresies of spiritualism as he placed his mark upon Cain. The godly need not be deceived if they are students of the Scriptures and obedient to follow the plain path marked out for them in the word of God.

The boastful spiritualist claims great freedom, and in smooth, flowery language seeks to fascinate and delude unwary souls to choose the broad path of pleasure and sinful indulgence, rather than the narrow path and the straight way. Spiritualists call the requirements of God's law bondage, and say those who obey them live a life of slavish fear. With smooth words and fair speeches they boast of their freedom, and seek to cover their dangerous heresies with the garments of righteousness. They would make the most revolting crimes be considered as blessings to the race.

They open before the sinner a wide door to follow the promptings of the carnal heart, and violate the law of God, especially the seventh commandment. Those who speak these great swelling words of vanity, and who triumph in their freedom in sin, promise those whom they deceive the enjoyment of freedom in a course of rebellion against the revealed will of God. These deluded souls are themselves in the veriest bondage to Satan and are controlled by his power, and yet promising liberty to those who will dare to follow the same course of sin that they themselves have chosen.

The Scriptures are indeed fulfilled in this, that the blind are leading the blind. For by whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. These deluded souls are under the most abject slavery to the will of demons. They have allied themselves to the powers of darkness and have no strength to go contrary to the will of demons. This is their boasted liberty. By Satan are they overcome and brought into bondage, and the great liberty promised to those they deceive is helpless slavery to sin and Satan.

We are not to attend their circles, neither are our ministers to engage in controversy with them. They are of that class specified whom we should not invite into our houses, or bid them God speed. We have to compare their teachings with the revealed will of God. We are not to engage in an investigation of spiritualism. God has investigated this for us, and told us definitely that a class would arise in the last days who would deny Christ who has purchased them with his own blood. The character of spiritualists is so plainly described that we need not be deceived by them. If we obey the divine injunction, we shall have no sympathy with spiritualists, however smooth and fair may be their words.

The beloved John continues his warning against seducers: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is Anti-christ that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father (but he that acknowledgeth the Son, hath the Father also)."

In Paul's second epistle to the Thessalonians, he exhorts us to be on our guard, and not depart from the faith. He speaks of Christ's coming as an event to immediately follow the work of Satan in spiritualism in these words: "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them

strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

In the epistle of Paul to Timothy, he foretells what will be manifested in the latter days. And this warning was for the benefit of those who should live when these things should take place. God revealed to his servant the perils of the church in the last days. He writes, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron."

The faithful Peter speaks of the dangers to which the Christian church would be exposed in the last days, and more fully describes the heresies which would arise and the blaspheming seducers who would seek to draw away souls after them. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."

Here God has worked out for us the proof of the class mentioned. They have refused to acknowledge Christ as the Son of God, and they have no more reverence for the eternal Father than for his Son, Jesus Christ. They have neither the Son nor the Father. And like their great leader, the rebel chief, they are in rebellion against the law of God, and they despise the blood of Christ.

We may rejoice in every condition of life, and triumph under all circumstances, because the Son of God came down from Heaven and submitted to bear our infirmities, and to endure sacrifice and death in order to give to us immortal life. He will ever bear the marks of his earthly humiliation in man's behalf. While the redeemed host and the pure angelic throng shall do him honor and worship him, he will carry the marks of one that has been slain. The more fully we appreciate the infinite sacrifice made in our behalf by a sin-atonement Saviour, the more closely do we come into harmony with Heaven.

We have characters to form here. God will test us and prove us by placing us in positions to develop the most enduring strength, purity, and nobility of soul, with perfect patience on our part, and entire trust in a crucified Saviour. We shall meet with

reverses, affliction, and severe trials; for these are God's tests. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and purge his people as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness.

The cross of Christ is all covered with reproach and stigma, yet it is the hope of life and exaltation to man. No one can comprehend the mystery of godliness so long as he is ashamed to bear the cross of Christ. None will be able to discern and appreciate the blessings which Christ has purchased for man at infinite cost to himself, unless he is willing to joyfully sacrifice earthly treasures that they may become his followers. Every self-denial and sacrifice made for Christ enriches the giver, and every suffering and reproach endured for his dear name increases the final joy and immortal reward in the kingdom of glory.



April 29, 1875

## **Christ and the Law**

Jesus would convince his enemies that his teachings and miracles did not supplant the law, detract from its dignity, or lessen its claims. His works were in strict accordance with both the moral and the ceremonial law. Christ was the angel who went before Moses, and guided the travels of the children of Israel in the wilderness. God had said to Israel, "Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions; for my name is in him. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries." Exodus 23:20-22. This angel, Christ, gave Moses the ceremonies and ordinances of the Jewish law to be repeated to the people.

The rebellion of Israel against the law and authority of God, caused their destruction. The honor God had given them of being thus conducted by his Son, increased their sin. The charges of the Jews that Christ did not regard the law of Moses, was without the least foundation. Christ was a Jew, and, to the hour of his death upon the cross, observed the law binding upon the Jews. But when type met antitype, at the death of Christ, then the offering of the blood of beasts became valueless. Christ made the one great offering in giving his own life, which all their former offerings had foreshadowed, which terminated the value of all the sacrificial offerings of the Jewish law.

Since the fall, no immediate communication could exist between God and man, only through Christ, and God committed to his Son, in a special sense, the case of the fallen race. Christ has undertaken the work of redemption. He purposes to maintain the full honor of God's law, notwithstanding the human family have transgressed it. He will redeem from its curse all the obedient who will embrace the offer of mercy by accepting the atonement so wonderfully provided. Through his mediatorial work, Christ will fully vindicate the holiness and immutability of his Father's law.

Adam and Eve at their creation had knowledge of the original law of God. It was

imprinted upon their hearts, and they were acquainted with the claims of law upon them. When they transgressed the law of God, and fell from their state of happy innocence, and became sinners, the future of the fallen race was not relieved by a single ray of hope. God pitied them and Christ devised the plan for their salvation by himself bearing the guilt. When the curse was pronounced upon the earth and upon man in connection with the curse was a promise that through Christ there was hope and pardon for the transgression of God's law. Although gloom and darkness hung, like the pall of death, over the future, yet in the promise of the Redeemer, the star of hope lighted up the dark future. The gospel was first preached to Adam by Christ. Adam and Eve felt sincere sorrow and repentance for their guilt. They believed the precious promise of God, and were saved from utter ruin.

Paradise was lost to Adam and the curse was pronounced upon the earth because of the transgression of the Father's law, and death came because of sin. Adam found by sad experience that it was easier to transgress the commandments of God than to resist and press back the tide of moral wretchedness that was pressing in upon him. Those who lived before the flood were favored in having a knowledge of the law of God communicated to them by Adam who had conversed with God and angels in Eden. He lived among them nearly one thousand years, and by his teachings, example, and humble obedience to all God's requirements, exalted the law of God. He sought to turn his posterity from transgression to a life of obedience and faith in a Saviour to come.

The knowledge of the law of God was preserved from Adam to Noah, and from Noah to Abraham and from Abraham to Moses, for the benefit of all who should live upon the earth. The blessings upon the patriarch Abraham for obedience are repeated to Isaac in these words: "And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes [statutes], and my laws."

Enoch first received instruction from Noah [Adam], and he observed the law of God, and served him with singleness of heart. He became so pure in character that the Lord communicated his will to him, and through holy vision revealed the great events connected with Christ's second appearing, and also the wickedness that would prevail just prior to the end. Enoch was a faithful preacher of righteousness, and sought to turn men from the transgression of the law to faithful obedience. He walked with God three

hundred years, giving to the world a faithful example in a pure and spotless life, which was in marked contrast with that rebellious and self-willed generation who boasted of their open disregard of God's holy law. His testimony was not regarded because men loved sin better than holiness. Enoch was borne by angels to Heaven without seeing death.

In the destruction of the inhabitants of the old world by the flood is clearly represented the [fate] of all those who continue to transgress the law of God. Enoch's translation to Heaven represents the commandment-keeping people of God who will be alive upon the earth when Christ shall come the second time, and who will be glorified in the sight of those who hated them because they would keep the commandments of God. These also will be translated to Heaven without seeing death, as Enoch and Elijah were.

The great wickedness of the people before the flood had reached unto Heaven. And the Lord made known to Noah that he would destroy man, whom he had created, from off the earth by the waters of the flood, because of their continual transgression of his law. Noah warned the people. He believed the word of God, and faithfully preached to that sinful generation, and made every effort to turn them from transgression to obedience. But he was unsuccessful. Only his own family at last received his message. The terrible judgments of God in their destruction should have been sufficient warning to all who should afterward live upon the earth, that God will surely punish those who disregard his law. But as the people multiplied upon the earth, men became bold in their transgression of God's law. Idolatry existed and increased to a fearful extent, until the Lord left the hardened transgressors to follow their evil ways, and he chose Abraham from an idolatrous family, and made him the depositary of his law for future generations.

The Lord communicated his will to Abraham through angels. Christ appeared to him, and gave him a distinct knowledge of the requirements of the moral law, and of the great salvation which would be accomplished through himself. Abraham was appointed of God to preserve the truth amid the prevailing sins and corruptions which were increasing. But the descendants of Abraham departed from the worship of the true God, and transgressed his law. They mingled with the nations who had no knowledge or fear of God, and gradually imitated their customs and manners, until God's anger was kindled against them, and he permitted them to have their own way and follow the

devices of their own corrupt hearts. He had conferred special blessings upon Abraham because he was faithful in keeping his commandments, and had chosen his family as his peculiar treasure.

God revealed to Abraham his purposes through vision. He was shown in a figure that his posterity would become bondmen to an idolatrous nation, because of their transgression of the law of God, and that they would be punished for their apostasy.

But when they humbled themselves before God, and acknowledged his dealings, and cried unto him earnestly for deliverance from the oppressive yoke of the Egyptians, their cries, and their promises to serve God and to be obedient to his law if he would break from off them the oppressive yoke of bondage, reached Heaven. God answered their prayers in a most wonderful manner, and Israel was brought forth from Egypt and taken to himself as his peculiar treasure.

After the Lord had made a covenant with Israel in a most solemn manner to be a peculiar treasure unto him, they were brought forth out of their tents and from their encampments to meet with God. And the Lord graciously condescended to come down upon Mount Sinai, not to give a new law, but to speak, with an audible voice in the hearing of all the people, his law which already existed. The presence of God made the mountain sacred, and neither man nor beast was permitted to touch the mountain on penalty of death. The Hebrews were instructed that everything that was connected with God must be regarded with the greatest reverence. They were greatly exalted in thus being made the depositaries of his law. "And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the mount.

The Lord made the occasion of speaking his law a scene of awful grandeur and sublimity, in accordance with its exalted character. The ten commandments were spoken amid thunder and flame, and in great power and glory. The voice of the Lord was like a trumpet, waxing louder, and louder, and in a full volume rolled down the mountain. The earth trembled and quaked, and the very mount seemed to be moving from its foundation. The best of Israel shook with fear, and fell upon their faces before the Lord. The awe-inspiring voice, and the terrible glory displayed upon the mount were to them most impressive.

God accompanied the declaration of his law with the most sublime exhibitions of his power, that the Hebrews might never forget the scene, and that they might be impressed with profound veneration for the Author of the ten commandments. In this, the Lord shows to all men the sacredness and importance of his law. The law of ten precepts was by no means given exclusively to Israel, to be confined to them as a people, but the Hebrews were made the depositaries of the law which was to be handed down to us. The entire history of the children of Israel was "written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come." No Hebrews could so fully estimate the sacredness and exalted character of God's law as those who accepted Christ as their Redeemer. He was the foundation of the entire Jewish system.

May 6, 1875

## The Law of God

The fact that the holy pair in disregarding the prohibition of God in one particular, thus transgressed his law, and as the result suffered the consequences of the fall, should impress all with a just sense of the sacred character of the law of God. If the experience of our first parents in the transgression of what many who profess to fear God would call the lesser requirements of the law of God, was attended with such fearful consequences, what will be the punishment of those who not only break its most important precepts, as clearly defined as is the fourth commandment, but also teach others to transgress?

All will yet understand, as did Adam and Eve, that God means what he says. Men who pass on indifferently in regard to the especial claims of God's holy law, and who turn from and reject the light given upon the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and seek to ease their consciences by following traditions and customs, will be held responsible by God, and in a greater degree, than if Christ had not come to the earth, and suffered on Calvary. The fact that the redemption of man from the penalty of the transgression, required this wonderful sacrifice on the part of Christ, gives unmistakable proof of the unchanging nature of the law of God.

God gave a clear and definite knowledge of his will to Israel by especial precepts, showing the duty of man to God and to his fellow-men. The worship due to God was clearly defined. A special system of rites and ceremonies was established, which would secure the remembrance of God among his people, and thereby serve as a hedge to guard and protect the ten commandments from violation.

God's people, whom he calls his peculiar treasure, were privileged with a two-fold system of law; the moral and the ceremonial. The one, pointing back to creation to keep in remembrance the living God who made the world, whose claims are binding upon all men in every dispensation, and which will exist through all time and eternity. The other, given because of man's transgression of the moral law, the obedience to which consisted in sacrifices and offerings pointing to the future redemption. Each is clear and distinct from the other. From the creation the moral law was an essential part

of God's divine plan, and was as unchangeable as himself. The ceremonial law was to answer a particular purpose of Christ's plan for the salvation of the race. The typical system of sacrifices and offerings was established that through these services the sinner might discern the great offering, Christ. But the Jews were so blinded by pride and sin that but few of them could see farther than the death of beasts as an atonement for sin; and when Christ, whom these offerings prefigured, came, they could not discern him. The ceremonial law was glorious; it was the provision made by Jesus Christ in counsel with his Father, to aid in the salvation of the race. The whole arrangement of the typical system was founded on Christ. Adam saw Christ prefigured in the innocent beast suffering the penalty of his transgression of Jehovah's law.

The law of types reached forward to Christ. All hope and faith centered in Christ until type reached its antitype in his death. The statutes and judgments specifying the duty of man to his fellow-men, were full of important instruction, defining and simplifying the principles of the moral law, for the purpose of increasing religious knowledge, and of preserving God's chosen people distinct and separate from idolatrous nations.

The statutes concerning marriage, inheritance, and strict justice in deal with one another, were peculiar and contrary to the customs and manners of other nations, and were designed of God to keep his people separate from other nations. The necessity of this to preserve the people of God from becoming like the nations who had not the love and fear of God, is the same in this corrupt age, when the transgression of God's law prevails and idolatry exists to a fearful extent. If ancient Israel needed such security, we need it more, to keep us from being utterly confounded with the transgressors of God's law. The hearts of men are so prone to depart from God that there is a necessity for restraint and discipline.

The love that God bore to man whom he had created in his own image, led him to give his Son to die for man's transgression, and lest the increase of sin should lead him to forget God and the promised redemption, the system of sacrificial offerings was established to typify the perfect offering of the Son of God.

Christ was the angel appointed of God to go before Moses in the wilderness, conducting the Israelites in their travels to the land of Canaan. Christ gave Moses his special directions to be given to Israel. "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should

be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ."

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." These words were called out by witnessing a representation by the Jews of water flowing from the flinty rock. This commemoration of bringing water from the rock in the wilderness moves the heart of the Son of God to tenderest compassion and pity for their darkened understanding; for they will not see the light which he has brought to them. Christ tells them that he is that rock. I am that living water. Your fathers drank of that spiritual rock that followed them. That rock was myself. It was through Christ alone that the Hebrews were favored with the especial blessings which they were continually receiving, notwithstanding their sinful murmurings and rebellion.

In consequence of continual transgression, the moral law was repeated in awful grandeur from Sinai. Christ gave to Moses religious precepts which were to govern the everyday life. These statutes were explicitly given to guard the ten commandments. They were not shadowy types to pass away with the death of Christ. They were to be binding upon man in every age as long as time should last. These commands were enforced by the power of the moral law, and they clearly and definitely explained that law.

Christ became sin for the fallen race, in taking upon himself the condemnation resting upon the sinner for his transgression of the law of God. Christ stood at the head of the human family as their representative. He had taken upon himself the sins of the world. In the likeness of sinful flesh he condemned sin in the flesh. He recognized the claims of the Jewish law until his death, when type met antitype. In the miracle he performed for the leper, he bade him go to the priests with an offering in accordance with the law of Moses. Thus he sanctioned the law requiring offerings.

Christians who profess to be Bible students can appreciate more fully than ancient Israel did the full signification of the ceremonial ordinances that they were required to observe. If they are indeed Christians, they are prepared to acknowledge the sacredness and importance of the shadowy types, as they see the accomplishment of the



events which they represent. The death of Christ gives the Christian a correct knowledge of the system of ceremonies and explains prophecies which still remain obscure to the Jews. Moses of himself framed no law. Christ, the angel whom God had appointed to go before his chosen people, gave to Moses statutes and requirements necessary to a living religion and to govern the people of God. Christians commit a terrible mistake in calling this law severe and arbitrary, and then contrasting it with the gospel and mission of Christ in his ministry on earth, as though he were in opposition to the just precepts which they call the law of Moses.

The law of Jehovah, dating back to creation, was comprised in the two great principles, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." These two great principles embrace the first four commandments, showing the duty of man to God, and the last six, showing the duty of man to his fellow-man. The principles were more explicitly stated to man after the fall, and worded to meet the case of fallen intelligences. This was necessary in consequence of the minds of men being blinded by transgression.

God graciously spoke his law and wrote it with his own finger on stone, making a solemn covenant with his people at Sinai. God acknowledged them as his peculiar treasure above all people upon the earth. Christ, who went before Moses in the wilderness, made the principles of morality and religion more clear by particular precepts, specifying the duty of man to God and his fellow-men, for the purpose of protecting life, and guarding the sacred law of God, that it should not be entirely forgotten in the midst of an apostate world.

Professed Christians now cry, Christ! Christ is our righteousness, but away with the law. They talk and act as though Christ's mission to a fallen world was for the express purpose of nullifying his Father's law. Could not that work have been just as well executed without the only beloved of the Father coming to this world and enduring grief, privation, and the shameful death of the cross? Ministers preach that the atonement gave men liberty to break the law of God, and to commit sin, and then praise the free grace and mercy revealed through Christ under the gospel, while they despise the law of God.

They cast aside the restraint of the law, and give loose rein to the corrupt passions and the promptings of the natural heart, and then triumph in the mercy and grace of the gospel. Christ speaks to such: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven." What is the will of the Father? That we keep his commandments. Christ, to enforce the will of his Father, became the author of the statutes and precepts given through Moses to the people of God. Christians who extol Christ, but array themselves against the law governing the Jewish church, array Christ against Christ.

The death of Jesus Christ for the redemption of man, lifts the veil and reflects a flood of light back hundreds of years, upon the whole institution of the Jewish system of religion. Without the death of Christ all this system was meaningless. The Jews reject Christ, and therefore their whole system of religion is to them indefinite, unexplainable, and uncertain. They attach as much importance to shadowy ceremonies of types which have met their antitype, as they do to the law of the ten commandments, which was not a shadow, but a reality as enduring as the throne of Jehovah. The death of Christ elevates the Jewish system of types and ordinances, showing that they were of divine appointment, and for the purpose of keeping faith alive in the hearts of his people.

July 5, 1875

## **A Peculiar People**

The Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself, and this consecration to God and separation from the world is plainly declared and positively enjoined in both the Old and New Testaments. There is a wall of separation which the Lord himself has established between the things of the world and the things he has chosen out of the world and sanctified unto himself. The calling and the character of God's people are peculiar. Their prospects are peculiar, and these peculiarities distinguish them from all people. All of God's people upon the earth are one body, from the beginning to the end of time. They have one head that directs and governs the body. The same injunctions rest upon God's people now, to be separate from the world, as rested upon ancient Israel. The great Head of the church has not changed. The experience of Christians in these days is much like the travels of ancient Israel. Please read 1 Corinthians 10, especially from the 6th to the 15th verse.

"Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.... Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say."

1 John 3:1: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

1 John 2:15-17: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If

any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

2 Peter 2:20: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning."

James 4:4: "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

James 1:27: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

Titus 2:12-14: "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

Romans 12:2: "And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

John 17:14, 15, 17: "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil..... Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."

Luke 6:22, 23: "Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy; for behold your reward is great in Heaven; for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets."

John 15:16-19: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

1 John 4:4, 5: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them."

1 John 2:5, 6: "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him. He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk even as he walked."

1 Peter 2:9: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

As we read the word of God, how plain that God's people are peculiar and distinct from the unbelieving world around them. Our position is interesting and fearful; living in the last days, how important that we imitate the example of Christ, and walk even as he walked. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." The opinions and wisdom of men must not guide or govern us. They always lead away from the cross.

The servants of Christ have not their home or their treasure here. Would that all of them could understand that it is only because the Lord reigns that we are even permitted to dwell in peace and safety among our enemies. It is not our privilege to claim special favors of the world. We must consent to be poor and despised among men until the warfare is finished and the victory won. The members of Christ are called to come out and be separate from the friendship and spirit of the world, and their strength and power consists in their being chosen and accepted of God.

The Son of God was the heir of all things, and the dominion and the glory of the

kingdoms of this world were promised to him. Yet when he appeared in this world it was without riches or splendor. The world understood not his union with the Father; and the excellency and glory of his divine character were hid from them. He was therefore "despised and rejected of men," and "we did esteem him smitten of God and afflicted."

Even so the members of Christ are as he was in this world. They are the sons of God and joint heirs with Christ; and the kingdom and dominion belong to them. The world understand not their character and holy calling. They perceive not their adoption into the family of God. Their union and fellowship with the Father and the Son are not manifest to the world, and while they behold their humiliation and reproach, it does not appear what they shall be. They are strangers. The world knows them not, and appreciates not the motives which actuate them.

The world is ripening for its destruction. God can bear with sinners but a little longer. They must drink the dregs of the cup of his wrath unmixed with mercy. Those who will be heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ to the immortal inheritance will be peculiar, yes, so peculiar that God places a mark upon them as his, wholly his. Think ye that God will receive, honor, and acknowledge, a people so mixed up with the world that they differ from them only in name? Read again Titus 2:13-15. It is soon to be known who is on the Lord's side--who will not be ashamed of Jesus. Those who have not moral courage to take their position conscientiously in the face of unbelievers, and leave the fashions of the world, and imitate the self-denying life of Christ, are ashamed of him, and do not love his example.

July 22, 1875

## **The Camp-Meetings**

Sister White writes to the Signs of the Times as follows concerning the Camp-meetings that have been held the present season in the West:

We arrived upon the camp-ground at Newton, Iowa, June 4. The meeting had been in session one day. Our meetings were excellent from the commencement to the close. The people listened with respectful attention, and we can but hope that the seed of truth sown in the many discourses given will find a lodgment in some hearts, and bear fruit to the glory of God.

Sabbath was a marked day on account of the special manifestation of the Spirit of God. After addressing the people for one hour and a half we invited those who felt that they were sinners, and those who were backslidden from God, to come forward to the front seats. About fifty responded to the invitation given. Some came forward in whom we had felt an especial interest for years. They had been backward in taking their position wholly on the Lord's side because of the suggestions of the enemy in keeping before them the course of some who professed the faith, but in their works denied it. Satan's temptations to them were, if they should profess to be followers of Christ and pursue the course these unconsecrated ones had, they would be in a worse condition than they then were.

We are sorry to admit that there are those who profess the truth, who are not sanctified by the truth, and such give to the world a bad example, and bring the religion of Christ and the precious truth into disrepute. The demands of the word of God are only met when we love God with all the heart and our neighbor as ourselves.

We entreated those who had been disgusted with the course of those who professed Christ but did not follow him, to come out on the Lord's side themselves, and show to the half-hearted and to the world a better way, that making the tree good is the only sure way of securing good fruit. The heart must be renewed before the life can be correct. A profession of Christ without internal rectitude is no better than a whited sepulcher, beautiful without but within full of corruption.

We felt deeply grateful to God to see so many young men coming forward for the first time, and thus showing that they, from this good day, will forsake a life of sin, and choose a life of righteousness, walking in the footsteps of Jesus. Several came forward who had long professed the Christian life, but who were convinced at this meeting that they were transgressing the law of God, in trampling upon the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

The Spirit of the Lord seemed to indite the prayers offered, and when opportunity was given for those to speak who desired to do so, nearly all expressed their feelings. What a scene was this! What an encouragement to the laborers in the vineyard of the Lord! Jesus said: "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." Should there not be more joy among those who rejoice in a Saviour's love upon the earth?

Sunday the Lord assisted his servants in speaking to the people. The crowd was attentive and respectful, and we sincerely hope that their understanding may be enlightened to see the claims of truth, and that they may have a heart to obey.

Monday morning the work commenced just where it closed on Sabbath evening. Again we invited those who wished to seek God, and those who were backslidden, to come forward. More responded to this call than on Sabbath. This exercise was more interesting, if possible, than the first, the special blessing of God attending the meeting. We left the ground very weary, but cheerful in God, knowing that Jesus had indeed come up to the feast, and had graced our meeting with his presence.

We complied with the earnest invitation of our brethren in Ladora and vicinity to call upon them, and speak to the people Wednesday night. We had great need of rest, but how could we have a heart to refuse these entreaties? We felt that it was unfavorable for us, and then also that we could not have the privilege, as do many of our fellow-laborers, of visiting. After the exercises of the meeting are over, there comes the writing of important reports and testimonies, which deprive us almost entirely of the privilege of conversation with our brethren and sisters.

After a long and interesting evening meeting, we rode five miles to the depot; and



then, after midnight, lay down for a couple of hours of rest upon quilts and blankets, brought from his home by the brother who took us to the depot, and which we spread upon the depot floor. Thus with scarcely any rest, we were obliged to travel most of the next day till we arrived, weary and worn, at the

### Illinois Camp-Meeting

Here, as in Iowa, the prayer and conference meetings were of special interest. On Sabbath afternoon, several mentioned the benefits which they had received from the health reform. Dr. Pottinger gave a very interesting testimony as follows:

"My brethren may have thought they were meeting with only half a brother, when they saw me using tobacco, The truth found me in the gutter. I was addicted to two fatal habits, drinking and tobacco-using. I have left off the former, and gained a complete victory over it, and so far as refraining from the use of tobacco is concerned, I could refrain from its use. But I have feared the result upon my system, as I am somewhat disposed to paralytic affections, and physicians have assured me that entire abstinence from tobacco would cost my life. But I am preparing to make a trial of the matter. I am waiting till my system shall rally a little from the reaction caused by leaving off tipping, then I shall take hold in earnest to rid myself of tobacco."

There were quite a number of our French brethren present, and this added much to the interest of the meeting. These French brethren and sisters are gaining an experience; and if they remain humble and true to their faith, God will use them as instruments in bringing others to the knowledge of the truth. There are a number whose lives are indeed a living epistle, known and read of all men. They show the transforming power of the truth upon their daily life.

It was under very discouraging circumstances that Eld. Bourdeau presented the truth to them. The opposition from prejudiced minds was very bitter. But some honest souls were interested, and when brought up to face the mirror, to compare their lives with the law of God, they were deeply convicted of sin. One brother who is now rejoicing in the truth, and can say with Paul, "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died," when he came to view his life in the light of the holy law, saw his sins to be so exceedingly sinful, that he thought they were too great to be forgiven. He was in great agony of mind. He called together his

neighbors and friends, and confessed to them the sins and wrongs of his life, and entreated their forgiveness. He tried to right every wrong. This wonderful work of the power of God in convicting the sinner, was a thing so new to his friends and neighbors that they thought he was out of his mind, and feared that he would die. Several physicians were consulted, and medicine was prescribed freely. But drugs, which would be useless to cure the diseased body, were utterly powerless to cure the sin-sick soul. While suffering the most intense remorse of conscience for his sins, the Lord did not leave him to perish. The light of health reform was forced upon his mind, and he refused to take the drugs prescribed, for he was strongly convinced that they were poison, and ruinous to his constitution.

Eld. Bourdeau and his wife felt the deepest anxiety as to the result of this case. Some charged Eld. B. with making this man crazy. Eld. B.'s life was in danger, and he and his wife wept and prayed many hours while others slept. They prayed that God would work in such a manner as to honor the cause of truth and glorify his name. The French brother came out all right. He had that repentance which needeth not to be repented of. He was indeed a new man, converted and thoroughly transformed. He had "put off the old man with his deeds;" and "put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him."

At this meeting we were attentively cared for by brother and sister Hobbs. These self-sacrificing souls showed especial hospitality on this occasion. May the Lord bless them and their dear children for this labor of love. On Wednesday Bro. Hobbs took us nine miles to Somonauk, where we took the cars for Lena, Wis. Here we were met by brother and sister Bates and Bro. Brown, who took us by private conveyance to the Monroe Camp-ground.

October 14, 1875

## **Duty of Parents to their Children**

One of the signs of the "last days" is the disobedience of children to their parents. 2 Timothy 3:2. And do parents realize their responsibility? Many seem to lose sight of the watch-care they should ever have over their children, and suffer them to indulge in evil passions, and to disobey them. They take but little notice of them until their own feelings are excited, and then punish them in anger.

Many parents will have to render an awful account at last for their neglect of their children. They have fostered and cherished their evil tempers by bending to their wishes and will, when the wishes and will of the children should bend to them. They have brought God's frown upon them and their children by these things. Children are left to come up instead of being trained up. The poor little children are thought not to know or understand a correction at ten or twelve months of age, and they begin to show stubbornness very young. Parents suffer them to indulge in evil tempers and passions without subduing or correcting them, and by so doing they cherish and nourish these evil passions until they grow with their growth, and strengthen with their strength.

Parents stand in the place of God to their children, and they will have to render an account, whether they have been faithful to the charge committed to their trust. Parents, I fear some of you are rearing children to be cut down by the destroying angel, unless you speedily change your course, and be faithful to them. God cannot cover iniquity even in children. He cannot love unruly children who manifest passion, and he cannot save them in the time of trouble. Will you suffer your children to be lost through your neglect? Unfaithful parents, their blood will be upon you, and is not your salvation doubtful with the blood of your children upon you? children that might have been saved had you filled your place, and done your duty as faithful parents should.

God says: "I know Abraham, that he will command his household after him," and God gave him the honor of being the father of the faithful. It is the duty of parents to have their children in perfect subjection, having all their passions and evil tempers subdued.

Parents, correct your children. Commence while they are young, when impressions can be more easily made, and their evil tempers subdued, before they grow with their growth and strengthen with their strength.

You should correct your children in love. Do not let them have their own way until you get angry, and then punish them. Such correction only helps on the evil, instead of remedying it. After you have done your duty faithfully to your children, then carry them to God and ask him to help you. Tell him that you have done your part, and then in faith ask him to do his part--that which you cannot do. Ask him to temper their dispositions, to make them mild and gentle by his Holy Spirit. He will hear you pray. Through his word he has enjoined it upon you to correct your children, to "spare not for their crying," and his word is to be heeded in these things.

It certainly must bring God's displeasure upon parents when they leave him to do what he has left and commanded them to do. God corrects us when we disobey, and go astray from him; and parents are bound by the word of God to correct their children when they disobey them, and show evil tempers. Check the very first manifestation of passion. Break the will (but do it with feelings of tenderness, and with discretion), and your children will be far happier for it, and you will be happier. Your effort will be remembered of God, and he that is so particular as to observe the falling of the sparrow; he that noted and commended Abraham's faithfulness, will not pass by your efforts. He that never slumbers nor sleeps will be ready to aid you with his Spirit and grace, and will reward your feeble efforts.

Children are the lawful prey of the enemy, because they are not subjects of grace, have not experienced the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus, and the evil angels have access to these children; and some parents are careless and suffer them to work with but little restraint. Parents have a great work to do in this matter, by correcting and subduing their children, and then by bringing them to God and claiming his blessing upon them. By the faithful and untiring efforts of the parents, and the blessing and grace entreated of God upon the children, the power of the evil angels will be broken, a sanctifying influence will be shed upon the children, and the powers of darkness will be compelled to give back.

When the destroying angel was to pass through Egypt, to destroy the first-born of man and beast, Israel was commanded to gather their children and families into their

houses with them, and then mark their door-posts with blood, that the destroying angel might pass by their dwellings, and if they failed to go through with this process, there was no difference made between them and the Egyptians.

The destroying angel is soon to go forth again, not to destroy the first-born alone, but "to slay utterly old and young, both men, women and little children" who have not the mark. Parents, if you wish to save your children, separate them from the world, keep them from the company of wicked children; for if you suffer them to go with wicked children, you cannot prevent them from partaking of their wickedness and being corrupted. It is your solemn duty to watch over your children, to choose their society at all times for them. Teach your children to obey you, then can they more easily obey the commandments of God, and yield to his requirements. Don't let us neglect to pray with, and for, our children. He that said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," will listen to our prayers for them, and the seal or mark, of believing parents will cover their children, if they are trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

November 4, 1875

### **A Remarkable Dream**

Several speakers had addressed large and attentive congregations at the camp meeting at Rome, N. Y., on first-day, September 12, 1875. The following night I dreamed that a young man of noble appearance came into the room where I was, immediately after I had been speaking. This same person has appeared before me in important dreams to instruct me from time to time during the past twenty-six years. Said he, You have called the attention of the people to important subjects, which, to a large number, are strange and new. To some they are intensely interesting. The laborers in word and doctrine have done what they could in presenting the truth, which has raised inquiry in minds and awakened an interest. But unless there is a more thorough effort made to fasten these impressions upon minds, your efforts now made will prove nearly fruitless. Satan has many attractions ready to divert the mind; and the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches all combine to choke the seed of truth sown in the heart, and in most cases it bears no fruit.

In every effort, such as you are now making, much more good would result from your labors if you had appropriate reading matter ready for circulation. Tracts upon the important points of truth for the present time should be handed out freely to all who will accept them, without money and without price, which might eventually result in a hundred fold returns to the treasury. You are to sow beside all waters.

The press is a powerful means to move the minds and hearts of the people. And the men of this world seize the press, and make the most of every opportunity to get poisonous literature before the people. If men, under the influence of the spirit of the world, and of Satan, are earnest to circulate books, tracts, and papers of a corrupting nature, you should be more earnest to get reading matter of an elevating and saving character before the people.

There should be more earnest efforts made to enlighten the people upon the great subject of health reform. Tracts of four, eight, twelve, sixteen, and more pages, containing pointed, well-written articles on this great question, should be scattered like the leaves of autumn. Small tracts on the different points of Bible truth applicable to the

present time should be printed in different languages and scattered where there is any probability that they would be read. God has placed at the command of his people advantages in the press, which, combined with other agencies, will be successful in extending the knowledge of the truth. Tracts, papers, and books, as the case demands, should be circulated in all the cities and villages in the land. Here is missionary work for all.

There should be men trained for this branch of the work who will be missionaries, and will circulate publications. They should be men of good address, who will not repulse others or be repulsed. This is a work to which men would be warranted to give their whole time and energies as the occasion demands.

Those who distribute tracts gratuitously should take other publications to sell to all who will purchase them. Persevering efforts will result in great good. Very many souls have been converted to the truth by reading papers and tracts alone, who would not have been reached without them. God has committed to his people great light. This is not for them to selfishly enjoy alone, but to let its rays shine forth to others who are in the darkness of error.

You are not as a people doing one-twentieth part of what might be done in spreading the knowledge of the truth. Very much more can be accomplished by the living preacher with the circulation of papers and tracts than by the preaching of the word alone without the publications. The press is a powerful instrumentality which God has ordained to be combined with the energies of the living preacher to bring the truth before all nations, kindreds, tongues and peoples.

Many minds can be reached in no other way. Here is true missionary work in which labor and means can be invested with the best results. There has been too great fear of running risks, and moving out by faith, and sowing beside all waters. Opportunities have been presented which have not been grasped and made the most of. There has been too great fear of venturing. True faith is not presumption, but it ventures much. Precious light and powerful truth need to be brought out in publications without delay. There is much lost in waiting to originate matter while there is already in print that which is valuable and appropriate for this time. These delays risk too much. Opportunities are lost which might be improved. Said he, Your husband and yourself can do much in the preparation of publications. You have a better knowledge of the

wants of the people than many others. God has brought you in close connection with himself, and has given you an experience in this work which he has not given many others.

He has connected you with this powerful agency--the publishing department. Others cannot take your place in this, and do the work God has appointed you to do. Satan has been making special efforts to discourage your husband by controlling the minds of some who ought to be helpers. They have cherished temptations. They have been murmurers, and have been jealous without cause. God will not leave nor forsake his servant while he clings by faith to his wisdom and strength. He has upheld him through the ministration of angels that excel in strength. His strength has not come from natural causes, but from God. He will be beset with the enemy on the right hand and on the left. Satan will lead the minds of some to be distrustful of his motives, and to murmur against his plans, while he is following the leadings of the Spirit of God. In God he must trust, for he is the source of his strength. The enemy, through agents, will harass and vex his patience, for the infirmities of human nature are upon him, and he is not infallible. But if he clings in humble confidence to God, and walks softly before him, God will be to him a present help in every emergency.

Your husband must not be discouraged in his efforts to encourage men to become workers, and responsible for important work. Every man whom God will accept, Satan will attack. If they disconnect from Heaven, and imperil the cause, their failures will not be set to his account or to yours; but to the perversity of the nature of the murmuring ones, which they would not understand and overcome. These men whom God has tried to use to do his work, and who have failed, and brought great burdens upon those who were unselfish and true, have hindered and discouraged more than all the good they have done. And yet this should not hinder the purpose of God in having this growing work, with its burden of cares, divided into different branches, and laid upon men who should do their part, and lift the burdens when they ought to be lifted. These men must be willing to be instructed, and then God can fit them and sanctify them, and impart to them sanctified judgment, that what they undertake they can carry forward in his name.

Your husband must be humble and trustful, and walk carefully and tremblingly before God, for the ground whereon he treadeth is holy. God has strengthened him for great emergencies. He has given him strength, and light, and power like a running stream. This is not of himself, but of God. He has an inexhaustible fountain to draw



from. He must not forget that he is mortal, and subject to temptations, and weariness. His mind should have periods of rest, which will result in great good to himself as well as to the cause of God which he represents. He can with a mind invigorated do a greater amount, with greater perfection, than he can accomplish by steady labor and constant effort with a wearied mind.

Eld. Andrews is God's chosen servant to do a special work; but he made a mistake in keeping the Sabbath History from the people in order to present a perfect work, and in allowing his mind to be diverted from the work God would have him do. He should have given this important work much sooner, and then improved it as he could do so. The enemy has been permitted to gain a march upon us in consequence of long delays on our part. He will throw hindrances in our path, and if we will be hindered he will exult. Long delays must not be permitted. Satan must be met in his bold advances, and be repulsed.

Eld. Haskell has done a good work in the tract and missionary department. He needs to ever connect closely with Heaven, that he may be led and taught of God. He has made some mistakes, but not intentionally. His zeal and concentrated efforts in one direction led him to lose sight of other important considerations. He has pressed the subject of giving means in some cases too far. Some of the poor have done more than they should, while those who have been entrusted as God's stewards with a large amount of means, have done but little. God's servants must discriminate, and work cautiously, judiciously, and ever give right counsel to the liberal, conscientious souls who are poor. God will have his servants connect so closely with him that they may have the mind of Christ.

December 2, 1875

### **Delaying Obedience**

Dear Brother and Sister, I had hoped to meet you again before we crossed the plains, but this may not be. I have thought much of our interview at your house, and have prayed that you both may have strength to walk in the path of obedience. You have had light, but Satan will not let you pursue the narrow road, and become loyal and true to all God's requirements, without contesting every inch of ground. He has his agents in men who profess, as did Satan when he tempted Christ, to be ministers of righteousness. They would belittle in your minds God's holy commandments. Satan is at war with that law which is the foundation of God's government in Heaven and in earth. God has let his light shine upon you. Will you, dear friends, cherish the light? Men may come in the garb of holiness, having error and truth mixed together, and many be deceived. Satan quoted Scripture to Christ, showing that he could use Scripture to work his deception upon minds. Those who are acquainted with their own hearts know the necessity of being closely connected with God in order to have divine wisdom to discern the wiles of Satan and to cling, with firm, unyielding grasp to Jesus.

There is no nook or corner of the world, however secluded, where error and sin have not found their way. Error is often presented in a specious garb, so that it requires more than human wisdom to detect the falsehood under the pretension of truth. If error was never mingled with truth, it would not be so subtle in its influence upon the mind. If error stood forth alone in its true, hideous form, souls would not be deceived. But there are many who see attractions in error, and will eagerly feast upon it, although it poisons the mind. Error always injures the soul and deforms the character. Error may, at first sight, appear plausible, but its tendency is to corrupt the heart, and to ensnare its victims. We often hear it stated that it matters not what one believes if his life is only right. But the life is molded by the faith. If light and truth, are within our reach, and we neglect to improve the privilege of hearing and seeing the truth, we virtually reject it, and choose darkness rather than light. Said Christ to the Jews, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."

I beseech you, my brother and sister, to inquire of God, as those who are willing to know the right way, What is truth? Do not willingly cheat your own souls of the light

which you may have if you will. Like the noble Bereans, search the Scriptures daily, and see whether these things are so. And be true to your convictions of truth and of duty. Many infidels are compelled to be such because they cannot consent to accept truth the living out of which would require a sacrifice on their part. Convenience is consulted by many who profess Christ. There is a desire to climb up some other way--one that will require less sacrifice.

Said Christ, "He that will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." To follow Jesus fully requires a thorough conversion. Half-way converts make half-hearted Christians. Again, said Christ, "He that is not for me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." The plain words of truth spoken by our Saviour sifted his followers down to a few faithful ones who laid the foundation of the Christian church. Many of the wealthy, honorable, and noble ones of the world were charmed with the teachings of Christ, and had a desire to follow him. But when the truth in its practical bearings was brought home to their hearts and lives, they drew back, and walked no more with Jesus. The young ruler was desirous of following Christ. "Sell all that thou hast," said the Master, "and come, follow me, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven." He could not comply with the terms. His poor, selfish heart loved his possessions better than the kingdom of God, and he turned from following his Saviour. He turned from his heavenly treasure, went back to his idolatrous love of his earthly treasures, and lost eternal riches.

Jesus requires the entire surrender of the soul to him without compromise. Those who are thoroughly converted will never be among those who cowardly plead, "I pray thee have me excused." The living Christian loves duty, and enjoys even the severities which he must bear, if he is a soldier of the cross of Christ.

We feel the greatest anxiety for souls who are in the valley of decision. We feel a dread of Satan's attacks upon these poor souls. He watches his opportunity to bring his powers to bear when he sees that there is a possibility of hindering souls from deciding to be wholly on the Lord's side.

While the Spirit of God is convicting you of the truth, do not stop to cavil, but believe. Do not find fault, but listen to evidence. Yield your pride to humility, and exchange your prejudice for candor. Confer not with flesh and blood, but surrender all to God. Take the Bible as your guide, and earnestly inquire, "Lord, what wilt thou have

me to do?" When you once yield your natural independence and self-will for a child-like, submissive obedience, and are willing to be taught, you will hear the voice of the true Shepherd saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Christ does not propose to teach the self-conceited and self-willed. It is only the meek whom he pledges to guide in judgment, and to whom he will teach his way.

If you are in search of truth, obedience will not be difficult. If you really want to know the Master's will, you will thankfully receive it. We are learners in the school of Christ. A genuine love for Jesus will of necessity create a love for the truth. Treasure up the truth in your heart. Seek knowledge. Make this your daily prayer: "With my whole heart have I sought thee; O let me not wander from thy commandments. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." We are not safe only as we mold our daily life after the divine Pattern.

I entreat you, my dear friends, to move guardedly; for you are making decisions for eternity. Walk in the light while you have the light. Let no one influence you to turn from the truth. You can never be sanctified through error. Christ prayed to his Father in behalf of his disciples: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." It is a time and age of the world when error prevails, and with nearly all is accepted as truth. Error is no less error because it has been instilled into minds from their very youth. Error is taught in schools, and preached from the pulpit. Theories are advanced which have no foundation in the word of God.

You made the remark, "My parents were godly, and they kept Sunday, and will be saved. If I keep the day which they kept, why will not I be as safe as they?" Your relatives and friends may have lived up to the light they had. They are not accountable for the light which shines in your day, which they did not have. If you have greater light than your fathers, and you live up to that light as faithfully as your fathers did to the light which shone upon them, you will be saved by obeying as they will be saved by obedience to the light which the Lord permitted to shine upon them. "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin." We are responsible for the light which shines upon our path. This is our day of visitation and privileges. God is setting before us solemn truth. Will we accept it? Reject not present light, and do not lightly esteem God's gracious opportunities.

If God in mercy has permitted light to shine out of darkness, and has removed the mist from your eyes that have been long blinded to the claims of his holy law, I beseech you to cherish the light and walk in it, lest it become darkness. We are living in the perils of the last days. It is not safe to be careless and indifferent now. With humble hearts and perfect submission to the will of God, we should pray earnestly to be kept from error and that we may be guided into all truth. Truth sanctifies. Error corrupts. The soul can be kept pure and strengthened only by walking in the light as Christ is in the light.

My heart has been drawn out in love to you. I have longed to see you moving out understandingly upon the truth, committing the keeping of your souls to God. In faith, press through the moral darkness of error and unbelief, and yield your souls' best and holiest affections to him. He has claims upon you which you cannot resist and be guiltless. I entreat of you to yield yourselves to God in faith. He can and will receive you with all your peculiarities of temperament, and with all your trials and temptations, and with all your duties, your cares, and burdens of responsibility, and will bear you and also your every burden, and will bring all your powers under the control of his grace. God will come to your help, and will aid you in your warfare. His messages of truth and warning are sent to save you, but not to flatter and amuse you. While truth deals in an unsparing manner with your sins, it has the deepest compassion for your soul.

Every taxing duty becomes easy, and every sacrifice becomes a pleasure, to those whom the truth makes free. What a victory is gained when the carnal life ceases, and the spiritual life begins. The Lord guides. The Lord keeps. The love of God, and obedience to all his commandments, bring all the powers of the soul into obedience to his will. What can constrain the heart and affections like love--sanctified love. That love which brings the soul into connection with Heaven is more earnest, fervent, and enduring for earthly relatives than any other. There is nothing in the heart at war with God's requirements. The mind, submissive and obedient, will love to do all his commandments. Evil will be abhorred, and the good will be chosen. There will be no self-denial or self-sacrifice that is grievous, for the heart delights in doing for Christ, and seeking to save souls from error and from the transgression of the holy law of God. When God has control of the affections, the mind will not be selfish, nor shrink from sacrifices.

The committing of the soul to God is essential for our salvation. You cannot follow a course of your own choosing, and be at war with the law of God, living in disobedience to his requirements, and yet be in harmony with God. Entire obedience to the will of God will bring courage, hope, peace, and happiness, to the soul. There will be seen watchfulness, diligence and prayer, self-denial, self-crucifixion and active benevolence. John thus describes the faithful whom he saw in vision upon the isle of Patmos:

"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

"And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

What an example have the martyrs for Jesus left us in their lives of self-denial and sacrifice. They were faithful and true to principle. Although prisons, tortures, inquisitions, gibbets, and the stake threatened them, they counted not their lives dear unto themselves. Their love for the truth was here manifested. They chose to obey the truth at the expense of great suffering. The world was not worthy of these heroes of faith. They died for their faith. The pure gold was refined from all dross through trial and suffering. As these shall enter the portals of glory they will shout in triumph: We overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of our testimony. We were faithful unto death, and now receive a crown of life. Shouts of triumph will come from lips that never triumphed before. Those who were too timid to praise God vocally were not too timid to die for their Lord. They struggled and fought the good fight of faith. They were steadfast to the end. They will unite their glad voices in the universal songs of triumph and victory, praising God that they were accounted worthy to receive the heavenly

benediction "well done" from the Master they loved, and for whom they suffered. His own right hand will place upon their brows crowns of immortal glory that fade not away.

April 27, 1876

### **Minnesota Camp-Meeting**

We should have been on the camp-ground at Eagle Lake, Minnesota, Thursday evening, June 24, 1875; but we learned that there was an impassable break in the road, occasioned by the severe storm of the previous night, which would detain us twenty-four hours. We took a room at the Jewell House, and were weary enough to have a thorough night's rest at Winona.

Friday noon we took the cars at Winona and went on about sixteen miles, and came to a halt. We were informed that we could go no farther, for the freight train in passing over the repaired break had broken through. We remained on the track six hours. This delay brought us to Eagle Lake at three o'clock Sabbath morning. We met a hearty reception from our brethren. Nearly everything upon the ground was drenched by the recent heavy rain, but they did not appear discouraged. Meetings had been in session since Thursday. Three discourses had been given with good effect.

Sabbath morning meetings were commenced under the tent for prayer and conference. Bro. Smith made appropriate remarks at the beginning of the meeting. I felt free in speaking about fifteen minutes, entreating all present to improve this opportunity of seeking the Lord. Our first work should be to search our own hearts and put away from them everything that is grievous to the Spirit of the Lord. Here in this convocation meeting was a favorable time for all of us to humble our hearts, by confessing our sins and faults, and to come near to God by repentance and faith, that we might feel an assurance of his love.

We lack in faith and love. We must exercise faith in God and cherish love in our hearts for him, love for the truth, and love for one another. We must do this if we prepare the way for the Holy Spirit.

Many then bore testimony, the substance of which I will give as the brethren and sisters spoke.

A sister says she is one of the most needy. She has had quite an experience in the



work, but has not made that advancement which she might; she now feels that she must make an entire surrender to God.

A brother says he cannot be satisfied until he becomes strong through Jesus and gains the victory over sin in his own heart.

Another brother is thankful God had spared his life to be present at this meeting. He has come to gain strength to be a better Christian, a man devoted to God, carrying out his faith in his every-day life.

A sister says she is determined to live like a humble follower of Jesus. Her trials sometimes seem greater than she can bear; then, again, she thinks these trials are to help her to endure and be a more perfect follower of Jesus. She wishes her daily life and her conversation to redound to the glory of God. She wants to be approved of her Heavenly Father.

A brother says he came a long way to this meeting, that he might receive a blessing here; he did not want to go away disappointed. He feels that he has an individual work to do; he wants to accomplish this work; he wants the crown that is to be given to the faithful.

A sister says that she loves Jesus, but feels that she has not the spirit of prayer and deep sympathy for his cause that she should have.

A brother says that he wants to get right before God, and thanks him for the good he has received during this meeting. He has here realized the blessing of God. Another brother says he has been admonished of the fact that the minister cannot do the work assigned to him. He must perform it himself; he must humble his heart, confess his sins and live a better life; contact with the world has had a chilling and withering influence upon his spirituality. Today he wants to be sanctified through the truth. It is the truth that makes us free. Another brother testifies that he is earnestly seeking for sanctification through the truth.

A brother bears testimony that it is good to be engaged in the work of God. He has been trying to redeem the failures of his past life. In searching his heart, that he might the better understand his own defects, he has felt the blessing of God. He wants to

derive all the benefit possible from this meeting.

A brother rejoices that he feels a hungering and thirsting for righteousness. He desires the Christian graces to be continually growing in his character and life.

A sister rejoices to meet so many friends interested in the truth. She had made a great effort to come to the meeting, and was trying to overcome the enemy and make sure of the kingdom.

One brother says he is reminded by this gathering of the great assembly which shall meet, from the east and the west, the north and the south, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of Heaven.

A sister feels most unworthy of all. This is the first camp-meeting she has attended. She thanks God for the good she has received.

A brother says he was at the camp-meeting one year ago, and there resolved to live a better life. He thinks he has made some progress and has been struggling to gain a victory over his sins. Another brother came to the meeting hoping to receive the blessing of God, and he has not been disappointed. He says if we place ourselves in a right position toward God, we may have a rich flow of his Spirit in our hearts.

A brother says, he is seeking to bring his body into subjection, that appetite and passion may be under the control his will.

A brother says it is good for him to be here. He has progressed some since one year ago. If we put our trust in God he will not forsake us. He has been blessed this morning. He sees that he has done many things that are wrong; he has indulged appetite to his injury; he has used tobacco; he feels that it is necessary for him to overcome this unnatural appetite. He wants to serve God with his whole soul, mind, and strength. The Lord has a work for him to do, which no one can perform for him.

Another brother says that God has spared his life and granted him the desire of his heart in enabling him to come to this camp-meeting. He wants to put himself in the way to receive the blessing of God. He has been afflicted--been brought near the gates of death; he had promised the Lord to surrender all to Christ. He has been searching his

heart and finds he has much to do to perfect a Christian character. He has suffered much pain because of the violation of the laws of his being. He feels that he has been taken into the stripping room, where, through a severe process, the Lord has brought him to see himself, in all his sinfulness. He must make clean work for eternity.

A sister says she is thankful that God has spared her life to enjoy this privilege. She wants to be a Christian; she knows it is a great thing to become one, for it is to be Christ-like. She does not want to be almost a follower of Jesus, but a full, earnest, cheerful, disciple of her Saviour.

Another sister expresses great thankfulness that she has the privilege of attending the meeting. She has been keeping the commandments of God.

A Swedish sister desires the help of God, that she may smooth off the sharp and rough points of her character. She wants to see her companion love and obey the law of God. A brother says he came a long way to attend this meeting, hoping to obtain more strength and grace; he has not been disappointed. He wants to live the life of a faithful Christian.

Another brother says he wants to stand as a witness for God. He is unworthy to bear the name of Christian; his life has not done honor to his profession; if God will be so gracious as to spare him to meet his friends in camp-meeting another year, he will endeavor to have a better testimony to bear.

A sister says she wants the rubbish removed from the door of her heart, that the spirit of Jesus may come in. Her heart has been troubled; she has carried her burden to Jesus, and knows that he will not forsake those who trust in him. She wants to be worthy to be called, with truth, a child of God. Her trials have been great, but God will not call her to pass through more than he will give her grace to endure.

A Swedish brother says that one year ago he promised that he would go home from that meeting and try to live up to his profession; his efforts have been with some success, but as he looks back today and sees how many crooked paths his feet has made, he feels deeply humbled. He is inclined to be hasty and impatient of speech in his family, he will make more earnest efforts to overcome this failing; he must be right at home in his actions and example, and he will be in the strength of God.

A sister says she will now, just now, open the door of her heart and let her Saviour in. She desires to get nearer to God.

A brother says he is determined to walk in all the commandments of God. Last year he heard others give their testimony, but he did not take his cross nor do his duty; he now felt that he must confess his fault. Let us all confess our faults, and pray for one another, that we may be healed of our infirmities.

A Seventh-day Baptist minister says he came to this meeting, after weary weeks of anticipation, to obtain the blessing of God. That blessing he has found. He was deeply affected, said he was a stranger to the most of those present, yet he felt that he was brought near to his brethren through the love of Jesus Christ. He came for the purpose, first, of receiving the blessing of God. Secondly, to observe and hear. He wanted to ascertain if professing a greater light and deeper truth was accompanied by a fuller consecration; if we are no better than other people who do not profess to have received new and greater light, then our faith is of no more virtue than theirs. He was rejoiced and made glad to hear the testimonies that were reaching down into the heart, seeking a deeper work of grace, equally important as, and corresponding with, the great and sacred truths which are professed, seeking for a better, higher, diviner life. If this is your aim and object, as I trust and believe, let me call you brethren, and we will unite as one. Let no discouragement deter you; some have felt, as they have expressed themselves, almost like giving up, because of the trials that beset them. They should remember that these afflictions are helpers in their spiritual lives, if only they stand fast under them, and bind them closer to their Father.

Yesterday the storm broke down a tree upon the encampment; this tree had stood among many trees, sheltered and protected by them; had it stood alone, in the open ground, and been blown hither and thither, its roots would have struck deeper down, and become more firmly established in the soil; it could have then resisted the tempest, and stood firmly beneath the shock of the hurricane. When great trials oppress you and threaten to crush you, dig deep and plant your roots firmly in the unyielding truth and wisdom of God, that you may stand and be strong. After a quarter of a century spent in enduring the conflicts and storms of life, he was more determined than ever before to hold fast the hope and fight the good warfare to the end.

A brother says he cannot allow this meeting to pass and this precious opportunity to be lost without testifying as to what God has done for him. He has been, for years, seeking to serve God. He now sees, as never before, what slow progress he has made. He is just beginning to see the sharp points and rough corners of his character; he feels that these traits are becoming more firmly fixed; he has asked God to help him to overcome them, to cherish humility and to bear the cross; but the cross has lacerated him in bearing it. The commandments of God are very broad; he wants to claim the Father's blessing through obedience.

A sister says she is trying to keep God's law and to love her Saviour with all her heart. Another says she has been trying to prepare her heart to receive a blessing and has been amply paid.

Still another sister says that the more and better we love God, the better we can see our guilt in transgressing the law of God. The blinder we are to our sins, the less importance we attach to the keeping of that law. The better we love God's commandments, the more precious will Jesus be to us, and the more grievous will sin appear.

A brother says his heart has rejoiced since he came on the ground; he is glad to meet old familiar friends. The enemy has tried hard to get him, but he is determined to press his way to the kingdom, there to meet his brethren and sisters, and rejoice with them in the final triumph.

A sister testifies that she loves Jesus and present truth; she has to make quite a sacrifice, but the Lord blesses her in making it. A brother says he is thankful indeed for this great privilege.

A sister is determined to press onward and make sure progress Heavenward.

A brother says that seventeen years ago, in the State of New York, he enlisted in the army of the Lord; he had idols which he could not then give up; the truth did not take deep enough hold on his heart to enable him to overcome; he had been opposed to the gifts, but for five or six months he has been strong in keeping the law of God, and has patiently endeavored to break off his wrong habits. This brother came, and with weeping confessed the bitterness of feeling he has had toward me, and the hard

speeches he has made to others in regard to me; he asked my forgiveness. I told him I forgave him as freely as Christ forgave me.

A brother says he has been keeping the commandments of God some two years; he feels more at home in the company of God's children than with his own relatives who oppose our faith; he feels that he must deny self and bear the cross.

A brother wants to stand as a witness for Jesus; he confesses that when he left home his motives were not right in coming to this meeting; he wanted to see what was to be seen, to visit with friends, and have a "good time;" but now he feels that he must have a work done for himself; he wants to be strong in the truth, to study his Bible and consecrate himself fully to the work of God.

A brother says he is glad that he loves God and loves his people. He has tried to keep the Sabbath for more than [than] twenty years; it is his experience that "great peace have they who love Thy law." He has unwavering faith in the Scriptures; he has no doubts regarding their truth; but he must have works accompanying his faith; for faith without works is dead, being alone. He desires to know the will of God and to live in obedience to it, and be sanctified through the truth. Brethren, let us hold on to God and his promises, pleading with him for strength to fight the good fight of faith and lay hold of eternal life.

A brother rejoices that he has this privilege. The meetings have done him good; he wants to make progress Heavenward; it is good for him to hear the testimony of those whom he knew years ago. He desires to be true to his profession. He has had trials; sometimes they seemed more than he could well endure; he has called upon God and laid his troubles before him, and he has been greatly strengthened in so doing.

A brother says he has rough ways that he wants to make smooth; he must break off from all things that hinder his advancement in the divine life; the love of God should be uppermost, and he should be willing to make everything subservient to His cause. He wants to gain the blissful shore. He wants all his acts and words to be in direct harmony with the will of God.

A brother says he believes the great and glorious gospel truths. He wants to go to the kingdom. He feels unworthy; he knows that it depends upon his actions whether he

makes his way to Heaven or not. He knows that God weighs his deeds in the balance, and he wants a clean record in Heaven.

A sister says she thanks God for this meeting, but is sorry to confess that she lacks patience in her family; she wishes us to especially pray that she may overcome this sin.

A brother says he feels like pressing on; he has trials, and almost every discouragement with which to contend. He has set up idols and it is difficult for him to sacrifice them; he does not progress as he should if he had cut loose from these hindrances; he feels that he must give up everything that would be in the way of his spiritual advancement, and be diligent to make his calling and election sure.

A sister says she is thankful that she came up to this meeting. There was the appearance of a storm; she asked God that the storm might be stayed. It looked very dark all night, but did not rain, and they started the following morning. They rode a part of the way in the rain, but this she did not mind; she had received many rich blessings since she came on the ground. She had many trials, but thought they were all for the best, and would trust in God to bring her through them all.

A brother says he desires to serve God in spirit and in truth; he wants his daily life to be acceptable in the sight of God. He has but a short time to serve the cause of truth, he wants the principles of truth to be exemplified in his every act, and the fear of God kept continually before him.

Four now rose at the same time. A sister says that she is a great sinner and wants to be converted.

A brother says, "I feel thankful for what mine eyes have seen and mine ears have heard. These cheering testimonies have met a response in my heart. I want to be strong in hope and faithful in obedience to all the commandments of God, and at last receive the reward of eternal life."

A Methodist sister says the Lord is here. She is thankful that he has given her enough of his Spirit that she can recognize the power and love of God manifested in the souls of this people. She is not of this fold, but feels that the Lord is among them.

A sister says she feels that, only through Christ, can she overcome. She has faults that she must put away. During the past year, when she thought she was strong, she was made to see her weakness. She came to this meeting to find Jesus. She wants to hide behind that Friend, as sister White has shown us it is only through the assisting grace of the Redeemer that we can overcome and have eternal life.

A sister says she loves the Lord, but she often says and does that which is wrong; this has hindered her progress. She has had severe conflicts and passed through many trying scenes; but the Lord has sustained her, and been to her a very present help in time of trouble.

A brother says that he has learned it is good to serve God. He has dedicated his entire self to the Lord, and feels that it is too small a gift. He is determined to serve him to the best of his ability.

A brother says he has been trying for many years to keep the commandments of God. He can say with truth that it pays even in this life to serve God. He intends to try, from this day, to serve him more faithfully.

A sister says that it is good to be here. She thanks God that he has seen fit to call her into his service. She knows that if she does her part, he will not fail to do his. We may always trust him; for he will never forsake us.

A brother says he feels great need of humbling himself before God. He has been guilty of a disposition to find fault; he feels like asking the forgiveness of God and his brethren and sisters.

A sister testifies that the Lord has been good to her. She praises his name for his Spirit which she has felt in her heart since she came to this camp-meeting. She feels that she must give herself and all she has into the hands of God, and trust him to keep and care for that which she has intrusted to him.

A sister says she is waiting for Jesus; she wants to be among the children of God when he shall appear. She feels that she must forsake her sins and obey the requirements of God, watching, waiting and praying, that she may be, at last, of that number that have



washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

A brother says he feels happy in the Lord, although he knows himself to be an unworthy follower and keeper of his commandments. He has had a hard time to get along, but he is not discouraged, but means to press on till he gains the reward of him who overcomes.

A Danish brother says he feels that the truth that he has heard is testing his heart. He knows that he must get nearer to God. It is an individual work that must be done in each heart, and his only course is to cling to the Father.

His heart beats in unison with the hearts of his brethren, and his soul cries out, "Your God is my God, and your people are my people." If he cannot live in peace and harmony with his brethren in this world, he surely cannot in the world to come.

A Norwegian says he wants to try to seek the Lord and be a complete overcomer. He says that the Lord has been very good to him, and very merciful in his dealings with him. He has not a single complaint to make.

Four upon their feet at once. A brother says that it is good for him to be here. He is glad to hear these good, cheering testimonies. He is trying to seek God that he may have a correct understanding of his will, and do the work that God has given him to do. He feels that it is an important time for all. We must not neglect the work of God, and our souls should be fruitful in the knowledge of his will.

A sister says she rejoices in the good prayers and testimonies she has heard: they have done her good. She wants a new conversion to God and to his service.

A brother came up here with the desire and expectation of receiving a great blessing on this camp-ground. He thinks that it is necessary for him to humble his heart before God, before he can enter upon his work with renewed zeal. He feels that he must have the patience, meekness and humility of Christ. He is determined to be a better man, through the grace of God, that his labors may be acceptable to him. He wants to be a faithful servant of Christ, that he may share the glorious reward promised to them who remain steadfast to the end.

May 4, 1876

### **Camp-meeting at Eagle Lake**

Sabbath afternoon, June 26, I had freedom in speaking to the people from Luke 19:41, 42. There was a solemn impression left upon the audience.

We invited those who felt that they were not in favor with God, and those who had never professed our faith, and those who had backslidden from God, to come forward. About one hundred promptly responded to the call. Opportunity was given for all who felt burdened to relieve their feelings by saying a few words to the point.

A sister said she felt that she needed the prayers of God's people. She had prayed the Lord to open the way for her to come to this meeting, that she might here seek God with all her heart. There was a very tender spirit in the congregation.

A brother said he feared that we did not realize the sacred work in which we are engaged, and do not feel the necessity of making sure work for eternal life. The truth never looked brighter than today.

A sister said she must have a stronger hold on God. She has led a praying life, but has not felt right. Her life has not been worthy of the name of Christian.

A sister said she had done wrong. Nothing, as she now views it, has been good and right in her life. She wants her heart cleansed. She has been living in doubts and fears, and knows that she cannot honor God by such a life.

A brother said he was laboring to find rest for his soul, but he does not feel free. He said that he had felt an antipathy to a certain brother. He begged his brother to give him his hand and forgive him for his feelings. This confession was well wet down with tears.

A sister said she wanted a consecration to God. She had not devoted time to the study of the Bible and had not given time to the education of her children. There has not been a day that she has not said or done something which she afterwards regretted. She

seemed to be overcome, and dropped upon her knees before God, weeping, confessing, and praying for the forgiveness of her sins. She confessed that she had been at times impatient with her family and fault-finding with her brethren and sisters.

A sister said she desired to be a child of God. She sometimes felt thankful to God for his mercies, but she longed to get nearer to God, and wanted to feel more anxiety for her children. She wanted a conversion that would make her love sinners more. She thought if she came forward to ask the prayers of the servants of God, he would cause a deeper work in her heart, and she would receive strength to do the duties that God had left for her to do.

A Danish sister said she had tried to serve the Lord, and wanted more of the Spirit of God.

A brother confessed that he was a sinner, by coming forward to these seats. He wanted a deeper work of God in his heart. He came up to humble himself before God. Unfaithfulness he felt was written on all his works. He felt that he must have a pure conscience; for the pure alone shall see God.

A brother said it had been only three months since he commenced to serve God and obey his commandments. He wanted to surrender all to God and love him with all his heart.

A brother said he had made a profession of the truth, but he had never felt satisfied with his position. He felt that he must have a deeper work of grace in his heart. He wanted to get right here at this meeting. He must work from the foundation. The foundation must be sound. He must dig deep and lay it firmly upon the Rock. Unless the law of God was written in his heart he felt that he could never be saved, and hear from the lips of Christ, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

A brother had loved Christ one year, and he felt that the commandments of the Father are holy, just, and good. He felt that he was a most sinful being. He had much to hinder him. He wanted to give up all his sins. For the past few weeks he had had a deep conviction of sin. He felt with the brother who had spoken just before him that he must dig deep, get down to the very bottom of his iniquity, and root out every evil. He knew

it was a trying time and a turning point in his life and experience. The law of God is exceedingly broad. The law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul. This conversion he must experience in his life.

A Dane spoke in his own tongue. Bro. Nelson interpreted his words. The brother said he had done many wrong things in his life, for which he was heartily sorry. He repented of his sins, and wanted to love Jesus with undivided affections and obey the commandments of God.

A sister said she had been many years a professed Christian, but she was convinced from what she had heard at this meeting, that she must have a deeper work of grace in her heart. She came here, that she might have her strength renewed. She made a confession to her brethren and sisters of her neglect of duty. She wanted to be a whole-hearted, daily Christian. She wanted a thorough work of grace in her heart, that she might be a blessing to others.

A sister said she came to this meeting to obtain the blessing of God. She was convicted of sin, and convinced that she has lived at a great distance from God. She has feared the cross of Christ. She loved the Lord's people and these truths. From a child she has had a love for the truth. The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus are precious to her. She wants to be a whole-hearted Christian and honor her Redeemer.

A brother said he realized that he was in the presence of the all-seeing God. He knoweth all things. He knoweth our hearts better than we can know them ourselves. If he should deceive men he knew that it was impossible for him to deceive God. He had not knowingly wronged his neighbor. He wanted to realize the claims of God upon him, and to love God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself. He was thankful that he came to this meeting. If he did not hear another word spoken, he could say that he is fully paid. He said he was determined to live more consecrated to God.

A sister requested the prayers of God's servants for her husband. He came to the meeting, but because of dampness and wet, had to leave. He was a great sufferer from neuralgia. She felt that she must give herself anew to God, and hope continually in his salvation.

A brother said he had for two years professed to keep the commandments of God.

He confessed he had not fully lived out his holy profession. His friends said he was foolish to believe these things. He had come to the meeting to see what there was here. He thanked God for what he had felt. He wanted God and the leaders in this work to forgive him for his unbelief. He wanted to dig deep around his own heart. He wanted his life spared a little longer, that he might get right. He hoped all his friends would forgive him his wrong doing. Oh! said he, how shall we feel when professedly keeping the commandments of God to find out that we are transgressors of the law? He said that he was convinced by the law of God that he was a sinner.

A sister said that she has received some tokens from God that she is indeed a child of his.

A brother said he came forward to confess his sins. He was convicted that he was a transgressor of the commandments. He feels that he must without delay identify himself with God's commandment-keeping people. His friends are astonished to think he has commenced to keep the Sabbath. He feels thankful for the publication of tracts and especially for the Voice of Truth.

A brother felt guilty that he had not lived up to the light, and will try to walk in the light henceforth as Christ is in the light.

A brother thinks that some may look upon this movement of his in coming forward, as a strange thing after professing to be a Christian for forty years. But he has promised to crucify the old man with his deeds. His children had come to accountability, and he felt to repent before God that he had not set the example before them that he should. He wanted to know from day to day that he is doing the will of God, and to so live before his family and the world that they may know that he is one of the family of God.

A sister said she once enjoyed the blessing of God, but she had got into a fretful way with her family. She wanted to do her duty to her little boys, that they might see that their mother had true love for them. She wanted to be strengthened of God, that she might do her duty to her family and the world. Time is short, and she felt that we must get deep at the root of the work. She asked forgiveness of her friends, that she had not given them a better example in her life. She prayed God to forgive her for her lack of love to him.

A sister said she wanted to get nearer to God. She did not want to be found following the fashions of this world.

A Danish sister said there were many things which must be done away with in her heart. She did not want to profess the truth and deny it in her life. She asked forgiveness, that she has sinned by her coldness. She wanted to feel the Spirit of God uniting with her spirit, that she could daily have the evidence that she was indeed a child of God. She did not feel that she could say today that she was a child of God.

A brother said he wanted to be deeply interested in the work of salvation. The present truth, had searched his heart. He felt that he must have the grace of God in his heart. He had been a Methodist for forty years. About one year ago, when he began to keep the commandments of God, charges were made against him, and he was turned out of the church. He felt that he wanted to be a thoroughly converted man. He knew not how soon his case might be brought in review before God. He must have a blameless life, a faultless character.

A brother said he had been keeping the commandments of God for six months. He felt that he needed a deeper work of grace in his heart. The truth is indeed precious to him; he had never realized the sinfulness of sin until he had seen the light in regard to the law of God.

A Norwegian sister said she has just come out to keep the commandments of God. A few obey the truth. They have meetings, and the Lord meets with them. She wanted more of the grace of God--to be brought into greater nearness to him and to be humble. If she had grieved any of her brethren because of her course, she asked forgiveness. She did not want to be merely half right, but just right.

A brother one year and a half ago was on the wrong track. He was ashamed to say he was a Sabbath-breaker, but now he wanted to be a Christian commandment-keeper.

A brother said he was not satisfied with his condition. To be a Christian is to be Christ-like. We must be all right, sanctified through the truth. A Christian will bear the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, and peace. He was frequently overcome by an impatient spirit. He felt that he must overcome this; for he did not believe a fretful Christian

would get into Heaven. He had made solemn vows to God before he came on the ground. He felt that he must pray much. We are too near the end to be trifling with eternal interests. The pure in heart alone shall see God. He must be a Bible Christian.

A brother said he wanted to get all right. He felt that this was the day and the hour of salvation. He has been for twenty years keeping the Sabbath, yet he is not satisfied with his present attainments. He wanted complete victory over every sin and over everything that offends the Lord.

A little child said she wanted to be good and go to Heaven.

A sister confessed that it is very humbling to acknowledge that while she has been trying to live a Christian life she has not walked before her family as she ought. She has at times been impatient, and feared that this sin would keep her out of Heaven. She wanted to be an overcomer. She knew her besetting sin to be impatience. This grieves the Spirit of God and brings darkness to her soul.

A brother said he resolved a few weeks ago to keep all of God's commandments. He wanted to take hold of the work anew and commence at the foundation. If he had wronged any one he asked to be forgiven.

A brother had been striving to keep the commandments of God one year. He wanted to be a perfect overcomer.

A brother said he felt that he needed a deeper work of grace, that he might perfect a Christian character and walk before his family and before God with acceptance.

A brother said he had followed the Lord for one year. He wanted from this time to strive more earnestly for eternal life.

A sister said it had been only five months since she commenced to keep all of God's commandments. She thanked God that she had the help and example of a good mother.

A brother said he belongs to the church at Grove Lake. The truth found him steeped in tobacco. He had at times used a little when his brethren did not know it. He

kept it secret from them, but he could not carry this burden any longer. He confessed that he had indulged his appetite to his injury; he is decided now to put it entirely away, and forever.

A brother wanted a deeper work of grace in his heart. He had professed to serve God, and came out in the truth about one year ago, but he was not willing to yield all. He wanted to make an entire surrender to God on this camp-ground.

A brother said he was naturally irritable, and he had been thus in his family. He wanted to set a better example before his family, that they might be brought into the truth.

A sister said she thought if we would set a right example before our children, they would grow up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

A sister said she felt herself to be a great sinner. She had not had patience toward her children. She felt that great responsibilities rest upon parents. The blood of our children will be required at our hands unless we are more faithful to do our duty to them.

A brother said he was not a member of our denomination. He has not been a member of any denomination. For the last twenty years he had been floating about, feeling perfectly safe until three months ago. He had been reading our publications, and investigating. He never heard a sermon until yesterday. He was searching for himself. Since being at this meeting, he saw things in a different light. He wanted truth. He thought he had a right to know something for himself. He came seventy-five miles to become acquainted with this people. He wanted to know what he is, and what he must be in order to be saved. He should not have come seventy-five miles if he had not had an interest to obtain light and truth. He believed that he had heard the truth, and he would take hold upon it, and walk in its light.

A brother said his course was onward. He wanted to enjoy the presence of God, he wanted to get in a position to work. He had been cheered up a little since he came to this meeting. He found there were Sabbath-keepers within five miles of him who have been keeping the Sabbath two months. He was one year ahead of them. He hoped to see brighter days.



A sister said she had five children in the grave. She wanted to live a consecrated life before God, and gain Heaven.

A brother said he loved Jesus, he loved the blessed truth. He had been much blessed since he came to the camp-meeting.

A brother said he was ashamed to occupy the seat as a sinner after professing to follow Jesus twenty-six years. He ought to be telling of victories and triumphs. He came to the camp-meeting determined to seek God with all his heart. He had for a time back been drifting away from God, and he had not had the assurance of his acceptance with God. He had been blessed since he came upon the ground.

A brother thanked God for the privilege he has had of attending this meeting. He would strive to live near to God. He had not been satisfied with himself at all. He must draw near to God and have more love in his heart.

A brother said he had been practicing self-denial. He had wanted to speak but felt great disinclination. He thought he ought to love his neighbor as himself. He was a member of the Methodist church for four years. He had been a believer in the Advent faith ten years, and had been keeping the Sabbath one year. He had a desire to keep all the commandments of God. He could not say that his life had been acceptable with God. He did not feel discouraged, and had tried to give himself wholly away to God today, trusting in his mercy. Since 1844 he had not felt that the last day was far distant, as many of the church had done. In his youth the Methodists used to preach the near coming of Christ, but those days are past in the popular churches. The cry has gone forth, "Be ye also ready." It was not the wise or great men of earth whom Jesus called to be co-workers with him, but poor fishermen. He hideth these things from the wise and prudent and revealeth them unto babes. He wanted the prayers of the servants of God for his family. They did not oppose him, but they had not yet embraced the truth. He would be glad to meet them in the kingdom.

A brother felt that he was drifting away from the Lord. He wanted to get where the Lord desired him to be, and where he could have pleasure in daily communion with him.

A sister, six years ago, started to keep the Sabbath, has no family or acquaintance in the truth. She has felt the blessing of God, but for some reason a season of darkness has come over her, and she scarcely knows which way to turn. She knows what the love of God in the heart is, and wants to realize his love again.

A brother wants to signify his willingness to have God's people pray for him. Darkness has come over him and he feels sad on his own account. He must have the darkness driven away. His sins are great, and he has gone as far as it is possible for him to go. He wants to realize the blessed hope that has been pictured out before him today. He wants to be an overcomer.

A brother promised if the Lord would bless him he would live a better Christian life. He feels that he must take up the cross. He asks his brethren to watch and see if he keeps his promise, and to pray for him, that he may have strength to do his whole duty.

A brother says he praises the name of the Lord that he has been blessed on the camp-ground.

A Swedish sister wants to press forward. She wants to have her sins forgiven. She wants the grace of God, to live a holy life hereafter.

A brother says he has neglected prayer because of discouragement. He has neglected duty and lacked faith in God. As he has moved forward the cloud has been lifted and he feels the necessity of his heart being made pure and clean before God. He feels like beginning anew to serve God.

A brother has been one year and a half keeping the commandments of God. He has found it good to obey the Lord. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." He means never to turn back. He knows that there is a great chance for improvement. He must have the grace of God in his heart, and resist lukewarmness which presses upon him.

A sister, weeping bitterly, says she wants to have her sins forgiven.

A Swedish sister says the Lord has been very good to her. She loves Jesus. She

loves the law of God; in keeping his commandments she has found great peace.

A brother had been twelve years in the Baptist church. Three years ago he began to read his Bible and study it, and God gave him light. He saw the Sabbath in the word of God, and commenced keeping it; found rest and peace in the love of Christ and in obedience to the law of God.

My husband then spoke a few words to those who were seeking the Lord. He said that many had been very much discouraged by the wrong views taken of God. They seek him with doubt and fear. Their hearts murmur, "I am not sure that he will forgive me." They look upon God the Father as a being of stern majesty and justice, devoid of sympathy and love. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not, with him, freely give us all things?" "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Is not the gift of Christ a pledge of the Father's love for sinners? I would say unto you who have come forward here, The Father loves you.

In the popular churches, we hear but little except, "Do you love Jesus?" The love of the Father is scarcely mentioned; it is only Christ, Christ. God the Father has given unto man the greatest gift that Heaven held. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." I believe that the heart of the great God is touched and moved by the condition of sinners today, as when he gave his Son to die for the sins of the world. Christ says, "I and my Father are one." Sinners and backsliders, it is your duty to believe that God loves you this day, and that Christ loves you. The Redeemer of the world made a great sacrifice to purchase for you life everlasting. Can you now say,

"Here on my heart the burden lies, And past offenses pain my eyes?"

The Father has given a pledge to sinners, in that he withheld not his dearly beloved Son, but gave him a sacrifice for them. Christ has given the pledge of his love to sinners, in that he gave his life to save them. If the Father has manifested his love for sinners by giving his only son, will he not freely give every mercy and blessing? On account of disease, or surrounding discouragements, some drift into despair, and gloom overshadows them. From this they may find entire freedom, and again become hopeful and expectant to overcome. The thought that Jesus loves them, pure angels love them,

and our gracious Heavenly Father loves, pities and wants to save them, should inspire them with faith and confidence in God. The Father takes no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but he wants him to repent of his sins and turn to righteousness and be saved. When the sinner desires the approval of the Lord more than any thing else, and is willing to make any and every sacrifice for the love of Jesus, he may settle it in his mind as a fact that, if he perseveres, he will stand finally in the city of God upon the gold-paved streets.

Go forward in faith, you that have taken your position upon these front seats, and thereby acknowledge your desire to serve your Heavenly Father. Expect that you will be saved, if you comply with the conditions laid down in the word of God. Take advance steps in faith. Make efforts in and through Jesus, relying upon the merits of his blood. You must have repentance toward God, because it is the Father's law which you have transgressed; and you must exercise faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as the sinner's advocate, to plead in his behalf. Come, sinner, to the Father and the Son! All Heaven invites you to come and gain eternal life.

Jesus wants you to come. If you stumble once and again, do not give up in despair. If you are brought into trial, if you are overcome and do wrong, repent sincerely before God, but do not despair. Try again, laying hold more firmly of the merits and strength of Christ. When sinful man has no righteousness of his own to rely upon, Christ becomes his righteousness. When he feels that he has no strength, Jesus offers to put his arm beneath him. The sinner may then indeed say, Christ died for me, and his blood cleanseth me from all sin. I know in whom I have believed; from him I derive strength for the daily toils and trials of life and to resist the strong temptations of Satan.

When our son Henry was dying he seemed as if inspired. He had a word for all just appropriate for each case. With the Spirit of God resting upon him, he said to his next younger brother, "Don't give up, try to do right." How many will sink down because they make some mistakes. They should never be discouraged, but try again. Under trials and discouragements many lose their faith. Jesus wants to save them. His arms are extended to receive them, and all their burdens if they will come. We hope your hearts will go out to Jesus in loving trust. He will then unite your heart to his by mysterious hidden links joining your soul to his. "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit."

We then united in earnest supplication to God for his Spirit and his pardoning love to be manifested upon that occasion. We had the assurance that our prayers were heard. The sweet peace of Heaven rested upon those present, and many were rejoicing in the evidence that Jesus had indeed spoken peace to their hearts.

May 11, 1876

### **Camp-meeting at Eagle Lake**

Sunday morning June 27, at 8 o'clock, by request I spoke about one hour for the benefit of our Swedish, Danish, and Norwegian, as well as American brethren, in regard to the work the Lord is doing in Europe, in bringing present truth before those of other tongues. It was interpreted to them. This was an encouragement to our brethren and sisters of other tongues, and also to our American brethren. Sunday, at 10 A.M., my husband spoke from the stand with great freedom and power, giving the reasons of our faith. The congregation was very attentive. We hope the good seed sown will spring up and bear fruit to the glory of God.

At 2 1/2 P.M., I spoke to the people about one hour and a half upon Peter's ladder of sanctification consisting of eight rounds. I dwelt upon temperance and the importance of parents' teaching their children self-denial, and self-control, guarding the appetite and taste from indulgence at the expense of mental, moral, and physical strength.

The lessons upon self-control and self-denial are to be received by education, in childhood and youth. The appetite is to be restrained and educated, and this is the responsible work that devolves upon parents. The youth in generations past have been the index to society.

If parents had done their duty in spreading the table with wholesome food, discarding irritating and stimulating substances, and at the same time had taught their children self-control, and educated their characters to develop moral power, we should not now have to handle the lion of intemperance. After habits of indulgence have been formed, and grown with their growth and strengthened with their strength, how hard then for those who have not been properly trained in youth to break up their wrong habits and learn to restrain themselves and their unnatural appetites. How hard to teach such ones and make them feel the necessity of Christian temperance, when they reach maturity. The temperance lessons should commence with the child rocked in the cradle. "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rocks the world."

I was requested by the Swedes and Danes to write out the subject just as I

presented it to the people, and have it translated into the different languages. I promised to do this when I had a favorable opportunity. Bro. Smith spoke to the people in the evening.

Monday morning at 5 o'clock a business meeting was held. At 8 o'clock my husband spoke from the stand to the people, in regard to the present condition of the cause. I spoke to the people Monday at 10 1/2 A.M., with great freedom. It seemed to fall to my lot to speak in the afternoon also. The Lord blessed and strengthened me greatly. I spoke above one hour. I felt the special power of God upon me while speaking. Bro. Smith spoke in the evening with his usual clearness. These discourses from Bro. Smith were a feast to many who could appreciate the clear points of argument on our position.

Tuesday morning, June 29, at 8 o'clock, my husband spoke to the people from the stand, upon baptism. He had great freedom and power. I spoke to the people at 10 1/2 o'clock from James 1:22, 25: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves; for if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

The Lord blessed the word spoken. Invitation was then given for any who desired to be children of God, those who were backslidden from God, and those who for the first time were convicted that they had been living in transgression of the law of God, to come forward. About forty responded to the call.

Liberty was given to any who wished to relieve their minds by bearing their testimony. An aged sister said she came forward to receive the prayers of the servants of God. She had professed to be a Christian for years, but since these meetings commenced she was convinced that she had been breaking the law of God, and from this time she should take her position with this people to keep all of God's commandments. The law of God has convicted her as a sinner. She has felt that the Spirit of God was with this people. When the invitation was given upon a former occasion to go forward, she did not accept the invitation and let the opportunity pass. She felt that she had done wrong. She was sorry that she had transgressed the law of God. Her good and gracious

Heavenly Father, who is plenteous in mercy and loving-kindness, has not left her in her blindness. She wants to be cleansed from all sin. (This sister was a member in good standing in the Methodist church.)

A brother thought he could get no encouragement in coming up to this meeting, but he had received great good, and thanked God for this precious privilege.

A Danish brother said he rejoiced in these truths. He thought the truth which was so clear to him would be seen and understood by all of good sense when presented before them, but he was terribly disappointed. Those who did see, would not acknowledge the light, and many he could not make see the evidences of the truth which were so plain to him.

Bro. L. said, "You may some of you be surprised to see me forward here for prayers among sinners and backsliders." He said he found scripture which was applicable to his case. Numbers 11:1 "And when the people complained, it displeased the Lord; and the Lord heard it, and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost parts of the camp." He wants to be fully in union and harmony with his American brethren. He has grown up outside of the ranks of Adventists. Circumstances have kept him there continually watching and severely tempted in regard to the feelings of the Americans toward his Swedish brethren. When his eyes rested upon the above passage in regard to murmurers, the Spirit of the Lord applied these words to his mind. He felt reprov'd of the Lord for being in the outermost part of the camp. This was a wrong position for him to gain strength. He will from this time take his stand among his brethren. He would be more reasonable. "May God bless my brethren," said he. "I want to put all my strength in the great work. I rejoice in the Lord that I see the half a dozen of my countrymen who can scarcely understand a word of English coming forward for prayers." It reminded him of the blind men feeling their way to Jesus. In a touching manner he talked in Swedish to those who came forward. The searching Spirit of God was in the meeting; his melting power was felt upon many hearts. Bro. L. continued, "May the Lord bless you all, and grant that we may all unite around the throne to praise his name."

A young sister feels that the Lord is very near her. She wants to leave the vanities of the world and follow her self-denying Redeemer.



We repaired to the water about three miles distant over a rough road. Eighteen were buried with Christ in baptism. This baptismal scene was an interesting occasion. Children went into the water so very calmly, with light and peace expressed in the countenance. Surely the blessing of the Lord rested upon candidates, administrator, and those who were interested spectators.

In the afternoon I spoke to the people with great freedom. I then invited sinners and backsliders forward for prayers. A large number responded. We gave them all an opportunity to talk out their feelings.

One man arose and said that probably there was not a person on the ground who had passed through so great trials as himself. He was in the Indian massacre. He received several balls in his person. He saw his family massacred. He would not detain the people with the relation of his experience. He wants to set out now at this meeting to serve God, and do the best he can to save his own soul. If Job and Daniel were in the land, they could only deliver their own souls. They could not save son or daughter.

A brother says he is an unworthy subject of religion. He has been a Baptist in profession. Many years he had loved the people of God. He had pointed sinners to the Lamb of God, but had long been down by the cold streams of Babylon. He had not given a right example to his friends and neighbors. He is not without trials. He wants to be a Christian. He does not feel the love that he once felt, and that help from the courts of Heaven he once had. He said he was glad he came to the Adventist camp-meeting. He had received ideas at this meeting that were entirely new to him. He has had something hard and bitter in his heart against Mrs. White's visions. He had said many wrong things in regard to her for which he is now ashamed. He believes in the prayers of the children of God. He requests them to pray that he may think and act right, and see clearly all things as we see them. He does not see all points as this people see them, but hopes to be fully with us yet in the faith.

A brother says he finds himself far behind. He wants to confess his wickedness before all present. He wants to make an entire surrender to God.

Another brother says it is only a few months since he has been enlightened in regard to the truth by reading a Review. He received the Signs of the Times also; and became convicted through reading these papers that Saturday was the Sabbath of the

Lord. He felt that he must have something more than merely the light upon the Sabbath. He wanted to know some things for himself which had never been told him. He offered his first prayer forty miles from home while in camp. He sought the Lord then and there, and had come to this meeting to obtain further light and to follow it. This brother received the ordinance of baptism, and fully identified himself with this people.

A brother then arose stating that the one who had just spoken had stated his case exactly. The Voice of Truth had first convicted him. He saw that this people had the truth.

A Dane stated that her mother had lived a Christian life and instructed her. She was trying to be a Christian also. She had made many crooked paths. She had been a backslider and wants to start out anew. She wants the prayers of God's servants, that she may have grace to labor for her neighbors that they may be brought to the truth. She has learned many good things of Adventists.

A brother finds that by gazing into the looking-glass as sister White mentioned, there was a lack. He had not the love of God in his heart as he should have it. He did not want to forget what manner of man he was. He wanted to see his defects revealed to him in the law of God.

A young sister says she will not let her crown go. She wants to get to Heaven. She will watch and pray that no one may take her crown. She is determined to stand firm and consecrate her life wholly to God.

A brother says no doubt many will be surprised to see him rise for prayers. He had made a profession of religion for a long time, joined the Baptist church, united with those of our faith in Illinois, came to Minnesota; since that time had become rather cold. He had backslidden and felt that he should be doing more than he was then doing. He had resisted the strivings of the Spirit of God. He wanted to consecrate all to the will of Christ. If it was his duty to bear the message he would do so. His wife had taken her seat with him to seek God that they might the better know and do his will from the heart.

June 30. Last morning upon the camp ground. Assembled under the tent at the ringing of the bell about five o'clock.

Meeting opened with singing and prayer. Bro. Smith made some appropriate remarks, then others followed with their testimonies.

A sister realizes her weakness, but rejoices that she has a Saviour to help those who put their trust in him. She wants to train her children aright that they may gain the kingdom at last. She thanks God for what he has done for her. He has given her husband unto her as a companion in this good way.

A brother rejoices in the goodness of God to him since he has been to this meeting. He has not felt his acceptance with God for a time, as he desired; but since these meetings he has enjoyed the blessing of God, and he wants to retain this precious blessing under all circumstances.

A brother says he never felt greater gratitude to God than he does this morning. He has a most earnest desire to follow him and be better prepared to live in his kingdom. He was much affected.

A brother rejoices for the blessing he has received at this meeting. He does not want to be forgetful of the words of truth, warning, and encouragement heard since coming here.

Another brother says he has been blessed in attending this camp-meeting. He feels that the Spirit of God and of Heaven has come nigh unto us. He desires to go home and live better for the time to come than he has done, that rays of light may pass from him to others, that they may know that he has been learning of Jesus. Unless he makes quick steps he fears that the message will get ahead of him, and he be left behind.

A sister says she is resolved to go to Mount Zion, lay all on the altar, and strive earnestly to do her Master's bidding.

A brother says he is glad that God has put into his heart a desire to be a soldier of the cross, and bear that cross cheerfully till he shall exchange it for a crown.

A Danish sister says she is thankful for the instruction she has received at this meeting. She wants to carry out the things she has heard. In all the departments of life

she wants to gather with Christ. If we lose the influence of these meetings it will be to us a great loss.

A sister feels that she has been greatly privileged in attending these meetings. She has been much discouraged. It seemed to her that she should never overcome, that with her the war was nearly ended. She has thought she could never obey the truth, her will had not been sufficient to enable her to do so. But she feels more hopeful, and is now willing to take hold anew and strive to overcome, and in every department of her life seek to work right to the point, let her surroundings and circumstances be as they may. She wants to live right before the Lord. She requests her brethren and sisters to tell her frankly when they see her out of the way, and she will receive it kindly and love them better for it. She desires to remember what she has heard, and the good words of instruction she has received at this meeting, and put them into practice when she returns home.

A brother came up here to get a blessing. He had been sick, and was obliged to leave the ground. He had the privilege of the last day's meeting. The Lord has blessed him; although he is afflicted, he will put his trust in God, and will praise him while he lives.

A brother says he has not kept his seat because he had nothing to say or had not an interest in the work. "My heart, with you, loves God." He has many things to overcome, and he has been strengthened, and encouraged.

A sister says she is determined to keep the law of God, and to love the truth.

Another sister says she thanks God for this great privilege. She means to profit by it. The Lord is willing to show us our faults as fast as we are willing to put them away and overcome them. She exhorted her brethren to faithfulness, to do nothing to bring a reproach upon the precious cause of God.

A brother thanks God for the privilege of being here and having a part in the good cause. He loves the people of God more than he ever has before. He has more confidence in this work than he has ever had.

One brother has been only a few months in the truth. He has enjoyed at this

camp-meeting a feast of fat things. While the great looking-glass has been held up before him, he has seen the imperfections in his character. He feels that he must be in earnest to remove the spots and stains, or he can never enter the pure kingdom of Heaven.

A sister says she is grateful for the instructions received, and will improve upon what she has heard.

A sister says she is thankful for this privilege. The light given has shown her sins. She wants to do the will of God daily and overcome every wrong in her life and gather with Christ.

A sister says she has received good instruction at this meeting. She could not, because of ill-health, get to the meeting until yesterday morning; but she has been richly paid by what she has received, and wants her heart and hand in the truth and work of God, growing stronger every day.

A Swedish brother is thankful for the privilege of speaking a few words. He feels very happy. He has enjoyed the blessing of God. If he had missed this camp-meeting it would have been a great loss to him. He has had to leave his father and friends. He has had an experience in leaving parents for the truth and Christ's sake. He hopes to see them yet turning to the truth. "Let us instruct our children in the way of life, that they may not be led astray by heresy, but be saved with the people of God. Let us, my Swedish brethren, be united with the people of God, that none of us be led astray from the fold. How sorry should we be if any should fail to meet us there, when the obedient shall receive their reward."

A brother says he has more confidence in the message today than ever before. He has gained strength on the camp-ground. At this meeting, he has gained an experience worth having.

A sister has been led, at the meeting, to feel the necessity of having a greater consecration to God.

A sister said she had had a precious season of the grace of God. She wanted a share in the kingdom with the redeemed.

Another sister spoke in behalf of a sister who was baptized in Wasioja. She is now in Canada, and has written a letter saying she has passed through great trials, but she can now rejoice in God because her husband has taken the truth. She is very poor, but she sent twenty-five cents of British money to aid in publishing these truths she so highly prizes. She said in her own behalf that the truth she has heard at this meeting will be a savor of life unto life to her and her family. She hoped they would be a united family in the kingdom of God.

A sister said she is thankful to God for this privilege and the instruction she had received, and was determined to follow on to know the Lord.

A brother had a very great desire to gain spiritual strength. He had been cheered and strengthened greatly at these meetings.

A brother said he was thankful that he had received the blessing he so much desired at this meeting.

A sister had been seeking to follow the Saviour. She received the ordinance of baptism yesterday. After coming out of the water she was greatly blessed.

A sister said the Lord has richly blessed her. Yesterday as she came out of the water a gleam of light from Heaven shone upon her. If clouds gather henceforth upon her soul she will strive to remember the sun shining beyond the cloud. She thanks God for the blessed results of this meeting.

A brother said he had been much blessed at this meeting. His faith was increased and he had been greatly strengthened.

Another brother thanked God for what he had done for his soul in this meeting. He was determined to live nearer to Jesus and serve him better. He wanted to overcome all his besetments. When the truth came to him at first, it found him going the downward road. He saw that he was a transgressor of God's law, and he had been trying to turn from his sins and choose the path that leads heavenward.

A sister spoke in behalf of our aged sister Gibson, who could not come to the

meeting. She is eighty years old, and this is the first camp-meeting she has missed of those held in the State. She wept because she was not strong enough to come to the meeting. She loves the truth. She desired the prayers of her brethren and sisters who attended the meeting.

A brother had at this meeting received encouragement to press on and be faithful in setting a right example.

A brother said he had enjoyed this meeting. He desired to live nearer to God. He had recently started to serve him.

A brother said his heart had been filled with gratitude to God for his blessing received at this meeting. He was determined to buckle on the armor anew and not lay it off until his Master bade him.

A sister said she had love for Jesus. She thanked God for all things, even for poverty, for this was among the all things which shall work together for good to them that love God.

A sister said she could say as never before, "My Lord and my God." Jesus wanted to save her. The Lord wanted to save her, and angels of God wanted to save her, and why should she be unbelieving?

A brother had looked forward with great expectations to this meeting. He had enjoyed it very much. For some reason a cloud had disturbed his mind for the last two days. He had felt like Peter that Satan desired to sift him as wheat. He wanted to enter into the kingdom of God. He wanted to go forth better prepared to work for God. He left his companion to go forth to his field of labor.

A brother Spicer said he had not yet been ground down to rigid discipline. God had tried him, that he might see his way clear to work for him. He wanted to be in earnest, lest the message get ahead of him. Two hundred years ago the Lord planted Sabbath-keepers in America. They prospered for awhile, then seemed to hesitate. God raised up a people to carry on the work. We see what we do at this time. Blessings have been taken away from those who have proved themselves unworthy of them and given to others who would be more faithful to their trust. If we are not faithful to the message

before us the blessing will be removed from us and given to others. We feel like saying to you who are attending this meeting, We feel like pressing forward and entreat of you to be faithful, be true, do not turn back. The promise is to those who endure unto the end.

My husband responded and presented the case of Bro. and Sr. Spicer, that they become members of the Conference. A rising vote was taken, not a dissenting voice.

So closed our last meeting on the ground.



May 18, 1876

## **The Sparta Camp-Meeting**

We arrived at the camp-ground about 7 o'clock Wednesday evening, June 30, 1875. We found the meeting in a very pleasant place. Eleven tents were already up. The most of these tents were unusually large. It was yet early, and a large gathering of our people was expected. Our tent, kindly furnished us by our brethren at Monroe, was soon pitched and furnished, and we were again at home in our cotton house.

Our labors closed in Minnesota Wednesday morning. After riding from 9 A.M. to 7 P.M. we were again upon camp-ground. We took a night's rest in our tent, and Thursday morning at 10 1/2 A.M. our labors commenced. Wednesday, while riding in the cars, we had not the privilege of resting. Eld. Smith, my husband, and myself, were all engaged in writing important matter while the train was moving swiftly onward. Attending camp-meetings every week leaves us no leisure time for rest and recuperation. Notwithstanding our weariness, we have good courage, and God has greatly blessed us with health, for which we feel deeply grateful to our Heavenly Father.

Bro. Smith spoke at the stand at 10 A.M., giving an appropriate discourse.

At 2 P.M. I read Matthew 18:1. I dwelt especially upon the necessity of humbling ourselves before God, and having our minds withdrawn from self, in sympathy and love for others. Especially should we engage in personal effort for those out of Christ. When self shall be submerged in Christ, then shall we walk in humbleness of mind, simplicity, and unselfishness, doing others good. It requires a thorough conversion to follow Jesus closely, a singleness of purpose, a purity of motive.

Friday, July 2, we had a conference meeting under the tent. After a prayer and singing, Bro. Sanborn bore a short testimony. Said he, "I love the precious truth, and the work of preparation necessary to insure eternal life. I have come to this meeting to get a fitting up, a renewal of the grace of God, that I may do his work acceptably. I am seeking the Lord for myself, and I desire to help others to seek him."

A brother says, "I have peace and joy in my soul. I came to camp-meeting to get

more of the love of God. I rejoice to see my brethren and sisters rejoicing in the truth and pressing their way to the happiness of Heaven. To those souls who are inquiring concerning our faith, I feel certain that if they really desire light, by which to see the truth and understand it for themselves, they may receive it, and be sanctified through it."

A brother says, "I am thankful for this privilege. I, too, am seeking the Lord. I have received great good since I came to this meeting."

A Swedish sister says, "I am truly renewed since I came here. I feel strong in the faith. Jesus has paid me for coming, in giving me peace and love. I want to be a humble follower of Christ. I want the seal of God upon my forehead."

A brother says, in much brokenness of spirit, "I am rejoiced to see so many of our faith testifying to the goodness of God. I feel the blessing of God in my heart. I want to glorify my Redeemer by doing good to others."

A brother says, "I feel the presence of God in this meeting. I am trying to do my Father's will, and gladly yield to the obligations of his law. I rely upon the merits of the blood of Christ to save me from all sin."

A brother says he has only been permitted to attend two of our yearly gatherings. He is trying to be an overcomer that he may have a part with God's children. He means to live a godly life before the world.

A brother says it is indeed a blessed privilege to enjoy the light of the truth. He has come a great way to attend this meeting, and wants to take home the spirit of his blessed Master.

A brother says it is good for him to be here. He has cause to be thankful that God has spared his life to meet his brethren here. Thank his holy name that he saw fit to show him where he was standing, and to point him to the way of life. Hereafter he will live close to Christ his Saviour.

A brother says that he is truly thankful he is on the Lord's side. It is in doing the will of God we gain strength; he has been blessed just according to his endeavor. There are blessings in store for each of us; for every sacrifice he has made in doing the will of

God, he has realized the smile of his approval. This meeting will be a great blessing to the people assembled here, if they will consecrate themselves to God without reserve. He is thankful for the grace of God he has felt at this meeting; he wants to be meek, and contrite, and lowly of spirit, like his Saviour. He feels himself as nothing before God; in an instant he could blot him from the face of the earth; yet he permits him to live and enjoy the benefits of his mercy. He wants to glorify God and to draw near the blessed Saviour, ever drinking of his love. For twenty-six years he has traveled, and three times he has been around the world. He has beheld many of the wonderful works of God by the land and by the sea. The Lord has delivered him from many dangers on the great waters. He will love God; he will hope in his great mercy; he claims the blessed Jesus for his Saviour.

He would work while the day lasts. The Lord is blessed. His heart is filled with love to overflowing. He has received a great blessing while seeking God, and praying to him in secret. He is determined to take heed to his ways and not fail in zeal and earnestness. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me." "Praise the Lord for his wonderful works to the children of men."

A brother praises God for the promises given him. He has seen the light of precious truth. He has entire confidence in God.

A sister says this is the work of the Lord. She knows it by her own experience. God has been with her, amid trials and temptations; has strengthened her in every instance. She has been led to love God and his holy commandments, and her whole soul blesses his holy name.

An appropriate hymn was then sung: "Come to the living waters come. Obey your Maker's call, Return ye weary wanderers home, My grace is free for all."

Our second conference meeting commenced Thursday, at 9 a.m. While the rain was gently falling, we assembled under the canvas. After singing, and several prayers had been offered, we listened with deep interest to many excellent and cheering testimonies.

Bro. Decker said he wished the meeting to commence just where it left off the previous morning. He hoped that the young converts to the truth would be free to bear

their testimony. He felt the rich blessing of God in his heart. He had enjoyed such fullness in Jesus that his spirit had been melted. He hoped each one present would be faithful during this meeting, and that its influence would be felt long afterwards. He trusted no one would experience a loss by neglecting duty.

A brother said he felt the power of God upon him. He had been using tobacco for years, had tried to overcome the habit, but had failed to do so. He scarcely knew which way to turn; finally he took his burden to the Lord in prayer. Jesus has said, "My grace is sufficient for you;" he had found these words true; he had overcome, in the name and strength of Jesus. The struggle was hard, but the victory was complete. Now he felt that he was clothed and in his right mind. Old things had passed away and all things had become new. He felt that he was washed clean in the blood of his Redeemer, and that the love of God was in his heart.

A brother said he wanted to become strong in the service of his Master; each day of his life he wanted to feel his approval. Time is short and the probationary period granted us here should be improved to the uttermost. He was sorry not to have set a better example before his associates.

A brother said, "I am old in years, but am a new convert to this faith. I did not coincide with the views held by this people until I had read their publications, comparing their doctrines with the Bible. I investigated the matter closely, with a desire to know the truth for myself; the Lord opened my eyes to the light of his word. I can now appreciate the love of God; I will always obey the truth, and do every thing I can for the cause, if I can at last be an heir of Heaven."

A sister said she felt thankful for the camp-meeting; she wanted the blessing of God, that she might live out the truth.

A brother said he had newly come into the faith; light had entered his heart; he had clearly understood the third angel's message. He was full of praise to God for his goodness; he had received a great blessing upon this camp-ground.

A sister said she had long anticipated this meeting; she had come here for no idle purpose; she was earnestly seeking for entire consecration to the will of God. She desired meekness and lowliness of mind, that she might do her work acceptably to her

Maker.

A sister said she had kept the commandments of God for one year and a half. It did her heart good to enjoy the blessings of this meeting. She wanted to be a Christian at home, living right every day before God, that when Jesus comes she may meet him in triumph.

A brother says, "I am thankful for this privilege of tenting on the ground. I feel a good degree of the Spirit in these meetings. I want my heart baptized with the Holy Spirit; I want to obey the precepts of God and faithfully follow out the teaching of the third angel's message, discharging my daily duties, and seeking to aid others in the way of life. I want light from Heaven to shine into my own heart, and from me to be diffused among my associates. I want to love God entirely and unreservedly."

A sister said she rejoiced in the great goodness of the Lord. She loves the truth and the cause of God. His Spirit has been made manifest at this meeting. She had been greatly benefited by it.

A brother said he desired to testify to the goodness of God. This was the first camp-meeting in which he had ever taken a part. He had not enjoyed the peace of God till he came to this meeting. He was sorry his companion could not have been with him. Bless God for the light of the third angel's message; himself and many others would now be in utter darkness, ignorant of the great truth, but God had sent to them his servants, to teach them the great message of mercy; he could now work understandingly and in the strength of Jesus, and walk in uprightness before him.

A sister felt deeply grateful to God for the privilege of this meeting. She had gathered strength here to carry the light before her friends and neighbors. She knew she had neglected duty in many ways. She saw her sins as she had never seen them before. She was glad to feel the Spirit of God here. The truth was precious to her soul; it had led her to be desirous of glorifying Jesus. God was calling her. He had brought her from darkness to light. In one week he had taken from her four of her little children; they had been hurried from her sight; she had parted with them in agony of spirit. This providence had turned her from her infidelity; she was brought to see herself a sinner against the law. Before she could not see Christ, now she was a firm believer in this good faith.

Another sister said she had felt that the power of the Lord was in this meeting. She knew for herself that God is a rewarder of all who diligently seek him.

A brother said this was a good place to be in. He had felt to rejoice while listening to the cheering testimonies given at this meeting. This was indeed a feast to his soul. He wanted to be a witness for Jesus, a living witness for the truth. He wanted a home in Heaven when the redeemed shall return to Zion with joy and everlasting triumph.

A sister said the Lord was surely with us; she had never felt so much of his good Spirit before. She had received help at the Lodi Camp-meeting last year. She had been enabled to draw near to God since that meeting. She had tried, in the fear of the Lord, to submit her will to his; she had found a blessing, and her peace had been like a river. She wanted Jesus and the truth to be uppermost in her mind. She wished to be contented with her lot and to do every duty devolving upon her, that she might at last live with Jesus forever.

A brother says, "I feel that the Lord is good and greatly to be praised. His mercies are as enduring as eternity. If at last we are found to be the children of God, what an honor, what a privilege it will be to meet in that happy gathering above, where there will be no partings, no farewells ever spoken. Praise God for the good and great work he is doing, in bringing out souls into the light of the truth. My prayer is that God will move onward the glorious work.

A sister said she could truly say that it was good for her to be here. The Spirit of the Lord was in the meeting. She wanted to overcome all her defects of character and meet the pure and blessed in the kingdom of glory.

A brother said the Lord had done a great deal for him, but he had done but very little for the Lord. He had but little experience in this good work. He wanted to walk humbly, and closely follow his Redeemer.

A brother said he felt thankful for this meeting. He had already been richly repaid. He had listened with deep interest to the truth here spoken. He saw faults in himself that he had never before perceived, and this was what he wanted, to know his

errors that he might correct them before it was too late. He wanted to love God more, and imitate the self-denial of Jesus, to be a perfect overcomer in his name.

A brother said he felt thankful that God was a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God. He knew that his Spirit was here. He rejoiced in his love. He rejoiced that Jesus lives; he has said, "I will pray the Father for you." He had prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." He rejoiced in the light of that truth. He wanted to lean more completely upon his Redeemer, the source of all his strength and his exceeding great reward. He came fifty-five miles to attend this meeting, and had been many times repaid for coming. The preaching that he had heard had put new life into him. He rejoiced in the truth; he wanted a more perfect understanding of it, that he might do his duty at home and among his neighbors.

A sister said she thanked her dear Saviour for the light she had received at this meeting. She understood better how to live the life of a Christian. She wanted to keep all the commandments of God and live in the faith of Jesus.

A brother said he wanted to be an overcomer. He wanted to worship God in spirit and in truth, and live in obedience to all God's commandments. He wanted to be sanctified in obeying the truth. He had been at a great distance from God; his besetting sins had separated him from his Redeemer. He wanted to put away from him all these sins. As he has been drawn nearer unto Jesus, he had felt his spirit respond to his efforts. Praise his dear name!

A sister said she had felt that the blessed Saviour was very near her. She was very grateful for the privileges of this meeting. She loved the Lord and loved the truth. She must be a devoted follower of the meek and lowly Jesus.

A youth said, "I want to be a child of God; pray for me, pray for our family, that we may have a home in Heaven."

An aged brother said, "Beloved, my mother and my brethren, if Jesus' little ones are here, then are they my relatives. One said to Jesus, long ago, 'Thy mother and thy brethren desire to speak with thee.' Jesus looked around upon his disciples and said, 'Behold my mother and my brethren.' The Saviour is speaking to us, saying, 'My little ones, keep the Father's commandments: take up the cross and follow where I shall lead.'"

I entreat you, my brethren, to be firmly established in the faith. Agrippa said unto Paul, 'Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.' Almost will never save any of us. Those who not only believe but obey the commandments of God, and rely upon the merits of the blood of Christ, will meet him with joy and triumph, when he comes in the clouds of Heaven."

A sister, weeping, said, "I have two children; I want them to give their hearts to Jesus at this meeting. Bro. White said, Parents, come, and bring your children with you! I have brought mine with me, and I entreat your prayers that their hearts may be convicted and converted to the truth."

A sister said she was very thankful for this blessed privilege. The Lord is good. He blesses her. She wants to humble herself under the hand of God, that she may be exalted in due time.

Another sister said she was still strong in the truth, striving, by the grace of God, to overcome her sins and gain eternal life, if it be by the loss of all other things.

Still another sister said she was striving to be a Christian. She had no desire to turn back, but wanted to follow her Saviour, humbly and fully.

Another sister said, "I am thankful for what my eyes behold and my ears hear and my heart feels. The mercies of God are indeed great. I have been sick and nigh unto death. I looked towards the camp-meeting and prayed, Lord, let me go! but nevertheless, do as thou pleasest with me; I was strengthened by the grace of God; and I endured the journey of seventy-five miles, and gained in strength all the way. I have been out to all the meetings and have been greatly blessed. We have heard precious truths; they are committed to our trust, and we should profit by them. I hope that I shall be prepared to live more humbly and be more zealous in the cause of God. When I hear from those who are young in the faith, I feel my unworthiness deeply, that I am so poor a follower of Jesus. But the Lord has done great things for us, whereof our hearts are glad. Praise his holy name!"

A sister said, "I want to have feeling and faith for others; I want to help my friends and neighbors, in the right way. I love to hear the testimonies of those who have recently embraced the truth; I am glad for the precious light that has filled my heart with



hope and courage. Since I have come with this people, I have been greatly blessed. The truth that I have heard from the stand has done me great good. I want my children to be converted: they keep the Sabbath in form, but not in spirit. Pray for them."

A sister said, "I am the Lord's. I love the dear Saviour. I have been blessed at this meeting. I want my ways to be right before God. I want a part in his kingdom."

A sister said, "I have no temptation to yield the truth. I came to this meeting to gain strength and spirit. Thank God, I have been brought out of darkness into his marvelous light. The truth is precious to my soul."

A sister said, "I feel it is my duty to acknowledge that this is a precious privilege to me. I felt that I must come to this meeting to gain instruction in the way of life. I cannot be left behind. I must have an interest in the resurrection. I want my name recorded in the book of life."

A sister said, "I am glad to find a people who are keeping the commandments, in faith. I want to be one with them and meet the Lord in peace."

A sister said, "This is the second camp-meeting I have attended; I feel thankful that I have received the blessing of God since I came here. I give thanks to the Lord for sparing the life of my husband. This is a heart-searching time. I used to think that I was sure of the kingdom, but since I have heard the third angel's message, I see of a truth where I was standing. I feel as nothing in the sight of the Lord. I rejoice that I have the light of this message. I feel that I must have hope and faith, and rely wholly upon my Redeemer, who can save to the uttermost."

May 25, 1876

### **Sparta Camp-Meeting**

At the commencement of the Sabbath, we met under the large tent for prayer and conference. The meeting opened with singing and prayers. A brother then rose and said, "I love the Lord. I have come a long way to worship him, and I wish to discharge every duty. I want my light to shine forth upon others."

My husband said, "What an interesting hour this is. The sun, God's great timekeeper, is going down. The laboring days of the week are just in the past. The Sabbath is drawing on. In Europe, our Sabbath-keeping friends are locked in midnight slumber. In an hour or two, the Signs of the Times Office, in Oakland, California, closes up, and our people will be preparing to keep the holy Sabbath, the rest-day of Jehovah. Bro. Bourdeau, engaged in the French mission, is now in conference with his brethren in Illinois. Many little companies are assembling to worship God.

"In regard to the summer campaign there is a large field for workers. Many little companies are just entering upon the work. We may look east, west, north, and south, and be assured that hearts are there, beating in unison with ours. We never found before such unanimity of feeling as we have realized at all the camp-meetings we have attended this season. We never read of such perfect union, except during times of persecution, when common suffering bound all hearts together in the tenderest sympathy.

"The power of the truth is taking hold of minds, and striking down deep into many hearts. Last winter, in Illinois, a French lady walked, regularly, several miles to attend the little gatherings upon the Sabbath, although she could not understand any thing that was said, not being acquainted with the English language. Her sister asked her why she took so much trouble to attend the meetings, when she could not understand what was spoken there. She answered that she was sorry she did not comprehend what was said, but she could feel the blessing, and her heart was so strengthened and encouraged that she felt this influence all through the week. It did her so much good that she felt it a great loss to miss one meeting. I am glad in God that I find my heart stirred as I see minds thus affected and embracing the truth. But few turn back; nearly all hold

on, faithful and true."

"I do not think we can spend this hour at the commencement of the Sabbath in any better way than bowed before God, in solemn, earnest, thankful prayer; especially let us thank God for the blessed work progressing on the Pacific Coast."

After a most precious season of prayer, a hymn was sung--"Stand up and bless the Lord."

My husband then continued his remarks, and as he spoke he was greatly blessed. Heaven's light and glory were reflected from his countenance, as he shouted the high praise of God. Heaven seemed very near. As the bright golden rays of the setting sun gilded and tinted the leaves of the sacred grove, the Sun of Righteousness beamed upon those assembled to worship God; their countenances shone with the reflections of heavenly light. It was a most holy season, long to be remembered.

Said the speaker, "There was a time when one man had more power than all the mighty ones on the face of the whole earth. He prayed in faith, and his prayer closed up Heaven, and the earth received neither dew nor rain for more than three years. Warriors, philosophers, and great princes who then lived, were unable to bring one drop of rain to the parched earth or prevent this one man from uniting his faith with the Infinite One. The Lord is good. He is great. He can dispel the gloom that oppresses the mind. More faith, brethren; we must have more faith to bring us nearer to God. Prayer does not change our Heavenly Father, but prayer does change our relations to him. We are thus brought nigh to God, and are enabled to unite our finite strength to his Infinite power. God grant that we may, by simple faith, take hold of his arm of strength and mercy, and receive his greatest blessings. He is the source of all good."

Bro. Decker said, "I feel the blessing of God upon me in great measure. I am filled with his love. I have no words to express my feelings. His presence has overpowered me with such a fullness of joy that I cannot give utterance to my feelings."

A brother said, "I feel that it is good to be here. The Lord has given us the presence of his Holy Spirit tonight. I want to work for the glory of God. Time is short. The Lord is preparing a people for his kingdom, and I want to be of them."

A brother said, "I feel the sweet influence of the Spirit of the Lord here. The still small voice has spoken to my heart. I want my will swallowed up in the will of God. I look towards the holy law, which I have transgressed, and then view the matchless love of Christ in becoming my advocate in the court of Heaven. I rejoice in the law of God. All the opposition cannot, for one moment, drag down that holy law. It is eternal, imperishable as the throne of God. I am trying to walk humbly, trying to be meek and lowly. I do feel the Spirit of God in my heart witnessing with my spirit that I am a child of God."

A sister said, "I feel it a duty to speak in favor of Jesus. I love the precious truth, and mean to follow my Saviour. I have received so much benefit at this meeting that I fear I am not half thankful enough for God's goodness to me. My heart praises him continually."

A brother said, "I thank the Lord for what mine eyes have beheld today of the goodness and wisdom of God. I desire to be a perfect overcomer and receive a crown of rejoicing at the Master's hand."

A brother said, "I am grateful to God for this precious meeting. I came not here to be an idle spectator. I came to gain the blessing of God. I trust in the Lord, and he pours his blessings upon me."

A brother said, "Thank God that this glorious truth ever came to me. My heart is too full to speak. 'Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.' I must be with him upon his throne."

A sister said, "Praise God for the love of my precious Saviour. He has forgiven me my sins. I have the evidences of his love. The devil has deluded me to believe that Jesus would not forgive my terrible sinfulness; but what blessings have I enjoyed in this place! I now know the way of the Lord more perfectly. He discovers our hearts; he reads our thoughts. I will confide in his mercy as long as I live."

A brother said, "Praise the Lord; I want my entire being to praise him. He is good to me. I love him! I love him!"

A sister said, "This is a precious privilege that I am enjoying. This is the best camp-meeting that I ever attended. I never heard so many cheering testimonies before."

A brother said, "This is a Pentecostal season to my soul, and to the whole encampment; it is a time of wonderful grace and power. I would take, if necessary, ten times the trouble that I have taken to come to such a meeting as this. I have been richly repaid. I cannot go back from the good way I have chosen, but will press onward to victory."

A brother said, "I feel the blessing of God flooding my soul. I want to be always rejoicing in God, pressing onward and upward, higher and higher, till the work closes."

A sister said, "I feel God's blessing upon me. There are angels hovering around! The heavenly atmosphere of peace and joy is here."

A brother said, "I have been serving the Lord for twenty-one years. I have attended fifteen Methodist camp-meetings. I was never at an Adventist camp-meeting before. I see a great difference; there is a spirit of love manifested here that I never met before."

A brother said, "I believe the truth. I have not been as faithful as I should have been. I must come nearer to my God and get his love in my heart. I have now started for life; I will live every day to glorify God."

A brother said, "I want a part with the people of God. I have been much blessed at this meeting. I still feel the need of more grace. I want to live in faithful obedience to all of the commandments of God, and receive the heavenly reward with my brethren in the Lord."

A brother said, "Praise the Lord! I want to press onward, and keep pace with the third angel's message. If we become careless and neglectful of our duty, we shall lose sight of the work God is doing in these last days. We need to daily cherish gratitude to God for our present privileges and blessings."

A sister said, "'Praise God from whom all blessings flow.' I have been blessed this night! The Lord has hedged us in with truth. Notwithstanding all the temptations of Satan, there is a tower of strength to which we may cling. Glory to God! He is merciful; for he has given his dear Son to die for me, a sinner. Precious Jesus will lead me, even

unworthy me, and will bring me to the haven of rest at last, if I humbly follow where he leads."

A brother said, "God wants no cowards in his cause. I want courage and strength to follow my Redeemer in the path of self-denial and self-sacrifice. I have been too weak, but I have been growing stronger during this meeting."

A brother said, "I want a part with the people of God. The Lord has kept me from going downward. He sent this precious, glorious truth to be a light to my path. I rejoice in the goodness and mercy of God. I feel much encouraged by the reports of the progress of the truth upon the Pacific Coast. I want to have a part in the work here on earth, and a part with the ransomed in Heaven."

A sister said, "I thank God for this opportunity of meeting with his people. My heart truly rejoices in God my Saviour. For fifty years I have been trying to live a Christian life. I praise his holy name that he has spared me to see this blessed day. I am thankful for the loving kindness of God to me. I want to so live out the truth daily that others may see the light which, to me, is so precious."

A sister said, "I feel thankful for this privilege. I have been greatly discouraged, but my faith and hope and courage are now renewed."

A brother said, "Thank God for the answer to prayer. In every emergency, here is help and relief for the burdened and distressed. I want to love God and keep his commandments. God has answered my prayers, even mine. Jesus has great power. When he was upon earth he healed the sick. He will surely hear the prayer of faith, if we come sincerely and humbly before him. I want to be an entire Christian, a temperate man in all my habits. I want to lay aside every thing that will prove injurious to health, or demoralizing in its effects. I have used tobacco from a child. I have tried to leave off the pernicious habit, but it has seemed impossible. The physicians have said it would kill me. I know I cannot do this in my own strength, but God will help me, and in him I trust. Here goes my idol, tobacco! [Here he threw a large package of tobacco upon the ground.] Now I hope to be more worthy of worshiping a pure and holy God! My Saviour, preserve me from this debasing appetite! Purge me from this polluting habit! Supported by your prayers, brethren, and clinging to God myself, by faith, I shall be victor. Brethren, do not forget to pray for me."

Before proceeding with the testimonies of this meeting, I will say that we afterwards went to the tent where this brother, Bro. Strong, made his home. We found the tent's company in prayer. We earnestly besought God in behalf of our brother, that strength and grace might be given him, through Jesus' name, to overcome this strong appetite for tobacco. We felt the assurance that it would be done. The blessing of the Lord rested upon us while we prayed. August 17, Bro. Jordan reported that Bro. Strong was firm in the truth. He had had no appetite for tobacco since we united in prayer to God for him. He was cheerful in the Lord, and felt that through the all-powerful help of Jesus he had gained a great victory in overcoming his appetite for tobacco. He is a happy man. We will now return to the meeting.

A sister followed this brother, saying, "I can sit still no longer. I wish to declare that I am resolved to live out the truth every day of my life."

Another sister said, "I cannot longer keep my seat. The Lord has blessed me. Praise his great and holy name! He will save to the uttermost all who come unto him."

A brother said, "Thank God for the influence of his Holy Spirit! The salvation of Heaven is here! I want to be pure in heart, that I may be received into the kingdom of God, and have a crown of life!"

A Swedish sister said she could not command language to express her feelings. She was thankful that Jesus gave his dear life that she might be saved. For twenty-seven years she had professed to love Jesus, but had not walked so close to God as she should have done. She thanked God for the Sabbath. New light shines upon the precious word of God.

Another Swedish sister said, "I want a humble part in the work of God. I cannot neglect duty. I turned from darkness to the light twenty years ago. I have often studied and pondered over the fourth commandment. God gave me light upon the Scriptures thirteen years ago. I feel to thank the Lord for the privilege of this meeting. This is the first camp-meeting I have attended. When the Lord shall gather up his jewels, I want to be among them."

A sister said, "I, for one, am perfectly astonished to see strangers to each other

meet together from all parts of the country, and express such unity of feeling and views--all of the same mind, all of the same judgment, perfect love flowing from heart to heart. Jesus has done everything for me. I have done almost nothing for him. I want to work for those who have no hope in Christ. Let us pray for them. There is much of this work to be done. The Spirit of God will assist our efforts, if we labor in faith and love. If we are the means of saving one soul what a rejoicing will there be in the kingdom of God. Oh, that the Lord would sanctify the whole camp."

The meeting now closed, all felt that it had been a blessed season of nearness to God.

Sunday morning there was another prayer and conference meeting. My husband said, "This meeting is a very solemn one to me. I have felt the presence of God in a special manner. The Spirit of the Lord may abide upon this assembly and yet no element of fanaticism be here. All things may be done decently and in order, for the worship of God. There is order in Heaven, and there should be order upon the earth, especially in regard to the sacred worship of God. Everything in this connection should be done with solemnity and to edification. The language of the prophet is. 'O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord.' I am glad the word of the Lord is in language to be understood. Scripture truth is given us to study. Here is a rich volume of inspiration for old and young. Here are writings running through different dispensations, and in order to understand their meaning we must become Bible students, and search prayerfully and critically for light upon the revealed word. There are inexhaustible streams of light to reward the research of the greatest minds. The Bible is an expression of God to man, in language simple and easy to be understood. Six days of labor were given to man, but the seventh God set apart for himself. If men will take the Bible, just as it reads, they will make no mistake in regard to the true Sabbath of Jehovah. The question with all should be, "What is truth?"

Then followed testimonies from those present. A Norwegian brother said, "I am glad for the mercies of God surrounding us. I want to enter into the work of the Lord. While God has been leading us into a knowledge of the truth, he has been giving us an experience in his work. We all of us need to search our hearts prayerfully and strictly, that no sin be left lurking there. We need to dig deep and lay our foundation sure. I am truly thankful for what the Lord has done for us. I still cry out, from my soul, 'Nearer my God to thee, nearer to thee!'"



A sister said, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and thought upon his name. These testimonies repeated over and over may seem a simple thing to an observer, but it is these very testimonies that are written in the book of remembrance before God. The Lord gives his attentive ear to that which he considers of so great importance, and when he makes up his jewels, all these faithful, God-fearing souls, whose testimonies are recorded in that book, will he spare, as a man spareth his son who serveth him."

A sister said, "I am thankful for the privilege of attending the camp-meeting. My soul has been refreshed. I have been drawing nearer to God, and yet the language of my heart is, 'Nearer my God to thee.' I have received light since I came here. I want to understand the depth and breadth of perfect love."

A sister said, "I came here to worship God. Here I want to put away my sins, and place myself in the hands of God to be molded as he wills. I wish to humble myself at the foot of the cross, and exalt my Saviour while I crucify self."

A brother said, "I bless God for the truth. I am a stranger to most of you, yet I feel that you are my brethren; for my heart says this morning, Bless God for the Sabbath! I love to meet the Lord's children upon that holy day. Where I live I am alone in keeping the Sabbath. I miss the companionship of the followers of the truth. I bless God for the prospect of meeting the people of God where parting shall be no more."

A sister said, "I am thankful for this privilege. I came here to get my soul refreshed. The Lord has drawn near to me. He will never leave nor forsake those who trust in him. I want to know the length and breadth, the height and depth, of the love of God."

A brother said, "Thank God for the light of truth. I love my Saviour because he first loved me. 'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.' I feel it a sacred duty to testify to the saving power of Christ Jesus."

A sister said, "I have been keeping the Sabbath twenty months. I have had help

from God in the crosses of my new life. I have enjoyed more of the Spirit of the Lord during these few months than I have during my previous religious profession for the last twenty-four years. The power of the truth has opened before me with clearness and beauty that which I could not before understand, and I can say truly that my soul is established on the truth of God's word. I thank God that I accepted the truth when I heard it. I intend to be faithful in all my duties. I want to escape the mark of the beast through obedience to all God's commandments."

A brother said, "I want to unite with this people in seeking the Lord. I want to receive the blessing which I came here to secure."

A sister said, "Praise God for his goodness. I have been greatly blessed in coming to this meeting. I have long looked forward to this blessed privilege. I came a long distance. I want the blessing of God. I have been very much prejudiced against camp-meetings, but this one has been a great benefit to me. I want to go home and live a true Christian life, constantly led by the Spirit of God unto the true doctrines of the Bible. We have the truth! let us live in its light. The nearer we live to God the more influence will we have over those who are not walking in the light of the truth. God will make us instruments to bring others to a right understanding of his word and to share his salvation.

A brother said, "I desire to have a part with the people of God. I anticipated pleasure in attending this camp-meeting for two reasons: First, because my parents resided in this place; and, secondly, because I desired to gain spiritual strength I have been passing through a severe struggle in regard to my parents. They are kind and affectionate, but have no interest in the truth which is so precious to me. My affections are strong. I felt that I could not give them up and have labored and prayed in their behalf. I want to live for Heaven and obey the truth, and if this causes a separation, may God give me grace and fortitude to bear it. I must love and serve God at any sacrifice."

A brother said, "I want to live a life of humble obedience. Jesus is the source of my strength. These yearly gatherings are a great blessing to me and mine. Jesus is soon coming. I want to walk the golden streets in the city of God."

A brother said, "Thank God for this blessed privilege. The peace of God has rested upon me. I want to sink deeper and deeper into the will of the Lord."

A sister said, "The Lord has graciously spared my life to meet with his people upon his holy Sabbath and in these free meetings. I praise his holy name for this precious privilege. I feel the love of God in my heart. I am strengthened to do his will, and I am determined to be more faithful in future."

A brother said, "I am thankful to be with you. About four years ago I commenced to keep the Sabbath with my family. We are still holding fast to the faith. It takes courage to live out the present truth before the world. I want to go home with mind and heart full of the blessing of God."

A Swedish brother said, "Praise God for his goodness to me! This is the first camp-meeting I ever attended. I love God. I love his truth. My heart rejoices in my Saviour. I desire to be a perfect overcomer."

A brother said, "I feel that this encampment is holy ground. There is a sacred influence surrounding us. My heart's desire is to be sanctified by divine truth, that I may live a Christian life, grow in grace and the knowledge of the truth, finish my Christian warfare with triumph, and receive the crown of victory."

A sister said, "My heart is glad for this privilege. I seldom have the opportunity of meeting with such friends on God's holy day. I am alone, yet not alone; for Jesus is with me, and angels help me in the love of the truth. I want to be purified through a knowledge of the truth. I rejoice that I have eaten the manna that will sustain me in my loneliness and great tribulation."

A brother said, "The love of the Lord is flowing in my heart. I have been skeptical in regard to the truth, but my mind is now firmly fixed. I want to work for my blessed Master. I never had so perfect faith as now. I have never seen the Spirit of God manifested as I have seen it here. I have never known such power as I have witnessed and felt here. I have a mother in Pennsylvania. I am sending our publications of the truth to her, praying that God may open her eyes to see wondrous things out of his law. My heart swells with joy at the prospect of the immortal life to be given to the faithful."

A sister said, "I am thankful for the goodness of God. I have been blessed at this meeting. I will here start anew to serve God."

A sister said, "I am sorry to have had no stronger faith. I must have a greater nearness to God. My whole heart must be in the work. 'What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that thou visitest him?' I feel that I must put aside all fear of the world, and serve my Master faithfully. This is the first meeting of the kind that I ever attended, and I have been amply repaid."

A brother said, "I have come to seek Jesus. As I listen to the testimonies my heart goes up in thankfulness to God that he has enlightened my understanding, so that I can see the present truth. The moments are golden. We must improve them in working for Jesus. Soon these precious privileges will be past. Those who come for the blessing may have it by asking for it. All the camp-ground may be lightened by the presence of God."

June 1, 1876

### **The Sparta Camp-Meeting**

At 8 o'clock A. M. on the Sabbath, prayer and conference meeting commenced.

A brother said, "My course is onward and upward. I have been benefited since I came here. If we have a burden of sins, we may take them to Jesus, and he will give us peace and rest."

A brother said, "I am thankful for this privilege. The Lord is good to me. He strengthens me to do my duty. I realize the goodness of God to me more fully than I have in the past."

A sister said, "I feel unworthy of this privilege. Since I have embraced the truth the Spirit of the Lord has been striving with me, impressing me with the belief that I ought to tell my brethren in Sweden these great truths. I am afraid the Lord will take away his blessing from me if I resist his power and neglect his voice."

A sister said, "I am thankful for this privilege. I feel encouraged when I hear the testimonies of God's commandment-keeping people. I want to keep pace with the truth."

A sister said, "It is a great cross for me to speak here. I love the truth. I have not had one doubt in regard to it since I first embraced it. If our fellowship below is so sweet, what heights of rapture shall we realize when we meet around the great white throne to praise God and the Lamb forever."

A sister said, "I give God the praise for the blessing I have felt at this meeting. I want a deep work of grace in my heart and to live right in the sight of the Lord every day."

A brother said, "The Lord is good. I feel great interest in the work. I do not feel anxious for merely a happy flight of feeling, but I want a solemn sense of the importance of this sacred work."

A sister said, "I feel weak and unworthy; I want to be strong in overcoming every defect in my character. Notwithstanding my weakness and unworthiness, I believe Jesus loves me and will help me to live aright."

A young sister said, "I do feel determined to overcome my sins and meet you on Mount Zion."

A sister said, "I feel thankful for the privilege of this meeting; I want to be an overcomer and share in the certain reward at last. I praise my Heavenly Father for the light of truth. I want to walk humbly before God, doing every duty."

A sister said, "I feel that it is my privilege to claim more blessings from the Lord. I can and must step out by faith into a clearer knowledge of the truth and a deeper love of God."

A brother said, "This is the first camp-meeting I have attended. I have anticipated this blessed privilege for several weeks, and have felt great joy in coming here to meet with the Lord's people. I feel thankful for the blessing which has been poured out upon this people. I want to shout glory when I shall see the Lord coming with power and majesty in the clouds of heaven."

A brother said, "I rejoice in God today that he has permitted me to see the light of the truth. It has been but a little time that I have kept the commandments of God. I have not for one moment felt a doubt of the truth."

A sister said, "I am thankful that God sent the truth to me. I am determined to overcome by the grace of God and have a home in the kingdom."

A sister said, "Praise the Lord! I want to be a meek follower of my Saviour, and know for myself how to perform every duty. Jesus loves me. I love the truth. I want, through grace, to overcome all my sins and be right with God and have the crown of life."

A brother said, "I have strayed from my Heavenly Father and earnestly desire to return and overcome my evil ways."

A sister said, "I thank God that I see so many witnesses for the truth. I love you all. I love the truth. I love my Heavenly Father. Praise his holy name! 'Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.'"

A brother said, "I came to this meeting with the expectation of receiving a great blessing. The second sermon I heard here I felt belonged to me. I could not get rid of the impression. I prayed to the Lord in the grove and found relief. Nothing has delighted me so much as these meetings. The testimonies of my brethren have strengthened me. I feel happy this morning. God has heard and answered my prayers."

A sister said, "I feel truly thankful for the truth. It has done a great work for me."

A sister said, "I feel to praise God, looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith. We need a blessed, holy, purifying work at the hands of God. Precious grace is always ready for us when we really desire it to help us in our work."

A brother said, "I feel almost discouraged sometimes, but I am convinced that if I go to God in faith and ask him to help me, he will not refuse. I felt sure this morning of the Spirit of God in my heart. I have not felt so deeply for years. Good angels are around us now. While here at this meeting the current runs smoothly, but when we go home, we again take up our daily labors and we must row against the stream. We must get much of the Spirit of God to carry with us and help us on our way. We know that Jesus loves us and will assist us each day. Watch unto prayer. Every action should be performed with an eye single to the glory of God."

A sister said, "I feel very thankful for the privilege of this meeting. I have not kept the Sabbath long. I have received light upon the health reform for which I praise God."

A sister said, "Praise God this morning for the precious truth! I hope to be ever steadfast, clinging to the unchanging word of God. I want to develop a holy character, and be guided by God's Holy Spirit. I feel that angels are around us. God has blessed us. I love to be with his dear people, refreshed with them by showers of grace."

A brother said, "I can truly say my heart rejoices in God. I have enlisted in a good cause. I trust in my Saviour. Thank God that he has caused me to see the light and

beauty of the truth. Today is the holy Sabbath of the Lord. This the word of God plainly declares. I want to give the world a bright example by living out the truth every day."

A sister said, "We are alone in Kilbourn, but we desire to so watch and exert a right influence that others may take knowledge of us that our daily walk accords with our profession."

A brother said, "I am thankful for the goodness of God; I have received a blessing on this camp-ground. I have thought it was useless for me to try to overcome, but I dared not give up the effort. Now I am determined to serve the Lord, and will watch and pray that I may resist the temptations of the enemy."

A sister said, "The first sermon I heard from Bro. Smith, I felt that now was the time to waken out of sleep. This first sermon roused me and did my soul good. The second one I heard from sister White was from the text, 'Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven.' This discourse seemed to apply to me. I needed it, and I am trying to improve according to its precepts by humbling my heart before God."

A sister said, "This is a blessed privilege for me. I have been among the lonely ones for fourteen years, trying to do my duty without the encouragement of mingling with the people of God. I have never heard the truth preached before. I feel to rejoice that at last I have had that blessed privilege. The Lord has blessed me abundantly. I want to do his will, overcome, and finally wear the crown of immortal life."

Another sister said, "I am truly thankful for this blessed privilege. One year ago the Lord sent his precious truth to me. I praise his name that I ever received this light. I want to be faithful in every duty and receive the reward at last."

Still another sister said, "I feel thankful to God for the light of truth and for his presence here. I feel that my wisdom is all weakness, but I pray God to make my influence such as will lead others to a knowledge of the truth. The Lord has blessed me with his Holy Spirit, and my heart is made glad by the promise of eternal life."

A German brother said, "I am thankful for this precious privilege of meeting with the people of God. I want to be a doer of the word and not a hearer only. I feel happy in



the love of God, and the knowledge that Jesus pleads even for unworthy me. If I should keep my seat, not offering my testimony here, I feel that I should be denying Christ, and slighting the opportunity to speak of his mercies to me. My brother cannot do my duty for me. I must acknowledge the truth on my own account, and the goodness of God in my behalf. I cannot express my feelings as some can, but God knows my heart and will accept my humble efforts if I do the best I can in his service. A few years ago one hundred Sabbath-keepers met at Battle Creek. Today I am astonished at the prosperity of the cause. We see around us a multitude taking hold of the truth. I want to work for my countrymen. I want to do something for this glorious cause which God will approve and accept."

A sister said, "I rejoice to see and feel the saving Spirit of God in this meeting. I am glad of this opportunity. My sands of life are running out. I thought I might live till Jesus came in the clouds of heaven. It may be I shall yet live to see that day; for I believe in the soon coming of the Saviour of the world. I have experienced much toil and pain and sorrow in my life, but the blessed hope of a future life has sustained me through all my tribulations. By the grace of God I hope to sing the new song of praise and deliverance over on the other shore."

A brother said, "My mind for some time past has been upon the things of this world; but I feel that this will not do, that I am thereby periling my chance of eternal life, and I am determined to be more zealous in the service of the Lord. I praise God for the great blessing that has been given me at this meeting. I feel that I am unworthy of so great a privilege. Praise the Lord for his mercies unto me!"

Another brother said, "It is encouraging to hear what the Lord is doing for his people. I came out from the scoffing world and embraced this precious truth, and have never had cause to regret so doing; for I have found great peace and happiness in the path to immortal life."

Still another said, "I am thankful to God for his many blessings. I am trying to overcome, that I may meet the saints of God in his everlasting kingdom."

And another said, "I am rejoiced to see so many of God's people obeying his truth. The Lord looks down upon his children and loves them. He cares for his people and will shield them from calamity. Let us work out our salvation with fear and

trembling, looking forward to the reward of the faithful."

A sister said, "I love God. He has done great things for me. Christ has made known to me my duty. Two years ago I felt that I ought to change my course and strive to subdue my stubborn heart, but I would not yield to obey the truth till one year ago when I began to live a Christian life. The prayers offered in my behalf were answered. Thank God, I could be hard and stubborn no longer. I had been long enough a sad stumbling-block in my husband's way, but I trust now to help and comfort him."

A brother said, "Thank God for his blessing which rejoices my heart. The good testimonies borne here have strengthened and encouraged me. Praise God for his love and favor! Four years ago I commenced to keep the Sabbath. I believe in the soon-coming of my Saviour. I do not want to look backward, but forward toward immortal life. Between thirty and forty years ago my mother began to keep the fourth commandment, and has kept it ever since that time and will keep it while she lives."

A sister said, "I want to overcome every sin in myself and try by my conversation and example to lead sinners to God."

A brother said, "I thank God for this privilege. I am rejoicing in the pardoning grace of God. I have been pleading with the Lord in the grove, and I have been greatly blessed. I have tried to serve God for thirty-five years, but I have been careless in reading his word, and have not seen the Sabbath and kept it. To shun the appearance of evil I have kept Sunday as the Lord's day. In regard to the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, I thought with Paul, "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." I commenced to search the word of God, to see for myself the evidences upon the Sabbath, not for the purpose of opposing any doctrine or faith, but to gather the facts. In consequence of this earnest study, I became settled upon the Sabbath question, and now I keep the commandments of God, and my soul is happy. I feel that I have gained a great victory, and I praise the Lord for His grace that has permitted me to see and understand the truth."

September 21, 1876

## **God's Commands Require Perfect Obedience**

When the Lord of glory left his station of high command to become a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, accepting ignominy and death in order to deliver man from the consequence of his disobedience, he did not consult his own convenience or pleasure. Jesus died, not to save man in his sins, but from his sins. He is to leave the error of his ways, to follow the example of Christ, take up his cross and follow him, denying self, and obeying God at any cost.

Said Jesus, "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

If we are true servants of God there should be no question in our minds as to whether we should obey his commandments or seek our own temporal interests.

If the believers in the truth are not sustained by their faith in these comparatively peaceful days, what will uphold them when the grand test comes, and the decree goes forth against all those who will not worship the image of the beast, and receive his mark in their foreheads or in their hands? This solemn period is not far off. Instead of becoming weak and irresolute, the people of God should be gathering strength and courage for the time of trouble.

Jesus, our great example, in his life and death, taught the strictest obedience. He died, the just for the unjust, the innocent for the guilty, that the honor of God's law might be preserved and yet man not utterly perish. Sin is the transgression of the law. If the sin of Adam brought such inexpressible wretchedness, requiring the sacrifice of God's dear Son, what will be the punishment of those who, seeing the light of truth, set at naught the fourth commandment of the Lord?

Circumstances will not justify any one in working upon the Sabbath for the sake of worldly profit. If God excuses one man, he may excuse all. But, says one, why may not a man who is poor work upon the Sabbath to earn means for a livelihood when he

might by so doing be better able to support his family? Why may not other brethren, or all of us, keep the Sabbath only when it is convenient to do so? The voice from Sinai makes answer: "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God."

Listen to these solemn words of promise addressed to all: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

God will visit with judgments those who profess to serve him, yet really serve mammon. They who disregard the Lord's express injunction in order to advantage themselves, are heaping future woe upon themselves. The people of God should inquire closely if they have not, like the Jews, made the temple of God a place of merchandise. Christ said, My Father's house shall be called a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.

Are not many of our people falling into the sin of sacrificing their religion for the sake of worldly gain; preserving a form of piety, yet giving all the mind to temporal pursuits? God's law must be considered first of all, and obeyed in spirit and in letter. If God's word, spoken in awful solemnity from the holy mountain, is lightly regarded, how will the testimonies of his Spirit be received? Minds that are so darkened as not to recognize the authority of the Lord's commandments given directly to man, can receive little good from a feeble instrument whom he has chosen to instruct his people.

Age does not excuse any from obeying the divine commands. Abraham was sorely tested in his old age. The words of the Lord seemed terrible and uncalled-for to the stricken old man; yet he never questioned their justice or hesitated in his obedience. He might have pleaded that he was old and feeble, and could not sacrifice the son who was the joy of his life. He might have reminded the Lord that this command conflicted with the promises that had been given in regard to this son. But the obedience of Abraham was without a murmur or reproach. His trust in God was implicit.

The faith of Abraham should be our example; yet how few will patiently endure a simple test of reproof of the sins which imperil their eternal welfare. How few receive reproof with humility, and profit by it. God's claim upon our faith, our services, our affections, should meet with a cheerful response. We are infinite debtors to the Lord, and should unhesitatingly comply with the least of his requirements. To be a commandment-breaker it is not necessary that we should trample upon the whole moral code. If one precept is disregarded, we are transgressors of the sacred law. And if we would be true commandment-keepers, we should strictly observe every requirement that God has enjoined upon us.

God allowed his own Son to be put to death in order to answer the penalty of the transgression of the law; then how will he deal with those who, in the face of all this evidence, dare venture upon the path of disobedience, having received the light of truth? Man has no right to question his convenience or wants in this matter. God will provide; he who fed Elijah by the brook, making a raven his messenger, will not suffer his faithful ones to want for food.

The Saviour asked his disciples who were pressed with poverty, why they were anxious and troubled in regard to what they should eat or how they should be clothed. Said he, "Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" He pointed to the lovely flowers, formed and tinted by a divine hand, saying, "And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

October 26, 1876

## **How to Win Back the Erring**

If you are grieved because your neighbors or friends are doing wrong to their own hurt, if they are overtaken in fault, follow the Bible rule: "Tell him his fault between thee and him alone." As you go to the one you suppose to be in error, see that you speak in a meek and lowly spirit; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. The erring can in no other way be restored than in the spirit of meekness and gentleness, and tender love. Be careful in your manner. Avoid any thing in look or gesture, word or tone of voice, that savors of pride or self-sufficiency. Guard yourself against a word or look that would exalt yourself, or place your goodness and righteousness in contrast with their failings. Beware of the most distant approach to disdain, or contempt, or an overbearing spirit. With care avoid every appearance of anger; and though you use plainness of speech, yet let there be no reproach, no railing accusation, no token of warmth but that of earnest love.

Above all, let there be no shadow of hate or ill-will, no bitterness nor sourness of expression. Nothing but kindness and gentleness can flow from a heart of love. Yet all these precious fruits need not hinder your speaking in the most serious, solemn manner, as though angels were directing their eyes upon you, and you acting in reference to the coming Judgment. Bear in mind that the success of reproof depends greatly upon the spirit in which it is given. Do not neglect earnest prayer that you may possess a lowly mind, and that angels of God may work upon the hearts you are trying to reach, before you, and so soften them by heavenly impressions, that your efforts may avail. If any good is accomplished, take no credit to yourself. God alone should be exalted. God alone hath done it all.

You excuse yourself for speaking evil of your brother or sister or neighbor, to others before going to him and taking the steps God has absolutely commanded you. "Why! I did not speak to any one until I was so burdened that I could not refrain." What burdened you? Was it a plain neglect of your own duty, a thus saith the Lord? You were under the guilt of sin, because you did not go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If you did not do this, if you disobeyed God, how should you be otherwise than burdened, unless your heart was hardened while you were trampling the command

of God under foot, and hating your brother or neighbor in your heart? And what way have you found to unburden yourself? God reproves you for a sin of omission, not telling your brother his fault; and you excuse and comfort yourself under his censure by a sin of commission, by telling your brother's faults to another person! Is this the right way to purchase ease, by committing sin?

All your efforts to save the erring may be unavailing. They may repay you evil for good. They may be enraged rather than convinced. What if they hear to no good purpose, and pursue the evil course they have begun? This will frequently occur. Sometimes the mildest and tenderest reproof will have no good effect. In that case, the blessing you wanted another to receive by pursuing a course of righteousness, ceasing to do evil and learning to do well, will return into your own bosom. If the erring persist in sin, treat them kindly and leave them with your Heavenly Father. You have delivered your soul. Their sin no longer rests upon you. Your [You] are not now partaker of their sin. But if they perish, their blood is upon their own head.--Testimonies for the Church 2:53

June 21, 1877

## **Christ an Educator**

The human mind is susceptible of the highest cultivation. A life devoted to God should not be a life of ignorance. Many speak against education because Jesus chose uneducated fishermen to preach his gospel. They assert that he showed preference for the uneducated. Many learned and honorable men believed his teaching. Had these fearlessly obeyed the convictions of their consciences, they would have followed him. Their abilities would have been accepted, and employed in the service of Christ, had they offered them. But they had not moral power, in face of the frowning priests and jealous rulers, to confess Christ, and venture their reputation in connection with the humble Galilean.

He who knew the hearts of all, understood this. If the educated and noble would not do the work they were qualified to do, Christ would select men who would be obedient and faithful in doing his will. He chose humble men and connected them with himself, that he might educate them to carry forward the great work on earth when he should leave it.

Christ was the light of the world. He was the fountain of all knowledge. He was able to qualify the unlearned fishermen to receive the high commission he would give them. The lessons of truth given these lowly men were of mighty significance. They were to move the world. It seemed but a simple thing for Jesus to connect these humble persons with himself; but it was an event productive of tremendous results. Their words and their works were to revolutionize the world.

Jesus did not despise education. The highest culture of the mind, if sanctified through the love and the fear of God, receives his fullest approval. The humble men chosen by Christ were with him three years, subject to the refining influence of the Majesty of Heaven. Christ was the greatest educator the world ever knew.

God will accept the youth with their talent, and their wealth of affection, if they will consecrate themselves to him. They may reach to the highest point of intellectual greatness; and if balanced by religious principle they can carry forward the work which



Christ came from Heaven to accomplish, and in thus doing be co-workers with the Master.

The students at our College have valuable privileges, not only of obtaining a knowledge of the sciences, but also of learning how to cultivate and practice virtues which will give them symmetrical characters. They are God's responsible moral agents. The talents of wealth, station, and intellect, are given of God in trust to man for his wise improvement. These varied trusts he has distributed proportionately to the known powers and capacities of his servants, to every one his work.

The Giver expects returns corresponding to the gifts. The humblest gift is not to be despised or left inactive. The little rivulet does not say, I will not flow along my narrow channel because I am not a mighty river. The spires of grass do not refuse to grow because they are not forest trees. The lamp does not refuse to give its little light because it is not a star. The moon and stars do not refuse to shine because they have not the brilliant light of the sun. Every person has his own peculiar sphere and vocation. Those who make the most of their God-given opportunities will return to the Giver, in their improvement, an interest proportionate to the intrusted capital.

The Lord does not reward the great amount of labor. He does not regard the greatness of the work so much as the fidelity with which it is done. The good and faithful servants are rewarded. As we cultivate the powers God has given us here, we shall increase in knowledge and perception, and be enabled to comprehend and value the immortal life. Those who have abused their God-given privileges in this life, and have been content with their ignorance, having their minds completely occupied with subjects of trivial value to themselves or others, will not comprehend personal responsibility, subdue evil tendencies, and strengthen high resolves for a purer, higher, holier life.

The youth should be learners for the next world. Perseverance in the acquisition of knowledge, controlled by the fear and love of God, will give them an increased power for good in this life, and those who have made the most of their privileges to reach the highest attainments here, will take these valuable acquisitions with them into the future life. They have sought and obtained that which is imperishable. The capability to appreciate the glories that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard," will be proportionate to the attainments reached in the cultivation of the faculties in this life.

Those who will empty their hearts of vanity and rubbish, through the grace of God may purify the chambers of the mind, and make it a store-house of knowledge, purity, and truth. And it will be continually reaching beyond the narrow boundaries of worldly thought, into the vastness of the Infinite. The justice and mercy of God will be unfolded to the moral perceptions. The grievous character of sin, with its results, will be discerned. The character of God, his love manifested in giving his Son to die for the world, and the beauty of holiness, are exalted themes for contemplation. These will strengthen the intellect, and bring man into close communion with the Infinite One.

August 23, 1877

## Indiana Camp-Meeting

This meeting has been one of the largest and most successful ever held by our people in this State. Twenty-six tents were on the ground, and three hundred of the brethren and sisters were assembled together. The camp was well located in a beech grove, quite open on the ground, but canopied by interlacing branches that formed a natural roof of leaves, so dense that during a slight shower, scarcely a drop of rain sifted through, and not a parasol or umbrella was raised while the sun was shining. The weather was generally favorable, excepting on the Sabbath, when a heavy rain storm interrupted the sermon of Eld. S. H. Lane, in the forenoon, and broke up the meeting for the time. In the afternoon, the people assembled under the large tent, and we spoke to them on the subject of Peter's ladder of sanctification, making temperance a prominent point in the discourse. We had the very best attention throughout. The tent was crowded, quite a large representation being from the city of Kokomo.

As we looked upon the people assembled in camp, and then remembered the first camp-meeting we ever attended in Indiana, we could not forbear saying, "What hath the Lord wrought?" It was a very small company that were then gathered together, not numbering more than fifty believers; and the appearance was not at all encouraging for missionary labor in that field. But we were now rejoiced to see over three hundred believers encamped upon the ground; and we have not met at any of our camp-meetings a more intelligent, earnest, and truth-loving people than in Indiana. Many of them are persons of education and influence.

The truth has been handled successfully here, demonstrating what can be done, through divine help, by earnest and persistent effort. The refining influence that the truth has upon the life and character of those who receive it, was exemplified very strongly here. While speaking, we asked those to arise who had been addicted to the use of tobacco, but had entirely discontinued its use because of the light they had received through the truth. In response, between thirty-five and forty arose to their feet, ten or twelve of whom were women. We then invited those to rise who had been told by physicians that it would be fatal for them to stop the use of tobacco, because they had become so accustomed to its false stimulus that they would not be able to live without

it. In reply, eight persons, whose countenances indicated health of mind and body, arose to their feet.

How wonderful is the sanctifying influence which this truth has upon the human life, making stanch temperance men of those who have indulged in tobacco, wine, and other fashionable dissipation. We here saw young men giving their hearts to God and becoming acquainted with the truths revealed in his Word. Many young men in this Conference will be workers in the cause of God. We formed a pleasant acquaintance with Dr. Hill and his wife. The latter has been an active worker in the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Rochester. They have both accepted the truth, and were at the camp-meeting--the first one which he had attended for eighteen years.

The Conference meetings were excellent. Brethren and sisters were prompt in occupying the time. There was no necessity for urging faithfulness in bearing testimony. Frequently from two to four were on their feet at the same time. There was no shade of complaining, but nearly all expressed gratitude and joy that they had been privileged to hear and accept the truth. The testimonies were brief, full of life, and cheerful hope, and edifying to all who heard them. The influence of the Spirit of God was present, and the tearful eyes, and broken utterances of many indicated its softening effect upon their hearts.

The editor of the Kokomo Dispatch was on the ground upon the Sabbath. He afterward issued notices to the effect that we were to address the people on the subject of Christian Temperance, at the camp ground on Sunday afternoon. The day was pleasant, and the ground free from dust, because of the rain on the preceding day. Eld. Waggoner spoke with great freedom in the forenoon to a good congregation, on the subject of the Sabbath. Three excursion trains poured their living freight upon the grounds. The people here are very enthusiastic on the Temperance question. At 2:30 P.M. we spoke to about 8,000 people on the subject of Temperance, taken from a moral and Christian stand-point. We were blessed with remarkable clearness and liberty, and were heard with the best attention from the large audience present.

We left the beaten track of the popular lecturer, and traced the origin of the prevailing intemperance to the home, the family board, and the indulgence of appetite in the child. Stimulating food creates a desire for still stronger stimulants. The boy whose taste is thus vitiated, and who is not taught self-control, is the drunkard, or tobacco slave

of later years. The subject was taken up upon this wide basis; and the duty of parents was pointed out in training their children to right views of life and its responsibilities, and in laying the foundation for their upright Christian characters. The great work of Temperance Reform, to be thoroughly successful, must begin in the home.

In the evening Eld. Waggoner spoke upon the Signs of the Times, to a large and attentive audience. Many remarked that this discourse, and his sermon upon the Sabbath, had awakened new thoughts in their minds, and that they were determined to investigate these subjects.

On Monday the meetings were of deep interest. We were suffering from congestion of the lungs, as the result of a severe cold, and feared the exercise of speaking would be injurious, but while addressing the people upon the trials and difficulties endured by the apostles in establishing the Christian Church, our weariness, and pain were forgotten, and the Spirit of the Lord rested upon us, and upon many of our hearers. After speaking one hour and a half, we invited sinners and backsliders--all those who had not the evidence that they were connected with Heaven--to come forward and join their prayers with those of God's people. Fifty responded to the invitation, fifteen of whom there made their first start in the Christian life. An unusual solemnity rested upon the congregation, while persuasive appeals were being made to seek salvation. The seasons of prayer were earnest. The Saviour of sinners seemed to be in our midst, compassionately inviting: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."

Those who came forward were given opportunity to speak if they desired to do so. Many bore testimonies that they were for the first time seeking the Saviour. Two young ladies, who were sisters, lifted the cross, and expressed a determination to commence a new life. It was indeed an interesting sight. Christ says, "There is more joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth, than over ninety and nine just persons, who need no repentance." With quivering lips and tearful eyes many confessed their backslidings, and their firm resolve to return to the Lord, that he might return unto them, and heal all their backslidings. An appointment was then made for those who were seeking the Saviour to meet in one of the tents for special labor in their behalf. This meeting was one of the best of its kind that we ever witnessed. The seekers all sought the Lord for themselves, presenting their petitions to the pitying, sin-pardoning Saviour.

A most interesting feature of this meeting was the case of a daughter of Bro. and sister Hill, a mute of sixteen years of age. She united with the supplicating ones, and prayed by signs; it was a most solemn and impressive sight. Fifteen were baptized, among them Dr. and Mrs. Hill, and their mute daughter. Quite a number in addition will be baptized upon their return home. Tuesday morning Bro. Bartlett was ordained to the ministry. The meeting upon the occasion was a very precious season. The Lord placed his signet upon the work, and blessed Bro. Bartlett, and Brn. Waggoner and Lane, who officiated at his ordination.

September 6, 1877

### **Notes from the Field**

On Thursday, August 23, our little company, consisting of Eld. Smith, my sick husband and myself, accompanied by sister Ings, left Battle Creek for the camp-meeting at Groveland, Mass. This movement of ours required considerable faith. To judge from appearances, it looked like presumption for my husband and myself to attempt the journey. I had been, and was still suffering much from a severe cold, taken while on the Indiana camp-ground, and had been under treatment at our Sanitarium, being much of the time a great sufferer.

My husband had been laboring incessantly to advance the interests of the cause of God in the various departments of the work centering in Battle Creek. His friends were astonished at the amount of labor he was accomplishing. Sabbath morning, August 18, he spoke in our house of worship. In the afternoon his mind was closely and critically exercised for four consecutive hours, while he listened to the reading of manuscript for Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 3. The matter was intensely interesting, and calculated to stir the soul to its very depths, being a relation of the trial, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension of Christ. Before we were aware of it he was very weary. He commenced labor on Sunday at five o'clock in the morning, and continued working until twelve at night. In this time he accomplished a great amount of business.

The next morning at about half-past six he was attacked by giddiness, and was threatened with paralysis. We greatly feared this dreaded calamity; but the Lord was merciful, and spared us the affliction. However, his attack was followed by utter physical and mental prostration; and now indeed it seemed impossible for us to attend the Eastern camp-meetings, or for me to attend them, and leave my husband depressed in spirits, and in feeble health.

On Wednesday we had a special season of prayer that the blessing of God might rest upon him, and restore him to health. We also asked for wisdom that we might know our duty in regard to attending the camp-meetings. The Lord had many times strengthened our faith to go forth and work for him under discouragements and infirmities; and at such times he had wonderfully preserved and upheld us. But our

friends pleaded that we ought to rest, and that it appeared inconsistent and unreasonable for us to attempt such a journey, and to incur the fatigue and exposure of camp life. We, ourselves, tried to think that the cause of God would go forward the same if we were set aside, and had no part to act in it. God would raise up others to do his work.

I could not, however, find rest and freedom in the thought of remaining absent from the field of labor. It seemed to me that Satan was striving to hedge up my way, to prevent me from bearing my testimony, and from doing the work God had given me to do. I had about decided to go alone, and do my part, trusting in God to give me the needful strength, when we received a letter from Bro. Haskell, in which he thanked God that Bro. and sister White would attend the New England camp-meeting. Eld. Canright had written that he could not be present, as he would be unable to leave the interest in Danvers, and also that none of the company could be spared from the tent. Eld. Haskell stated in his letter that all preparations had been made for a large meeting at Groveland; and it was decided to have it, with the help of God, even if he had to carry it through alone; and that when once he had made this decision the bitterness of death was past.

This statement of the situation brought a burden upon me, and I was more than ever convinced that it was my duty, sick though I was, to go forward in faith to the work, trusting God to give me strength. We again took the matter to the Lord in prayer. We knew the mighty Healer could restore both my husband and myself to health, if it was for his glory to do so. It seemed hard to move out, weary, sick, and discouraged. At times I felt that God would make the journey a blessing to us both, if we went trusting in him. The thought would frequently arise in my mind, Where is your faith? God has promised, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

I sought to encourage my husband; he thought that if I felt able to undergo the fatigue, and to labor in camp, it would be best for me to go; but he could not endure the thought of accompanying me, in his state of feebleness, unable to labor, his mind clouded with despondency, and himself a subject of pity to his brethren. He had sat up but very little since his sudden attack, and seemed to grow no stronger. We sought the Lord again and again, hoping that there would be a rift in the cloud, but no special light came.

About an hour before we stepped on board the train, my husband and myself had a special season of prayer. We then both decided to walk out by faith without evidence,



and to venture all on the promise of God. Upon taking our seats in the car we felt that we were in the path of duty. We rested in traveling, and slept well at night.

About eight o'clock on Friday evening we reached Boston. There was no train that night to take us out to Groveland, but we took the first train in the morning. When we arrived at the camp-ground, and stepped from the car, the rain was literally pouring. We found our brethren waiting for us at the station, which was just outside the camp, and they protected us with umbrellas till we were safe in the tent. Elder Haskell had labored constantly up to this time, and excellent meetings were reported. There were 47 tents on the ground, besides three large tents, the one for the congregation being 80 by 125 feet in dimensions.

The meetings on the Sabbath were of the deepest interest. The church was revived, and strengthened, while sinners and backsliders were aroused to a sense of their danger.

Sunday morning the weather was still cloudy, but before it was time for the people to assemble the sun shone forth. Boats and trains poured their living freight upon the ground, as was the case last year. Elder Smith spoke in the morning upon the Eastern question. The subject was of special interest, and the people listened with the most earnest attention. It seemed to be just what they wanted to hear. In the afternoon it was difficult for me to make my way to the desk through the standing crowd. Upon reaching it, a sea of heads was before me. The mammoth tent was fully seated, the seats having comfortable backs. These were all filled, yet thousands stood about the tent, making a living wall several feet deep.

My lungs and throat pained me very much, yet I believed God would help me upon that important occasion. My text was, "To him that overcometh," etc. Revelation 3:21. The Lord gave me great freedom in addressing that immense crowd upon the subject of Christian Temperance. I labored to show that temperance must be lived out in our homes; that our children must be trained to temperate habits from the cradle, in order for them to be firm of principle, correct in their morals, and able, not only to withstand all temptations to intemperance themselves, but to wield a powerful influence over others in favor of the right. In their ignorance or carelessness, parents give their children the first lessons in intemperance. At the table, loaded with injurious condiments, rich food, and spiced knickknacks, the child acquires a taste for that which

is hurtful to him, which tends to irritate the tender coats of the stomach, inflame the blood, and strengthen the animal passions. The appetite soon craves something stronger, and tobacco is used to gratify that craving. This indulgence only increasing the unnatural longing for stimulants, liquor-drinking is soon resorted to, and drunkenness follows. This is the course of the great highway to intemperance.

While speaking my weariness and painful throat and lungs were forgotten, as I realized that I was speaking to a people that did not regard my words as idle tales. The discourse occupied over an hour, with the very best attention throughout. There were many more attentive listeners than we had on a similar occasion at the same place last year, because of the greater number of comfortable seats, which accommodated a third more than those of last year. As the closing hymn was being sung, the officers of the Temperance Reform Club of Haverhill solicited me, as on last year, to speak before their association on the following evening. Having an appointment to speak at Danvers I was obliged to decline the invitation. They then desired me to speak one week from the following Monday, but as we expected to attend the Eastern camp-meetings, we could not comply with this request.

Monday morning we had a season of prayer in our tent in behalf of my husband. We presented his case to the great Physician. It was a precious season; the peace of Heaven rested upon us. These words came forcibly to my mind, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." We all felt the blessing of God resting upon us. We then assembled in the mammoth tent, and my husband, in his feebleness, was able to meet with us, and spoke for a short time, precious words from a heart softened, and aglow with a deep sense of the mercy and goodness of God. He spoke to the point of bringing the believers in the truth to realize their privilege of receiving assurance of the grace of God in their hearts; that the great truths we believe should sanctify the life, and ennoble the character, and have a saving influence upon the world. The tearful eyes, and sympathizing looks of the people showed that their hearts were touched and melted by his remarks.

We then took up the work where we had left it on the Sabbath, and the morning was spent in special labor for sinners and backsliders, of whom 200 came forward for prayers, ranging in years from the child of ten to gray-headed men and women. More than a score of souls among them were setting their feet in the way of life for the first time. In the afternoon thirty-eight persons were baptized, quite a number delaying

baptism until they returned to their homes.

### The Danvers Tent

Monday evening I stood in the stand of the Danvers tent. A large congregation was before me; I never stood in the presence of a more intelligent looking people; they were evidently of the best class of society. The tent was full, and about 200 persons stood outside the canvas, unable to find room inside. I went into the stand with great weariness and trembling. My throat and lungs were very painful, and in a state of congestion; but I had found comfort in pleading with God for help in this emergency. I knew that if any degree of success attended my labors, it would be through the strength of One mightier than I. Committing myself to God, I commenced to speak from the words of Christ in answer to the question of the learned scribe as to which was the great commandment in the law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," etc. Matthew 22:37-39.

The blessing of God rested upon me, and my pain and feebleness were forgotten. Before me were a people whom I might not meet again until the Judgment; and the desire for their salvation led me to speak earnestly, and in the fear of God, that I might be free from their blood. Great freedom attended my effort, which occupied one hour and ten minutes. Jesus was my helper and his name shall have all the glory. The audience was very attentive, I had the pleasure of speaking with quite a number who had lately embraced the truth. There is a growing interest in Danvers. The community is stirred, and many have received the light, and have been led into the path of holiness and obedience. May the good work progress, and sinners continue to yield their hearts to God.

We returned to Groveland on Tuesday to find the camp breaking up, tents being struck, our brethren saying farewell, and ready to step on board the cars to return to their homes. This has been one of the best camp-meetings I have attended. Before leaving the ground Elders Canright, Haskell, my husband, sister Ings, and myself sought a retired place in the grove, and united in prayer for the blessing of health and the grace of God to rest more abundantly upon my husband. We all deeply felt the need of my husband's help, when so many urgent calls for preaching were coming in from every direction. This season of prayer was a very precious one; and the sweet peace and joy that settled upon us was our assurance that God heard our petitions.

In the afternoon we started for South Lancaster, to rest at the home of Eld. Haskell. He took us there in his carriage, by easy stage across the country. We preferred this way of traveling, thinking it would benefit our health. We are now resting at the good, quiet home of Eld. Haskell, enjoying the peace of God, and rejoicing that we have been so wonderfully sustained on our journey, and in our work.

February 21, 1878

## **An Appeal for Our Students**

We have had many fears that students who attend Battle Creek College will fail to receive all the benefit they might, in the way of religious culture, from the families that furnish them rooms. Some families do not enjoy the sweet influences of the religion of Christ, although they are professed Christians. The influence which this class of persons exert over the students is more objectionable than that of those who make no pretensions to godliness. These irreligious, irresponsible formalists may stand forth before the world in pretentious leaves, while, like the barren fig-tree, they are wholly destitute of that which alone our Saviour values,--fruit to his glory. The work wrought on the heart by the grace of God, they know nothing about. These persons exert an influence which is detrimental to all with whom they associate. There should be committees, to see that the homes provided for the students are not with mere formalists, who have no burden for the souls of the dear youth.

Very much may be done for those who are deprived of the softening, subduing influences of the home circle. The spirit manifested by many shows that the language of the heart is, "Am I my brother's keeper?" I have no burden or responsibility aside from my own family. I have no special burden or interest for the students who occupy rooms in my house. I would ask these persons if they have burdens and feel responsibilities for their own children. I am sorry to see so little anxiety on the part of some parents that all the influences surrounding their children should be favorable to the formation of Christian character; but those who do have soul-burdens for their own loved ones should not selfishly confine their interest to their own family. Jesus is our example in all things; but he has given us no example of such selfishness as we see manifested by many who profess to be his followers. If we abide in Christ, and his love abides in us, we shall love those for whom Christ died; for he has commanded his followers to love one another as he has loved them. Do we who profess his name obey this injunction? If we fail in this point we shall in others also. Had Christ studied his own profit, convenience, and pleasure, the world would have been left to perish in its sin and corruption.

A strange indifference in reference to the salvation of souls seems to have taken

possession of many professed Christians. Sinners may be perishing all around them, and they have no particular burden in the matter. Will Christ say to these indifferent ones, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"? The joy of Christ consists in seeing souls redeemed through the sacrifice he has made for them.

Young men and women who are not under home influences need some one to look after them, and to manifest some interest for them; and those who do this are supplying a great lack, and are as verily doing a work for God and the salvation of souls as the minister in the pulpit. This work of disinterested benevolence in laboring for the good of the youth is no more than God requires of every one of us. How earnestly should the experienced Christian work to prevent the formation of those habits that indelibly mar the character. Let the followers of Christ make the word of God attractive to the youth. Let your own characters, softened and subdued by the beauties of holiness, be a daily, hourly sermon to the youth. Manifest no spirit of grumbling; but win them to holiness of life and obedience to God. Some professors, by their sourness, repel the young. The hearts of youth are now like impressible wax, and you may lead them to admire the Christian character; but in a few years the wax may become granite.

I call upon the professed Christians of Battle Creek as a church and as individuals, take up your God-given responsibilities. Walk with God yourselves; and exert an influence over the young which shall preserve them from falling under the manifold temptations made attractive to seduce the young of this generation. Satan is getting the start of God's professed people. They seem to be asleep to the dangers of the young, and the ruin that threatens them. Satan exultingly displays his victories gained over the youth; and those who profess to be soldiers of the cross allow him to take his victims from under the very roof-tree, and appear wonderfully reconciled.

The cases of many are looked upon as hopeless by those who did not reach out a helping hand to save them. Some of these might have been saved; and even now, if proper interest was manifested in them, they could be reached. What have any of us that we did not receive? We are debtors to Christ for every ability, every grace, every good thought, and every proper action. Of ourselves we have nothing of which to boast. In lowliness and humility, let us bow at the foot of the cross; and let all our words and acts be such as shall win others to Christ, and not drive them farther from him.

I address you who reside at the great center of the work. You cannot be careless,

irreverent formalists all to yourselves. Many witnesses are looking upon you, and many pattern, after your course. An irreligious life not only seals your own condemnation, but ruins others also. You who live where such weighty interests are to be maintained, should be minute men, faithful sentinels, never off guard. One incautious moment spent in selfish ease or in self-gratification may give the enemy an advantage which years of hard labor may not recover. Those who choose Battle Creek for their home should be men and women of faith and prayer, true to the interests of those around them. There is no safety only as they walk with God.

There will be diversity of character among the youth who attend the College at Battle Creek. They have been differently educated and trained. Many have been left to follow the bent of their own inexperienced minds. The parents have thought they loved their children, but have proved themselves their worst enemies. They have let evil go unrestrained. They have allowed their children to cherish sin, which is like cherishing and petting a viper, that will not only sting the victim who cherishes it, but all with whom he is connected.

Some of these petted children are among the students who attend our College. Teachers, and all who are interested in the students and would help them, have an unenviable task in seeking to benefit this class of untamed youth. They have not been in subjection to their parents at home, and have no idea of having a head at school or in the homes where they board. What faith, and patience, and grace, and wisdom are required to deal with these neglected, much-to-be-pitied youth. The deceived parents may even take sides with the children against school and home discipline. They would restrain others from doing the duty God requires of them, and which they have grossly neglected. What wisdom from God is needed to deal justly and love mercy under these trying circumstances. How difficult to balance in the right direction minds that have been warped by this mismanagement. While some have been unrestrained, others have been governed too much; and when away from the vigilant hands that held the reins of control harshly, leaving love and mercy out of the question, they have felt that they would not be dictated to by any one. They despise the very thought of restraint.

Should not those who have the difficult task of educating these young people and molding their characters have the faithful prayers of the children of God? Care, burdens, and weighty responsibilities must fall to the lot of the conscientious, God-fearing teacher, as well as that of the burden-bearing fathers and mothers in Israel who reside in

Battle Creek. All sincere Christians, who value souls for whom Christ died, will make earnest efforts to do all in their power to correct even the wrongs and neglects of the natural parents. The teachers will feel that they have a duty devolving upon them to present their pupils before the world and before God with symmetrical characters and well-balanced minds. But the teachers cannot bear all this burden, and should not be expected to be alone responsible for the good manners and elevated morals of their pupils. Every family that provides rooms for them should have rules to which they must conform. It will not be doing them or their parents a kindness to allow them to form lawless habits and break or deface furniture. If they have exuberant spirits and pent-up energy, let them do vigorous manual labor, until weariness prepares them to appreciate rest in their rooms.

The rooms of some of the students last year bore an unfavorable record of the roomers. If students are coarse and rude, their rooms, frequently make this fact apparent. Reckless sport, boisterous laughter, and late hours should not be tolerated by those who rent rooms. If they allow this conduct in the students, they do them a serious wrong, and make themselves, in a great degree, responsible for the misconduct. The rooms of students should be frequently visited, to see if they are favorable to health and comfort, and to ascertain if all are living in accordance with the rules of the school. Any remissness should be pointed out, and the students should be faithfully labored with. If they are insubordinate and will not be controlled, they are better off at home, and the school is better off without them. Our College should not become depraved for the sake of a few lawless students. The colleges in our land are many of them places where the youth are in danger of becoming immoral and depraved through these evil associations.

The associations of our students is an important matter, and should not be neglected. Many who come to our College are professed Christians. Especial interest should be manifested in these, and they should be encouraged in their endeavors to live a Christian life. They should be guarded, as far as possible, from the temptations that meet the youth whichever way they may turn. To those who have had years of experience, the temptations which overcome these young people may seem so light and trivial that they will withdraw their sympathies from the tempted and tried ones. This is wrong. Their own life and early experience may have been even more varying than those of the youth they would censure for their weakness.

Many who profess to be followers of Christ are weak in moral power. They have



never been heroes of the cross, and are easily attracted from their allegiance to God by selfish pleasures of amusements. These persons should be helped. They should not be left to chance in choosing their companions and room-mates. Those who love and fear God should bear the burden of these cases upon their souls, and should move discreetly in changing unfavorable associations. Christian youth who are inclined to be influenced by irreligious associates should have for companions those who will strengthen good resolutions and religious inclinations. A well-disposed, religiously-inclined youth, and even a professor of religion, may lose his religious impressions by association with one who speaks lightly of sacred and religious things, and perhaps ridicules them, and who lacks reverence and conscientiousness. A little leaven may leaven the lump. Some are weak in the faith; but if placed with proper room-mates, whose influence is strong for the right, they may be balanced in the right direction, obtain a valuable religious experience, and be successful in the formation of Christian character.

I would that our brethren and sisters would watch for souls as they that must give an account. My mind has been deeply exercised upon this subject. I would urge upon those who profess Christ the necessity of putting on the whole armor; then work for our youth who attend Battle Creek College. They may not need sermons and long censorious lectures as much as they need genuine interest. Let them know by your works that you love them, and have a care for their souls. If you would manifest for the tender youth now coming to Battle Creek, who are thrown into the very arms of the church; one-half the care you have for your temporal interests, you might bind them to you by the strongest bonds of sympathy; and your influence over them would be a power for good.

March 14, 1878

## **An Appeal to the Churches**

Our influence is of some consequence; it is active, constantly telling on one side or the other. We are builders, every one of us; and we are either building up the cause of God or we are building up the cause of Satan. There are many more engaged in building up the cause of Satan than we have the least idea of. Many who profess Christ do not have him enshrined in their hearts. Christ does not abide in them, and they do not abide in Christ. They are merely cumberers of the ground, destitute of fruit; and the curse which Christ pronounced upon the fig-tree will fall upon them as surely as it fell upon the barren fig-tree. What a time we are living in! the very remnant of probation! Surely these golden moments should be improved. Where are the stewards of God, to whom he has intrusted means for them to use in his cause, to extend the light of truth to those who are now in darkness? Where are the missionaries who feel the burden of the work, and who will go into other countries, and to people of other tongues, to make them ready for the great day just upon us?

Money is needed now. One dollar now, when it is actually needed, is worth as much as one hundred dollars will be by-and-by, when means are flowing into the treasury. The call comes from Europe for means to publish tracts and papers in the Italian language. Who has the ready money, and will help now, just now, when Europe is stretching forth her hands, crying, Help us to get the light of truth before these who are ready to perish? We are trying to sell our property that we may have means to use now. Oh! why will not those who have money at interest use it at this time? Why will they withhold from the cause of God the very means God has placed in their hands to be used in time of need? I feel intensely upon this subject. Men are robbing God; and with self-complacency they look up and say, "Wherein have we robbed thee?" The answer comes from him, "In tithes and in offerings." There are men in the ranks of Sabbath-keepers who are holding fast their earthly treasure. It is their god, their idol; and they love their money, their farms, their cattle, and their merchandise better than they love their Saviour, who for their sakes became poor, that they, through his poverty, might be made rich. They exalt their earthly treasures, considering them of greater value than the souls of men. Will such have the "Well done" spoken to them? No; never. The irrevocable sentence, "Depart," will fall upon their startled senses. Christ has no use for

them. They have been slothful servants, hoarding the means God has given them, while their fellow-men have perished in darkness and error.

My soul feels to the very depths on this point. Will the men of means sleep on until it is too late? until God shall reject them and their treasures, saying, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you." What a revelation will be made in the day of God, when hoarded treasures, and wages kept back by fraud, cry against their possessors, who were professedly good Christians, and flattered themselves that they were keeping the law of God, when they loved gain better than they loved the purchase of Christ's blood, the souls of men!

Now is the time for all to work, those to whom are intrusted the five talents and those who have only one. Those with limited talents are responsible to God for their limited trust. To every man is given his work, and of every man the Master will require improvement of the talents intrusted to him. What will many answer in the day of God, when he inquires, What have ye done for me, who gave my riches, my honor, my command, and my life to save you from ruin? The do-nothings will be speechless in that day. They will see the sin of their neglect. They have robbed God of the service of a life time. They have not influenced any for good. They have not brought one soul to Jesus. They felt content to do nothing for the Master; and they meet no reward, but eternal loss. They perish with the wicked, although they professed to be followers of Christ.

None should mourn that they have not larger talents. When they use to the glory of God the talents he has given them, they will improve. It is no time now to bemoan our position in life, and excuse our neglect to improve our abilities because we have not another's ability and position, saying, O if I had his gift and ability, I might invest a large capital for my Master. If such persons use their one talent wisely and well, that is all the Master requires of them.

Look into our churches. There are only a few real workers in them. The majority are irresponsible men and women. They feel no burden for souls. They manifest no hungering and thirsting for righteousness. They never lift when the work goes hard. These are the ones who have but one talent, and hide that one in a napkin, and bury it in the world; that is, they use all the influence they have in their temporal matters. In

seeking the things of this life, they lose the future, eternal life, the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. What can be said and done to arouse this class of church members to feel their accountability to God? Must the mass of professed Christian commandment-keepers hear the fearful words, "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth"?

Every man and woman and child should be a worker for God. Where there is now one who feels the burden of souls there should be one hundred. What can we do to arouse the people to improve what influence and means they already have to the glory of the Master? Let those who have one talent use that well, and in so doing they will find it doubled. God will accept "according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." There always has been, and there always will be, diversity of gifts. It is not the great gifts alone that God requires and accepts, but he calls for the smaller talents, and will accept them if men will use them to his glory. Have we not become servants of the Master by his grace? It is not, then, our own property that is intrusted to us, but the Lord's talents. The capital is his, and we are responsible for its use or its abuse.

I hope efforts will be made in every church to arouse those who are doing nothing. May God make these realize that he will require of them the one talent with improvement; and if they neglect to gain other talents besides the one, they will meet with the loss of that one talent and their own souls also. We hope to see a change in our churches. The Householder is preparing to return and call his stewards to account for the talents he has intrusted to them. God pity the do-nothings then! Those who hear the welcome [plaudit], "Well done, good and faithful servant," will have well done in the improvement of their abilities and means to the glory of God. Who will come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty? Satan is active, persevering, a faithful general in his work, leading on his armies. He has his faithful sentinels everywhere. What are the servants of Jesus Christ doing? Have they the armor on? Are they vigilant and faithful to meet and resist the strong forces of the enemy? or are they asleep, expecting another to do their work?

Vigilant men are wanted in every church. Every member should be awake and active, feeling that he is responsible for the prosperity of the church. The reason there is so much dissension in the churches is because they do so little for God. Satan gives them a work to do for him in finding fault, murmuring, and talking discouragement. You will ever find that those who invest least in the cause of God are the ones who will

express great concern as to how those at the head of the work are using the means in their trust. Those who do least have the least faith. They are like Judas, who grudged the money that would comfort, and bless, and honor the Redeemer. But let the church come up individually, every one doing what he can, and all that God requires, and these petty difficulties will not exist. The mind will be so engrossed in the greatness of the work, in devising plans for its advancement, that they cannot spend time to investigate their brother's work or motives.

Let all awake; for the time is at hand when it will be said, "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." Just now is the time to seek purity and holiness of character, and obtain white robes, that we may be prepared for a seat at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

March 21, 1878

## **An Appeal In Behalf of Our Missions in Europe**

We are receiving letters every week from Europe saying that the missionary work there is greatly hindered in its advancement from want of sufficient means. We would gladly send them the needed help ourselves; but we have become very much crippled for means, and find it beyond our power at present to do much for the relief of this branch of the cause. But there are many in the church who are amply able to answer this pressing need, and to them we would say, One dollar rightly invested now in the cause is worth many when times are better, and money is flowing into the treasury. Now is the time for our wealthy brethren to head the list with a liberal subscription, and then zealously circulate it, receiving pledges according to each one's ability. This will furnish means to meet the present emergency, without pressing too heavily upon any one. Much may be done by individual effort. Let our brethren make this a matter of personal interest.

Europe is stretching out her hands to us for help, and the way is opened to do a good work there if the press can be established, and publications go forth from it in the German, French, and Italian languages. Bro. Ribton says that Italy needs publications in her own language, in order for our ministry to be successful there. These repeated and urgent calls stir our inmost soul; yet we are unable to personally aid the European mission as we would like to do. Now is the time to invest the means which God has intrusted to his stewards for this very work. Time is short; hoarded wealth will soon be worthless. When the decree shall go forth that none shall buy or sell except they have the mark of the beast, very much means will be of no avail. God calls for us now to do all in our power to send forth the warning to the world.

We want the brethren to awake to the service of their Master in this missionary work. Let them not set their hearts upon their possessions, and hold them with a miserly grip; but invest their means and use their influence to promote the cause of God, thereby sending treasure to Heaven before them. Love of the world is a great hindrance to a Christian life. It strengthens its hold upon the heart almost imperceptibly, and eclipses the value of Heaven and the virtue of the atonement, in the mind. It supersedes the love of God and his truth, and becomes the very root of all evil.

There is danger among us of shirking our God-given responsibilities, and drifting into a state of indifference regarding the cause of God in all its various branches and departments. Many do not give the pecuniary support they are amply able to furnish to the home and foreign mission field. They have had warnings from God, but have neglected to profit by them. They made some impression upon them at first; but that influence soon wore away, and they bore little fruit to God's glory. They have cherished the love of money till it has become an all-absorbing passion, and Heaven does not seem as valuable to them as their present earthly treasure. How can they keep the commandments as God requires them to be kept, yet place two-thirds of their affections upon the world? Such a life dishonors our holy faith, and is contrary to the injunction of Christ, who said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

Words and professions are of no value with God while the heart is corrupted by the inordinate love of gain. Christ said, "Ye are the salt of the earth; but and if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men." If we would imitate the example of Christ we should be self-denying, and ready to sacrifice our own comfort and pleasure for the good of others. It was not pleasant for Christ to leave the purity and bliss of Heaven, and the society of holy angels, and come to a world all seared and marred by the curse of sin, and die to save fallen man from the consequences of his iniquity. Are we willing to imitate the life and character of Christ? Are we willing to suffer, if need be, for his sake, to forego some of the comforts of life in order to save our perishing fellow-creatures from eternal death? If so, we should be willing to give much from our abundance toward this purpose.

What a fearful mistake that young ruler made when he turned from the requirements of Christ, and decided to risk the consequence of being guided by his avaricious spirit. He chose to devote his life to gaining temporal wealth and power, rather than to follow Christ and resign his worldly possessions. Jesus pitied the young man; he saw in him precious material for a preacher of righteousness, if he would but overcome his selfish greed for gain. Said Jesus, "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven; and come and follow me."

Jesus only required him to go where he led the way. The thorny path of duty becomes easier to follow when we trace his divine footsteps before us, pressing down the briars. Christ would have accepted this talented and noble ruler, if he had yielded to his requirements, as readily as he accepted the poor fishermen whom he bade to follow him. The young man's ability to acquire property was not against him, provided he loved his neighbor as himself, and had not wronged another in acquiring his riches. That very ability, had it been employed in the service of God in seeking to save souls from ruin, would have been acceptable to the divine Master, and he might have made a diligent and successful worker for Christ. But he refused the exalted privilege of co-operating with Christ in the salvation of souls; he turned away from the glorious treasure promised him in the kingdom of God, and clung to the fleeting treasures of earth.

We fear this is the case with many who profess to keep the commandments of God. Love of gain has taken possession of their souls, and they refuse to answer the demands of God in applying their wealth to the spreading abroad of his truth to all tongues and all nations. Jesus touched the plague spot in the young ruler's heart, which, if not healed, would destroy his soul. He showed him that he was not keeping the commandments of God, since he did not love God supremely, and his neighbor as himself. Jesus offered to make him his companion and a laborer in bringing souls into the kingdom of Heaven. The young man had wealth, education, position, and influence, and was therefore qualified to work intelligently and successfully for the Master. But his love of the world prevented him from accepting the invitation of Christ.

The humble fishermen obeyed the call of Jesus, and forsook all to follow him. It may appear to some that it required little self-denial for them to do this, as their business was neither elevated nor lucrative; but it should be remembered that these men owned boats and nets, and obtained a good livelihood by their occupation. Also their life upon the water had its attractions, and it was a great sacrifice for them to leave the employment in which they had thus far spent their lives.

The young ruler represents a large class who would be excellent Christians if there was no cross for them to lift, no humiliating burden for them to bear, no earthly advantages to resign, no sacrifice of property or feelings to make. Christ has intrusted to them capital of talents and means, and he expects corresponding returns. That which we possess is not our own, but is to be employed in serving Him from whom we have



received all we have.

The barren fig-tree received the withering curse of God because it was a pretentious hypocrite, professing superiority over the other fig-trees by displaying its luxuriant foliage, while it was as destitute of fruit as the leafless trees. The barren fig-tree well represents those who profess to keep the commandments, as did the Jews, thus presenting the appearance of fruitfulness, yet whose religion, like that of the Pharisees, is a sham, bearing no fruit to the glory of God.

Redeem the time while you are spared to work. All your good works cannot save you; but it is nevertheless impossible for you to be saved without good works. Every sacrifice made for Christ will be for your eternal gain. What will you do to aid the mission in Europe? What will you do to relieve the present pressing need?

June 6, 1878

## **Bogus Sanctification**

Eld. S. H. Lane, Dear Brother, We are pained to learn the condition of Bro. B., and to know that Satan is pushing him on to cause disaffection in the Indiana Conference under the pious guise of Christian holiness. Both you and ourselves fully believe that holiness of life is necessary to fit us for the inheritance of saints in light. We contend that this state must be reached in a Bible way. Christ prayed that his disciples might be sanctified through the truth, and the apostles preached of purifying our hearts by obeying the truth.

The professed church of Christ is full of the spurious article, and one distinct feature of it is, the more one drinks into the spirit of popular sanctification, the less he prizes the present truth. Many of those who are the open opponents of God's Sabbath, the third angel's message, and the health reform, are among the sanctified ones. Some of them have even reached the almost hopeless position that they cannot sin. These, of course, have no further use for the Lord's prayer, which teaches us to pray that our sins may be forgiven, and but very little use for the Bible, as they profess to be led by the Spirit.

Now we do not doubt the sincerity of Bro. B. Satan has taken advantage of the weakness of his body, with which his mind is of course in sympathy. We do not doubt but he is led by a strong spirit, which he thinks is the Spirit of God; but God's Spirit will never lead one in a course that is contrary to his word, or that leads to separation from that people who are giving the last message of mercy.

Is Bro. B. preaching the Laodicean message? That is well; but let it be borne in mind that the person who has become so sanctified that he cannot sin is the veriest Laodicean. The true Witness appeals to such in these words: "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." What a terrible deception! They think they are complete in Christ, and know not that they are wretched, blind, miserable, poor, and naked.

We would recommend that Bro. B. be treated at the Sanitarium, at Battle Creek,

for the improvement of his health. It is hoped that this, in addition to the strong influence for the truth there, would greatly improve his physical, mental, and spiritual condition; for no matter what a man may preach under the spirit of strong delusion, he is sure to have some followers, however great may be the heresy. Unless he can be helped, loss will be sustained to himself and the Conference in Indiana.

We warn our brethren of the Indiana Conference and elsewhere. Our position has ever been that true sanctification, which will stand the test of the Judgment, is that which comes through obedience of the truth and of God.

The position which we have both taken in our writings is too plain to be misunderstood. Much of our most laborious labor for the past thirty years has been to meet that fanaticism which has grown out of the teachings of ultra holiness. God is leading out a people, but it has been Satan's effort all the way to induce certain ones to set up their judgment against that of the body, and thus lead them away from the body to certain ruin. Thus have self-deceived souls fallen all the way along during the history of the third angel's message. Those who are led by fanaticism will gradually feel in harmony with those who fully reject the truth, and unless they can be arrested in their course will, sooner or later, be in the ranks of our bitterest opponents.

August 8, 1878

### **An Appeal to the Ministers**

"And Enoch walked with God." This is the path of safety to all who profess to follow Christ, but in a special manner to those who profess to be watchmen upon the walls of Zion. I am deeply convinced that there must be greater piety among those who teach the truth of God. Those who labor for the truth in word and doctrine should closely examine themselves for the purpose of purifying and improving their character. Many study books to perfect themselves in knowledge, while they neglect to become acquainted with themselves. Christ said, in the prayer just prior to his betrayal, "I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." If the minister would present those for whom he labors, perfect in Christ, he must himself be perfect. This work of becoming perfect through the merits of Christ requires much meditation and earnest prayer.

I have felt grieved at hearing some ministers talk of Christ's life and teachings in as common-place a manner as though recounting the incidents in the life of some great man of the world. When I hear this sacred subject treated in such a manner, I feel a grief that I cannot express; for I know that although these men are teachers of the truth, they have never become acquainted with Christ and learned of him. Had they exalted views of Jesus Christ, they would not express themselves in the common-place manner in which they do. They have not that elevation of thought which would give them a clear conception of the divine character of the world's Redeemer. They have little faith, little godliness, and bring down the standard of holiness to a level with their own narrow comprehension. This tends to lower the appreciation of the exalted character of Christ in the minds of the people.

It is not unusual for ministers, in their discourses, to treat of Christ as though he were a man like themselves. As a rule such ones place a high estimate upon themselves and that which they accomplish. While professedly servants of Jesus Christ, they are not partakers of his divine nature; they are wrapped up in self, and do not discern sacred things.

The ministers of Christ, who bear the message of truth to men, will never become

self-sufficient or self-exalted if they have correct views of the character and work of Christ, the author of man's salvation. The unworthiness, weakness, and inefficiency of their own efforts in contrast with those of the eternal Son of God, will render them humble, distrustful of self, and will lead them to rely upon Christ for strength and efficiency in their work. Habitually dwelling upon Christ, his exalted character, and the all-sufficient merits of his sacrifice, increases the faith, sharpens the imaginative power, strengthens the longing desire to be like him, and creates holy earnestness in prayer, that makes it efficacious.

I see that great reformation must take place in the ministry before it shall be what God would have it. Ministers in the desk have no license to behave like theatrical performers, assuming attitudes and expressions calculated for effect. They do not occupy the sacred desk as actors, but as teachers of solemn truths. There are also fanatical ministers, who, in attempting to preach Christ, storm, halloo, jump up and down, and pound the desk before them, as if this bodily exercise profited anything. Such antics lend no force to the truths uttered, but, on the contrary, disgust men and women of calm judgment and elevated views. It is the duty of men who give themselves to the ministry to leave all coarseness and boisterous conduct outside the desk at least.

Awkward and uncouth gestures are not to be tolerated in the common walks of life, how much less, then, are they to be endured in the most sacred work of the gospel ministry. The minister should cultivate grace, courtesy, and refinement of manner. He should carry himself with a quiet dignity becoming his elevated calling. Solemnity, a certain godly authority, mingled with meekness, should characterize the demeanor of him who is a teacher of God's truth. Ministers should not make a practice of relating anecdotes in the desk; it detracts from the force and solemnity of the truth presented. The relation of anecdotes or incidents which create a laugh or a light thought in the minds of the hearers is severely censurable. The truth should be clothed in chaste and dignified language; and the illustrations should be of a like character.

The minister who has learned of Christ will ever be conscious that he is a messenger of God, commissioned by him to do a work both for time and eternity. It should not be any part of his object to call attention to himself, his learning, or his ability. But his whole aim should be to bring sinners to repentance, pointing them, both by precept and example, to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. Self should be hidden in Jesus. Such men will speak as those conscious of possessing power

and authority from God, being a mouth-piece for him. Their discourses will have an earnestness and fervor of persuasion that will lead sinners to see their lost condition, and take refuge in Christ. Such ministers will partake of the sympathy and love flowing from Jesus, the great fountainhead, and souls will be touched by their words, prejudice will melt away, and sinners will be converted.

Were the gospel ministry what it should and might be, the teachers of Christ's truth would be working in harmony with the angels; they would be co-laborers with their great Teacher. There is too little prayer among the ministers of Christ, and too much self-exaltation. There is too little weeping between the porch and the altar, and crying, "Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach." There are too many long doctrinal sermons preached, without one spark of spiritual fervor and the love of God. There is too much gesticulation and relation of humorous anecdotes in the pulpit, and too little said of the love and compassion of Jesus Christ. It is not enough to preach to men; we must pray with them and for them; we must not hold ourselves coldly aloof from them, but come in sympathy close to the souls we wish to save, visit and converse with them. The minister who conducts the work outside the pulpit in a proper manner will accomplish tenfold more than he who confines his labor to the desk.

Christ is constantly interceding in Heaven for poor sinners upon earth; if ministers would be co-laborers with him they must do the work on earth which corresponds with that which their Master is doing in Heaven. Jesus has opened the gates of Heaven for us, and we may make intercessions at the throne of grace, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting, and bear the cases of those for whom we are laboring before God. We may see the heavens opened, and the glorified Son of God, the High Priest of our salvation, pleading for sinners. Doctrinal discourses should be well savored with the Saviour's dying love to men. This will make the truth spoken tenfold more efficient. Let your own heart be filled with the Spirit of God and the love of Christ, and then let your hearers feel that you deeply appreciate their danger, and that you would sacrifice even life itself, if it were necessary, in order to turn their feet from the path of perdition into the path of life and peace. Those who forget self, and rely on God alone for success in the task of saving sinners, will have divine approval, and the fruit of their labors will tell gloriously in the harvest of souls.

Ministers should be instant in prayer; they should walk with God in spirit, as Enoch did of old. The divine light shining upon their countenance, and shown in their

words, will illuminate the truths uttered by them, and the treasures of infinite mercy, and the Redeemer's boundless love, will be the theme of their hearts. The fervor and earnestness which characterized the work of Christ should also distinguish the efforts of his ministers. Their hearts should be subdued and filled with the Saviour's love, if they would break down the prejudice and melt the coldness of those who listen to their words. Converts seldom rise at once in spirituality above the level of their teachers. How important, then, that those teachers should habitually put their trust in God, and seek for the manifestations of his divine power upon their labors; that they should be meek, spiritual-minded, and in constant communion with Heaven. Then those who are converted under their labors will partake of their spirit, and emulate their graces.

Divine power alone will reach and melt the sinner's heart, and bring him, a penitent, to Christ. Neither Luther, Melancthon, Wesley, Whitefield, nor any other great reformer and teacher, could of himself have gained such access to hearts as to accomplish the grand results these men did. But God spoke through them. Men felt the influence of a superior power, and involuntarily yielded to it. The ministers of the truth should ever represent the life and teachings of Christ; then will they have power over the hearts of men.

I feel constrained to say that ministers are greatly deficient in their labors, and in their spiritual attainments. God is ready to bestow his grace upon them, yet they pass on from day to day, possessing a cold and nominal faith, presenting the theory of the truth, but without that vital force which comes from connection with Heaven, and which would send the word preached home to the hearts of men. May God awaken ministers from their lukewarm state! Oh, that their lips might be touched by a live coal from the altar, that they might with heartfelt expostulations, warnings and tears, seek to arouse perishing souls to a sense of their danger. It is fearful to contemplate the carnal security which is taking possession of souls. While the ministers of the truth are half asleep over their work, souls are perishing around them in darkness and error.

Ministers of Christ, with your own souls aglow with love to God, and love for your fellow-creatures, seek to arouse men from the stupor of death. Let your heart and mind be imbued with the spirit of your work. Let your entreaties and earnest warnings pierce the ears of the sinner. Let your fervent prayers and expostulations melt his ice-bound heart, and cause him to go in penitence to the Saviour. There are sacred obligations resting upon you as ambassadors of Christ, preaching the message of

salvation to an erring world. Few in the ministry have a proper appreciation of their weighty responsibilities. They go on indifferently with their sacred work, and it is like the blind leading the blind. Ministers of Christ, will you awake to your obligations to God, and to your fellow-men? You are not your own; you belong to God; your Redeemer paid the price of agony and blood for your redemption, and he has just and sacred claims upon you, and demands your full co-operation with him in the work of salvation. He has a right to all your powers, your means, and your time, and he requires your services to the fullest extent of your capabilities. He would employ them for his honor and glory, and for the salvation of souls. You dishonor him if you are not continually growing in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth.

Whatever sufferings or trials you may be called upon to bear, you should not permit a breath of murmuring to escape your lips. You should reflect that the Majesty of Heaven endured far more for your sake than it is possible for you to be required to bear. He has redeemed you by his boundless mercy, by his blood, and agonies, and death. When the Master calls you, "Go work today in my vineyard," let no selfish desire, no worldly ambition or projects, deter you from instant, cheerful, and unqualified obedience. The life of the gospel minister should be a living representation of the life of Christ. The Christianity that is manifested in the life and character, that beams out in divine loveliness from the countenance, and from every action, is a power that will attract sinners to the Saviour, and dispel the dreary shades of doubting and distrust. The corruptions existing in the ministry have made thousands of infidels. When men see the selfishness and sin of the professed teachers of Christianity, they are apt to lose confidence in Christianity itself.

God calls upon ministers who accept his truth, and bear, in his name, the most solemn message ever given to the world, to lift the standard of Bible truth, and exemplify its precepts in their daily lives. Such a course would charm into believing many who have intrenched themselves behind the breast-works of infidelity. The influence of a true Christian character is like the cheering rays of sunlight that pierce to the remotest corners of the dark places into which they are allowed to enter. The light emanating from the example of the true Christian minister should not be fitful and uncertain like the flash of a meteor, but it should have the calm and steady radiance of the heavenly stars.

The minister of Christ should be encircled by an atmosphere of spiritual light,



because he is connected with the world of light, and walks with Christ, who is the light of the world. Arguments may be resisted; persuasion and entreaty may be scorned; the most eloquent appeals, supported by the rigor of logic, may be disregarded. But a living character of righteousness, a daily piety in all the walks of life, an anxiety for the sinner wherever found, the spirit of truth burning in the heart, beaming from the countenance, and breathing from the lips in every word, constitute a sermon which is hard to resist or to set aside, and which makes the strongholds of Satan tremble. Ministers who walk with God are clad with the panoply of Heaven, and victory attends their efforts.

Ministers who would labor effectively for the salvation of souls must be both Bible students, and men of prayer. It is a sin for those who attempt to teach the word to others to be themselves neglectful of its study. All who feel the worth of souls will flee to the stronghold of truth, where they may be furnished with wisdom, knowledge, strength, and divine power to work the works of God. They should not rest without the holy unction from on high. Too much is at stake for them to dare to be careless in regard to their spiritual advancement. Ministers of Christ, your coldness, your lack of prayer, of fervor, and of heavenly wisdom may turn the balance with a soul, and send it to perdition. Ye messengers of the truth, ye cannot afford to be indifferent in these last days! Our feet are on the borders of the eternal world, and every probationary moment is more precious than gold.

Ministers of Christ whom God has made the depositaries of his law, you have an unpopular truth. You must bear this truth to the world. Warnings must be given men to prepare for the great day of God. You must reach those whose hearts are calloused by sin and love of the world. Continual and fervent prayer, and earnestness in well-doing, will bring you into communion with God; your mind and heart will imbibe a sense of eternal things, and the heavenly unction, which springs from connection with God, will be poured upon you. It will render your testimony powerful to convict and convert. Your light will not be uncertain, but your path will be luminous with heavenly brightness. God is all-powerful, and Heaven is full of light. You have only to use the means God has placed in your power to obtain the divine blessing.

Be instant in prayer. You are a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. You occupy a fearfully responsible position. I entreat you to redeem the time. Come very near to God in supplication, and you will be like a tree planted by the river of waters, whose leaf is always green, and whose fruit appears in due season. Ministers of Christ,

you need divine power, which God is willing to give without stint, when the draft is made upon him. Only go to God, and take him at his word, and let your works be sustained by living faith in his promises. God does not require from you eloquent prayers and logical reasoning; but only a humble, contrite heart, ready and willing to learn of him. The praying minister, who has living faith, will have corresponding works, and great results will attend his labors, despite the combined obstacles of earth and hell. "Rouse to some work of high and holy love, And thou an angel's happiness shalt know; Shalt bless the earth; while in the world above, The good begun by thee shall onward flow, In many a branching stream, and wider grow The seed that in these few and fleeting hours, Thy hands unsparing and unwearied sow, Shall deck thy grave with amaranthine flowers And yield the fruits divine in Heaven's immortal bowers."

August 8, 1878

## **The Sabbath-School**

Vital godliness is a principle to be cultivated. The power of God can accomplish for us that which all the systems in the world cannot effect. The perfection of Christian character depends wholly upon the grace and strength found alone in God. Without the power of grace upon the heart, assisting our efforts and sanctifying our labors, we shall fail of saving our own souls, and of saving the souls of others. System and order are highly essential, but none should receive the impression that these will do the work without the grace and power of God operating upon the mind and heart. Heart and flesh would fail in the round of ceremonies, and in the carrying out of our plans, without the power of God to inspire and give courage to perform.

There should be discipline and order in our Sabbath-schools. Children who attend these schools should prize the privileges they enjoy. They should be required to observe the regulations of the Sabbath-school. And even greater care should be taken by the parents that their children should have their Scripture lessons learned perfectly than they take with their lessons in the common schools. If parents and children see no necessity for this interest, then the children might better remain at home; for the Sabbath-school will fail to prove a blessing to them. Parents and children should work in harmony with teachers and superintendent, thus giving evidence that they appreciate the labor put forth for them. Parents should have an especial interest in the religious education of their children, that they may have a more thorough knowledge of the Scriptures.

There are many children who plead a lack of time as a reason why their Sabbath-school lessons are not learned. There are few who cannot find time to learn their lessons if they have an interest in them. Some devote time to amusement and sight-seeing, while others devote time to the needless trimming of their dress for display, thus cultivating pride and vanity. The precious hours thus prodigally spent are God's time, for which they must render an account to him. The hours spent in needless ornamentation, or in amusements and idle conversation, will, with every work, be brought into judgment.

October 31, 1878

## **Beneficence**

"Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

"There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself."

"The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand."

"Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all the nations shall call you blessed."

God is abundantly able to fulfill his promises. Every earthly good comes from his hand. The resources of the Lord are infinite, and he employs them all in accomplishing his purposes. Faithful stewards, who wisely use the goods which God has intrusted to them to advance the truth and bless suffering humanity, will be rewarded for so doing. God will pour into their hands while they dispense to others. He is advancing his cause in the earth through stewards intrusted with his capital. Some there are who, notwithstanding they greatly desire wealth, would be ruined by its possession. God has tested individuals by lending them talents of means. It was in their power to abuse the gift or use it to the glory of God. If they have hoarded or wasted the Lord's money, the Master finally says to them, "Thou mayest be no longer steward." They have been tested and proved, and found unfaithful in using that which was another man's as though it was their own. God will not intrust such with the eternal riches.

Those who make a judicious and unselfish disposition of the Lord's goods, thus

identifying their interest with that of suffering humanity, will be advanced; for they act the part which God designed they should in his own system of beneficence. The first great principle contained in the moral law is supreme love to God. The second is this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

Every good thing upon the earth was given to man as an expression of the love of God. He makes man his steward, and gives him talents of influence and means to use for the accomplishment of his work in the earth. Our Heavenly Father proposes to connect finite man with himself. As laborers they may be his instruments in the salvation of souls. He has accepted those who have consecrated themselves to his service to preach the word to those who have not a knowledge of the truth. But these are not the only ones whom he uses to advance his work in the earth. Every man who professes to be illuminated by the Spirit of God in this time will be required to enlighten others. "No man liveth to himself," and yet loves God with all his heart and his neighbor as himself. Every one has his station of duty adapted to his capacity in the accomplishment of this great work. Those who walk in the light of truth will emit light to those around them. They are living witnesses for Christ. They will not be like the world, living in moral darkness, loving themselves and the things of the world, and seeking for earthly treasures. They will be "a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

It will cost much self-denial and self-sacrifice to imitate the pattern, Christ Jesus. In order to become like him, we must cultivate a benevolent disposition. Those who have the most of this world's goods often manifest a selfish penuriousness in giving to the cause of God. The most liberal donations frequently come from the poor man's purse, while those with whom God has intrusted an abundance, for the very purpose of supplying the wants of the cause, fail to see where means are most needed, and do not regard the cries of the needy who are in their very midst. These cries go up to Heaven, and are a powerful testimony in condemnation of the unjust, selfish course of the unfaithful stewards. The offerings of the poor, given through self-denial to aid in extending the precious light of saving truth, will not only be a sweet-smelling savor to God, and wholly acceptable to him as a consecrated gift, but the very act of giving expands the heart of the giver, and unites him more fully to the Redeemer of the world. He was rich; but for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. The smallest sums given cheerfully by those who are in limited circumstances are fully as acceptable to God, and even of more value in his sight, than

the offerings of the rich who can bestow their thousands, and yet exercise no self-denial, and feel no lack.

The poor widow manifested love, faith, and benevolence combined, in contributing her two mites; for she gave all that she had, without questionings or doubts in regard to her uncertain future. Christ represents her little offering as the greatest gift of all that had been cast into the treasury that day. The rich gave of their abundance. They did not need to exercise faith, for they had means enough left to supply all their wants. It was not the value of the coin that was regarded by Christ, but the devoted purity of the motive which prompted the sacrifice. This small gift, with God's blessing upon it, could become instrumental in accomplishing important results. The widow's mite, cast into the treasury with thousands of other coins, would appear insignificant, and be lost to human vision, but not to the eye of God. The Source of all riches, the great Benefactor, would make this sincere, genuine offering of the highest value for good. The widow's mite has been like a stream, small at the source, but continuing to flow through all time, until it has widened, and deepened, and run in a thousand channels, contributing to the extension of the truth, and supplying the wants of the needy. The influence of this small gift has acted and reacted upon humanity in every age of the world, and in every country upon the globe. The tiny rills which have flowed into the treasury of the Lord from the liberal, self-denying poor, have formed a living fountain, and its streams flow forth refreshing the needy, and resulting in the salvation of thousands of souls.

Again, the example of the widow's mite cannot be estimated in its influence upon the hearts of those who are inclined to selfishly withhold from God the goods he has intrusted to them. Her liberality, her faith and sincerity, are a standing rebuke to the ease-loving, selfish, doubting ones who have means with which they might do good if they would. They are provoked to good works by the unselfish gifts of the poorer brethren. That little deed of benevolence manifested by the widow was but a small light in the beginning; but it has been steadily burning brighter and brighter, and shedding its rays farther and with more intense radiance, and it will still continue to shine brighter and stronger, reaching to all countries and climes. The poor as well as the rich may enjoy the blessed privilege of knowing that they are God's stewards, and may identify their interests with Jesus Christ, and with suffering humanity, who are the purchase of his blood.

But God would not have rich or poor entertain the idea for a moment that he is dependent upon them, nor that their liberalities can in any case supply defects of Christian character. Liberality is but one of the traits which are characteristic of a Christian. The inspired apostle says, "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity [love], it profiteth me nothing." Charity is thus defined: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth." The character of a tree bearing all these fruits may be readily discerned. For "by their fruits ye shall know them." As followers of Jesus Christ, we must be wide awake to discern with heavenly eyesight the devices of Satan. God has given us his word as a chart to mark out our way to the eternal shore. With the Bible for our guide, aided by our own reason kept clear by strictly temperate habits, we may be able to acquit ourselves like servants of the Master who have duties to perform and eternal interests to secure.

Benevolence is one precious trait of character which needs to be cultivated and strengthened by continual exercise. God is not dependent upon us. He could speak the word, and every mountain would be turned into gold. "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry I would not tell thee; for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof." These words were spoken as a reproof to Israel, whose hearts were not right with God. They were multiplying their sacrifices, as though to make a compromise with God, while they were separating from him by wicked works. While they multiplied their victims upon the altar of sacrifice, they did not cultivate pure and vital godliness in the heart, which would move them to act constantly in reference to the two great principles of the moral law, love to God and love to man.

Gifts and offerings will not purchase salvation for any of us. The religion of the Bible is that development of our moral natures in which the soul holds converse with God, loves that which God loves, and hates that which God hates. God will not accept your offerings if you withhold yourself. He asks not only for that which is his own in the means intrusted to you, but for his own property in your body, soul, and spirit, purchased at the infinite price of the blood of the Son of God.

God might have made angels the ambassadors of his truth. He might have proclaimed the law from Sinai with his own voice. But he has chosen to take man into his counsel, and connect him with himself, that through the instrumentality of man the mysteries of the cross of Christ might be fully explained in an audible voice. Man has a work to do. And in this work, life will prove a blessing. The real value of life to him is indicated by the character of the work which employs his powers. If the powers which angels possess were given to man they would be of no use unless some new work was given him in which to engage them. All the riches intrusted to man are only a curse unless he employs them to relieve his own daily wants and those of the needy around him, and to glorify his Maker by advancing his cause in the earth. Objects which shall call benevolence into action must be placed before him, or he cannot imitate the character of the Great Exemplar. Man would have no gifts to bestow were they not first given to him. But our Heavenly Father has made every provision for man, that he may be fully tested and proved, and through the merits of Christ perfect a righteous character.

God has made man his brother's keeper, and will hold him responsible for this great trust. God has taken man into union with himself, and he has planned that men shall work in harmony with him. He has provided the system of beneficence, that man whom he has made in his image may be self-denying in character, like Him whose infinite nature is love. He has appointed man as his almoner to distribute the blessings he has given him. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." God has done for our good all that a kind Heavenly Father could do. He appeals to humanity whether he has failed in a single instance to do all that he could do for the highest interest of man. "Judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?"

God has reposed confidence in us in making us stewards of means and of his rich grace. How shall we show our appreciation of his care and love and unparalleled mercy, except in grateful returns to him of our talents of means and ability with faithfulness and integrity. We cannot possibly enrich the Lord by bestowing any favor directly upon him, for he is the giver of all our bounties. But he points us to the poor and suffering and oppressed, and to souls bound in chains of superstition and error, and assures us that if we do good to these he accepts the deed as though done to himself. Christ identifies himself with suffering humanity. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of



these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

November 7, 1878

### **Camp-Meeting at Richland Kansas**

This meeting, the third of the kind which has been held in this State the present season, was held October 24-29. At Topeka we left the cars and rode by private conveyance twelve miles across the broad prairie to the place of meeting. We found the settlement of tents in a grove. A wooden tent was prepared for us, and furnished with a stove, and everything to make us comfortable. It being late in the season for camp-meetings, every preparation was made for cold weather that could be made. There were seventeen tents on the ground besides the large tent, which accommodated several families; and every tent had a stove.

Sabbath morning it commenced snowing. But notwithstanding this, not one meeting was suspended. About an inch of snow fell, and the air was piercing cold. Women with little children clustered about the stoves. It was a touching scene to see one hundred and fifty people assembled for a convocation meeting under these circumstances. Some came two hundred miles by private conveyance. All seemed hungry for the bread of life, and thirsty for the water of salvation.

Bro. Haskell spoke Friday afternoon and evening. In the meeting Sabbath morning I felt called upon to speak encouraging words to those who had made so great an effort to attend the meeting. I told them that the more inclement the weather, the greater the necessity of our obtaining the sunshine of God's presence. This life at best is but the Christian's winter and the bleak winds of winter,--disappointments, losses, pain, and anguish,--are our lot here; but our hopes are reaching forward to the Christian's summer, when we shall change climate, leave all the wintry blasts and fierce tempests behind, and be taken to those mansions Jesus has gone to prepare for those that love him.

I presented before them the lives of the apostles. Paul was one whom God honored with visions of his glory, and although thus honored of Heaven, he was subject to the fiercest persecutions by his own people, the Jews. They did not allow him to labor in peace even among idolaters, but taking advantage of the superstition of the people, stirred up the Gentiles against him. Once the Gentile element was so wrought upon by

the Jews that he was stoned and taken up for dead. But this hero of faith pens no words of discouragement.

Near the close of his life he was, under the cruel Nero, immured in prison walls that never saw the light of day. His dungeon, chiseled out of the solid rocks, was reeking with dampness, and he an invalid, who had labored for years pressed by physical sufferings. One consolation was left him. One and another of his brethren were allowed to be with him and share the discomforts of his home, and to stand by him when brought before Nero to answer for his life.

In looking over the incidents of his eventful life, he remembers all. He recalls the scenes of his trials and sufferings, and now if he has any words of murmuring we shall surely hear them. Mark his words: "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Again, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

When we contrast our circumstances with those of the apostle Paul, we should feel rebuked for ever harboring the least feeling of murmuring or complaint. We know but little by experience of self-denial, and persecution, and pain for Christ's sake. We are here as probationers, and we must be tested and proved. Says Paul, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Many testimonies were borne in this morning meeting, and many hearts were softened by the beams of light from the Sun of Righteousness. At half-past ten Bro. Haskell spoke with great freedom upon the subject of the talents.

In the afternoon I spoke from these words: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." I had much

freedom in presenting before our brethren the great dignity conferred upon them in being the acknowledged sons of God. The meeting was prolonged till near sunset, giving all the privilege of witnessing for Christ and the truth. Many testimonies were borne well wet down with tears, and many humble confessions were made. All seemed desirous to put away their lukewarmness, and let their example testify to their neighbors that there was a power in the truth they professed, to refine the life and elevate the character. We were made sensible of the fact that inaction in the cause of God will eventually destroy confidence in God.

Evening after the Sabbath, Eld. Haskell spoke to the people upon the message to the Laodiceans. Sunday morning was clear and cold. In the morning meeting Eld. Haskell explained the tract and missionary work, and at the usual hour for preaching he spoke upon the Sabbath. Sunday afternoon there was quite a large outside attendance, considering the meeting was located so far from the thoroughfare of travel. I spoke with freedom upon Christ weeping over Jerusalem, and the barren fig-tree Bro. Haskell spoke again in the evening.

Monday morning at nine o'clock I spoke to the brethren from the third chapter of Malachi. We then called for those to come forward who wanted to be Christians and who had not the evidence of their acceptance with God. About thirty responded. Some were seeking the Lord for the first time, and some who were members of other churches were taking their position upon the Sabbath. We gave all an opportunity to speak. The free Spirit of the Lord was in our midst. One little boy about eleven years old said that he had been blessed. Had he not said a word his shining countenance would have testified to the fact.

After prayer had been offered for those who had come forward, candidates for baptism were examined. Six were baptized. In the afternoon Eld. Haskell brought before the people the necessity of placing reading matter in private families, especially the three volumes of Spirit of Prophecy, and the four volumes of Testimonies. These could be read aloud during the long winter evenings by some member of the family so that all the family might be instructed. I then spoke of the necessity of parents properly educating and disciplining their children. The greatest evidence that the world can have of the power of Christianity is to present to them a well-ordered, well-disciplined family. This will recommend the truth as nothing else can, for it is a living witness of its practical power upon the heart.

The Spirit of the Lord rested upon us in this our closing meeting. Tuesday morning the camp was early astir, striking their tents and preparing to return to their homes, it is to be hoped better Christians than when they came to the meeting.

November 7, 1878

### **Locating General Meetings**

We were sadly disappointed to find the Richland, Kansas, camp-meeting located in an isolated place, twelve miles from Topeka, the nearest railroad station. This is indeed hiding our light under a bushel. We depend much upon the influence of our camp-meetings to shed the bright beams of truth upon those who are in darkness.

We cannot say that any of our camp-meetings are failures; for the people of our faith who attend them are hungry for a better knowledge of the truth, and more of the Lord's blessing. They have the evidences of our faith brought clearly before their minds, and receive additional light at every such gathering. To assemble, and hear the testimonies of brethren and sisters, encourages them. The earnest prayers and humble confessions of those who are wrought upon by the Spirit of God have a softening, subduing influence upon the heart, and all are made better by them. But every ray of light that shines from Heaven upon the people of God will have an influence in removing prejudice. And more than this is accomplished at our camp-meetings: the evidences of our faith are presented with convincing power before a large class of persons who could not be drawn out upon any other occasion. Again, laborers are few, and the field of labor is extending. It is as easy to speak to thousands as it is to hundreds.

When we consider that we have a message which must go to all the world, and then see our large meetings carried away from the people into isolated, out-of-the-way places, we feel sad at heart. We have had much to say upon this point, and yet our brethren fail to realize the importance of holding their general meetings where the community at large may be benefited. Says Christ, "Ye are the light of the world;" "ye are the salt of the earth." We hope our brethren will be more liberal, and feel that the truth of heavenly origin should be brought before the world. Would that all our ministers were so closely connected with God that they would be awake to the wants of the cause, and could realize what might be done for the world through earnest effort.

When our large gatherings are appointed, let them be held on the line of the railroad, where the people can reach them.

Brethren, wake up! Shake off your lethargy, and be in earnest to be Christ's co-laborers. Let the light which shines upon you, shine upon others, who are in darkness. You need the true, zealous missionary spirit.

November 21, 1878

## Holiday Presents

The holidays are approaching. In view of this fact, it will be well to consider how much money is expended yearly in making presents to those who have no need of them. The habits of custom are so strong that to withhold gifts from our friends on these occasions would seem to us almost a neglect of them. But let us remember that our kind heavenly Benefactor has claims upon us far superior to those of any earthly friend. Shall we not, during the coming holidays, present our offerings to God? Even the children may participate in this work. Clothing and other useful articles may be given to the worthy poor, and thus a work may be done for the Master.

Let us remember that Christmas is celebrated in commemoration of the birth of the world's Redeemer. This day is generally spent in feasting and gluttony. Large sums of money are spent in needless self-indulgence. The appetite and sensual pleasures are indulged at the expense of physical, mental, and moral power. Yet this has become a habit. Pride, fashion, and gratification of the palate, have swallowed up immense sums of money that have really benefited no one, but have encouraged a prodigality of means which is displeasing to God. These days are spent in glorifying self rather than God. Health has been sacrificed, money worse than thrown away, many have lost their lives by overeating or through demoralizing dissipation, and souls have been lost by this means.

God would be glorified by his children should they enjoy a plain, simple diet, and use the means intrusted to them in bringing to his treasury offerings, small and great, to be used in sending the light of truth to souls that are in the darkness of error. The hearts of the widow and fatherless may be made to rejoice because of gifts which will add to their comfort and satisfy their hunger.

Let all who profess to believe the present truth calculate how much they spend yearly, and especially upon the recurrence of the annual holidays, for the gratification of selfish and unholy desires, how much in the indulgence of appetite, and how much to compete with others in unchristian display. Sum up the means thus spent all needlessly, and then estimate how much might be saved as consecrated gifts to God's cause without



injury to soul or body. Mites and more liberal gifts may be brought in, according to the ability of the giver, to aid in lifting debts from churches which have been dedicated to God. Then there are missionaries to be sent into new fields, and others to be supported in their respective fields of labor. These missionaries have to practice the strictest economy, even denying themselves the very things you enjoy daily, and which you consider the necessaries of life. They enjoy few luxuries.

If, after prayerful consideration of this matter, you are not moved to prompt and zealous action, we shall know that you have forgotten your first love, that you have lost sight of the sacrifice Jesus has made for you that you might be blessed with the gift of eternal life. Said Christ, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Self-denial is a mark of Christianity. To offer to God gifts that have cost us something, a sacrifice that we shall ask him to use to advance his cause in the earth, will be pleasing to him. The Saviour will accept the free-will offerings of every one, from the oldest to the youngest. Even small children may participate in this work, and enjoy the privilege of bringing their little offerings. While we have been mindful of our earthly friends from year to year, have we not neglected our heavenly Friend? In bestowing our gifts liberally upon our friends, have we not forgotten God and passed him by?

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Heavy debts are upon several of our churches. Let us consider from this time how we may economize in expending our means, and help to remove these incumbrances. As Christians, we should follow the directions of the inspired apostle: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves."

The apostle Paul gave directions to Timothy similar to the instruction given by Peter: "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety, not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."

It would be well pleasing to God if extra ornaments, twice so explicitly forbidden in the word of God, were laid off. Now is a favorable opportunity to present these as offerings to God. They may be sold for something, and the money thus received may be used to advance the precious cause of truth. Let the wearing of useless trimmings and adornments be discarded. Extravagance should never be indulged in to gratify our pride. Our dress may be of good quality, made up with plainness and simplicity, for durability rather than for display. Our appetites must also be brought into subjection, and not gratified to our injury. The question should come home to every heart, "How much owest thou unto my Lord?" He has granted us privileges and blessings without number; and now should not the bands of selfishness be broken and removed from us, and the just claims of God and humanity be met?

Missionaries are planting the standard of truth in foreign lands. Publications must be multiplied, and scattered like the leaves of autumn. These silent messengers are enlightening and molding the minds of thousands in every country and in every clime. As a people, we come far short of moving forward as fast as the providence of God opens the way. He gives the command, "Go forward." Thousands are thirsting for living truth. The Macedonian cry is coming to us from every direction, "Come over and help us." We look about us and inquire, "Who will go?" One and another may respond, "Send me. I long to do something for my Master." But to do this requires money.

Time and again I have had presented before me a vision of people, across the broad ocean, standing in perplexity, and pale with anxiety, and earnestly inquiring, "What is truth?" Say they, "We want the bread of life. Our churches are backslidden from God. We want to find the old paths. We want to come back to the simplicity of gospel religion." Our tears will flow as we see this picture, like a reality, rising vividly before us. The voice from Heaven pleads, "Go ye therefore into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." While so great a work remains to be done, shall not we, as Christ's followers, arouse to a sense of our God-given responsibilities, and be active in doing our part?

The lands that have never heard the truth are yet to hear it. They are to become vocal with the praise of God, and to lift their voices in proclaiming the last note of warning. If the church of Christ will now use all her talents of means and of influence according to God's order, the great work may be carried forward gloriously. We need men who are adapted to the work. Money is also needed to carry it forward. Let the church show that she is in earnest. A steady flow of means from each member will keep the treasury supplied with funds. "Bring ye," says God, "all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house." If all the sin-offerings and peace-offerings and thank-offerings are brought into the treasury, we shall see that souls will not be so dark and backslidden from God. They will show by their works that they have a lively interest in the success of the truth, and the advancement of the glory of God in the earth. That which costs little, we have no special interest in; but that in which we have invested our means, claims our interest and attention, and we will labor to make it a success.

We see the churches of our day encouraging feasting, gluttony, and dissipation, by the suppers, fairs, dances, and festivals gotten up for the purpose of gathering means into the church treasury. Here is a method invented by carnal minds to secure means without sacrificing. Such an example makes an impression upon the minds of youth. They notice that lotteries and fairs and games are sanctioned by the church, and they think there is something fascinating in this way of obtaining means. A youth is surrounded by temptations. He enters the bowling alley, the gaming saloon, to see the sport. He sees the money taken by the one who wins. This looks enticing. It seems an easier way of obtaining money than by earnest work, which requires persevering energy and strict economy. He imagines there can be no harm in this; for similar games have been resorted to in order to obtain means for the benefit of the church. Then why should he not help himself in this way? He has a little means, which he ventures to invest, thinking it may bring in quite a sum.

Whether he gains or loses, he is in the downward road to ruin. But it was the example of the church that led him into the false path.

Let us stand clear of all these church corruptions, dissipations, and festivals, which have a demoralizing influence upon young and old. We have no right to throw over them the cloak of sanctity because the means is to be used for church purposes.

Such offerings are lame and diseased, and bear the curse of God. They are the price of souls. The pulpit may defend festivals, dancing, lotteries, fairs, and luxurious feasts, to obtain means for church purposes; but let us participate in none of these things; for if we do, God's displeasure will be upon us. We do not propose to appeal to the lust of appetite or resort to carnal amusements as an inducement to Christ's professed followers to give of the means which God has intrusted to them. If they do not give willingly, for the love of Christ, the offering will in no case be acceptable to God.

Death, clad in the livery of Heaven, lurks in the pathway of the young. Sin is gilded over by church sanctity. These various forms of amusement in the churches of our day have ruined thousands who, but for them, might have remained upright and become the followers of Christ. Wrecks of character have been made by these fashionable church festivals and theatrical performances, and thousands more will be destroyed; yet people will not be aware of the danger, nor of the fearful influences exerted. Many young men and women have lost their souls through these corrupting influences.

While God in his providence has laden the earth with his bounties and filled its storehouses with the luxuries of life, there is no excuse whatever for allowing the treasury of God to remain empty. Christians are not excusable for permitting the widow's cries and the orphan's prayers to ascend to Heaven because of their suffering want, while a liberal Providence has placed in the hands of these Christians abundance to supply their need. Let not the cries of the widow and fatherless call down the vengeance of Heaven upon us as a people. In the professed Christian world, there is enough expended in extravagant display, for jewels and ornaments, to supply the wants of all the hungry and clothe the naked in our towns and cities; and yet these professed followers of the meek and lowly Jesus need not deprive themselves of suitable food or comfortable clothing. What will these church members say when confronted in the day of God by the worthy poor, the afflicted, the widows and fatherless, who have known pinching want for the meager necessities of life, while there was expended by these professed followers of Christ, for superfluous clothing, and needless ornaments expressly forbidden in the word of God, enough to supply all their wants?

We see ladies professing godliness wear elegant gold chains, necklaces, rings, and other jewelry, with a profusion of feathers and ribbons and expensive trimmings, while want stalks in the streets, and the suffering and destitute are on every side. These

do not interest them, nor awaken their sympathy; but they will weep over the imaginary suffering depicted in the last novel. They have no ears for the cries of the needy, no eyes to behold the cold and almost naked forms of women and children around them. They look upon real want as a species of crime, and withdraw from suffering humanity as from a contagious disease. To such, Christ will say, "I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not."

But on the other hand Christ says to the righteous: "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matthew 25:35-40. Thus Christ identifies his interest with that of suffering humanity. Deeds of love and charity done to the suffering are as though done to himself.

"As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the coming of the Son of man." There will be feasting and merriment, sorrow and want and anguish, until the end comes. Then the wicked shall reap that which they have sown--corruption.

November 28, 1878

### **Search the Scriptures**

The word of God has not been appreciated, but sadly neglected. This book, revealing the will of God to man, deserves to be held in the highest esteem, not only by the rich, but by the common people. Instruction of the highest value is given to the working class. The apostle enjoins upon slaves under masters to adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour. Those in the humblest employment can, through connection with God, so order their conversation and be so circumspect in deportment as to bring no dishonor or reproach upon the cause of the Redeemer. They will not by inconsistencies furnish occasion to bring the truth into disrepute, when it should be a savor of life unto life.

In a special manner, those who are blessed with a connection with God, should, by close application to his sacred word, imitate the great Pattern in doing good, thus exemplifying the life of Christ in their daily conversation, in pure and virtuous characters. By being courteous and beneficent they adorn his doctrine, and show that the truth of heavenly origin beautifies the character and ennobles the life. Christ's followers are "living epistles, known and read of all men." Their daily words and noble actions recommend the truth to those who have been prejudiced against it by nominal professors, who have had a form of godliness, while their lives have testified that they know nothing of its sanctifying power.

No man, woman, or youth can attain to Christian perfection and neglect the study of the word of God. By carefully and closely searching his word we shall obey the injunction of Christ, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." This search enables the student to closely observe the divine Model, for they testify of Christ. The Pattern must be inspected often and closely in order to imitate it. As one becomes acquainted with the history of the Redeemer, he discovers in himself defects of character; his unlikeness to Christ is so great that he sees he cannot be a follower without a very great change in his life. Still he studies, with a desire to be like his great Exemplar; he catches the looks, the spirit, of his beloved Master; by beholding he becomes changed. "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith." It is not in looking away from him, and in losing sight of him,

that we imitate the life of Jesus; but in dwelling upon and talking of him, and seeking to refine the taste and elevate the character; seeking to approach through earnest, persevering effort, through faith and love, the perfect Pattern. The attention being fixed upon Christ, his image, pure and spotless, becomes enshrined in the heart as "the chief among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely." Even unconsciously we imitate that with which we are familiar. By having a knowledge of Christ, his words, his habits, his lessons of instruction, and by borrowing the virtues of the character which we have so closely studied, we become imbued with the spirit of the Master which we have so much admired.

After the resurrection, two disciples traveling to Emmaus were talking over the disappointed hopes occasioned by the death of the beloved Master. Christ himself drew near, unrecognized by the sorrowing disciples. Their faith had died with the Lord, and their eyes, blinded by unbelief, did not discern the risen Saviour. Jesus, walking by their side, longed to reveal himself to them, but he did not choose to do so abruptly; he accosted them merely as fellow-travelers, and asked them in regard to the communication which they were having one with another, and why they were so sad. They were astonished at the question, and asked if he were indeed a stranger in Jerusalem and had not heard that a prophet mighty in word and in deed had been taken by wicked hands and crucified. And now it was the third day, and strange reports had been brought to their ears that Jesus had risen, and had been seen by Mary and certain of the disciples. Jesus said to them, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken; ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to have entered into his glory?" And beginning at Moses and the prophets, he opened to them the scriptures concerning himself.

When they arrived at Emmaus, Jesus made as though he would have gone farther; but the disciples constrained him to tarry with them, for the day was far spent and the night was at hand. The evening meal was quickly prepared, and while Jesus was offering devotional thanks the disciples looked at one another with astonished glances. His words, his manner, and then his wounded hands were revealed, and they exclaimed, "My Lord and my God." Had the disciples been indifferent in regard to their fellow-traveler, they would have lost the precious opportunity of recognizing their companion who had reasoned so ably from the Scriptures regarding his life, his suffering, and his death and resurrection. He reproved them for not being acquainted with the scriptures in reference to himself. Had they been familiar with the Scriptures, their faith would have

been sustained, their hopes unshaken; for prophecy plainly stated the treatment Christ would receive from those he came to save. The disciples were astonished that they could not discover Christ at once, as soon as he spoke with them by the way, and that they had failed to bring to their support the scriptures which Jesus had brought to their remembrance. They had lost sight of the precious promises; but when the words spoken by the prophets were brought to their remembrance, faith revived, and after Christ revealed himself they exclaimed, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

The word of God, spoken to the heart, has an animating power, and those who will frame any excuse for neglecting to become acquainted with it will neglect the claims of God in many respects. The character will be deformed, the words and acts a reproach to the truth. The apostle tells us, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." One of the prophets of God exclaims, "While I was musing, the fire burned." If Christians would earnestly search the Scriptures, more hearts would burn with the vivid truths therein revealed. Their hopes would brighten with the precious promises strewn like pearls all through the sacred writings. In contemplating the history of the patriarchs, the prophets, the men who loved and feared God and walked with him, hearts will glow with the spirit which animated these worthies. As the mind dwells upon the virtue and piety of holy men of old, the spirit which inspired them will kindle a flame of love and holy fervor in the hearts of those who would be like them in character.

The student of the Sabbath-school should feel as thoroughly in earnest to become intelligent in the knowledge of the Scriptures as to excel in the study of the sciences. If either is neglected, it should be the lessons of the six days. The injunction of our Saviour should be religiously regarded by every man, woman, and child who professes his name. Teachers in the Sabbath-school have a missionary field given them to teach the Scriptures, not, parrot like, to repeat over that which they have taken no pains to understand. "They are they which testify of me"--the Redeemer, him in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. If teachers are not imbued with the spirit of truth, and care not for the knowledge of what is revealed in the word of God, how can they present the truth in an attractive light to those under their charge? The prayer of Christ for his disciples was, Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. If we are to be sanctified through a knowledge of the truth found in the word of God, we must have an



intelligent knowledge of his will therein revealed. We must search the Scriptures, not merely rush through a chapter and repeat it, taking no pains to understand it, but we must dig for the jewel of truth which will enrich the mind, and fortify the soul against the wiles and temptations of the arch-deceiver.

Parents plead trifling excuses for not interesting themselves in the lessons with their children, and they fail to become conversant with the Scriptures. Fathers as well as mothers excuse themselves from disciplining their own minds. They do not seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, but exalt the temporal above the spiritual and eternal. This forgetfulness of God and neglect of his word is the example they give their children, which molds their minds after the worldly standard and not after the exalted standard erected by Christ. Some fathers will while away hours in their own amusement, in conversation upon worldly things, and put God out of their thoughts and hearts. How much more profitable to be faithful disciples of Christ, engaged in searching the Scriptures that they may be thoroughly furnished to all good works, and be able to give an intelligent explanation of the word given of God to guide our footsteps to the eternal shores.

Mothers are heard to deplore that they have no time to teach their children, no time to instruct them in the word of God. But these same mothers find time for outward adorning, time to ornament with tucks and ruffles and needless stitching. Needless trimming is seen upon their own dresses and their children's. The inward adorning of the mind and the culture of the soul are neglected as though inferior to the adornment of the apparel. The minds of mothers and children are starved in order to follow custom and fashion.

Fathers and mothers, we entreat you to take up your long-neglected duties. Search the Scriptures yourselves; assist your children in the study of the sacred word. Make diligent work because of past neglect. Do not send the children away by themselves to study the Bible, but read it with them, teach them in a simple manner what you know, and keep in the school of Christ as diligent students yourselves. Be determined that this work shall not be neglected. Mothers, dress yourselves and your children in modest apparel, clean and neat, but without needless adornment. When you learn to do this, to dress with conscientious plainness, then you will have no excuse for being novices in the Scriptures. Follow Christ's injunction, "Search the Scriptures," then you will advance in spiritual strength yourselves, and be able to instruct your children so that

they need not come to the Sabbath-school untaught.

Many of the youth say, I have no time to study my lesson. But what are they doing? Some are crowding in every moment to earn a few cents more, when this time pressed into work, if given to the study of the Bible would, if they practiced its lessons, save them more than the amount gained by overwork. It would save much that is expended in needless ornaments, and preserve vigor of mind to understand the mystery of godliness. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." But these very youth who profess to be Christians gratify the desires of the carnal heart in following their own inclinations; and God-given probationary time, granted them to become acquainted with the precious truths of the Bible, is devoted to the reading of fictitious tales. This habit once formed is difficult to overcome; but it can be done, it must be done by all who are candidates for the heavenly world. That mind is ruined which is allowed to be absorbed in story-reading. The imagination becomes diseased, sentimentalism takes possession of the mind, and there is a vague unrest, a strange appetite for unwholesome mental food, which is constantly unbalancing the mind. Thousands are today in the insane asylum whose minds became unbalanced by novel-reading, which results in air-castle building, and love-sick sentimentalism. The Bible is the book of books. It will give you life and health. It is a soother of the nerves, and imparts solidity of mind and firm principle.

The student of the Sabbath-school should be in earnest, should dig deep and search with the greatest care for the precious gems of truth contained in the weekly lessons. The privileges and opportunities which they now have of becoming intelligent in regard to the Scriptures should not be neglected. God would have those who profess to be his followers thoroughly furnished with proof of the doctrines of his word. When and where can this be better obtained than in youth at the Sabbath-school? Parents should in no case treat this matter indifferently.

December 12, 1878

## **Address and Appeal, Setting Forth the Importance of Missionary Work**

"And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." Daniel 12:3. "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Revelation 22:12.

There is a constant conflict between the two great armies led by the Prince of life and the Prince of the powers of darkness. The devil, assisted by his angels, is constantly engaged in the most determined effort to gather souls under his banner, while Jesus Christ and holy angels are diligently at work pressing back the powers of darkness, rescuing souls from the grasp of Satan, and gathering them under the blood-stained banner of Prince Immanuel. Those who are truly soldiers of the cross of Christ will not be indifferent spectators, but will take an active part and manifest a personal interest in this conflict. They will "know the fellowship of his sufferings," being co-laborers with Jesus Christ in disseminating light and truth to redeem the purchase of his blood from the slavery of sin and death.

There is now the same call for disinterested workers as when Christ gave his commission to his disciples before he was taken from them into Heaven. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," is our Lord's command. Self-sacrificing labor is wanted in every part of the harvest-field. Men and women may be co-workers with their self-sacrificing, self-denying Redeemer. In their unselfish efforts to do others good, they will be bearing his yoke and lifting his burdens. Thus they will find pure happiness and rich joys. Whoever accepts the invitation of Christ to bear his yoke and share his burdens will not only find the yoke easy but the burden light. Rest and peace is found in forgetfulness of self and in earnest, persevering efforts to save souls from the darkness of error. Those who shirk the responsibilities which Jesus would have them bear, choosing a life of self-indulgent ease, will be destitute of spiritual joys and divine peace, and cannot be partakers with Christ of his glory. Selfish enjoyments will never satisfy the cravings of a soul whom God has qualified for a higher sphere and nobler mission.

That church only is strong that is a working church, whose members feel an individual responsibility to act their part in strengthening, encouraging, and building up the church by their personal efforts. These workers will extend their influence and labors in doing all that they can in every branch of the work. The truth spreads when living, active workers commend it by personal effort, characterized by piety and the beauty of true holiness.

We are a people whom God has favored with special privileges and blessings in making us the depositaries of his law. None of us are to be idlers in the vineyard of the Lord. We are not all qualified to do the same kind of work; all cannot be ministers, to labor in word and doctrine; but there are other parts of the work, fully as important as this even, which have been fearfully neglected. Men and women are needed to act a part in this great work, in spreading the light of truth by circulating our publications. This work has not been taken hold of as it should have been by those who profess the truth.

The larger part of the members of our churches are not working Christians; they are living as if there was no great emergency, no fearful danger of their fellow-men losing eternal life. Many fold their hands at ease, yet profess to be followers of Christ. The burden of the work has been left principally upon ministers, while many of the church have stood looking on to see how matters were coming out. There are not only men but women who should set their hearts and minds to become intelligent in regard to the very best manner of working for the Master, qualifying themselves to do that part of the work for which they are best adapted. All will, if connected with God, see something to do, and will do it. They cannot be soldiers in the Lord's army unless they shall obey the call of the Captain and bear responsibilities which someone must bear.

There are fields of missionary labor which have been open for years, calling for workers, and yet many have not seen or realized the necessity of their doing anything. The work, they thought, was for some others, but not for them. There are hundreds and thousands who can work if they are so disposed. Up to the present time they have done nothing but serve themselves. This class of do-nothings and know-nothings, as far as the work to be done in God's cause is concerned, will never hear the well done from the lips of the Majesty of Heaven. They have not taken any interest in the many branches of the work. They have not learned how to work for the Master to advance his cause in doing to the utmost of their strength and ability to save souls from error and death. I was shown that there must be with men and women a general waking up to the needs of

God's cause. The minds of our sisters may be expanded and cultivated. If they are devoted to selfish interests, the soul will be left dwarfed. Emptiness and unrest will be the result.

A solemn responsibility rests upon the ministers of Christ to do their work with thoroughness. Many have left some portions of the work undone because it was not agreeable, expecting the next coming minister to finish it up for them. They had better not engage in the work unless they can bind it off thoroughly, so that it will not ravel out. There are many ministers who do not connect so closely with God that they can feel and realize the wants of the people and give them meat in due season. They should lead the young disciples along wisely and judiciously, step by step, onward and upward, until every essential point has been brought before them. With the burden of the work upon them, it is their duty to lead the people along until they can present every man perfect in Christ.

A mere assent to the truth is not enough. There must be prayerful labor with those who embrace the truth, until they shall be convicted of their sins and shall seek God and be converted. Then they should be instructed in regard to the claims of God upon them in tithes and in offerings. They must learn that the tithing system is binding upon God's people in these last days as truly as it was upon ancient Israel. The tract and missionary work should be presented before them. Nothing should be kept back. But all points of truth should not be given abruptly in the first few lectures; gradually, cautiously, with his own heart imbued with the spirit of the work of God, the teacher should give meat in due season.

Ministers frequently neglect these important branches of the work,--health reform, spiritual gifts, systematic benevolence, and the great branches of the missionary work. Under their labors large numbers may embrace the theory of the truth, but in time it is found that there are many who will not bear the proving of God. The minister laid upon the foundation, hay, wood, and stubble, which would be consumed by the fire of temptation. Some proved to be gold, silver, and precious stones; these from principle would cling to the truth. But if the teacher of truth had brought these converts along as he should have done, presenting before them the obligation which rested upon them, many who afterward drew back to perdition, might have been saved.

Another minister follows the first, and in the fear of God presents the practical

duties, the claims of God upon his people. Some draw back, saying, "Our minister who brought us the truth did not mention these things. We have been deceived. These things were kept back." And they become offended because of the word. Some will not accept the tithing system; they reject systematic benevolence, and become offended, turn away, and no longer walk with those who believe and love the truth. When the tract and missionary field is opened before them, inviting them to work in it, they answer, "It was not so taught us," and they hesitate to engage in the work. How much better it would be for the cause, if the messenger of truth had faithfully and thoroughly educated these converts in regard to all these essential matters, ever if there were less whom he could number as being added to the church under his labors.

Ministers must impress upon those for whom they labor the importance of their bearing burdens in connection with the work of God. They should be instructed that every department of the work of God should enlist their support and engage their interest. The great missionary field is open to men, and the subject must be agitated, agitated, again and again. The people must understand that it is not the hearers of the word but the doers of the word that will have eternal life. Not one is exempted from this work of beneficence. God requires of all men to whom he imparts the gifts of his grace to communicate, not only of their substance to meet the demands for the time in successfully advancing his truth, but to give themselves to God without reserve.

Self-denying benevolence characterized the life of Christ. He came not to seek his own. He identified his interest with the wants of his people. He went about doing good. Our sisters who have hitherto lived for self and have cherished habits of indolence and self-indulgence, can now, through the grace given them, imitate the life of Christ. The exercise of disinterested benevolence will strengthen in their own hearts the principles taught by their divine Master.

God gives regularly and freely to bless man. His gifts are not only rich and munificent but systematic. The light of day, the recurring seasons, the dew and rains causing vegetation to flourish, are blessings of God unceasingly flowing to the children of men. And God requires of those whom he blesses beneficent efforts in conformity to the divine Model. Our liberalities are never to cease; our charities must be regular and constant; and order must be observed in the work. It is not a trait of the natural heart to be beneficent; men must be taught, giving them line upon line and precept upon precept, how to work and how to give after God's order.

We are required to do good and bless others by our labors and prayers as well as by the gift of means. In order to be Christians and to gain Heaven we must imitate the great Exemplar. He cheerfully gave his life to ransom an apostate world. Selfishness and worldliness were condemned by the daily life of Christ; and none of us can live for ourselves and yet enjoy the approval of God.

Our sisters have been too willing to excuse themselves from bearing responsibilities which require thought and close application of the mind; yet this is the very discipline they need to perfect Christian experience. They may be workers in the missionary field, having a personal interest in the distribution of tracts and papers which correctly represent our faith. All cannot go abroad to labor, but all can do something at home. Many occupy their time in needless stitching, and trimming, and ruffling of their own and their children's clothing, and thus lose golden moments in which they might improve their talents by efforts to get the truth before others. We should, as Christians, have an abiding sense that our time, our strength and ability, have been purchased with an infinite price. We are not our own to use our moments in gratifying our fancy and our pride. As children of the light we should diffuse light to others. It should be our study how we may best glorify God, how we can work to save and bless souls for whom Christ died. In working to bless others we shall be gathering strength and courage to our own souls, and shall receive the approval of God. Hundreds of our sisters might be at work today if they would. They should dress themselves and their children with simplicity, in neat and durable garments free from adornment, and devote the time they have spent in needless display to missionary work. Letters may be written to friends at a distance. Our sisters may meet together to consult as to the best manner of labor. Money can be saved to present as an offering to God, to be invested in papers and tracts to send to their friends. Those who are now doing nothing should go to work. Let each sister who claims to be a child of God feel indeed a responsibility to help all within her reach. The noblest of all attainments may be gained through practical self-denial and benevolence for others' good.

December 12, 1878

### **Sabbath-School Work**

I am deeply interested in the Sabbath-school work, and have a great desire to see it prosper. The Sabbath-school is the place where we learn of God and Christ, and learn to study the Holy Bible. If we would develop Christian characters, we must study the character of Christ, that we may come into full union with Him.

It is true greatness, it is nobility of soul and meekness and lowliness of heart, which will bring us into such a position before God that we can receive the finishing touch of immortality, and be translated as was Enoch. But I am afraid many do not appreciate the help which the Sabbath-school may be in obtaining these qualities.

Fathers and mothers should so exalt the privileges of the Sabbath-school as to take time to see that their children learn their lessons perfectly every Sabbath. They should even take more interest in having these well learned than in having their lessons in the day school properly prepared. In many places this matter is too much neglected. The teachers simply read over the lesson, and when they come to the Sabbath-school, allow their pupils to read the answers either from the Bible or lesson paper. This course should never be taken. Every lesson should be thoroughly committed to memory by both teacher and scholar, so that it will be of some benefit to them in after life.

Fathers and mothers, teachers and students, should make the most of these God-given opportunities; for in eternity we shall see that the Sabbath-school has been a great instrumentality in the conversion of souls, and in keeping the young from the evils and temptations that exist all around them.

We must seek to become acquainted with God; we must study to understand the Scriptures. Says the Majesty of Heaven, the King of Glory, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me."

Many spend much precious time in reading story books. These are entertaining no doubt; but there are very few of them that give any information which will help us to perfect a righteous character, one that will enable us to enjoy that life in the kingdom of



God which runs parallel with the life of Jehovah. The time spent in light reading, if devoted to the study of the Sabbath-school lesson, would be of infinitely greater benefit to the mind.

A more interesting history than the Bible was never given to the world; and the more we search it, the better we are prepared to appreciate its excellences. It is the privilege of every one of us to know for ourselves that we are following out its instructions. And it is the privilege of each one of us to ask God for his Holy Spirit, for wisdom, for grace, and for moral worth, that we may have a good understanding. If all did this, they would be better prepared to work for themselves and to benefit society; and the knowledge and experience thus gained could be carried over into the new earth.

Now is the time to become acquainted with the Scriptures, to learn how to perfect a Christian character, to be preparing for Heaven by having a close connection with God, that at last we may be crowned with everlasting salvation in the kingdom of God.

December 19, 1878

## **Address and Appeal, Setting Forth the Importance of Missionary Work**

I have been shown that many do not take hold of the missionary work because the matter has not been presented before them and urged upon their attention by the ministers who have labored in their behalf. These ministers have neglected one essential part of their duty, and as the result hundreds are indifferent and idle who might be at work had they been more perfectly instructed.

We have no time to lose. Important work is before us, and if we are slothful servants we shall certainly lose the heavenly reward. But few have broad and extensive views of what can be done in reaching the people by personal, interested efforts in a wise distribution of our publications. Many who will not be induced to listen to the truth presented by the living preacher will take up a tract or a paper and peruse it; many things they read meet their ideas exactly, and they become interested to read all it contains. Impressions are thus made upon their minds which they cannot readily forget. The seed of truth has in some cases been buried for years beneath the rubbish of the world, and the pleasing fables that deceived ones have enjoyed. After a time some earthly sorrow or affliction softens their hearts, and the seed springs up and bears fruit to the glory of God.

Again, many read these papers and tracts and their combativeness is aroused, and they throw the silent messengers from them in a passion. But ideas all new to them have, although unwelcome, made their impression, and as the silent messenger bears the abuse without retaliation there is nothing to feed the anger which has been excited. Again the hand takes up the neglected paper or tract, and the eye is tracing the truthful lines, and again in passion it is thrown from them as their path is crossed. But the mind is not at rest; the abused paper is at last perused, and thus point after point of truth commences its convicting work; step by step the reformation is wrought, self dies, and the warfare and antagonism to the truth is ended. The despised paper or tract is henceforth honored as the means of converting the stubborn heart and subduing the perverse will, bringing it in subjection to Christ. Had the living preacher spoken as pointedly, these persons would have turned from him, and would not have entertained the new and strange ideas brought before them. The papers and tracts can go where the

living preacher cannot go, and where if he could go he would have no access to the people, because of their prejudice against the truth.

I have been shown that but few have any correct idea of what the distribution of papers and tracts is doing. The missionary work, in circulating the publications upon present truth, is opening doors everywhere, and preparing minds to receive the truth, when the living preacher shall come among them. The success which attends the efforts of ministers in the field is not due alone to their efforts, but in a great degree to the influence of the reading matter which has enlightened the minds of the people and removed prejudice. Thus many are made susceptible to the influence of the truth when it is presented before them.

The tract and missionary field is an extensive one. I have been shown that Eld. S. N. Haskell has been more fully awake to this subject than any of our other ministers, because he has exercised his mind in this department of the work. He has been untiring in his efforts to advance this work, and to have it carried forward with order and method. He has not at all times had the encouragement he should have had from his ministering brethren. He might have accomplished more had he received the co-operation which he could have had and ought to have had. Although discouraged at times as he has seen that but few appreciated the importance of the missionary work, yet he has not given up his efforts, but has returned again and again with new courage and perseverance to urge forward this branch of the work.

The Signs of the Times is our missionary paper; it is doing its work everywhere, and is opening the way for the truth to be more fully presented. This paper has been made a blessing to very many souls. All should feel the deepest interest to have it a spiritual messenger, full of life, and plain, practical truth. In the Christian world there are many starving for the bread of life. The Signs of the Times, laden with rich food, is a feast to many of these who are not of our faith. This paper should not contain many long articles, but the truth should be prepared with great care and made as attractive as possible. Articles which make sharp thrusts upon other churches are out of place in this paper, for they create prejudice. The truth should be presented in its simplicity, in the meekness of wisdom, having an influence to persuade. The matter should be the very choicest; the language should be chaste, elevating, every word breathing the spirit of Christ. The argumentative and practical combined will make a paper beaming with light, to go forth as a lamp that burneth, as a messenger indeed from Heaven.

Our brethren do not all see and realize the importance of this paper; if they did they would feel greater personal interest to make it intensely interesting, and then to circulate it everywhere. All who have a part to act in the preparation of matter for this pioneer sheet are engaged in a sacred work, and they should be connected with God; they should be pure in heart and life. God can work with them and give them wisdom that they may become intelligent in the knowledge of the truth. God sees the motive of each worker, and will impart his grace in rich measure in accordance with the spirit in which the labor is done. The silent preacher, enriched with precious matter, should go forth on the wings of prayer, mingled with faith, that it may do its appointed work in shedding the light of truth upon those who are in the darkness of error.

Calls are coming in from all directions, not only from persons of our faith, but from those who have become interested by reading our publications; they say, Send us a minister to preach to us the truth. But there is a great want of laborers. We have to answer, There is no man to send among you. Many are obliged to be content with the silent preacher until God shall send them the living messenger. Let all our brethren take this to heart, and by personal effort in faith and hope contribute to the Signs of the Times; for in sending matter that is alive, in speaking by the pen words bearing the holy unction, they are preaching to thousands. Long, dry articles are not wanted for this paper. The great lack of men to go from place to place and preach the word may be in a great degree supplied by tracts and papers, and by intelligent correspondence.

The many scattered all over the land who can seldom have the living preacher may make their meetings very interesting and profitable by selecting a good reader to read appropriate discourses published in our papers and books. You have a large variety to choose from, both doctrinal and practical. You can form a Bible-class and search the Scriptures for yourselves, with the aid of our publications, and in this way learn much of present truth. You may present the reasons of our faith to those who shall inquire for them. All should be making the most of the opportunities granted them to become intelligent in the Scriptures.

If all would realize the necessity of doing to the utmost of their ability in the work of God, having a deep love for souls, feeling the burden of the work upon them, we should see hundreds engaged as active workers who have been hitherto dull and uninterested, accomplishing nothing. They have felt that there was nothing of

importance in this tract and missionary work, nothing worthy of their especial interest. Yet it is a fact that the circulation of our papers is doing even a greater work than the living preacher can do. Many have failed to become thoroughly acquainted with the work, because they have felt that it did not concern them. All can, by individual effort, do something. Some can do more than others. All should become intelligent as to how they can work most successfully and methodically in spreading the light of truth, by scattering our publications. We meet with young and old who profess to be children of God, yet who have not grown an inch for years. A Christian indeed will grow in knowledge of the truth; and as he is sanctified through the truth he will become more and more like Jesus, and more desirous to save souls, the purchase of his blood.

With many, the rubbish of the world has clogged the channels of the soul. Selfishness has controlled the mind and warped the character. Were the life hid with Christ in God, his service would be no drudgery. If the whole heart were consecrated to God, all would find something to do, and would covet a part in the work. They would sow beside all waters, praying and believing that the fruit would appear. The practical, God-fearing workers will be growing upward, praying in faith for grace and heavenly wisdom that they may do the work devolving upon them with cheerfulness and a willing mind. They will seek the divine rays of light that they may brighten the paths of others. Those who are co-laborers with God will have no disposition to engage in the various expedients for amusement; they will not be seeking after happiness and enjoyment. In taking up their work in the fear of God, and doing service for the Master, they will secure the most substantial happiness. Connected with Jesus Christ, they will be wise unto salvation. They will be fruit-bearing trees. They will develop a blameless life, a beauteous character. The great work of redemption will be their first consideration. Eating and drinking and dressing, houses and lands, will be secondary matters. The peace of God within will force off the withered or gnarled branches of selfishness, vanity, pride, and indolence. It is faith and practice that makes up the Christian's life. We do not meet the standard of Christianity in merely professing Christ and having our names upon the church book. We should be individual workers for Christ. By personal effort we can show that we are connected with him.

There is a wide field in which our sisters may do good service for the Master in the various branches of the work connected with his cause. Through missionary labor they can reach a class that our ministers cannot. There are noble women who have had moral courage to decide in favor of the truth from the weight of evidence. They have

conscientiously accepted the truth. They have tact, perception, and good ability, and will make successful workers for their Master. Christian women are called for. There is work neglected or done imperfectly that could be thoroughly accomplished by the help that sisters can give. There are so many kinds of work too laborious for women, which our brethren are called to engage in, that many branches of missionary work are neglected. Many things connected with different churches are left undone that women, if properly instructed, could attend to. Our sisters might serve as church clerks, and the church business would not be so sadly neglected. There are many other offices connected with the cause of God which our sisters are better qualified to fill than our brethren, and in which they might do efficient service.

Our sisters can serve as vigilant workers in writing, and drawing out the true feelings of friends who have received our papers and tracts. Very valuable items are brought to light through this means. The writers should not seek for self-exaltation, but to present the truth in its simplicity wherever they shall have an opportunity. The money that has been spent for needless trimmings and useless ornaments should be spent in the purchase of papers and tracts to send to those who are in the darkness of error. The souls saved by their personal efforts will be more precious to them than fashionable dress. The white robes given them by Christ, and the jeweled crown as their reward for their unselfish efforts in the salvation of souls, will be more valuable than needless adornments. The stars in their crowns will shine forever and ever, and will a thousand times repay them for the self-denial and self-sacrifice they have exercised in the cause of God.

Women of firm principle and decided character are needed, women who believe that we are indeed living in the last days, and that we have the last solemn message of warning to be given to the world. They should feel that they are engaged in an important work in spreading the rays of light which Heaven has shed upon them. Nothing will deter this class from their duty. Nothing will discourage them in the work. They have faith to work for time and for eternity. They fear God, and will not be diverted from the work by the temptation of lucrative situations and attractive prospects. The Sabbath of the fourth commandment is sacredly kept by them, because God has placed his sanctity upon it, and has bidden them to keep it holy. They will preserve their integrity at any cost to themselves. These are the ones whom God can use in the tract and missionary work. These are the ones who will correctly represent our faith, whose words will be fitly spoken, like apples of gold in pictures of silver. These can in many ways do a

precious work for God in scattering tracts and judiciously distributing the Signs of the Times. Sisters, God calls you to work in the harvest-field and help gather in the sheaves.

Our sisters can show by their self-denial and self-sacrifice, and their willingness to work to the best of their ability, that they believe, and are being sanctified through, the truth. Many need a work of this kind to develop the powers they possess. Our sisters should in no case neglect their husbands and their children, but they can do much without neglecting home duties; and there are many who have not these responsibilities. In the various branches of the missionary work, the modest, intelligent woman may use her powers to the very highest account. Who can have so deep a love for the souls of men and women for whom Christ has died as those who are partakers of his grace? Who can represent the truth and the example of Christ better than Christian women who are practicing the truth in their earnest efforts to bring souls to the light? Who so well adapted to be teachers in the Sabbath-schools? With a heart imbued with the love of Christ, teaching the children of her class, praying with them and for them, she may see souls converted. The true mother is adapted to be the true teacher of children. I do not recommend that woman should seek to become a voter or an office-holder; but as a missionary, teaching the truth by epistolary correspondence, distributing tracts and soliciting subscribers for periodicals containing the solemn truth for this time, she may do very much. In conversing with families, in praying with the mother and children, she will be a blessing.

January 2, 1879

## **Address and Appeal, Setting Forth the Importance of Missionary Work**

Women can be the instruments of righteousness, rendering holy service. It was Mary that first preached a risen Jesus. In fulfillment of the divine plan, the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost. If this work was not beneath the dignity of the world's Redeemer, the Creator of worlds, should it be considered too humiliating for sinful mortals? If Christ taught, and if he wrestled in earnest prayer to his Father in behalf of those he came to save, we should engage in the same work. Those who engage with the Son of God in his work, be they ever so aspiring, can have no greater, no holier work than this. If there were twenty women where now there is one, who would make this holy mission their cherished work, we should see many more converted to the truth. The refining, softening influence of Christian women is needed in the great work of preaching the truth. The Lord of the vineyard is saying to many women who are now doing nothing, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" Zealous and continued diligence in our sisters toiling for the spread of the truth would be wholly successful, and would astonish us with its results. Through patience and perseverance, the work must be accomplished. In this faithful work is manifested the real devotion to God. He calls for deeds, and not words only.

We are so much wrapped up in our selfish interests that our hearts are not allowed to take in the needs and wants of humanity; we are lacking in deeds of sympathy and benevolence, in sacred and social ministering to the needy, the oppressed, and the suffering. Women who can work are needed now, women who are not self-important, but meek and lowly of heart, who will work with the meekness of Christ wherever they can find work to do for the salvation of souls. All who have been partakers of the heavenly benefits should be earnest and anxious that others, who do not have the privileges which they have enjoyed, in seeing and hearing the evidences of truth, should have the truth in papers, tracts, and pamphlets. They will not merely desire that others should have this benefit, but will see that they do have it, and will act their part to accomplish this object.

Those who work for God will grow in moral and spiritual power, while those who devote their time and energies to serving themselves will dwarf, and wither, and die.



Our sisters, the youth, the middle-aged, and those of advanced years, may act a part in the closing work for this time; and in doing this as they have opportunity, they will obtain an experience of the highest value to themselves. In forgetfulness of self, they will grow in grace. By training the mind in this direction, they will learn how to bear burdens for Jesus. But those who take hold of this work, whether young or old, must not be above counsel, and refuse to receive instruction. They will need to guard against self-sufficiency and self-importance. When it may come in the line of duty to correspond with those they wish to help, they should be careful not to show a pompous, self-righteous, pharisaic spirit. Those sisters who may be appointed to do work for the church, or tract and missionary work, should be guarded in regard to the tone in which they write. Some quite young persons have shown great weakness on this point. Letters have been written by youth, addressed to old and tried friends of the cause of God, who have carried the banner of the cross of Christ in all worthiness for nearly a quarter of a century, exhorting and advising them to be more zealous in the cause of God, more prompt in duty, in labor, and in reporting. All that was written may have been good in itself, but it was inappropriate; such letters do no good. It is the manner and spirit in which labor is performed that makes it acceptable or repulsive.

The lives of those who are connected with God are fragrant with deeds of love and goodness. The sweet savor of Christ surrounds them; their influence is to elevate and bless. These are fruitful trees. Men and women of this stamp of character will render practical service in thoughtful deeds of kindness, and earnest, systematic labor. Self-importance, vanity, and pride should in no case be mingled with the sacred work. Those who become lifted up because they can do something in the cause of God, will be in danger of marring the work by their self-conceit, and they will ruin their own souls. All who are connected with the work of God should make their mission as attractive as possible, that they may create no distaste for the truth in consequence of their demeanor. Self must be hid in Jesus, and those who labor for God must have characters with a pleasant flavor. Now is the time to put forth earnest efforts. Men and women are needed to work in the great missionary field with determined effort, praying and weeping, sow the precious seed of truth in imitation of the Redeemer, who was the Prince of missionaries.

Christ left the royal courts of Heaven; he left his high command, and for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. He labored in his vineyard among the hills of Galilee, and at last bedewed with his own blood the seed

which he had sown. When the harvest of the earth shall be gathered into Heaven's garner, and Christ shall then look upon the saints redeemed, he will see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. He who gives increased talents to those who have made a wise improvement of the talents intrusted to them, is pleased to acknowledge the services of his believing people in the Beloved, through whose strength and grace they have wrought. Those who have sought the development and perfection of Christian character by exercising their faculties in good works, in sowing the seeds of truth beside all waters, will, in the world to come, reap that which they have sown. The work begun upon earth will reach its consummation in the higher and holier life, to endure through all eternity. The self-denial and self-sacrifice required in the cultivation of the heart in doing the works of Christ, will be infinitely overbalanced by the rich reward of the eternal weight of glory, the joys of the life which measures with the life of God.

None of us should feel content to save merely our own souls. Those who appreciate the plan of salvation, the infinite price paid for man's redemption, will not live for themselves alone. They will have the deepest interest to save their fellow-men, that Christ may not have died for them in vain. All Heaven is interested in the salvation of souls, and all who are partakers of the heavenly benefits will feel an intense anxiety that this interest manifested in Heaven may not be in vain. They will on earth co-operate with the angels in Heaven, by manifesting their appreciation of the value of souls for whom Christ has died. They will, through their earnest, judicious labor, bring many to the fold of Christ. Not one who is a partaker of the divine nature will be indifferent in this matter. The world is our field; with a firm hold on God for his strength and his grace we may move forward in the pathway of duty, as co-laborers with the Redeemer of the world. Our work is to spread the light of truth and advance the work of moral reform, to elevate, ennoble, and bless humanity. We should apply the principles of Christ's sermon on the mount to every move that we make, and then trust the consequences with God.

"I say unto you that likewise joy shall be in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance." "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." If God and Christ and angels rejoice when even one sinner repents and becomes obedient to Christ, should not man be imbued with the same spirit, and work for time and for eternity with persevering effort to save, not only his own soul, but the souls of others? If you work in this direction with whole-hearted interest as the

followers of Christ, discharging every duty, improving every opportunity, your own souls will be gradually settling into the mold of a perfect Christian. The heart will not be sere and unfeeling. The spiritual life will not be dwarfed. The heart will glow with the impress of the divine image; for it will be in close sympathy with God. The whole life will flow out with cheerful readiness in channels of love and sympathy for humanity. Self will be forgotten, and the ways of this class will be established in God. In watering others, their own souls will be watered. The stream flowing through their souls is from a living spring, and is flowing out to others in good deeds, in earnest, unselfish effort for their salvation. In order to be a fruitful tree, the soul must derive its support and nourishment from the Fountain of Life, and must be in harmony with the Creator.

All who are faithful workers for God will yield their spirit and all their powers a willing sacrifice to him. The Spirit of God operating upon their spirit calls forth the sacred harmonies of the soul in the answer to the divine touch. This is true sanctification, as revealed in the word of God. It is the work of a lifetime. And that which the Spirit of God has begun upon the earth for the perfection of man, glory shall crown in the mansions of God. Those who are indolent and self-caring know not true happiness and peace. They are losing, even in this life, and what glory they lose in the future, immortal life. I wish I could speak words to men and women which would nerve them to diligent action. The moments now granted us to work are few. We are standing upon the very borders of the eternal world. We have no time to lose. Every moment is golden, and altogether too precious to be devoted merely to self-serving. Who will seek God earnestly, and from him draw strength and grace to be his faithful workers in the missionary field? Individual effort is essential for the success of this work. The ease-loving and self-caring, the worldly, ambitious ones will be ashamed to engage perseveringly in the tract and missionary work. Some may take hold of it impulsively, but they will not be able to bear rebuffs, and sneers, and contempt. These soon become weary in well-doing, and fall back to their own position of living and caring for self. For such there will be no reward in Heaven, for Christ is to give to every one as his works shall be.

There will be no lazy Christians in this cause, or connected with this work. It is essential that all who have named the name of Christ have a personal knowledge of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. They should understand the Scriptures for themselves. All indifference and lethargy must be overcome. Work, work, is crowding upon the few who are willing and obedient. They overwork because they see

so much to do and so few who are willing to lift the burdens and bear the yoke of Christ. Many who see the work for this time, and realize its importance, are pressed under the weight of responsibility as a cart beneath sheaves, while hundreds are dying a spiritual death of inaction because they will not work at all. These might come into working order if they would gather divine strength, and yield not to passing influences. They have the opportunity to cultivate traits of character which would be the opposite of selfishness, which would refine, enrich, and ennoble their lives. These may grow in spirituality if they will accept any burdens of the work where they can best serve the cause of God. Christians, in the fullest acceptation of the term, grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. They love God more and more, and are more and more desirous of acting a part in the great plan of salvation. Intellectual laziness and spiritual lethargy must be overcome, and as Christ's soldiers we must be faithful to duty, ready for every good work.

If the Christian thrives and progresses at all, he must do so amid strangers to God, amid scoffing, subject to ridicule. He must stand upright, like the palm-tree in the desert. The sky may be as brass, the desert sand may beat about the palm-tree's roots, and pile itself in heaps about its trunk. Yet the tree lives as an evergreen, fresh and vigorous amid the burning desert sands. Remove the sand till you reach the rootlets of the palm tree, and you discover the secret of its life; it strikes down deep beneath the surface, to the secret waters hidden in the earth. Christians indeed may be fitly represented by the palm tree. They are like Enoch; although surrounded with corrupting influences their faith takes hold of the Unseen. They walk with God, deriving strength and grace from him to withstand the moral pollution surrounding them. Like Daniel in the courts of Babylon, they stand pure and uncontaminated; their life is hid with Christ in God. They are virtuous in spirit amid depravity; they are true and loyal, fervent and zealous, while surrounded by infidels, hypocritical professors, godless and worldly men. Their faith and life are hid with Christ in God. Jesus is in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Faith, like the rootlets of the palm-tree, penetrates beneath the things which are seen, drawing spiritual nourishment from the fountain of life.

The character of the true Christian will be consistent, meek, cheerful, fragrant with good works, and so resolute that sin will find no sanction in the heart, in the words uttered, or in silence. The peace of Christ ruling in the heart of the earnest, working Christian will be reflected upon others; and will elevate and refine the taste, and sanctify the judgment. The faithful sower of the seed will hear the commendation of the Master,

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant, ... enter thou into the joy of the Lord."  
What is the joy of our Lord? It is the joy of seeing souls for whom Christ died redeemed in the kingdom of glory. Those who enter into the joys of their Lord will have the blessed satisfaction of seeing souls saved in the mansions of God through their instrumentality. These souls will be as stars in the crown of their rejoicing.

February 6, 1879

## **An Appeal for Northern Europe**

In my last vision I was shown the importance of the work in Northern Europe. The people are awakening to the truth. The Lord has given Elder Matteson a testimony to reach hearts. But the work is just entered upon. With judicious, self-sacrificing labor, many souls will be brought to the knowledge of the truth. There should be several unselfish, God-fearing workers in this missionary field, who will labor for souls as they that must give account in the day of Judgment.

I have been shown that not all is being done by our Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish brethren that they might and should do for their own countrymen. As soon as they embrace the truth, they ought to feel the fire of missionary zeal kindled in their hearts for their brethren in the darkness of error. Many are looking for help from their American brethren while they do not do their duty and feel the burden God requires them to feel for those of their own nation. They may do very much more than they are now doing if they will. These brethren must overcome selfishness and arouse to a sense of their responsibilities to God and their fellow countrymen, or they will lose the precious reward they might secure by putting their talents of means into the treasury of God, and by wisely-directed personal effort, thus being instrumental in the salvation of many souls.

Young men should be educated to become missionaries to their own nation, to teach the truth to those in darkness. Publications should be printed in Europe. But at the present time there is altogether too much ease and too little zeal among the Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians who believe the truth in this country to sustain such a continual drain upon their funds. And for this reason I urge upon them the necessity of coming up into working order, feeling even a greater interest for their own people than their American brethren have shown. God requires that these brethren should come up to the help of the Lord without delay.

The Lord is the great benefactor of the universe, a being of infinite love. His tender mercy is over all his works. He sees the great want of those in different countries who have not the truth. Thousands are not satisfied with their present state, and desire to

learn a better way. They are hungering and thirsting for light, and longing for greater surety and deeper spirituality. Minds are deeply stirred, and yet how few there are to bear the message to them!

Brethren, we need a deeper work of the Spirit of God in our own hearts. Jesus was rich in Heaven; but for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. The life of Christ, his self-denial and self-sacrifice, rebukes the indolence and inactivity of those who might and should engage in this great work of doing what they can to save their fellow-men. God requires that we should be like Christ, bear his image and imitate his example.

I was shown that many in Northern Europe had embraced the truth through reading. Their souls were hungering for light and knowledge when some tracts or papers came into their hands, and they were represented to me as reading. The wants of their souls were met; the Spirit of God softened and impressed their hearts; tears were in their eyes, and sobs came from burdened hearts. They knelt with the leaflets in their hands, and with earnest prayer besought the Lord to lead them and help them to receive the light as it was from him. Some surrendered themselves to God. Uncertainty was gone; and as they accepted the truth upon the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, they felt that they were indeed standing upon the Rock of Ages. Many persons scattered all through Northern Europe were presented to me as being ready to accept the light of truth.

I also saw Bro. Matteson at work among this very people. A cry comes to us from him across the waters for help. Shall we let him call in vain? We want to invest one hundred dollars in this mission. We do not want to hide our talents in the earth where they will do no one any good, but we wish to put them out to the exchangers where they can be used for the salvation of the souls for whom Christ has died.

We do not feel in the least discouraged to have these calls come in from foreign countries. They will not be made in vain. There are noble, self sacrificing men and women in our ranks who only wait to know their duty, and they are ready to engage in the work personally, or to help with their money. In doing this they are not only blessing others, but they are blessing themselves. Said Christ, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither

moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." It is for ourselves we are laying up treasure. I would not, for my right hand, do as some of our brethren have done. They make but little distribution of their means to sustain the cause of God, and excuse their consciences by resolving that when they shall have no further use for it they will will it to the cause of God. Will such poor, faithless souls have credit for laying up treasure in Heaven? No, no. Satan, through his agents, begins to work to secure the means in his cause, and he generally succeeds. This should be a standing rebuke to those unfaithful stewards, who are acting over the same plan hundreds have acted before them.

Men are too faithless to use their talents themselves and put it out to the exchangers, and so they would throw all the burden of their stewardship upon someone after they are gone. How much better for them to use the means which God has loaned them to be used for the advancement of his cause and to glorify his name on the earth.

The time is near when we shall be called to give an account of the manner in which we have spent our means. When the great white throne comes down from Heaven, and He sitteth thereon from whose face the heavens and earth flee away, then the dead, small and great, will stand before God, and the books will be opened, and all will be judged according to the things written in the books. We are trying to send our means beforehand into glory, and we call upon the selfish and penurious to arouse and do their duty before it shall be too late.

Put the means God has lent you out to the exchangers yourselves. The Lord will require of us personally a faithful record of how we have used our talents of means. Can we show a wise and faithful stewardship? How will you who hide your talents in the earth answer in that day? How will you answer who spend money upon your idols, tea and coffee? How will you, my sisters, answer, who spend much of the Lord's money in needless, expensive dress, when plain, modest apparel would be more in accordance with your faith?

You who would imitate your self-denying Redeemer, should deny the appetite, take the money formerly expended for tea and coffee and many other hurtful indulgences, and put it into the treasury of God. You should have a missionary box, and put the money into it which you have been in the habit of spending for these wicked indulgences which ought long ago to have been laid aside.



Is it not high time that we begin to make some little sacrifice for Christ, when he has sacrificed his life for us? Let the tea and coffee money, and money that is spent so freely for dress and ornaments, be sent in to the treasury, and God will bless you for whatever sacrifice you make for his cause. Shall these important calls for means to carry forward this missionary work come to us across the broad waters in vain? No, no; let every voice answer, No!

We recommend that Eld. Matteson commence to publish a paper without delay, and we direct that one hundred dollars be sent to him immediately.

We now call for one thousand dollars to be raised, to assist Bro. Matteson in publishing the paper, in issuing another edition of his European hymn book, and to meet other expenses of the mission during the present year. Our American brethren, who are able, are urgently invited to follow our example in this good work; but the Scandinavian brethren, who have taken but little stock in our Publishing Houses, College, and Sanitarium are our main dependence in promptly raising this sum.

We pledge to pay monthly for this purpose, J. and E. G. White \$5.00, and of this sum we now pay for present relief \$15.00.

Brethren, send in your pledges and money as soon as possible. And with your alms, let your prayers come up before God for perishing souls in Northern Europe.

June 12, 1879

### **The Camp-Meeting at Nevada, Mo**

From the Kansas camp-meeting we came direct to the Missouri camp-ground. Arriving there May 30, we found a very pleasant encampment. Eld. Butler soon rallied helpers to pitch a tent for us, and with a floor laid and carpeted, a table, bedstead, lounge, and chairs, our temporary home was made tasteful and inviting.

I was suffering from weakness and a severe cold, and would have been glad to keep my bed Sabbath morning, had I not been so desirous of speaking to the people. I was too sick to speak long, but in great weakness I sought to impress upon the people the necessity of preparing for a future life. I then invited sinners and backsliders to come forward. A large number responded, many making a start for the first time.

The people who came upon the ground Sunday had been told that I would speak to them; but it seemed like an impossibility for me to do so. My lungs were congested, and I was very hoarse; but, unable as I had been to sit up an hour since I came on the ground, I decided to venture out by faith. And, as on former occasions, I found the promises of God unfulfilling. "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." I was strengthened of God to speak nearly two hours, and was not nearly as tired when I left the stand as when I went upon it.

Monday morning, we assembled under the tent to attend the organization of a temperance association. There was a fair representation of our people present. Eld. Butler spoke, and confessed that he had not been as forward in the temperance reform as he should have been. He stated that he had always been a strictly temperance man, discarding the use of liquor, tea and coffee, but he had not signed the pledge being circulated among our people. But he was now convinced that in not doing so he was hindering others who ought to sign it. He then placed his name under Col. Hunter's; my husband placed his name beneath Bro. Butler's, I wrote mine next, and Bro. Farnsworth's followed. Thus the work was well started.

My husband continued to talk while the pledge was circulating. Some hesitated, thinking that the platform was too broad in including tea and coffee; but finally their

names were given, pledging themselves to total abstinence.

Bro. Hunter, who was then called upon to speak, responded by giving a very impressive testimony as to how the truth found him, and what it had done for him. He stated that he had drank liquor enough to float a ship, and that now he wanted to accept the whole truth, reform and all. He had given up liquor and tobacco, and this morning he had drank his last cup of coffee. He believed the testimonies were of God, and he wished to be led by the will of God expressed in them.

As the result of the meeting, one hundred and thirty-two names were signed to the teetotal pledge, and a decided victory was gained in behalf of temperance.

July 10, 1879

## **Our Camp-Meetings**

These annual gatherings are attended with great expense and wearisome labor. They are designed especially for our people, as the best means of reaching the greatest number. And while wisdom should be manifested in locating them where those not of our faith may be benefited by the light of truth presented, great care should be exercised that the object of the meeting be not lost sight of in the desire to make a favorable impression upon the public mind.

I see a marked change for the worse in our camp-meetings. Reporting the meetings through the secular papers, will, if properly conducted, be the means of calling the attention of the people to our faith, and awakening an interest in it; but if not managed in a manner to exalt Jesus and the truth rather than to make a display of what is done, the efforts are thrown away, and time and energy needed to keep up the interest of the meetings are worse than lost. When sincere piety, earnest devotion, and sanctified zeal are manifested by those professing the truth, and our devotional exercises are characterized by the presence of God's Spirit, impressions will be made upon the outside world that no amount of reporting will produce.

Our camp-meetings greatly fail of being what they should be, and our people do not gain the spiritual benefit from them that they might. Home burdens and worldly thoughts should be laid aside. Every individual should be upon the ground the first day of the meeting, prepared to remain until the closing service. When one family strike their tent a day or two before the close of the meeting, others feel inclined to do the same, and the interest of the meeting is greatly injured. One full week is none too long a time to devote exclusively to the service of God, having the mind withdrawn from worldly interests and concentrated upon spiritual things; but to abridge the one week to two or three days is robbing God of time which should be spent in his service. Some do not get into the spirit of the meeting before they start for their homes. Such show that they value temporal things above spiritual, and they will receive no permanent good.

How must our Lord look upon his people who are thus indifferent and careless when his servants are laboring earnestly to bring them up to the requirements of the

Bible, and to awaken in them greater earnestness and devotion in the cause of God. The preaching on Sunday is generally designed more especially for the people outside of our faith, the evidences of our position being dwelt upon. Monday the work commenced on Sabbath for those who are seeking the Lord, is resumed. This, the day for binding off the meetings, is the most important of the series; and our brethren meet with a great loss themselves, and cast a depressing influence upon the meeting, by taking this day for packing, taking down tents, and leaving the grounds. This is a wrong which nearly destroys the good that might be realized from the meetings.

We would appeal to our brethren and sisters to come to the camp-meeting prepared to remain to the close. It is disheartening to your ministers to see a disposition on your part to scatter, as if in haste to get away from the camp. Be on the ground the first day, and feel an individual responsibility to labor for the interest of the meeting from the first day to the last.

As a people, we are backsliding from God. The hearts of his professed children are being estranged from him. While they have a name to live, the true, vital energies of the soul have become spiritually dead. To such, Jesus speaks: "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!" Christ does not say days, but "day,"--"this thy day." That last meeting may be the very day of the special visitation of Christ,--a day of rare privileges and blessings so much needed by them.

When Christ was upon the earth, attending one of the Jews' convocations, upon the last day, that great day of the feast, he stood and cried: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." His eye of tenderest pity was cast around upon the multitude who were apparently all joy and rejoicing; but he who reads the secrets of the heart saw that there were many in that festive throng who were thirsting for that peace, and comfort, and consolation which he alone can give. They had failed to quench their thirst at earthly fountains, and his voice was heard by the whole temple crowd: "I am the fountain of living waters. If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."

In our camp-meetings Jesus is present with his gracious invitations; and if, on the last day of the feast, he is specially near, and his mercies and blessings are more forcibly brought home to us, how great the loss of those who fail to be present! On the very day of all others when they should be present, they are hastening to their homes; and thus

failing to drink of the living waters, their souls are unrefreshed.

One family decide that their farm calls them; but if they had a little more faith and trust in their Heavenly Father, who has said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you," they would be more willing to leave the consequences with God. But very few are willing to make any sacrifice of their temporal things in order to gain eternal riches.

We feel to the very depths the spiritual loss that our people are sustaining in not appreciating their privileges and present blessings. They are not becoming more earnest, devoted, and perfect in character. Their faith is dead, because it is not sustained by works. There is every year a growing tendency to assimilate to the world. Self and the world are becoming a ruling power. I state that which I know. Spiritual death is coming upon us, because of the absence of vital godliness. Says Jesus, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." It is one thing to profess Christ, and another thing to follow him.

Anciently God commanded his people to assemble three times a year, and from every city from Dan to Beersheba the people came to these annual feasts. The one at the commencement of the season was to entreat God's blessing upon their families, their lands, their flocks, and their herds. The one at the close of harvest was the crowning festal gathering, to bring their offerings to God. The land had yielded its increase, the harvest had been gathered into their granaries, the first-fruits had been stored, and the people came with their tributes of thanksgiving to God, who had thus richly blessed them. Joy and rejoicing were there combined with the solemnities of a holy and sacred convocation.

God directed Moses to say to the children of Israel, "Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine." "Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the Lord thy God, in the place which the Lord shall choose; because the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice."

Many sacrifices were made at these feasts; and this profusion of blood shed in connection with the harvest of thanksgiving was significant to them of the fact that even the bounties of the earth could come to them only through the cross of Calvary. By thus

assembling and bringing their tithes into the treasury, they ever acknowledged the Lord to be the giver of all their blessings. The children of Israel are our ensamples, that while we should imitate their faithfulness and virtues, we should shun those sins which brought the displeasure of God upon them.

We have our convocation meetings yearly, and all who possibly can attend them should feel under obligation to do so. If they neglect to improve the opportunities to obtain a better knowledge of the truth, and to become more thoroughly in earnest in their efforts to perfect Christian character, they will be held responsible for the light, and privileges, and blessings which they might have had. Their case is nearly as bad in the sight of God as that of those who attend the meetings but fail to improve by the light and blessings there received.

I plead with our brethren and sisters to make the most of their God-given opportunities. Christ, when weeping over Jerusalem, exclaimed, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." Jerusalem's sin was in abusing past blessings and privileges, and she was sealing her doom in rejecting present mercies and warnings. The weak faith of our people today shows that past warnings and reproofs have not been heeded, and hardness of heart, and indifference, and unbelief are the result.

The most solemn and awful period for the Jewish nation was when Jesus was in their midst. It was that generation that was responsible for not accepting the light of the world. For many years God has been pleading with his people by mercies, by judgments, and by the most solemn warnings and entreaties. Blessings have been bestowed, and blessings removed, and yet the people who profess to be in advance of every other people in the light of truth have not responded to these warnings and entreaties of the Spirit of God. The Saviour's love has been unrequited. Christ looks mournfully upon the individual members of the church, and exclaims, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."

The hour of probation is fast passing; the cup of God's indignation is fast filling. Will those who profess to be waiting for the appearing of their Lord from heaven be found wanting in that day, or will they awake from their carnal security, repent of their indifference and hardness of heart, and in this their day give most diligent heed to the things which belong to their peace? Must the fast westering sun of merciful probation

set, and the sentence be pronounced, "but now they are hid from thine eyes"?

From the crest of Olivet, Christ overlooked the world. Every soul who has become indifferent to the privileges within his reach, is personally addressed in this appeal. Christ is stooping over his throne today, his great heart of love yearning with deep and tender compassion over those who are careless, and neglectful of their eternal interests. Many professed Christians are now only stumbling-blocks,--false way-marks. They do not represent to the world by good works the principles of the doctrines of Christ. They neglect the study of the Scriptures, and secret prayer, and have become, so far as their influence is concerned, traitors to their holy trust. Their hearts have gradually become hardened; they have a name to live, while the vital energies of the soul have become spiritually paralyzed. Of this class our Saviour speaks: "Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

It is not enough to profess to believe in Christ, saying that we are saved by Christ, when we do not practice the lessons he has given. All such professed Christians are represented by the man who built his house upon the sand; while the hearers and doers of the word are represented by the man who built his house upon the rock, and amid tempest, storm, and flood, it remained unmoved. Thus the true foundation for every soul is represented by those who not only hear the truth but practice it. Those who claim to be children of God and do not his will are hypocrites.

He who is indeed a follower of Jesus Christ, will be assimilated to his image. He will be brought into sympathy with him through the fellowship of his sufferings. Storms of trial and adversity may break upon him, but he is not swayed from his foundation, for his soul is riveted upon the eternal Rock. Indolence in spiritual things will bring moral feebleness; active workers in the cause of God will be men of prayer, and will have success. Every day that they labor to do the will of God they will have increased ability to work efficiently to promote his glory. To such he will say by and by, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."



July 17, 1879

## **How to Win Back the Erring**

If you are grieved because your neighbors or friends are doing wrong to their own hurt, if they are overtaken in fault, follow the Bible rule. "Tell him his fault between thee and him alone." As you go to the one you suppose to be in error, see that you speak in a meek and lowly spirit; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. The erring can in no other way be restored than in the spirit of meekness, and gentleness, and tender love. Be careful in your manner. Avoid anything in look or gesture, word or tone of voice, that savors of pride, or self-sufficiency. Guard yourself against a word or look that would exalt self, or present your goodness and righteousness in contrast with their failings. Beware of the most distant approach to disdain, overbearing, or contempt. With care avoid every appearance of anger; and though you use plainness of speech, yet let there be no reproach, no railing accusation, no token of warmth, but that of earnest love. Above all let there be no shadow of hate or ill-will, no bitterness, nor sourness of expression. Nothing but kindness and gentleness can flow from a heart of love. Yet all these precious fruits need not hinder your speaking in the most serious, solemn manner, as though angels were directing their eyes upon you, and you were acting in reference to the coming Judgment. Bear in mind that the success of reproof depends greatly upon the spirit in which it is given. Do not neglect earnest prayer that you may possess a lowly mind, and that angels of God may work upon the hearts you are trying to reach, before you, and so soften them by heavenly impressions, that your efforts may avail. If any good is accomplished, take no credit to yourself. God alone should be exalted. God alone hath done it all.

You may have excused yourself for speaking evil of your brother or sister or neighbor to others before going to them, and taking the steps God has absolutely commanded. Perhaps you say, "I did not speak to any one until I was so burdened that I could not refrain." What burdened you? Was it a plain neglect of your own duty, a thus saith the Lord? You were under the guilt of sin because you did not go tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If you did not do this, if you disobeyed God, how should you be otherwise than burdened, unless your heart was hardened, while you were trampling the command of God under foot, and hating your brother or neighbor in your heart? And what way have you found to unburden yourself? God reproves you for a sin

of omission, not telling your brother or sister their fault, and you excuse and comfort yourself under his censure by a sin of commission, by telling your brother's faults to another person! Is this the right way to purchase ease, by committing sin?

All your efforts to save the erring may be unavailing. They may repay you evil for good. They may be enraged rather than convinced. What if they hear to no good purpose, and pursue the evil course they have begun. This will frequently occur. Sometimes the mildest and tenderest reproof will have no good effect. In that case, the blessing you wanted another to receive by pursuing a course of righteousness, ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well, will return into your own bosom. If the erring persist in sin, treat them kindly and leave them with your Heavenly Father. You have delivered your soul. Their sin no longer rests upon you. You are not now partaker of their sins. But if they perish, their blood is upon their own heads.

August 28, 1879

## **Christians, Christ's Representatives**

In his sermon on the mount, Christ addressed his followers in these words: "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

If we take in the full meaning of our Saviour's words, we shall feel a responsibility resting upon us that is not small. We are to be channels of light. We are to so connect ourselves with Him who is the light of the world, that his character will appear in us his followers. There are excellent men and women in our organized churches, who will ever be standard bearers, faithful Calebs. Such will be lights in the world; but the mind and purpose of Christ in the usefulness of many of the church-members is not met. He comes to them as he came to the barren fig tree, searching for fruit, and finds "nothing but leaves."

There has been on the part of many a sacrifice of the simplicity of true godliness to outward forms and appearances. Worldly thoughts and cares absorb their attention, and the things of eternal interest are made secondary. Christians holding daily communion with God, feasting upon the truths of his word, will by their religious conversation be constantly exerting a powerful influence for good upon their fellow-men. Hearts imbued with the love of Jesus will not fail to express themselves in words. The precious love of Christ has been experienced by them, and they cannot refrain from relating their experience to others. From a heart throbbing with a Saviour's love, the story of the cross of Christ will be repeated, and they will thus testify that Jesus has power on earth to forgive sins.

The individual members of the church, as sons and daughters of God, should show by their words and by their transformed characters, the divine reality that there is in the religion of Christ. They may exemplify in their lives that the happiness which

worldlings seek after in vain is to be found in the service of Jesus Christ. Here alone is serenity, peace, contentment, and true happiness and joy. Those who have a name to live, but are dead, are by their unconsecrated lives daily confirming the sinner in his impenitence, and thus, while neglecting their duty to gather with Christ, they are scattering abroad by their silence and the indifference which they manifest.

The testimonies borne in the prayer-meeting frequently savor of gloominess and self-condemnation, and sinners think that if there is no more brightness and cheerfulness in religion than is expressed, and revealed in their lives, they do not desire it. But hundreds and thousands profess Christ who are unacquainted with him, and who do not the will of God in Heaven. Eternal life is a matter of tremendous moment; and if those professing Christ can testify by words and actions to the love of Christ, and can have the divine witness of the Spirit to their testimonies, sinners will be convicted. It is the indifference of the members of the church which makes the truths they profess powerless.

There is a decided lack of genuine, living conversion among Christ's professed followers. When his people are thrown into the society of unbelievers, whether walking, working, riding, trading, or visiting, they should, as they have opportunity, introduce the subject of religion, and speak of the things which concern their eternal interest. They should not do this abruptly, but with tact. This was the way in which our Saviour taught concerning the kingdom of God. Everything in nature, and the incidents passing under their notice were to him texts for impressive sermons. He thus bound up his sacred lessons with the flowers, with the recurring seasons, with the rocks, the hills, and the mountains, and with the every-day occurrences of life. Thus it is the duty of every follower of Jesus to sow beside all waters, and in so doing he is fulfilling the purpose of God, and doing his work as Christ's representative on earth.

August 28, 1879

## **Spiritual Life in the Church**

The question is often asked, Why is there not more power in the church? why not more vital godliness? The reason is, the requirements of God's word are not complied with in verity and in truth; God is not loved supremely, and our neighbor as ourselves. This covers the entire ground. Upon these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Let these two requirements of God be obeyed explicitly, and there would be no discord in the church, no inharmonious notes in the family. With many the work is too superficial. Outward forms take the place of the inner work of grace. They are whited sepulchers,--beautiful without, as far as claims to piety and a profession of the truth are concerned, but within full of uncleanness. The theory of the truth has converted the head, but the soul temple has not been cleansed from its idols.

When the commandment came home to the mind and heart of Paul, he says, "Sin revived and I died." In these days of pretense there are many sham conversions. True conviction of sin, real heart sorrow because of wickedness, death to self, the daily overcoming of defects of character, and the new birth,--these, represented as old things, Paul says had passed away, and all things had become new. Such a work many know nothing of. They grafted the truth into their natural hearts, and then went on as before, manifesting the same unhappy traits of character. What is now needed is the plain testimony borne in love from lips touched with living fire.

Church-members do not show that living connection with God that they must have in order to win souls from darkness to light. Make the tree good, and good fruit will be the result. The work of the Spirit of God upon the heart is essential to godliness. It must be received into the hearts of those who accept the truth, and create in them clean hearts, before one of them can keep his commandments and be doers of the word. "Marvel not," said the great Teacher unto the astonished Nicodemus, "Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again."

The Bible is not studied as much as it should be; it is not made the rule of life. Were its precepts conscientiously followed, and made the basis of character, there would be steadfastness of purpose that no business speculations or worldly pursuits

could seriously influence. A character thus formed, and supported by the word of God, will abide the day of trial, of difficulties and dangers. The conscience must be enlightened, and the life sanctified by the love of the truth received into the heart, before the influence will be saving upon the world.

What is needed is men of action for the time, prompt, determined, firm as a rock to principle, and prepared to meet any emergency. Why we are so weak, why there are so many irresponsible men among us, is because they do not connect with God; they have not an indwelling Saviour, and do not feel the love of Christ ever fresh and new, calling forth deep gratitude to God, and unfeigned love for souls for whom Christ died. No earthly relationship is as strong as this love. Nothing can compare with it. It elevates, ennobles, and develops all that is great and beautiful in humanity. It is constantly elevating the human to the divine. This life should be a living representative of Jesus Christ.

December 11, 1879

## **The Holidays**

We are rapidly approaching the season of the holidays, and many conscientious ones are now questioning what course they may pursue that will be pleasing in the sight of God. By the world the holidays are spent in frivolity and extravagance, gluttony and display. It is the prevailing custom at this time to make and receive presents. And it is no small burden upon the mind to know how to distribute these gifts among friends so that none will feel slighted. It is a fact that much envy and jealousy are often created by this custom of making presents.

Thousands of dollars will be worse than thrown away upon the coming Christmas and New Year's in needless indulgences. But it is our privilege to depart from the customs and practices of this degenerate age; and instead of expending means merely for the gratification of the appetite, or for needless ornaments or articles of clothing, we may make the coming holidays an occasion in which to honor and glorify God.

We advise all our brethren and sisters to make a decided reform in regard to these festal days. Those who appreciate the gift of God's dear Son to save them from ruin, now have a favorable opportunity to give tangible proofs of their gratitude by rendering to God their thank-offerings. Let old and young lay aside their mites as sacred offerings to God. If we would give to the cause of our Redeemer one-half as much as we have bestowed upon our friends, we would do much good and receive a blessing for giving.

Let us seek to faithfully represent Christ on the coming festal days by imitating his example as he went about doing good. It is impossible to enjoy the approbation of God while living for self. As Christians who profess a living faith in the near coming of the Son of man, keeping all of God's commandments, let us make earnest efforts to draw near to God through Jesus Christ, and make a covenant with him by sacrifice. In our principles of action we must be elevated above the customs and fashions of the world. Christ came to our world to elevate the minds of men to the divine level, and to bring them into sympathy with the mind of God.

As every blessing we enjoy is brought to us through the condescension,

humiliation, and sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we should render to him our best gifts, above all not withholding ourselves. The infinite sacrifice which Christ has made to free us from the guilt and woe of sin, should work in every heart a spirit of gratitude and self-denial which is not manifested by the world. God's gift of Christ to man filled all Heaven with amazement, and inspired at his birth the angelic song, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Christmas day, precious reminder of the sacrifice made in man's behalf, should not be devoted to gluttony and self-indulgence, thus exalting the creature above the Creator. Let us who are partakers of this great salvation show that we have some appreciation of the gift, by rendering to God our thank-offerings. If we would indulge less in feasting and merriment upon these occasions, and instead make them the means of benefiting humanity, we should better meet the mind of God. It is a pleasure and gratification to exchange gifts with our friends; but are there not nobler and more glorious objects for which we may give our means, and thus do good by shedding light upon the pathway of others?

There are many who have not books and publications upon present truth. Here is a large field where money can be safely invested. There are large numbers of little ones who should be supplied with reading. The Sunshine Series, Golden Grains Series, Poems, Sabbath Readings, etc., are all precious books, and may be introduced safely into every family. The many trifles usually spent in candies and useless toys, may be treasured up with which to buy these volumes.

Children need proper reading, which will afford amusement and recreation, and not demoralize the mind or weary the body. If they are taught to love romance and newspaper tales, instructive books and papers will become distasteful to them. Most children and young people will have reading matter; and if it is not selected for them, they will select it for themselves. They can find a ruinous quality of reading anywhere, and they soon learn to love it; but if pure and good reading is furnished them, they will cultivate a taste for that.

Especial efforts should be made to exclude from our homes that class of literature which can have no beneficial influence upon our children. Many times I have been pained to find upon the tables or in the book-cases of Sabbath-keepers, papers and books full of romance, which their children were eagerly perusing.



There are those who profess to be brethren who do not take the Review, Signs, Instructor, or Good Health, but take one or more secular papers. Their children are deeply interested in reading the fictitious tales and love stories which are found in these papers, and which their father can afford to pay for, although claiming that he cannot afford to pay for our periodicals and publications on present truth. Thus parents are educating the taste of their children to greedily devour the sickly, sensational stories found in newspaper columns. All such reading is poisonous; it leaves a stain upon the soul, and encourages a love for cheap reading which will debase the morals and ruin the mind.

Parents should guard their children, and teach them to cultivate a pure imagination and to shun, as they would a leper, the love-sick pen pictures presented in newspapers. Let publications upon moral and religious subjects be found on your tables and in your libraries, that your children may cultivate a taste for elevated reading. Let those who wish to make valuable presents to their children, grandchildren, nephews, and nieces, procure for them the children's books mentioned above. For young people, the Life of Joseph Bates is a treasure; also the three volumes of Spirit of Prophecy. These volumes should be placed in every family in the land. God is giving light from Heaven, and not a family should be without it. Let the presents you shall make be of that order which will shed beams of light upon the pathway to Heaven.

Anciently the children of Israel were commanded to keep three annual feasts each year: the Passover, the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Feast of Weeks. The Lord gave directions that on these occasions their gifts and offerings were to be consecrated to him, and none should appear before him empty-handed. But in our day it has become fashionable to observe these festal occasions in a manner that would divert the mind from God instead of bringing glory to his name. Those whom God has blessed with prosperity should acknowledge the Giver, and feel that where much is given much will be required.

Our holidays have been perverted from their intended use. Gifts are lavished upon one another, and praise which should have been given to God, to whom all these things belong, is bestowed upon poor mortals.

Our houses of worship in Oakland and Battle Creek are under the pressure of

debt. The Dime Tabernacle belongs to us all; we should all have a special interest in it. In order to accommodate the students at the College, the patients at the Sanitarium, the laborers at the Office, and the large number of worshipers constantly coming in from abroad, the erection of this spacious house of worship was a positive necessity. Great responsibilities rest upon those at Battle Creek, and also upon those whose arms should be reached out to sustain these interests at the great heart of the work. Not in all the world is there a battle field for truth and reform like this. Great interests are involved here. The Sabbath-school and College are educating the young, and determining the future destiny of souls. There is here a continual necessity of devising ways and means for the advancement of truth and the conversion of souls. Our people are not half awake to the demands of the times. The voice of Providence is calling upon all who have the love of God in their hearts to arouse to this great emergency. Never was there a time when so much was at stake as today. Never was there a period in which greater energy and self-sacrifice were demanded from God's commandment-keeping people.

We are now nearing the close of another year, and shall we not make these festal days opportunities in which to bring to God our offerings? I cannot say sacrifices, for we shall only be rendering to God that which is his already, and which he has only intrusted to us till he shall call for it. God would be well pleased if on Christmas, each church would have a Christmas tree on which shall be hung offerings, great and small, for these houses of worship. Letters of inquiry have come to us asking, Shall we have a Christmas tree? will it not be like the world? We answer, You can make it like the world if you have a disposition to do so, or you can make it as unlike the world as possible. There is no particular sin in selecting a fragrant evergreen, and placing it in our churches; but the sin lies in the motive which prompts to action, and the use which is made of the gifts placed upon the tree.

The tree may be as tall and its branches as wide as shall best suit the occasion; but let its boughs be laden with the golden and silver fruit of your beneficence, and present this to Him as your Christmas gift. Let your donations be sanctified by prayer, and let the fruit upon this consecrated tree be applied toward removing the debts from our houses of worship at Battle Creek, Mich., and Oakland, Cal.

A word to the wise is sufficient.

January 1, 1880

## **Praise Glorifies God**

God says by the psalmist, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." The worship of God consists chiefly of praise and prayer. Every follower of Christ should engage in this worship. No one can sing by proxy, bear testimony by proxy, or pray by proxy. As a rule, too many dark testimonies are borne in social service, savoring more of murmuring than of gratitude and praise.

When the word of God was spoken to the Hebrews anciently, the Lord said to Moses, "And let all the people say, Amen." This response, in the fervor of their souls, was required as evidence that they understood the word spoken and were interested in it.

When the ark of God was brought into the city of David and a psalm of joy and triumph was chanted, all the people said, Amen. And David felt that he was fully repaid for his labor and anxiety by this cheerful universal response from the people.

There is too much formality in the church. Souls are perishing for light and knowledge. We should be so connected with the Source of all light that we can be channels of light to the world. The Lord would have his ministers who preach the word energized by his Holy Spirit. And the people who hear should not sit in drowsy indifference or stare vacantly about, making no responses to what is being said. The spirit of the world has paralyzed the spirituality of such, and they are not awake to the precious theme of redemption. The truth of God's word is spoken to leaden ears, and hard, unimpressible hearts. The impression given the unbeliever by these professed Christians is anything but favorable for the religion of Christ. These dull, careless ones show ambition and zeal when engaged in the business of the world, but things of eternal importance do not engross the mind and interest them as do worldly things. The voice of God through his messengers is a pleasant song; but its sacred warnings, reproofs, and encouragements are all unheeded. Eternal and sacred things are placed upon a level with common things. The Holy Spirit is grieved. Said Christ, "Take heed, therefore, how ye hear." Those are spiritually dead who profess to worship God while the heart is not in the work. There should be a hearty, wide-awake church to encourage and uphold the hands of the ministers of Jesus Christ.

The people who profess to believe the truth may be familiar with the evidences of our faith, and yet be like the pretentious fig-tree, which flaunted its foliage in the face of the world, but when searched by the Master, was found destitute of fruit. Fruitful Christians will be connected with God, and intelligent in the things of God. The truth and the love of God is their meditation. They have feasted upon the words of life, and when they hear it spoken from the desk, they can say, as did the two disciples who were traveling to Emmaus when Christ explained to them the prophecies in reference to himself, "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

All who are connected with the light will let their light shine to the world, and will, in their testimonies, praise God, to whom their hearts will flow forth in gratitude. Those who have a vital union with Christ will rejoice in the assurance of his love. Nothing of the world can make them sad when Jesus makes them glad by his presence. Walking in the light, they will never disgrace their profession or bring reproach upon the cause of Christ. It is the privilege of every child of God to store his mind with divine truth, and the more he does this the more vigor and clearness of mind he will have to fathom the deep things of God. He will be more and more earnest and vigorous, as the principles of the truth are carried out in his daily life.

We should all be working together with God. No idlers are acknowledged as his servants. The members of the church should individually feel that the life and prosperity of the church is affected by their course of action. Those in the church who have sufficient talent to engage in any of the various vocations of life, such as teaching, building, manufacturing, and farming, will generally be prepared to labor for the upbuilding of the church by serving on committees or as teachers in Sabbath-schools, engaging in missionary labor or filling the different offices connected with the church.

God requires that the first, the best, and the most useful talents shall be employed to carry forward his work upon the earth. The same zeal and energy, tact and order, which are exercised in counting-rooms, shops, and in the fine arts, should be brought into the religious life and exercised in the work of God. These persons are responsible for the talents given them of God to use to his glory. He calls for them to come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

Many will give money because it costs less self-denial and self-sacrifice than to give themselves. Some say, "My business claims all my time. So numerous are my engagements and so pressing their demands, I cannot give my time." Of what avail is means without agents to use it? Ministers cannot do a tithe of the work necessary to be done at this time to save souls and preserve the vitality of the church.

God wants, not only that you should give of your means, but that you should give yourselves. He wants you. He claims your personal interest, your talents. The very best and most vigorous thoughts should be devoted to his cause and to glorifying his name.

What revelations will be made in the day of God, when each individual will see his life as God sees it! What opportunities lost to save souls! How many precious hours wasted in following inclination instead of discharging duties! How much greater advancement might have been made in the knowledge of the truth! How much talent that was given of God for wise improvement, to be spent in his service, has been buried in the cares and allurements of this world! How much strength and courage might have been given to the individual members of the church, had they dedicated to God their talents and used them to his service and glory. And how many souls might have been saved had they been wise and sought first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

What can we say to arouse the people, who profess to be the followers of Christ, to a sense of the solemn responsibilities resting upon them? Is there no voice that shall arouse them to work while the day lasts? Our Divine Master gave his life for a ruined world. Who will deny self, and make some sacrifice to save souls for whom Christ died? Christ has left us an example in his life, that we might follow in his steps and secure the approval of Heaven.

Contemplating things of eternal interest will give true perception of the things of God. The respect and reverence due to God will be exhibited in the daily life and character. The soul will be brought into harmony with Heaven. The entire character will be elevated and transformed. The believer will be made Christ-like, and finally obtain an entrance into the city of God.

January 8, 1880

## Improvement of Talents

God designs that improvement shall be the life-work of all his followers, and that it shall be guided and controlled by correct experience. The true man is one who is willing to sacrifice his own interest for the good of others, and who exercises himself in binding up the broken-hearted. The true object of life is scarcely begun to be understood by many; and that which is real and substantial in their life is sacrificed because of cherished errors.

Nero and Caesar were acknowledged by the world as great men; but did God regard them as such? No! they were not connected by living faith to the great heart of humanity. They were in the world, and ate, and drank, and slept, as men of the world; but they were satanic in their cruelty. Wherever these monsters of humanity went, bloodshed and destruction marked their pathway. They were lauded by the world while living; but when they were buried the world rejoiced. In contrast with the lives of these men, is that of Luther. He was not born a prince. He wore no royal crown. From a cloistered cell his voice was heard, and his influence felt. He had a humane heart, which was exercised for the good of men. He stood bravely for truth and right, and breasted the world's opposition to benefit his fellow-men.

Intellect alone does not make the man, according to the divine standard. There is a power in intellect, if sanctified and controlled by the Spirit of God. It is superior to riches and to physical power; yet it must be cultivated in order to make the man. The right which one has to claim to be a man is determined by the use made of his intellect. Byron had intellectual conception, and depth of thought, but he was not a man according to God's standard. He was an agent of Satan. His passions were fierce and uncontrollable. He was sowing seed through his life which blossomed into a harvest of corruption. His life-work lowered the standard of virtue. This man was one of the world's distinguished men; still the Lord would not acknowledge him as a man, but only as one who had abused his God-given talents. Gibbon, the skeptic, and many others whom God endowed with giant minds, and whom the world called great men, rallied under the banner of Satan, and used the gifts of God for the perversion of truth and the destruction of the souls of men. Great intellect, when made a minister of vice, is a curse

to the possessor and to all within its influence.

That which will bless humanity is spiritual life. If the man is in harmony with God, he will depend continually upon him for strength. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." Our life-work is to be reaching forward to the perfection of Christian character, striving continually for conformity to the will of God. The efforts begun upon earth will continue through eternity. God's standard of man is elevated to the highest meaning of the term, and if he acts up to his God-given manhood he will promote happiness in this life, which will lead to glory and an eternal reward in the life to come.

The members of the human family are entitled to the name of men and women only when they employ their talents, in every possible way, for the good of others. The life of Christ is before us as a pattern, and it is when ministering, like angels of mercy, to the wants of others that man is closely allied to God. It is the nature of Christianity to make happy families and happy society. Discord, selfishness, and strife will be put away from every one who possesses the spirit of Christ.

Those who are partakers of Christ's love have no right to think that there is a limit to their influence and work in trying to benefit humanity. Did Christ become weary in his efforts to save fallen man? Our work is to be continuous and persevering. We shall find work to do until the Master shall bid us lay our armor at his feet. God is a moral governor, and we must wait, submissive to his will, ready and willing to spring to our duty whenever work needs to be done.

Angels are engaged night and day in the service of God, for the uplifting of man in accordance with the plan of salvation. Man is required to love God supremely, that is, with all his might, mind, and strength, and his neighbor as himself. This he cannot possibly do unless he shall deny himself. Said Christ, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."

Self-denial means to rule the spirit when passion is seeking for the mastery; to resist the temptation to censure and to speak fault-finding words; to have patience with the child that is dull, and whose conduct is grievous and trying; to stand at the post of duty when others may fail; to lift responsibilities wherever and whenever you can, not for the purpose of applause, not for policy, but for the sake of the Master, who has given

you a work to be done with unwavering fidelity; when you might praise yourself, to keep silent and let other lips praise you. Self-denial is to do good to others where inclination would lead you to serve and please yourself. Although your fellow-men may never appreciate your efforts, you are to work on.

Search carefully and see whether the truth which you have accepted has, with you, become a firm principle. Do you take Christ with you when you leave the closet of prayer? Does your religion stand guard at the door of your lips? Is your heart drawn out in sympathy and love for others outside of your own family? Are you diligently seeking a clearer understanding of scriptural truth, that you may let your light shine forth to others? These questions you may answer to your own souls. Let your speech be seasoned with grace, and your demeanor show Christian elevation.

A new year has commenced. What has been the record of the past year in your Christian life? How stands your record in Heaven? I entreat of you to make an unreserved surrender to God. Have your hearts been divided? Give them wholly to the Lord now. Make a different life history the coming year from the one of the past. Humble your souls before God. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." Put away all pretense and affectation. Act your simple, natural self. Be truthful in every thought, and word, and deed, and "in all lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." Ever remember that moral nature needs to be braced with constant watchfulness and prayer. As long as you look to Christ, you are safe; but the moment you think of your sacrifices and your difficulties, and begin to sympathize with and pet yourself, you lose your trust in God and are in great peril.

Many limit the divine Providence, and divorce mercy and love from his character. They urge that the greatness and majesty of God would forbid his interesting himself in the concerns of the weakest of his creatures. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows."

It is difficult for human beings to give attention to the lesser matters of life while the mind is engaged in business of vast importance. But should not this union exist? Man formed in the image of his Maker should unite the larger responsibilities with the



smaller. He may be engrossed with occupations of overwhelming importance, and neglect the instruction which his children need. These duties may be looked upon as the lesser duties of life, when they in reality lie at the very foundation of society. Happiness of families and churches depends upon home influences. Eternal interests depend upon the proper discharge of the duties of this life. The world is not so much in need of great minds, as of good men who will be a blessing in their homes.

January 15, 1880

## **The Danger of Riches**

When the lawyer asked what he should do to inherit eternal life, Jesus told him that obedience to God's commandments was necessary for his salvation. But mark the answer returned: "Master, all these have I observed from my youth." Jesus looked upon this deceived young man with pity and love. He was about to show him that he had failed to keep from his heart the commandments that he confidently asserted he was obeying. Jesus said unto him, "One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me."

After calling attention to his own self-denying, cross-bearing life, Jesus entreated the young man to come and imitate his example, telling him that he should thus lay up treasure in Heaven. Did the young man's heart leap with joy at the assurance? Oh, no. His earthly riches were his idol, and they eclipsed the value of the eternal inheritance. He turned from the cross and from the self-sacrificing life of the Redeemer, to this world. He had a lingering desire for the promised reward, and reluctantly turned from the prospect. It cost a struggle to decide which he should choose; but he finally decided to continue his love for his earthly possessions.

Very few realize the strength of their love for money until the test is brought to bear upon them. Many who profess to be Christ's followers then show that they are unprepared for Heaven. Their works testify that they love wealth more than their neighbor or their God. Like the rich young man, they inquire the way of life; but when it is pointed out and the cost estimated, and they see that the sacrifice of earthly riches is demanded, they decide that Heaven costs too much. The greater the treasures laid up on the earth, the more difficult it is for the possessor to realize that they are not his own, but are lent him to be used to God's glory. Jesus here improves the opportunity to give his disciples an impressive lesson: "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of Heaven." "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

Here the power of wealth is seen. The influence of the love of money over the human mind is almost paralyzing. Riches infatuate, and cause many who possess them to act as though they were bereft of reason. The more they have of this world, the more they desire. Their fears of coming to want increase with their riches. They have a disposition to hoard up means for the future. They are close and selfish, fearing that God will not provide for them. This class are indeed poor toward God. As their riches have accumulated, they have put their trust in them, and have lost faith in God and his promises. The faithful, trusting poor man becomes rich toward God by judiciously using the little he has in blessing others with his means. He feels that his neighbor has claims upon him that he cannot disregard and yet obey the command of God, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." He considers the salvation of his fellowmen of greater importance than all the gold and silver the world contains.

Christ points out the way in which those who have wealth, and yet are not rich toward God, may secure the true riches. He says: "Sell that ye have, and give alms;" and lay up treasure in Heaven. The remedy he proposes is a transfer of their affections to the eternal inheritance. By investing their means in the cause of God to aid in the salvation of souls, and by relieving the needy, they become rich in good works, and are "laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." This will prove a safe investment. But many show by their works that they dare not trust the bank of Heaven. They choose to trust their means in the earth, rather than to send it before them to Heaven. These have a great work to do to overcome covetousness and love of the world. Rich poor men, professing to serve God, are objects of pity. While they profess to know God, in works they deny him. How great is the darkness of such! They profess faith in the truth, but their works do not correspond with their profession. The love of riches makes men selfish, exacting, and overbearing.

To obtain wealth by unjust dealing, overreaching in trade, oppressing the widow and the fatherless, or hoarding up riches and neglecting the wants of the needy, will eventually bring the just retribution described by the inspired apostle: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries

of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth."

The humblest and poorest of the true disciples of Christ who are rich in good works, are more blessed and more precious in the sight of God than the men who boast of their great riches. They are more honorable in the courts of Heaven than the most exalted kings and nobles who are not rich toward God. The admonition which the apostle Paul exhorted Timothy to give the rich is applicable to very many who profess to believe the truth for these last days. He says: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

Those who hoard up means, or invest largely in lands, while they deprive their families of the comforts of life, act like insane men. They do not allow their families to enjoy the things God has richly given them. Notwithstanding they have large possessions, their families are frequently compelled to labor far beyond their strength to save still more means to hoard up. Brain, bone, and muscle are taxed to the utmost to accumulate. Religion and Christian duties are neglected. Work, work, work, is the ambition, from morning until night.

Many to whom God has intrusted wealth do not consider that they are working against their own eternal interests by selfishly retaining their money. The apostle shows them that by being rich in good works, they are working for themselves. They are providing in Heaven an enduring treasure, and laying hold on eternal life. In helping the cause and relieving the wants of the needy, they are faithfully doing the work that God has assigned them; and their self-denial and generous, loving acts will be written in the book of Heaven. Every deed of righteousness will be immortalized, although, the doer may not feel that he has done anything worthy of notice.

God has intrusted many with means to use in his cause, which they have employed for selfish purposes only; and when the Master comes to require an account of their stewardship, what report will they make? Have they made hearts glad by their liberalities? Have they given of their means to assist in the work of converting sinners? What fruit have they borne? If such could but stop one moment, and look back upon their past life, they would readily see how destitute it has been of good, noble, and

generous actions. Opportunities for doing good have been lost, that can never be regained, while selfishness has marred the entire life-work. Against all such, "unfaithfulness" is entered in the records above.

January 22, 1880

## **Bible Biographies**

The lives recorded in the Bible are authentic histories of actual individuals. From Adam down through successive generations to the time of the apostles, we have a plain, unvarnished account of what actually occurred, and the genuine experience of real characters. It is a subject of wonder to many, that inspired history should narrate facts in the lives of good men that tarnish their moral characters. Infidels seize upon these sins with great satisfaction, and hold their perpetrators up to ridicule. The inspired writers did not testify to falsehoods, through fear that the pages of Sacred History would be clouded by the record of human frailties and faults. The scribes of God wrote as they were dictated by the Holy Spirit, having no control of the work themselves. They penned the literal truth, and stern, forbidding facts are revealed, for reasons that our finite minds cannot fully comprehend. It is one of the best evidences of the authenticity of the Scriptures, that the truth is not glossed over, nor the sins of its chief characters suppressed.

Many will urge that it is an easy matter to relate what has occurred in an ordinary life. But it is a proven fact that it is a human impossibility to give an impartial history of a contemporary; and it is almost as difficult to narrate, without deviating from the exact truth, the story of any person or people with whose career we have become acquainted. The human mind is so liable to prejudice that it is almost impossible for it to treat the subject impartially. Either the faults of the person under review stand out in glaring relief, or the virtues shine with undimmed luster, just as the writer is prejudiced for or against him. However impartial the historian may design to be, all critics will agree that it is a very difficult matter to be truly so.

But Inspiration, lifted above the weaknesses of humanity, tells the simple, naked truth. How many biographies have been written of faultless Christians, who, in their ordinary home life and church relations, shone as examples of immaculate piety. No blemish marred the beauty of their holiness, no fault is recorded to remind us that they were of common clay, and subject to the ordinary temptations of humanity. Yet had the pen of Inspiration written their histories, how different would they have appeared. There would have been revealed human weaknesses, struggles with selfishness, bigotry and

pride, hidden sins perhaps, and the continual warfare between the spirit and the flesh. Even private journals do not reveal on their pages the writer's sinful deeds. Sometimes the conflicts with evil are recorded, but usually only when the right has gained the victory; but they may contain a faithful account of praiseworthy acts and noble endeavors, when the writer honestly intends to keep a faithful journal of his life. It is next to a human impossibility to lay open our faults for the possible inspection of our friends.

Had our good Bible been written by uninspired persons, it would have presented quite a different appearance, and would have been a discouraging study to erring mortals, contending with natural frailties and the temptations of a wily foe. But, as it is, we have a correct record of the religious experiences of marked characters in Bible history. Men whom God favored, and intrusted with great responsibilities, were sometimes overcome by temptation and committed sins, even as we of the present day strive, waver, and frequently fall into error. But it is encouraging to our desponding hearts to know that through God's grace they could gain fresh vigor to rise again above their evil natures, and, remembering this, we are ready to renew the conflict ourselves.

The record of the murmurings of ancient Israel and of their rebellious discontent, is given for our benefit, as well as that of the mighty miracles wrought in their favor and the punishment of their idolatry and ingratitude. Their example is given as a warning to the people of God, that they may avoid unbelief and escape his wrath. If the iniquities of the Hebrews had been omitted from the Sacred Record, and only their virtues recounted, their history would fail to teach us the lesson that it does.

Infidels and lovers of sin excuse their crimes by citing the wickedness of men to whom God gave authority in olden times. They argue that since these holy men yielded to temptation and committed sins, it should excite no wonder that they too are guilty of wrong-doing. More than this, they even intimate that they are not so bad, after all, since such illustrious examples of iniquity are placed before them. The principles of justice require a faithful narration of facts for the benefit of all who read the Sacred Record. In this we discern the evidences of divine wisdom. We are required to obey the law of God and are not only instructed as to the penalty of disobedience, but we have, narrated for our benefit and warning, the history of Adam and Eve in Paradise, and the sad results of their disobedience of God's commands. The account is full and explicit. The law given to man in Eden is recorded, together with the penalty incurred because of its

transgression. The record of our first parents is given as a warning to the children of men, that they may understand how strictly God requires his creatures to conform to all his requirements, and how surely his retributive justice follows disobedience. When the law of Sinai was proclaimed, how definite was the penalty annexed! how sure the punishment that followed its transgression! and how plain are the cases recorded in evidence of that fact!

The pen of Inspiration, true to its task, tells us of the sins that overcame Noah, Lot, Moses, Abraham, David, and Solomon, and how Elijah's strong spirit sunk under temptation during his fearful trial. Jonah's disobedience and Israel's idolatry are faithfully recorded. Peter's denial of Christ, the sharp contention of Paul and Barnabas, the failings and infirmities of the prophets and apostles, are all laid bare to the gaze of succeeding generations, that they may profit by the experience of those who preceded them. If no faults had marked their lives, they certainly would have been more than human, and we, with our sinful natures, would despair of ever reaching such a point of excellence. But, seeing where they struggled and fell, took heart again and conquered through the grace of God, we are encouraged to press on over the obstacles that degenerate nature places in our way.

God has ever been faithful to punish crime. He sent his prophets to warn the guilty, denounce their sins, and pronounce judgment upon them. Those who question why the word of God brings out the sins of his people in so plain a manner for scoffers to deride and saints to deplore, should consider that it was all written for their instruction, that they might avoid the evils recorded, but imitate the righteousness of those who served the Lord.

We need just such lessons as the Bible gives. The sorrow and penitence of the guilty and the wailings of the sin-sick soul, come to us from the past, telling that man was then, as now, in need of the pardoning mercy of God. The record shows us that while he is a punisher of crime, he pities and forgives the repenting sinner. In his good providence the Lord has seen fit to teach and warn his people in this way through the Sacred Writings, that all might understand his will. If God's people would recognize his dealings with them, and accept his teachings, they would find a straight path for their feet, and a light to guide them through darkness and discouragement. David learned wisdom from God's dealings with him, and bowed in humility beneath the chastisement of the Most High. The faithful portrayal of his true state by the prophet Nathan, made



David acquainted with his own sins and aided him to put them away. He accepted counsel meekly, and humbled himself before God. "The law of the Lord," he exclaims, "is perfect, converting the soul."

Repentant sinners have no cause to despair because they are reminded of their transgressions and warned of their danger. These very efforts in their behalf show how much God loves them and desires that they shall be saved. They have only to follow his counsel and do his will to inherit eternal life. God sets before his erring people their sins, that they may behold them, in all their enormity, under the light of divine truth. It is then their duty to renounce them forever.

God is as powerful to save from sin today as he was in the times of the patriarchs, of David, and of the prophets and apostles of Bible times. The multitude of cases recorded in Sacred History, where God has delivered his people from their iniquities, should make the Christian of this time eager to receive divine instruction, and zealous to perfect a character that will bear the close inspection of the Judgment.

Bible history stays the fainting heart with the hope of God's mercy. We need not despair when we see that others have struggled through discouragements like our own, fallen into temptations, even as we have done, yet recovered their ground and been blessed of God. The words of Inspiration comfort and cheer the erring soul. Although the patriarchs and apostles were subject to human frailties, yet through faith they obtained a good report, fought their battles in the strength of the Lord, and conquered gloriously. Thus may we trust in the virtue of the atoning sacrifice, and be overcomers in the name of Jesus.

February 5, 1880

## **Cultivation of the Voice**

Some of our most talented ministers are doing themselves great injury by their defective manner of speaking. They are intelligent men, and should know that they are not pursuing a course which God can approve. Ministers should stand erect, and speak slowly, firmly, and distinctly, letting the voice go down deep, taking a full inspiration of air at every sentence, and throwing out the words by exercising the abdominal muscles. The chest will thus become broader, and by educating the voice, the speaker need seldom become hoarse, even by constant speaking. Instead of our ministers' becoming consumptives through speaking, they may, by proper care, overcome all tendency to that disease.

Ministers should stop to consider whether they are performing their life-work in such a manner as to accomplish the best and greatest results, or whether they are cutting their lives short by spasmodic efforts, without regard to the laws of health. God is pleased with men who do not think that they have attained perfection, but who are constantly trying to improve. He would have us come into connection with him, and increase in understanding, and reform our habits, ever rising higher, and approaching nearer the standard of perfection.

The minister of Christ should continue to search the Scriptures. He will never know so much of Bible truth that he need not search for more. A true Bible Christian will not find anything in the word of God justifying him in disregarding the laws of life and health. The Saviour of the world would have his co-laborers represent him; and the more closely a man walks with God, the more faultless will be his manner of address, his deportment, his attitude, and his gestures. Coarse and uncouth manners were never seen in our Pattern, Christ Jesus. He was a representative of Heaven, and his followers must be like him. We are to make daily improvement; our ways and manners are to become more like the ways and manners of the holy angels. Every uncouth gesture and coarse and uncultivated expression, should be put far away. Every imperfection may be overcome if we learn of Jesus and closely follow his example.

The manner in which the truth is presented often has much to do in determining

whether it will be accepted or rejected. All who labor in the great cause of reform should study to become efficient workmen, that they may accomplish the greatest possible amount of good, and not detract from the force of the truth by their own deficiencies. All the vigor of a cultivated intellect and a well-developed body is called for to do justice to the work of God. Men of narrow minds, who feel no necessity of becoming efficient workmen, need to have this truth impressed upon them.

Ministers and teachers should discipline themselves to clear and distinct articulation, giving every word its full sound. Those who talk rapidly, from the throat, and who jumble their words together and raise their voices to an unnaturally high pitch, soon become hoarse, and the words spoken lose half the force which they would have if spoken slowly, distinctly, and not so loud. The sympathies of the hearers are awakened for the speaker, for they fear he is doing violence to himself, and they constantly expect him to break down. It is no evidence that a man is having a zeal for God because he works himself up into a frenzy of excitement and gesticulation. "Bodily exercise," says the apostle, "profiteth little."

Speakers and writers need much physical exercise, and abundance of pure air. The lungs need food as much as the body. The sleeping-rooms should be thoroughly ventilated, that the lungs may not be starved. This is very important to speakers, teachers, and students, and should not be neglected. Ministers should bring intelligent reason and common sense to bear upon these matters. If they will ponder upon them as they should, they will know what to do for themselves to preserve life. No minister can speak to the glory of God while he knowingly disregards the laws of life. Some do not realize the injury they are doing themselves until it is too late; then come sorrow, regret and repentance. But repentance cannot repair the broken-down lungs or the abused throat. Right habits adopted, even at the eleventh hour, will improve many cases, although persons must still suffer for the past transgressions of nature's laws.

Frequently a young man is sent out to labor with a more experienced minister; and if he is defective in his manner of speaking, the young man is very apt to copy his defects. Therefore, it is important that ministers who have been long in the field should reform, though it cost them much painstaking and the exercise of much patience, that their defects may not be reproduced in young and inexperienced laborers. The young preacher should copy only the admirable traits of character possessed by the more experienced laborer, while at the same time he should see and avoid his errors. When

some attempt to speak calmly, without excitement and excessive gesticulation, they become embarrassed, and feel a lack of freedom, because they are restraining themselves from following their old habits. But let all such feelings, which are mere excitement, go to the four winds. That freedom of feeling that would result in your committing suicide is not sanctified.

Some reason that the Lord will qualify a man by his Spirit to speak as he would have him; but the Lord does not propose to do the work which he has given man to do. He has given us reasoning powers, and opportunities to educate the mind and manners. And after we have done all we can for ourselves, making the best use of the advantages within our reach, then we may look to God with earnest prayer to do by his Spirit that which we cannot do for ourselves.

February 12, 1880

## **Dangers and Duties of Ministers**

Some ministers feel but little disposition to take the burden of the work of God upon them, and labor with that disinterested benevolence which characterized the mission and life of our divine Lord. Such men are a hindrance rather than a help to those churches which have had faith in the testimonies God has been pleased to give, and have acted upon them, while the preacher himself is far behind. He may profess to believe the testimony borne, and even go so far as to make an iron rule for those who have had little or no experience, and thereby do hurt. Such a course, to say the least, is very inconsistent.

The people of God generally feel a united interest in the spread of the truth. They cheerfully contribute toward a liberal support for those who labor in word and doctrine. This is no more than they should do; yet it is the duty of those who have the responsibility of distributing means, to see that the contributions of the church are not squandered. As these liberal brethren freely give a portion of their substance, which it has cost them so much hard labor to obtain, it is the duty of those who labor in word and doctrine to manifest a zeal and self-sacrifice at least equal to that shown by these brethren.

God's servants should go out free. They should know in whom they trust. There is power in Christ and his salvation to make them free men; and unless they are free in him, they cannot build up his church and gather in souls. Will God send a man out to rescue souls from the snare of Satan, when his own feet are entangled in the same net? God's servants must not waver. If their feet are sliding, how can they say to those of a fearful heart, "Be strong"? God would have his servants hold up the feeble hands, and strengthen the wavering. Those who are not prepared to do this would do better to first labor for themselves, and pray until they are indued with power from on high.

While the Author of our salvation was laboring and suffering for us, he denied himself, and his whole life was one continued scene of toil and privation. He could have passed his days on earth in ease and plenty, and appropriated to himself the pleasures of this life; but he considered not his own convenience. He lived to do others good. He

suffered to save others from suffering. He finished the work which was given him to do. And now, can it be that we, the unworthy objects of so great love, will seek a better position in this life than was given to our Lord? Every moment of our lives we have been partakers of the blessings of his great love, and for this very reason we cannot fully realize the depths of ignorance and misery from which we have been saved. Can we look upon Him whom our sins have pierced, and not be willing to drink with him the bitter cup of humiliation and sorrow? Can we look upon Christ crucified, and wish to enter his kingdom in any other way than through much tribulation?

Let the history of the Waldenses testify what they suffered for their religion. Though persecuted and driven from their homes, they conscientiously studied the word of God, and lived up to the light which shone upon them. When their possessions were taken from them, and their houses burned, they fled to the mountains, and there endured hunger, fatigue, cold, and nakedness. And yet the scattered and homeless ones would assemble to unite their voices in singing and praising God, that they were accounted worthy to suffer for Christ's name. They encouraged and cheered one another, and were grateful for even their miserable retreat. Many of their children sickened and died through exposure to cold, and the sufferings of hunger; yet the parents did not for a moment think of yielding their faith. They prized the love and favor of God far more than earthly ease or worldly riches. They received consolation from God, and with pleasing anticipations looked forward to the recompense of reward.

Look at the case of Martin Luther. His mind was starving for something sure upon which to build his hope that God would be his Father and Heaven his home. The new and precious light which dawned upon him was of such priceless value, that he thought if he went forth with it he could convince the world. He stood up against the ire of a fallen church, and strengthened those who with him were feasting upon the rich truths contained in the word of God. Luther was God's chosen instrument to tear off the garb of hypocrisy from the papal church, and expose her corruption. He raised his voice zealously, and in the power of the Holy Spirit rebuked the existing sins of the leaders of the people. And although proclamations went forth to kill him wherever he might be found, and he seemed left to the fury of a cruel and superstitious people who were obedient to the head of the Roman church, yet he counted not his life dear unto himself. Luther knew that he was not safe anywhere, yet he trembled not. The light of truth in which he rejoiced was life to him, and consequently of more value than all the treasures of earth. Earthly treasures he knew would fail, but the rich truths that opened his

understanding, and operated upon his heart, would live, and, if obeyed, would lead him to immortality.

When summoned to Augsburg to answer for his faith, he obeyed the summons. Firm and undaunted, he stood before those who had caused the world to tremble--a meek lamb surrounded by angry lions; yet for the sake of Christ and his truth, he unflinchingly and with holy eloquence, which the truth alone can inspire, gave the reasons of his faith. Various inducements were offered to allure him from his position, but life and honors were valueless to him if purchased at the sacrifice of truth. Brighter and clearer shone the word of God upon his understanding, giving him a more vivid sense of the errors, corruptions, and hypocrisy of the papacy. His enemies then sought to intimidate him and cause him to renounce his faith, but he boldly stood in defense of the truth. He was ready to die for his faith, if God required, but to yield it never. The angels of Heaven brought him through the stormy conflict unharmed, and baffled the rage and purposes of his enemies.

The calm, dignified power of Luther humbled his enemies, and dealt a most dreadful blow to the papacy. The great and proud men in power meant that his blood should atone for the mischief he had done to their cause. Their plans were laid; but a mightier than they had charge of the great Reformer. His work was not finished. Foiled in their designs upon Luther at Augsburg, they summoned him to Worms, fully determined to make him answer for his folly. His feeble health did not deter him from responding to the call, though he knew full well the danger that threatened him there. The minions of the papacy were crying for his blood as eagerly as the Jews clamored for the blood of Christ, yet he trusted in that God who preserved the three worthies in the burning, fiery furnace. The intrepid man of God sought not his own ease or preferment, but felt that he would rather die than see the precious truth exposed to the insult of its bitter enemies.

The great men of earth, in all their pomp and splendor, are not attended by a larger company than crowded the streets of Worms as Luther entered the city. From the midst of that surging throng which pressed around and followed him, was heard the shrill and plaintive voice of one chanting a funeral dirge to warn the Reformer of his impending danger. Intense excitement prevailed, and for a time Luther's faith and courage were severely tested; but as his agonizing prayer went up to God, the clouds that seemed to envelop him in darkness were lifted, and light from Heaven beamed in

upon him. That prayer was heard, and Luther received strength to deliver the message that God designed those mighty men of earth should hear.

The meek bearing of this messenger of the Lord was in striking contrast with the passion and rage exhibited by the so-called great men composing that vast assembly. But they could not frighten him into a recantation of the truth. The opposition of his enemies, their rage and threats, like the mighty wave, surged against him; yet in noble simplicity and calm firmness he stood like a rock. They were chagrined to have their power, which had caused kings and nobles to tremble, thus despised by a humble man, and longed to make him feel its force by torturing his life away; but One who is mightier than the potentates of earth had charge of this fearless witness. God had a work for him to do. He was yet to see the cause of truth wade through bloody persecutions, and to suffer in its behalf. He must live to justify it and be its defender, when the mighty ones of earth should seek to destroy it. He must live to see it tear away the errors and superstitions of the papacy. Luther gained a victory at Worms which awakened the man of sin, and struck an effectual blow for the Reformation throughout the world.

The last merciful message is intrusted to God's humble, faithful servants of this time. Those who have not shunned responsibility, have, by the help of God, been enabled to lay systematic plans by which all can work if they will. With everything furnished to his hand, it is displeasing to God for any minister to now refuse to throw his whole energy into this all-important work. Some, however, think they are sacrificing much, and having a hard time, when they really know nothing about suffering, self-denial, or want. They may often be weary, so would they be if they were dependent on manual labor for a support. Some have felt that it would be easier to labor with their hands, and have often expressed a desire to do so, thinking they would be more free from anxiety, and could better labor at home for their families. But in this they are deceived; for should they engage in manual labor, they would not be free from anxiety and weariness. And while laboring to support their families, they could not be sitting down at their firesides. God marks every thought, and word, and feeling; and Heaven is insulted by any such exhibition of weakness and lack of devotion to the cause of God. In the early stages of this work, there were but few friends of the cause. These servants of God wept and prayed for a clear understanding of the truth. They suffered privations and much self-denial, in order to spread a knowledge of it; and although as the result of much labor but few received the precious message, yet step by step they followed as God's opening providence led the way. They did not study their own convenience or



shrink at hardships. God, through these men, prepared the way, and the truth has been made very plain; yet some who have since embraced the truth have failed to take upon themselves the burden of the work.

In every age men have arisen who have thought it noble to doubt the word of God. Those who think it a virtue to quibble can have plenty of room to disbelieve the inspiration and truth of God's word now. God does not compel any to believe. They can choose to rely upon the evidences he has been pleased to give, or doubt, and cavil, and perish; but those who are troubled with doubts and difficulties which they cannot solve, should not throw other weak minds into the same perplexity. In the past, some have hinted or talked their unbelief, and have passed on, little dreaming of the effect produced. The seeds of unbelief, in some instances, have taken immediate root, while in others they have lain buried quite a length of time, until the individual in whose heart the seed was sown has taken a wrong course and given place to the enemy, and the light of God has been withdrawn from him; then the seeds of infidelity which were sown so long ago have sprung up and borne fruit. Ministers as well as people have a warfare before them in resisting the devil. The individual who represents God's truth is in a sad plight when found serving the purposes of Satan by listening to his whisperings, and letting him captivate the mind and guide the thoughts. It is, furthermore, a grievous sin in the sight of God for one to talk out his unbelief, and draw other minds into the same dark channel, thus suffering Satan to carry out a twofold purpose in tempting him.

By such a course the work of death is carried on at a fearful rate. It is time that the watchmen upon the walls of Zion should understand the responsibility and sacredness of their mission. They should feel that a woe is upon them if they do not perform the work God has committed to them. If they become unfaithful, they are endangering the safety of the flock of God, endangering the cause of truth, and exposing it to the ridicule of our enemies. Oh, what a work is this! It will surely meet its reward. God is not dependent upon any man for the advancement of his cause. He is raising up and qualifying men to bear the message of truth to the world, in whose weakness his strength can be made perfect. Ready speech, eloquence, and great talents, will not convert a single soul; but the converting power is of God. Pulpit efforts may stir up minds, and the plain argument may be convincing; but a little imprudence upon the part of the minister out of the pulpit, a lack of gravity of speech and true godliness, will counteract his influence every time, and do away the good impressions made by him. The converts will be his. In many instances they will seek to rise no higher than their

preacher. There will be in them no thorough heart-work.

The success of a minister depends very much upon his deportment out of the desk. When he leaves the desk, his work is not finished. He should follow up his public labors by private efforts, laboring personally for souls at every opportunity, conversing around the fireside, beseeching and entreating them to seek those things which secure their peace. He should never move heedlessly, but set a watch over himself, lest something that he may do or say may be taken advantage of by the enemy, and a reproach be brought upon the cause of Christ.

February 19, 1880

## **Unity of the Church**

As all the different members of the human system unite to form the body, and each performs its office in obedience to the intelligence that governs the whole, so the members of the church of Christ should be united in one symmetrical body, subject to the sanctified intelligence of the whole. The advancement of the church is often retarded by the wrong course of its members. Uniting with the church, although an important and necessary step, does not make one a Christian or insure salvation. We cannot secure a title to Heaven by having our names enrolled upon the church book, while our hearts are not in unison with Christ and his people. We should be his faithful representatives on earth, working in harmony with him. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." We should keep in mind this holy relationship, and do nothing to bring dishonor upon our Father's cause.

Our profession is an exalted one. As Christians, we profess to obey all of God's commandments, and to look for the coming of our Redeemer. A most solemn message of warning has been intrusted to God's faithful few. We should show by our words and works that we recognize the great responsibility laid upon us. Our light should shine so clearly that others can see that we glorify the Father in our daily lives; that we are connected with Heaven and are joint heirs with Jesus Christ; that when he shall appear in power and great glory, we may be like him.

We should feel our individual responsibility as members of the visible church and workers in the vineyard of the Lord. We should not wait for our brethren, who are frail as ourselves, to help us along; for our precious Saviour has invited us to join ourselves to him, and unite our weakness with his strength, our ignorance to his wisdom, our unworthiness to his merits. None of us can occupy a neutral position. We are active agents for Christ or for the enemy. We either gather with Jesus or scatter abroad. True conversion is a radical change. The very drift of the mind and bent of the heart should be turned, and the life should become new in Christ.

God is leading out a people to stand in perfect unity upon the platform of eternal truth. Christ gave himself to the world "that he might purify unto himself a peculiar

people, zealous of good works." This refining process is designed to purge the church from the spirit of discord and contention and from all unrighteousness, that they may build up instead of tearing down, and may concentrate their energies on the great work before them. God designs that his people should all be joined together in unity of faith. The prayer of Christ just before his crucifixion was, that his disciples might be one, even as he was one with the Father, that the world might believe that the Father had sent him. This most touching and wonderful prayer reaches down the ages, even to our day; for his words were, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." How earnestly should the professed followers of Christ seek to answer this prayer in their lives. Many do not realize the sacredness of the church relation, and are loth to submit to restraint and discipline. Their course of action shows that they exalt their own judgment above that of the united church; and they are not careful to guard themselves lest they encourage a spirit of opposition to its voice.

Those who hold responsible positions in the church may have their faults in common with other people, and may err in their decisions; but, notwithstanding this, the church of Christ on earth has given them an authority that cannot be lightly esteemed. Christ, after his resurrection, delegated power to his church, saying, "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." A relation to the church is not to be easily canceled; yet some professed followers of Christ will threaten to leave the church when their path is crossed, or their voice has not the controlling influence which they think it deserves. But in doing this they would themselves be the greatest sufferers; for in withdrawing beyond the pale of the church's influence, they subject themselves to the full temptations of the world.

Every believer should be whole-hearted in his attachment to the church. Its prosperity should be his first interest, and unless he feels under sacred obligations to make his connection with the church a benefit to it rather than to himself, it can do far better without him. It is in the power of all to do something for the cause of God. Some spend a large amount for needless luxuries and to gratify their appetites, but feel it a great tax to contribute means to sustain the church. They are willing to receive all the benefits of its privileges, but prefer to leave others to pay the bills. Those who really feel a deep interest in the advancement of the cause, will not hesitate to invest money in the work whenever and wherever it is needed. They should also feel it a solemn duty to illustrate in their characters the teachings of Christ, being at peace one with another and moving in perfect harmony as an undivided whole. They should waive their individual

opinion to the judgment of the church. Many live for themselves alone. They look upon their lives with great complacency, flattering themselves that they are blameless, when in fact they are doing nothing for God, and are living in direct opposition to his expressed word. The observance of external forms will never meet the great want of the human soul. A mere profession of Christ is not enough to prepare one to stand the test of the Judgment. There should be a perfect trust in God, a childlike dependence upon his promises, and an utter consecration of self to his will.

God has ever tried his people in the furnace of affliction, in order to prove them firm and true, and purge them from all unrighteousness. After Abraham had borne the severest test that could be imposed upon him, God spoke to him by his angel as follows: "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." This great act of faith causes the character of Abraham to shine forth with remarkable luster. It forcibly illustrates his perfect confidence in the Lord, from whom he withheld nothing, not even his son of promise.

There is nothing too precious for us to give to Jesus. If we return to him the talents of means he has intrusted to our keeping, he will give more into our hands. Every effort we make for Christ will be rewarded by him; and every duty we perform in his name will minister to our own happiness. God surrendered his dearly beloved Son to the agonies of the crucifixion, that all who believe on him should become one through the name of Jesus. When Christ made so great a sacrifice to save men and bring them into unity one with another, even as he was united with the Father, what sacrifice is too great for his followers to make, in order to preserve that unity?

If the world sees a perfect harmony existing in the church of God, it will be a powerful evidence to them in favor of the Christian religion. Dissensions, unhappy differences, and petty church-trials dishonor our Redeemer. All these may be avoided, if self is surrendered to God, and the followers of Jesus obey the voice of the church. Unbelief suggests that individual independence increases our importance, that it is weak to yield to the verdict of the church our own ideas of what is right and proper. But to cherish such feelings and views will only bring anarchy into the church and confusion to ourselves. Christ saw that unity and Christian fellowship were necessary to the cause of God, therefore he enjoins it upon his disciples. And the history of Christianity from that time until now proves conclusively that in union only there is strength. Let individual judgment submit to the authority of the church.

The apostles felt the necessity of strict unity, and they labored earnestly to this end. Paul exhorted his brethren in these words: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

He also writes to his Philippian brethren: "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

To the Romans he writes, "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus, that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us, to the glory of God." "Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits."

Peter wrote to the churches scattered abroad: "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another; love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous; not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise, blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing."

And Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians says: "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you."

February 26, 1880

### **God's Bow in the Cloud**

Some time ago, we were favored with a view of the most glorious rainbow we ever beheld. We have often visited galleries of art, and have admired the skill displayed by the artist in paintings representing God's great bow of promise. But here we saw the varied tints,--crimson, purple, blue, green, silver, and golden, all perfectly blended by the great Master Artist. We were entranced as we looked upon this glorious picture in the heavens.

As we look upon this bow, the seal and sign of God's promise to man, that the tempest of his wrath should no more desolate our world by the waters of a flood, we contemplate that other than finite eyes are looking upon this glorious sight. Angels rejoice as they gaze upon this precious token of God's love to man. The world's Redeemer looks upon it; for it was through his instrumentality that this bow was made to appear in the heavens, as a token or covenant of promise to man. God himself looks upon the bow in the clouds, and remembers his everlasting covenant between himself and man.

After the fearful exhibition of God's avenging power, in the destruction of the Old World by a flood, had passed, he knew that those who had been saved from the general ruin would have their fears awakened whenever the clouds should gather, the thunders roll, and the lightnings flash; and that the sound of the tempest and the pouring out of the waters from the heavens would strike terror to their hearts, for fear that another flood was coming upon them. But behold the love of God in the promise: "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud. And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature, of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh."

The family of Noah looked with admiration and reverential awe mingled with joy upon this sign of God's mercy, which spanned the heavens. The bow represents Christ's love which encircles the earth, and reaches unto the highest heavens, connecting men

with God, and linking earth with Heaven.

As we gaze upon the beautiful sight, we may be joyful in God, assured that he himself is looking upon this token of his covenant, and that as he looks upon it he remembers the children of earth, to whom it was given. Their afflictions, perils, and trials are not hidden from him. We may rejoice in hope, for the bow of God's covenant is over us. He never will forget the children of his care. How difficult for the mind of finite man to take in the peculiar love and tenderness of God, and his matchless condescension when he said, "I will look upon the bow in the cloud, and remember thee."

Oh! how easy for us to forget God, while he never forgets us; he visits us with his mercies every hour. We would feel that it was a calamity indeed to be forgotten of God. But our Redeemer says, "I will not forget thee. I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands." Graven his children with the deep prints of the nails driven through those dear hands which he presents to the Father. He says, I will that those who accept my merits be with me where I am, that they may enjoy the mansions which I have prepared for them at an infinite cost; and angelic songs ring through Heaven, Worthy, worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath all power and might and dominion and glory.



March 4, 1880

### **Deceitfulness of Riches**

Many who profess the special truths for our time, have not a proper discernment of character. They fail to appreciate moral worth. They may boast much of their fidelity to the cause of God, and their knowledge of the Scriptures; but they are not humble in heart. They have a special regard for those who are wealthy and prosperous, forgetting that riches do not give man favor with God. True excellence of character is frequently overlooked, if possessed by the poor man. Money sways a mighty influence. But does God care for money--for property? The cattle upon a thousand hills are his,--the world and all that is therein. The inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers before him; and the nations, with all their riches, "are counted as the small dust of the balance." He is no respecter of persons. Yet men of property have often looked upon their possessions and said, By my wisdom have I gotten me this wealth. But who gave them power to get wealth? God has bestowed upon them the ability which they possess; and instead of giving him the glory, they take it to themselves. He will prove them and try them, and will bring their glorying to the dust; he will remove their strength and scatter their possessions. Instead of a blessing, they will realize a curse.

An act of wrong, or of oppression, any deviation from the right way, should be as promptly condemned in the rich as in the poor. All the riches that the most wealthy ever possessed will not be of sufficient value to cover the smallest sin before God. Repentance, true humility, a broken heart and a contrite spirit, alone will be accepted of him.

Many rich men have obtained their wealth by close dealing with their fellow-men, by overreaching in trade, to advantage themselves at the loss of others; and then they glory in their shrewdness, and keenness in a bargain. But the curse of God will rest upon every dollar thus obtained, and upon the increase of it on their hands.

How forcible are the words of our Saviour, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Those who possess the ability to acquire property, unless constantly on the watch, will be led by their acquisitiveness to sacrifice the generous, benevolent, noble principles of their

manhood for sordid gain.

Many have been corrupted by the spirit and influence of the world. Their characters are becoming more and more unlike the divine model. They are being transformed to become instruments of unrighteousness. In striking contrast with this class are those industrious, honest, poor men, who ever stand ready to help the needy; who would rather suffer themselves to be defrauded by their wealthy brethren than to manifest so close and acquisitive a spirit as they manifest; who esteem a clear conscience, and integrity, even in little things, of greater value than riches. They are so ready to help others, so willing to do all the good in their power, that they do not accumulate; their earthly possessions do not increase. If there is a benevolent object to call forth means or labor, they are the first to be interested in it and to respond to it, and will frequently go far beyond their real ability, denying themselves some needed good, to carry out their benevolent purposes.

Because such persons can boast of but little earthly treasure, they are often looked upon as deficient in ability and judgment, and are lightly esteemed even by their brethren. But how does God regard these poor, wise men? In his sight they are precious; and although not increasing their treasure upon earth, they are laying up for themselves a treasure in the heavens which is incorruptible. In so doing they manifest a wisdom as far superior to that of the wise, calculating, acquisitive, professed Christian, as the divine and godlike is superior to the earthly, carnal, and satanic. It is moral worth that God values. A Christian character untarnished with avarice, possessing quietness, meekness, and humility, is more precious in the sight of God than the most fine gold, even the golden wedge of Ophir.

Wealthy men are to be tested more closely than they ever yet have been. If they overcome their defects of character, and as faithful stewards of Jesus Christ render to God the things that are God's, to them it will be said, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

The parable of the unjust steward is to the point. "And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations. He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much. If

therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?"

God has committed to his stewards means to be used in doing good, and thus securing a treasure in Heaven. But if, like the man who had one talent, they hide their means, fearing that God will receive that which belongs to him, they will not only lose the increase which will finally be awarded the faithful steward, but also the principal which God gave them to work upon. They have not only neglected to lay up treasure in Heaven, but have also lost their earthly treasure. They have no habitation on earth, and no friend in Heaven to receive them into the everlasting habitation of the righteous.

Christ declares that "no servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon,"--cannot serve God and earthly riches too. "The Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things, and they derided him." Mark the words of Christ to them: "Ye are they who justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men [riches acquired by oppression, by deception, by overreaching, by fraud, or in any dishonest manner], is abomination in the sight of God." Then Christ presents the two characters, the rich man who was clothed with purple and fine linen, and who fared sumptuously every day, and Lazarus, who was in abject poverty, and loathsome to the sight, and who begged the few crumbs which the rich man despised. Our Saviour shows his estimate of the two. Lazarus, although in so deplorable a condition, had true faith, true moral worth, which God sees, and which he considers of so great value that he takes this poor, despised sufferer, and places him in the most exalted position, while the honored and wealthy ease-loving rich man is thrust out from the presence of God, and is plunged into misery and woe unutterable. In the sight of God this wealthy man was of no value, because he had not true moral worth. His riches did not recommend him to God.

By this parable Christ would teach his disciples to shun the course pursued by the Pharisees, who judged or valued men by their wealth, or by the worldly honors they received. He showed that some who possessed both riches and worldly honor were of no esteem in the sight of God; more than this, they were despised and rejected,--cast out from his sight as disgusting to him, because there was no moral worth or soundness in them. They were corrupt, sinful, and abominable before him.

In Paul's charge to Timothy he warns him of a class who will not consent to wholesome words, but who place a wrong estimate on riches. He says: "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness; from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses." "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

The great apostle, in his letter to Timothy, would impress upon his mind the necessity of giving such instruction as should remove the deception which so easily steals upon the rich, that because of their ability to acquire wealth, they are superior in wisdom and judgment to those who are in poverty; that gain is godliness. They flatter themselves that because of their wealth they are especially favored of God. Here is the fearful deception.

Individuals may devote their whole lives to the one object of acquiring riches, yet as they brought nothing into the world, they can carry nothing out. They must die and leave that which cost them so much labor to obtain. They stake their eternal interest, to obtain a little of this world, and lose both worlds. But some are determined to be rich; it is their constant study; and in their zeal, eternal considerations are overlooked. In the pursuit of wealth, they are blinded by Satan, and made to believe that their motives are good. Thus many have "erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many

sorrows." They have sacrificed noble, elevated principles, given up their faith for riches; and if not disappointed in their object, they are disappointed in the happiness they supposed wealth would bring. They are burdened with care and perplexity; they are slaves to avarice themselves, their families are compelled to the same bondage, with only the advantage of reaping "many sorrows."

The apostle shows the only true use for riches, and bids Timothy charge the rich to do good, to be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; for in so doing they are laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come,--referring to the close of time,--that they may lay hold on eternal life. The teachings of Paul harmonize perfectly with the words of Christ, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations." Godliness with contentment is great gain. Here is the true secret of happiness, and real prosperity of soul and body.

March 11, 1880

## **Dangers of the Young**

Says the beloved apostle: "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

This exhortation includes the young of both sexes. Their youth does not excuse them from responsibilities. They are not oppressed with cares or the weight of years, and should be strong to labor in every good word and work. Their affections are ardent, and if withdrawn from the world, and placed upon Christ and Heaven, a well-founded hope may be cherished of being finally crowned with glory, honor, immortality, eternal life. But if, on the other hand, they live to gratify the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, they please their great adversary, and are separating themselves from the Father. Then when these earthly things pass away, their hopes will be blasted and their expectations will perish. Separated from God, they will bitterly repent the folly of serving their own pleasure, of gratifying their own desires, and of selling an eternity of happiness for a little imaginary good.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world," says the inspired writer. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." It is an alarming fact that the love of the world predominates in the minds of the young; and for this very reason the love of God finds no room in their hearts. Their pleasures are found in the world, with the things of the world, and they are strangers to the Father and the graces of his Spirit. Frivolity and fashion, vain talking and laughing, characterize the life of the youth generally, by which God is dishonored. Paul in writing to Titus exhorts the youth to sobriety. "Young men, likewise, exhort to be sober-minded. In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you."

I entreat the youth, for their souls' sake, to heed the exhortation of the inspired apostle. All these gracious instructions, warnings, and reproofs, will be either a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. Many of the young are reckless in their conversation. They forget that by their words they shall be justified or condemned. Take heed to the words of our Saviour: "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of Judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." How little regard is paid even to the instructions of the Heavenly Teacher. By many of the young, the word of God is either neglected altogether, or if studied at all, its solemn admonitions are unheeded, and these plain truths will rise up in the Judgment and condemn them.

Words and acts testify plainly what is in the heart. If vanity, pride, love of self, and love of dress fill the mind, the conversation will be upon the fashions, the dress, and the appearance, instead of on Christ and the kingdom of Heaven. If envious feelings dwell in the heart, the same will be manifested in words and acts. Those who excuse their own wrongs because of the faults of others, are feeding on husks, and will remain spiritual dwarfs as long as they gratify Satan by thus indulging their own unconsecrated feelings.

Some dwell upon what they shall eat and drink, and with what they shall be clothed. Their hearts are filled with these thoughts, and they forget the words of Christ, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Many of the youth have their hearts filled with love of self, which is manifested in the desire to see their faces portrayed by the artist; and they will not be satisfied with being once represented, but will sit again and again for their picture, hoping to appear more beautiful than they really are. Their Lord's money is squandered in this way, and what is gained? Merely their poor shadow upon paper. Hours that should be spent in prayer are devoted to their own poor selves,--precious hours of probation are thus wasted. The adversary of souls is gratified to have the attention of youth diverted from the right object, so that he may steal a march upon them, and ensnare them in his devices. They are not aware that the great Heavenly Artist is taking cognizance of every

act, every word; and that even the thoughts and intents of the heart are faithfully recorded. Oh that the young might realize that every defect in the moral character is not only revealed to the gaze of the pure and sinless angels, but that they themselves will have the faithful picture presented to them in all its deformity at the execution of the Judgment. Those vain, frivolous words are all written in the book. Those selfish acts, the motives of which may be concealed from human eyes, are discerned by the all-seeing eye of Jehovah, and are written in living characters.

Young persons generally conduct themselves as though the precious hours of probation were one grand holiday, and they were placed in this world merely for their own amusement, to be gratified with a continued round of excitement. Satan makes special efforts to lead the youth to find happiness in worldly amusements, and to justify themselves in thus doing, by endeavoring to show that these amusements are harmless, innocent, and even essential to health. He represents the path of holiness as difficult, and that of worldly pleasures as strewn with flowers. The impression has been given by some physicians that spirituality and devotion to God are detrimental to health. This suits the adversary well.

Those whose moral faculties are beclouded by disease are not the ones to rightly represent the Christian life, or the beauties of holiness. They are too often in the fires of fanaticism, or the waters of cold indifference or stolid gloom. Some are scourging themselves all through life because of their sins; all they can see is an offended God of justice. Christ and his redeeming power, through the merits of his blood, they fail to see. Such have not faith. Through disease transmitted to them from their parents, and an erroneous education in youth, they have imbibed wrong habits, injuring the constitution, affecting the brain, causing the moral organs to become diseased, and making it impossible for them to think and act rationally upon all points. Such have not well-balanced minds.

Godliness is health to the body and strength to the soul. Says Peter: "He that will love life, and see good days, ... let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.... But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye; and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled."

The consciousness of right-doing is the best medicine for diseased bodies and



minds. The special blessing of God is health and strength to the receiver. A person whose mind is quiet and satisfied in God is in the pathway to health. To have a consciousness that the eyes of the Lord are upon us, and his ears open to hear our prayers, is a satisfaction indeed. To know that we have a never-failing Friend in whom we can confide all the secrets of the soul, is a privilege which words can never express. The words of Christ are of more worth than the opinions of all the physicians in the universe. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." This is the first great object,--the kingdom of Heaven, the righteousness of Christ. The attainment of all other objects should be secondary to this.

The young may urge that they need something to enliven and divert the mind. But there is pleasure in industry, a satisfaction in pursuing a life of usefulness. Some may still urge that they must have something to interest the mind, when business ceases,--some mental occupation or amusement to which the mind can turn for relief and refreshment from labor. The Christian's hope is just what is needed. Religion will prove to the believer a comforter and a sure guide to the fountain of true happiness. The young should study the word of God, and give themselves to meditation and prayer, and they will find that their spare moments cannot be better employed. Young friends, you should take time to prove your own selves, whether you are in the love of God. Be diligent to make your calling and election sure. All depends upon your course of action, whether or not you secure to yourselves the better life.

Wisdom's "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." The future abode of the righteous, and their everlasting reward, is a high and ennobling theme for the young to contemplate. Let the mind dwell upon the marvelous plan of salvation, the great sacrifice made by the King of glory, that we might be elevated through the merits of his blood, and finally, by obedience, be exalted to the throne of Christ. This subject should engage the noblest powers of the mind. To be brought into favor with God,--what a privilege! To commune with him,--what can more elevate, refine, and exalt us above the frivolous pleasures of earth? To have our corrupt natures renovated by grace, our lustful appetites and animal propensities in subjection, and to stand forth with noble moral independence, achieving victories every day, will give peace of conscience which can alone arise from right doing.

With such employment and diversion as this, the youth may be happy. But the reason why some are restless is, that they do not go to the only true source for

happiness. They are ever trying to find out of Christ that enjoyment which is found alone in him. In him are no disappointed hopes. Oh how is the precious privilege of prayer neglected! The reading of the word of God prepares the mind for prayer. One of the greatest reasons why many have so little disposition to draw near to God by prayer is, that they have unfitted themselves for this sacred work by reading fascinating stories, which have excited the imagination and aroused unholy passions. The word of God becomes distasteful; the hour of prayer is not thought of. Prayer is the strength of the Christian. When alone, he is not alone; he feels the presence of One who has said, "Lo, I am with you always."

The young want just what they have not, namely, Religion. Nothing can take the place of it. Profession alone is nothing. Names may be registered in the church-books upon earth, and yet not be recorded in the book of life above. The life of Christ is an example of good works. He wept over Jerusalem, because its inhabitants would not be saved by accepting the redemption he offered them. They would not come to him, and have life. Let the young compare their pleasure-seeking life with that of the Master, who made so great a sacrifice to save them.

See that company gathered. Listen to the frivolous, light, and vain conversation; hear the laugh, the jesting, the joking. Is this imitating the Pattern? Still listen,--is Jesus mentioned? Is the truth the theme of conversation? Are they glorying in the cross of Christ? No; they are talking of this fashion, that bonnet, that dress, what that young man or that young lady said, or of the amusements they are planning. Hear that song; it is a frivolous ditty, fit only for the dance hall. The pure angels, with sadness on their countenances, move from the scene, and darkness envelops those thoughtless ones. Music, when turned to a good account, is a blessing. When abused, it leads the unconsecrated to pride, vanity, and folly, and becomes one of Satan's most attractive agencies to ensnare souls. When music is allowed to take the place of devotion and prayer, it is a terrible curse.

Paul says: "I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."

Peter says: "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

The inspired Paul calls on Titus to give special instructions to the church of Christ, "that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." He says, "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

Peter thus exhorts the churches: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." "But the end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer."

Again he says: "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear: having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing."

Are the youth prepared to give an answer to every man that asks a reason of their hope, with meekness and fear? Terrible scenes are just before them,--a time of trouble which will test the value of character. Those who have the truth abiding in them will then be developed. Those who have shunned the cross, neglected the word of life, and paid adoration to their own poor selves, will be found wanting. They are ensnared by Satan, and will learn when it is too late that they have made a terrible mistake. The pleasures they have sought after will prove bitter in the end. Then sacrifice all for God. Self must die. The natural desires and propensities of the unrenewed heart must be subdued. Flee to the neglected Bible. The words of inspiration are spoken to you; pass them not lightly by; for you will meet every word again, to render an account whether you have been a doer of the work, shaping your life according to the holy teachings of

God's word. Holiness of heart and life is necessary. Every one who has taken the name of Christ, and has enlisted in his service, should be a good soldier of the cross. He should show by his daily walk that he is dead to the world, and that his life is hid with Christ in God.

Paul writes to his Colossian brethren as follows: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." "And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

To the Ephesians he writes: "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

But few of the youth understand what it is to be Christians, to be Christ-like. A prayerful study of the word of God is necessary if they would conform their lives to the perfect Pattern. Few experience that separation from the world which God requires of them in order to become members of his family, children of the heavenly King. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

What a promise is here made upon condition of obedience. Is it necessary to sever your connection with friends and relatives in deciding to obey the elevated truths of God's word? Take courage; God has made provision for you, his arms are opened to receive you. He promises to be a Father unto you. Oh, what a relationship is this! higher and holier than any earthly tie. If you make the sacrifice, even forsaking father, mother,

sisters, or brothers, for Christ's sake, you will not be friendless. God will adopt you into his family; you will become members of the royal household, sons and daughters of the Heavenly King who rules in the Heaven of heavens. Can you desire a more exalted position than is here promised? Is it not enough? What could God do for the children of men more than he has already done? If such love, such exalted promises, are not appreciated, could God devise anything higher, anything richer and more lofty? All has been done for the salvation of man that God could do, and yet the hearts of the children of men have become hardened. Because of the multiplicity of the blessings with which God has surrounded them, they are received as common things and the gracious Benefactor is forgotten.

Young men and women, God has a work for you to do. If you neglect to take up your cross and follow Christ, you are unworthy of him. While you remain in listless indifference, how can you know what is the will of God concerning you? and how do you expect to be saved, unless as faithful servants you do your Lord's will? Those who possess eternal life will all have done well. The king of glory will exalt them to his right hand, while he says to them, "Well done, good and faithful servants."

March 18, 1880

## **The Sin of Indifference**

To secure the indulgence of appetite, Esau sacrificed his birthright. Afterward he saw his folly; but "when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

Esau represents a class who have a blessing of priceless value within their reach,--the immortal inheritance; life that is as enduring as the life of God, the Creator of the universe; happiness immeasurable, and an eternal weight of glory. Yet there are very many who have indulged appetite, passion, and inclination, so long that their power to discern and appreciate the value of eternal things is weakened. Esau had a strong desire for a particular article of food, and he had so long gratified self that he did not feel the necessity of turning from the tempting coveted dish.

He made no special effort to restrain his appetite, until that power bore down every other consideration, and controlled him, and he imagined he would suffer great inconvenience, and even death, if he could not have that particular dish. The more he thought upon it the more his desire strengthened, until his birthright, which was sacred, lost its value and its sacredness. He thought, Well, if I now sell it, I can easily buy it back again. He flattered himself that he could dispose of it at will, and buy it back at pleasure. When he sought to purchase it back, even at a great sacrifice on his part, he was not able to do so. He then bitterly repented his rashness, his folly, his madness. He looked the matter over on every side. He sought for repentance carefully and with tears. It was all in vain. He had despised the blessing, and the Lord removed it from him forever.

Some have thought that they could sacrifice the truth for a time to their worldly interests, without becoming entirely reckless, so that if they should be disappointed in their hopes and expectations of worldly gain, they could again interest themselves in the truth and become candidates for everlasting life. But in this they only deceive themselves. Under the parable of a great supper, our Saviour shows that many will choose the world above himself, and will as the result lose Heaven. The gracious invitation of our Saviour is slighted. The man in the parable had been to the trouble and

expense of making a great preparation at an immense sacrifice, and then invited the guests to his feast. But they with one consent began to make excuse. One said, "I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come."

The Lord turns from the wealthy and world-loving, whose lands and oxen and wives were of so great value in their estimation as to outweigh the advantages they would gain by accepting the gracious invitation he had given them to eat of his supper. The master of the house was angry and turned from those who had thus insulted his bounty offered them, to a class who are not full, but are poor and hungry, and who are maimed and lame, halt and blind. These have not possessions of lands and houses, and will appreciate the bounties provided, and in return will render the master sincere gratitude, unfeigned love and devotion. But his house is not yet filled, and the command is, "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled; for I say unto you that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper." Here is a class rejected of God because they despised the invitation of the Master.

The Lord declared to Eli, "Them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." Says Christ, "If any man serve me, let him follow me, and where I am there shall also my servant be; if any man serve me, him will my Father honor." God will not be trifled with. Those who have the light and reject it, or neglect to walk in it, to them it will become darkness. An immense sacrifice was made on the part of God's dear Son, that he might have power to rescue fallen man and exalt him to his own right hand, make him an heir of the world, and a possessor of the eternal weight of glory.

The riches, glory, and honor, offered by the Son of God, are of such infinite value that it is beyond the power of men or even angels to give any just idea of their worth, excellence, and magnificence. If men, plunged in sin and degradation, refuse these heavenly benefits, refuse a life of obedience, trample upon the gracious invitations of mercy, and choose the paltry things of earth because they are seen, and it is convenient for their present enjoyment to pursue a course of sin, Jesus will carry out the figure in the parable; such shall not taste of his glory; but the invitation will be extended to

another class. Those who choose to make excuses, and continue in sin and conformity to the world, will be left to their idols. There will be a day when they will not beg to be excused. Not one will wish to be excused. When Christ shall come in his glory, and with the glory of his Father, and all the heavenly angels surrounding him, escorting him on his way, with voices of triumph, while strains of the most enchanting music fall upon the ear, all will then be interested; there will not then be one indifferent spectator.

Speculations will not then engross the soul. The miser's piles of gold, which are before him, and which have feasted his eyes, will be no longer attractive. The palaces which the proud men of earth have erected, and which have been their idols, will be turned from with loathing and disgust. No one will then plead his lands, his oxen, or his wife that he has just married, as a reason why he should be excused from sharing the glory that bursts upon his astonished vision. All will want a share, but some will know that it is not for them.

They will then call, in earnest, agonizing prayer, for God to pass them not by. The kings, the mighty men, the lofty, the proud, the mean man, will bow together under an inexpressible load of woe; and heart-anguished prayers of Mercy! mercy! Save us from the wrath of an offended God! will be wrung from their lips. A voice answers them with terrible distinctness: "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof, I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh."

Then kings and nobles, the mighty man, and the poor man, and the mean man, alike will cry most bitterly. They who in the days of their prosperity despised Christ and the humble ones who followed in his footsteps, men who would not humble their dignity to bow to Jesus Christ, who hated his despised cross, are now prostrate in the mire of the earth. Their greatness has all at once left them, and they do not hesitate to bow to the earth at the feet of the saints. They then realize with terrible bitterness that they are eating the fruit of their own way, and being filled with their own devices. In their supposed wisdom they turned away from the high, eternal reward, rejected the heavenly inducement for earthly gain. The glitter and tinsel of earth fascinated them, and in their supposed wisdom they became fools. They exulted in their worldly prosperity as though their advantages were so great that they could, through them, be recommended to God, and thus secure Heaven.



Money was their power, and money was their god; but their very prosperity destroyed them. They became fools in the eyes of God and his heavenly angels, while men of worldly ambition thought them wise. Now their supposed wisdom is all foolishness, and their prosperity their destruction. Again rings forth in shrieks of fearful, heart-rending anguish, "Rocks and mountains, fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" To the caves of the earth they flee as a covert, but these fail to be a protection then.

Said Christ: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." If this commandment is obeyed, it prepares the heart to obey the second, which is like unto it,--Love thy neighbor as thyself. All the ten commandments are embodied in these two specified. The first takes in the first four commandments, which show the duty of man to his Creator. The second takes in the last six, which show the duty of man to his fellow-man. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. They are two great arms sustaining all ten of the commandments, the first four and the last six. These must be strictly obeyed. "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Very many who profess to be Christ's disciples will apparently pass along smoothly in this world, and men will regard them as upright, godly men, when they have a plague spot at the core, which taints their whole character, and corrupts their religious experience.

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This forbids the taking advantage of our fellowmen in order to advantage ourselves. We are forbidden to wrong our neighbor in anything. We should not view the matter from the worldling's standpoint. To deal with our fellow-men, in every instance, just as we would wish them to deal with us, is a rule we should apply to ourselves. God's laws are to be obeyed to the letter. In all our intercourse and dealing with our fellow-men, whether believers, or unbelievers, this rule is to be applied: Love thy neighbor as thyself. Many who profess to be Christians will not bear the measurement of God on this point; but will be found wanting when weighed in the balances of the sanctuary. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean, and I will receive you, and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." What a promise is this. We should not lose sight of the fact that this promise is based upon obedience to a specific command. God calls upon all to separate from the world, and not to follow its practices or be conformed to it. "But be ye transformed by the renewing of

your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

God calls for separation from the world. Will we obey? Will we come out from among them, and remain separate and distinct from them? "For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" No one can mingle with worldlings, partake of their spirit, and follow their example, and be at the same time a child of God. The Creator of the universe addresses his children as an affectionate Father. All who separate from the world in their affections, and remain free from its contaminations, will be adopted into the family of God, and made heirs of an immortal inheritance. In place of this world, he will give them the kingdom under the whole heaven, and life that is as enduring as eternity.

If we would have his blessing attend us, and his presence to abide in our families, we must obey him, and do his will irrespective of losses or gains, or our own pleasure. We should not consult our desires, nor the approbation of worldlings, who know not God, and seek not to glorify him. If we walk contrary to God, he will walk contrary to us. If we have other gods before the Lord, our hearts will be turned away from serving the only true and living God, who requires the whole heart, the undivided affections. God requires all the heart, all the soul, all the mind, and all the strength. He will accept nothing short of this. No separation is allowed here. No half-hearted work will be accepted.

In order to render to God perfect service, we must have clear conceptions of his will. This will require us to use only healthful food, prepared in a simple manner, that the fine nerves of the brain be not injured, making it impossible for us to discern the value of the atonement, and the priceless worth of the cleansing blood of Christ. "Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all; but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air. But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

If, for no higher object than a wreath or perishable crown as a reward of their ambition, men subjected themselves to temperance in all things, how much more should

those who profess to be seeking, not only an unfading crown of immortal glory, but a life which is to endure as long as the throne of Jehovah, and riches that are eternal, honors which are imperishable, and an eternal weight of glory. Will not the inducements presented before those who are running in the Christian race, lead them to practice self-denial, and temperance in all things, that they may keep their animal propensities in subjection, keep under the body, control the lustful passions and appetites? Then can they be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

If the exceeding precious and glorious reward promised will not lead us to welcome greater privations, and endure greater self-denial than worldly men who are seeking merely a bauble of earth, a perishable laurel which brings honors from a few of the worldly, we are unworthy of everlasting life. With earnestness and intensity of desire to do the will of God, we should excel the zeal of those who are engaged in any other enterprise, to a degree as much greater as the value of the object we are seeking to attain is higher. The treasure we are striving to secure is imperishable, immortal, and all-glorious; while that which the worldling is in pursuit of endures but a day is fading and perishable, fleeting as the morning cloud.

We should let nothing obstruct our progress in the way to everlasting life. Our eternal interest is at stake. There must be a thorough work wrought in us, or we shall fail of Heaven. But Jesus invites us to make him our strength, our support. He will be to us a present help in every time of need. He will be as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. May it not be our great anxiety to succeed in this world; but may the burden of our souls be, How shall I secure the better world? What have I to do to be saved? In saving our own souls, we save others. In lifting ourselves, we lift others. In fastening our grasp upon the truth, and upon the throne of God, we aid others to fix their trembling faith upon the promises of God, and his eternal throne. The position all must come into, is to value salvation, dearer than earthly gain, to count everything but loss that they may win Christ. The consecration must be entire. God will admit of no reserve, of no divided sacrifice, no idol. All must die to self, and to the world. Then let us each renew our consecration to God daily. Everlasting life is worth a life-long, persevering, untiring effort.

March 25, 1880

## **Missionary Address**

It is not my intention this evening to confine myself to any particular portion of Scripture, but to speak for a short time in regard to working for the Master.

When we realize the fact that we are not our own, but bought with an infinite price, even the blood of the Son of God, we shall have no desire to devote our mental or physical powers to our own personal interests; but we shall feel a deep sense of our obligations to the Creator and to his cause, and of our duty to faithfully perform what he requires of us.

There never was a time when I realized more fully the value of souls than at the present. There never was a time in the history of our cause when we could do more for the conversion of sinners than now. There is much to be done; and there are those whose services the Lord will accept, if they will consecrate themselves unreservedly to him.

Some of the youth have been diligent and persevering, and they are now making their mark, and are occupying important positions in the cause of God. We often hear persons speak of the talents and ability of these youth as though God had bestowed upon them special gifts; but this is a mistake. It is the use we make of the talents given us, that makes us strong. There are many who might be well qualified to engage in the work of the Lord, who fail to improve upon the ability God has given them.

Let us take two young men as examples of these two classes. One is ever ready to make the most of his time and opportunities. He feels the importance of using his powers to the glory of God. Circumstances are against him; he has difficulties and obstacles to meet; but he does not complain of the trials that beset him. He accommodates himself to the circumstances, or so controls them as to make them serve his best interests. This individual's abilities are strengthened, his talents are increased; and he finally becomes a fully developed man, fitted to occupy some important position in society, and in the cause of God. When placed in any office of trust, he is able to exercise good judgment, and to discharge his duties with faithfulness and efficiency.

The other young man has similar difficulties to meet, but instead of bravely surmounting every obstacle, he complains, wishing things were different, and saying if he only had circumstances to suit his mind, what a splendid success he would make! This young man is destined to make a failure; because he does not apply his mind to his work, and does not determine that, live or die, sink or swim, he will so improve the abilities God has given him, as to make a success of life.

God has not bestowed upon us all the same talents and abilities. For this reason, we are not all capable of filling the same position with the same degree of success. Again, many talents have been given to some, while others have received but few. The latter are responsible only for what they have; while those more richly endowed will be held to account for the wise improvement of all that has been committed to them. Every one is capable of using the talents intrusted to him, of developing and increasing them.

Persons often speak of Dr. Kellogg as one whom God has especially called, and is using in his service. But while we believe that he is a man of God, we believe that the Lord did not accept him to the exclusion of others. He has met the difficulties of his situation, and mastered them. He has improved his time to increase his talents, and God has accepted his labors.

Not long since, a young man came to see us about obtaining a situation. Upon inquiry, he said that he had been at work on a farm, but that he could not fix his mind on his work. He desired some other kind of labor, and thought he would give himself to the Lord. Because he did not enjoy the plain, simple duties of life, he concluded to leave them, and devote himself to the cause of God. "Young man," said I, "you are making a mistake. It is necessary that you should prove yourself faithful wherever you are. If called to work upon the farm, or to engage in any of the ordinary duties of life, you should show that you can make a success there; and when you have done this, the Lord may see fit to give you some greater responsibility."

Many are like this youth. They do not enjoy the every-day duties of life. They think that if they were in some responsible position they would make a success. They have a desire to do some great work; but they are always standing still. They yield to circumstances instead of meeting difficulties with fortitude, determined to improve their abilities and gain a valuable experience.

In my youth I made up my mind that, should I allow myself to be controlled by circumstances, my life would be a failure; I went about whatever I regarded as duty, even though the surroundings were against me. My father would frequently say, "Ellen, if it were your duty to go to such a place, it would be made so plain that you could have no doubt in the matter. In consideration of your youth and feebleness, the Lord will give you clear evidence of your duty; and he will give you strength to do it without difficulty." "But," said I, "Father, if difficulties appear, I must summon greater resolution to meet them, and in doing this I shall gain a valuable experience, one that will help me to wisely use the abilities intrusted to my care."

Here is a work for every one of us to do. Never did I see and sense the value of souls as I do at the present time. How can we realize the importance of the work of salvation? In comparison with the value of the soul, everything else sinks into insignificance. This world and its treasures, this life and its happiness, are of little consequence, when we compare them with the joy of even one soul eternally saved. Until we have clear and distinct ideas of what that soul will enjoy when saved in the kingdom of glory; until we can fully comprehend the value of that life which measures with the life of God; until we can fully realize the riches of that reward which is laid up for those who overcome and gain the victory,--we cannot know the inestimable value of the soul.

We should train our minds to dwell on the importance of working for the salvation of souls for whom Christ has died. We should not feel that this work is of no special consequence; I fear that many of us are too often indifferent in this respect. At times, when I have labored excessively day after day, burdened with a sense of the great work that yet remained to be done, and have seen men and women of intelligence who professed to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, idly passing away the time, I have inquired, In view of the impending Judgment, how can they be indifferent in regard to the salvation of souls? If I had a thousand lives, I would devote them all to the service of the Lord.

Not all are called to preach the word, but there are other ways in which we may be of service in the cause of God. Many feel themselves excused from doing anything, because they cannot stand in the desk and explain the truths of the gospel. But let us consider, dear friends, what joy unspeakable will fill our hearts in the day of God, if, as

we gather around the great white throne, we shall see souls, saved through our instrumentality, with the crown of immortal glory upon their brows. How shall we feel as we look upon that company, and see one soul saved through our agency, who has saved others, and these still others,--a large assembly brought into the haven of rest as the result of our labors, there to lay their crowns at Jesus' feet, and to praise him with immortal tongues throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity.

April 1, 1880

## **Missionary Address**

Some ministers who have power in presenting the truth from the desk, neglect their duty in the family circle. They should manifest deep feeling in speaking of the truth in the families they visit, and then bow down and plead with God, that the light of truth may find its way to the heart of every member of the family. We should feel the responsibilities that rest upon us as Christians, and labor as though we realized the value of souls, remembering that one soul saved in the kingdom of God is worth more than ten thousand worlds like this. When we have this spirit, we can more readily convince others that we have the truth. But so long as indifference is manifested, we cannot expect to exert a decided influence in drawing others to God.

When we see a world lying in wickedness, sinners going to ruin, and appeals for help coming from all directions, we are reminded of the many young men who might be workers in the cause of truth, if they would consecrate themselves to God. There are many who might be as efficient workers in the cause as those who are already in the field. God has not chosen any persons to engage in His work to the exclusion of others, but He has accepted those who were willing to bear burdens and responsibilities.

I have just returned from Indiana, where the people are eager to hear the truth. Upon very brief notice, houses of worship were crowded. Although it was in feebleness that I attempted to speak to the people, yet God sustained and strengthened me. When I saw the house so crowded, and the people so eagerly listening to the truth, my soul was stirred within me. My mind went out to the great missionary field. We are not all called to occupy the desk, but we are all called to be missionaries, though perhaps in a limited sense. None can be excused. It is the duty of every one to sow the seed of truth, that it may spring up and bear fruit to the glory of God. The Lord has not given His work into the hands of a few men only; but He has given to every man his charge.

The design of this Institute is to teach you how to work; and we hope that you will give time and attention to this course of instruction. Here is a God-given privilege, in the improvement of which you may learn how to labor intelligently for the Master. God will help all who will take hold to help themselves; but we cannot expect light and



help to be given us unless we heed the light we already have. If we would be efficient laborers in the cause of God, we must learn how to work. If you would be a carpenter, you must learn the carpenter's trade; if you would be a worker for the Master, you must learn how to work for him. You should study to do your work well. It is the duty of every one so to labor that those who come into the truth, will come in ready to work in harmony with us on all points.

A few have borne the responsibilities and burdens of the work; but the cause is increasing, and their arms cannot encircle it. The work is becoming so much extended that no one individual can carry it forward. As Elders Haskell and Whitney have labored in the missionary cause, and have tried to show others how to work, they have met with success, and have gained an experience which they should impart to others. If you have already been somewhat successful in this branch of the work, do not think that you have learned all that is worth knowing, but attend this Institute and learn all you can. There are points on which you may receive instruction. The plans may be different from yours; if so, try to follow them, and work in harmony. It cannot be expected that all minds will run in the same channel; but you can all work understandingly after the same plan.

The tract and missionary work is an important part of the third angel's message. Canvassers must go out into various parts of the country. The importance of this work is fully equal to that of the ministry. The living preacher and the silent messenger are both required for the accomplishment of the great work before us.

I see before me a number of youth. I hope you will individually feel the importance of laboring in the missionary cause. I love to see the young working for the Master; but it pains me to see young people professing our faith, waste their time and energies on outside adornments. How much better it would be for these persons to employ their time in the formation of beautiful characters, and in helping in the work of gathering souls into the fold of Christ. I would that you who are devoting your time to frivolity and needless display, could look over on the other shore and see the result of such a selfish, indifferent course.

All of us can be workers for the Master. Women might do much more in the missionary cause, if they would. There are many positions which they could fill acceptably. We should all learn to be self-denying and self-sacrificing; and as time is

spent in preparing to present a pleasing outward appearance, so let us study to form such characters as shall rightly represent the religion of Christ before the world. As you go out to labor in the missionary work, your deportment and manner should be such as to please, and not to offend. You should labor in meekness, and with the fear of God before you. You should be Christian ladies and gentlemen; let your conversation and deportment be such as will recommend you to others.

There is missionary labor to be done in the distribution of tracts and papers, and in canvassing for our different publications. Let none of you think that you cannot engage in this work because it is taxing, and requires time and thought. If it requires time, give it cheerfully; and the blessing of God will rest upon you. There never was a time when more workers were needed than at the present. There are brethren and sisters throughout all our ranks who should discipline themselves to engage in this work; in all our churches something should be done to spread the truth. It is the duty of all to study the various points of our faith, that they may be prepared to give a reason for the hope that it is within them, with meekness and fear.

A great work is before us. There are souls to be saved; and we are responsible for the salvation of those around us. Let every one see how much he can do to get the light before others. You will meet with ridicule, but that need not hinder you. Show yourselves men and women in Christ Jesus. Show that you can bear reproach. Remember that your Master bore the same before you; and have courage to stand for the right. There is a rich reward for you by and by. The Master will say, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Who can understand the joy of the Lord? Who can comprehend it? It is the satisfaction of seeing souls saved through the virtue of his own blood.

He left the courts of Heaven, his royal throne, his majesty, his honor, his glory; he clothed his divinity with humanity, and for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. He took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man; and he walked among the children of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." For the joy that was set before him, he "endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be

wearied and faint in your minds." When we consider the infinite sacrifice that has been made by the Son of God, in dying for the sins of the world, and then think that here are men and women who do not consider they have anything to do, any sacrifice to make for the salvation of their fellow-men, we can but cry to God to arouse us to a sense of our duty.

To the young who are obtaining an education at our College, we would say, Do not let your studies hinder you from attending these meetings, and learning what you can. You ought to make it your business while here to obtain an education in the things of God, as well as in the arts and sciences. To learn your duty to God and to your fellow-men, should be your highest aim. I can see a broad field open before you. Take hold intelligently and understandingly, working with your whole soul, mind, and strength, and you will see the work go forward.

There has been with us a great lack of prayer. We ask of the Lord, but do not believe we shall receive the things for which we ask. We lack that faith which takes hold upon God. He wants us to come to him in our feebleness, with faith, knowing that he turns his compassionate eye upon us, and that his willing hand is stretched out over us. We should have implicit confidence in God. He has met with us, and manifested his power in our midst. We have received special tokens of his love; and we know that the Lord is ready to hear us, if we only put our trust in him. When we come to him as a child to a parent, he will withhold no good things from us. Jesus says if we love him and keep his commandments, he will pray the Father, and he will send the Comforter to bless us.

The old and young in our midst are falling beneath the power of death. Will they come up in the first resurrection? When I travel through the country, and see in the distance the white tomb-stones gleaming among the evergreens and ornamental trees, I am led to inquire, How many of the silent sleepers will awake in the morning of the first resurrection? How many have lived and died without hope for the future?

We want you to feel that God has a work for you to do, and that it is your duty to take hold of it earnestly and understandingly. We ask every one of you to engage in this missionary work, and do what you can for the salvation of souls. First, understand the truth yourself, and then you will desire to have others understand it. This is an important and solemn work; and we need to seek God in earnest prayer, that we may be prepared

to perform our duty faithfully.

We should not only profess Christianity, but we should carry out its principles in our daily life; and if faithful, when Christ shall come he will place a crown of immortal glory upon our brows. I love him; he died for me; and I want to bring souls to Jesus. Let this be the feeling of every heart.

April 8, 1880

## **The Trial of Our Faith**

God leads his people on, step by step. He brings them into positions which are calculated to reveal the motives of the heart. Some endure at one point, but fall off at the next. At every advance step the heart is tested, and tried a little closer. If any find their hearts opposed to the straight work of God, it should convince them that they have a work to do in overcoming, or they will be finally rejected of the Lord.

This world is the place in which to prepare to appear in God's presence. Individuals will here show what power affects their hearts, and controls their actions. If it is the power of divine truth, it will lead them to good works, and make them noble-hearted and generous, like their divine Lord. But, on the other hand, selfishness, covetousness, and pride will manifest themselves as the sure result of yielding to evil impulses.

All who become connected with the cause of God will have opportunity to know what is in their hearts. If they prize anything higher than the truth, their hearts are not prepared to receive Jesus, and he is consequently shut out. If individuals, when tested, refuse to sacrifice their idols, and overcome selfishness, pride, and evil passions, it will be said of them as of Ephraim of old, They are joined to their idols, let them alone; and the Spirit of God will leave them with their sinful traits unsubdued, to the control of evil angels.

Many who profess to be Christ's followers are unwilling to closely examine their own hearts, to see whether they have passed from death unto life. Some lean upon an old experience, seeming to think a mere profession of the truth will save them; but God's word reveals the terrible fact that all such are cherishing a false hope. It would be more pleasing to God if such professors of religion had never taken his name, since they are a continual stumbling block to unbelievers, and evil angels exult over their crooked course. Such are a curse to the cause at home or abroad. They draw nigh to God with their lips, while their hearts are far from him. When those sins which God hates are subdued, then Jesus will come into their hearts, and they may commune with him; they may increase in divine strength day by day, and be able with holy triumph to say,

"Blessed be God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The people of God should not imitate the fashions of the world. All who do this will gradually lose that peculiar, holy character which should distinguish them as God's people. In these last days some of the fashions are shameful and immodest. If God's professed people had not greatly departed from him, there would now be a marked difference between their dress and that of the world. We are living in a time when earth's inhabitants are growing more and more corrupt, and the line of distinction must be more plain between them and the Israel of God, or the curse which falls upon worldlings will fall on God's professed people.

The following scriptures furnish clear and unmistakable directions for those who would learn God's will: "In like manner also that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shame-facedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." 1 Timothy 2:9, 10. "Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time, the holy women also who trusted in God, adorned themselves." 1 Peter 3:3-5.

Young and old, God is now testing you. You are now deciding your own eternal destiny. Pride, fashion, empty conversation, and selfishness are evils which, if fostered, will increase, and choke the good seed sown in your hearts, till soon the word will be spoken concerning you, as was said of Eli's house, that your sins shall not be purged with sacrifices nor offerings forever. Oh, that every lukewarm professor could realize what will be required of him, in order to pass the close and searching test of the Judgment. Dear readers, do not deceive yourselves concerning your condition. You cannot deceive God. Says the True Witness, "I know thy works."

The sin of this age is disregard of God's express commands. The power of influence in a wrong direction is very great. Yet there are those who recklessly place themselves in scenes of danger and peril, and expose themselves to temptations, out of which it would require a miracle of God to bring them unharmed and untainted. These are presumptuous acts, with which God is not pleased. Satan's temptation to the Saviour of the world to cast himself from the pinnacle of the temple, was firmly met and

resisted. The arch-enemy quoted a promise of God as security, that Christ might with safety do this on the strength of the promise. Jesus met this temptation with Scripture: "It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." In the same way Satan urges men into places where God does not require them to go, presenting Scripture to justify his suggestions.

The precious promises of God are not given to strengthen man in a presumptuous course, or for him to rely upon when he rushes needlessly into danger. God requires us to move with a humble dependence upon his providence. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Nothing can be done prosperously without the permission and blessing of God. He can set his hand to prosper and bless, or he can turn his hand against us. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass." We are required, as children of God, to maintain the consistency of our Christian character. We should exercise prudence, caution, and humility, and walk circumspectly toward them that are without. Yet we are not in any case to surrender principle.

Our only safety is in giving no place to the devil; for his suggestions and purposes are ever to injure us, and hinder us from relying upon God. He transforms himself into an angel of purity, that he may, through his specious temptations, introduce his devices in such a manner that we may not discern his wiles. The more we yield, the more powerful will be his deceptions over us. It is unsafe to controvert or to parley with him. For every advantage we give the enemy, he will claim more. Our only safety is to reject firmly the first insinuation to presumption. God has given us grace through the merits of Christ sufficient to withstand Satan, and be more than conquerors. Resistance is success. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Resistance must be firm and steadfast. We lose all we gain if we resist today only to yield tomorrow.

April 15, 1880

## **Order in the Church**

When difficulties arise in the church, special study should be given to the word of God, with earnest prayer to learn what course Christ would pursue to settle the matter. It is a common practice for church-members to discuss the faults of the erring among themselves, while the one at fault is not visited, and no special effort is made to redeem him; and frequently he is treated with a coldness and neglect which has an influence to push him farther from light, and more fully upon the battle-field of the enemy, where it is far more difficult to recover him from the snare into which he is fallen.

Our Redeemer understood the perversity of human nature; and in order to save the souls for whom he sacrificed his life, and establish his church in unity and prosperity upon the earth, he has given explicit rules for church-members to follow in dealing with one another. Hear what he says: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."

Although it is no pleasant task to go to the one supposed to be in error, and tell him his fault between you and him alone, it is the very work Christ has given us to do to save the erring and preserve the harmony of the church. It is much more gratifying to human nature to tell our suspicions to our brethren, and make comments behind the back of the erring one, than to go to him frankly and say the same things we would say were he not present.

The church needs faithful, heroic men, who will dare to be right and true, and who will follow the Bible to the letter, refusing to basely submit to the forms and practices of this corrupt age. Such men, when they are fully known, will have great influence in the church, and their daily lives will be a confession of Christ before the world.



If we receive the eternal reward, many things for which self pleads will have to be yielded, and much will have to be endured for the sake of Christ and his gospel. Everything in social life must be held subordinate to the claims of religion. All who do this will be fruitful in God; and in time of extreme need, when there is help for them only in God, Jesus will stand up for those who have stood up for him. He will help them when they need help; and the light and strength which they receive from him, they will impart to others. Such men will have a molding influence in their families, in the church, and on the world. It is not always easy and convenient to do right. Satan's path is the broadest and the most deceptive. It is made to appear the most attractive, while it is hard, mystifying, and full of disappointment. The path of holiness is narrow, full of self-denial and continual sacrifice; and yet in this laborious, up-hill path is happiness, comfort, and hope. In the midst of conflicts, rebuffs, and trials, the most elevated consolation is enjoyed by those who walk in the path of obedience.

We should deal with the erring as Christ has dealt with us. He pities our weaknesses, and so we should pity the erring. He made every sacrifice to save man; we should not hesitate at any self-denial or sacrifice to save our fellow-men. Our duty is plain. If our brother trespass against us, even though he has no immediate connection with us, it is our duty to go to him alone, not with censure and bitterness, but with sorrow expressed in our words. The voice should be modulated to reach his heart, and not to arouse a spirit of combativeness. We should come as close to the erring as possible, and with a spirit of forbearance, calmness, and love for their souls, patiently tell them their faults; and, with a softened heart, bow down and pray with and for them. In nine cases out of ten, these efforts will be successful. If the erring one yields to advice and counsel, and humiliates his soul before God by humble repentance and confession, that disagreeable matter is ended, a soul saved, and the church no longer grieved and tortured.

But if the erring will not yield to the entreaties and faithful efforts of his brother, then his course is clear to take one or two more of the church and visit the one at fault. These should act with patience and tenderness; and in the spirit of Christ, having their own hearts imbued with his love, with words of kindness, try to correct and save the erring; making humble supplications to God to touch and subdue the heart of the one who has erred, and is under the power and darkness of Satan. But should all these efforts prove ineffectual, and the erring persistently remain independent and incorrigible, the third step should then be taken. Bring the matter before the church. The

action taken by this body in the fear of God, after these rules have been followed to the letter, is recognized in Heaven.

If members of the church were all doers of the word of Christ as well as hearers, freedom and prosperity would be the result. How much sorrow might be saved families and churches, if all, in sincerity and truth, practiced the lessons given us by Jesus, our Redeemer. Religion is not mere doctrine and dry theory. It regulates the life as well as the faith. The Bible, on one page, tells us what the doctrine of Christ is, while on another page, it specifies our duty toward God and our brethren. Piety and devotion are united. The injunction of the world's Redeemer is, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

One great reason why our brethren and sisters have no more confidence toward God in prayer, is, that nearly all neglect to follow the words of Jesus in preserving harmony between brethren. They allow various wrongs to exist with members of the church, which create bitter envy and strife; and while these differences exist, God neither hears nor answers their prayers, and darkness comes over the mind, because they have neglected the duty so plainly pointed out by our Redeemer. There is a great want of Bible simplicity and genuine love for one another. Love and exaltation of self prevent that humility of mind which should characterize the life of every member of the church. Unless those who come together in church capacity shall observe the rules of Christ which are given them in his word, and which are so simple and reasonable that all may understand, regulating their conduct toward one another by them, there can be no such thing as spiritual strength, harmony, or prosperity in the church; but disaster and ruin will be the result.

It is necessary that each member of the church upon earth should cultivate those traits of character which will be the very attributes called into exercise to preserve harmony and happiness in the church above. Love is a plant of heavenly growth, and it must be cultivated by exercise. Supreme love to God and our neighbor is not cherished and does not abound more and more in the church. If there is one who has done wrong, that one is in darkness, and under the control of the destroyer of souls. While in this condition, he cannot clearly discern his own sinfulness, and will frequently make

himself believe that he is right, and that his brethren are not kind, but trying to injure him. For the time being, reason seems to be dethroned; and he is a prey to ungovernable feelings, and seems hurried on to take a course which shall place him at the greatest possible distance from the church. Wisdom is needed to save that soul from ruining himself and others. Jesus understood all about the peril of these souls, and therefore gave rules which would prove a success if they were obeyed. Any departure from the Bible plan may place that soul fully on the enemy's ground, where it is not possible for him to be reached.

If the wrongs of the erring one are talked by one member of the church to another, or if his wrongs are opened to the church, thus taking the third step without the two former, the one in error feels justified in considering himself injured, and this makes it much more difficult to get access to him, and impress his mind. He places himself beyond the reach of help, and is lost to the church. Christ knew the worth of souls as man never can. He has paid the price of his own life for their redemption, and Satan is constantly at work with every device, to wrench souls from the hand of Jesus Christ, and place them in his ranks. Church members, in not following the rules Christ has given them, aid Satan in the accomplishment of his work, when, had they been doers of the words of Christ, and not hearers only, they might have been wholly successful in taking the steps Christ has given in the settlement of difficulties.

Frequently individual members are suspected of wrong where no wrong actually exists. True Christian love cherished in the heart and exemplified in the life, would teach us to put the best possible construction upon the course of our brethren. We should be as jealous of their reputation as of our own. If we are forever suspecting evil, this very fact will so shape their course of action as to produce the very evil which we have allowed ourselves to suspect. In this way, a great many difficulties are manufactured that otherwise would never have had birth, and brethren are often wronged by our being suspicious, free to judge their motives, and express our opinion to others in regard to their actions. That which one may be ready to construe into grave wrongs, may be no more than we ourselves are chargeable with every day.

While our tempers are tried and feelings chafed, there is great temptation to speak of the supposed wrongs of some one of our brethren, and frequently a thrust is made at him in public meeting. Thus it becomes a grave matter, is made church property, and church action is called for, when, if the grieved had gone to his brother alone, and, in

the spirit of the Master, talked over the matter with him, they would have come to an understanding at once, and the church would never have been troubled and burdened with the difficulty.

In this world we shall never be free from the assaults of the enemy. "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord." Satan did not hesitate to assail the world's Redeemer. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Again we read that he suffered, being tempted. The conflict was at times so severe that the soul of the Son of God was wrung with anguish. Temptation is not sin, nor any indication that our Heavenly Father is displeased with us.

June 3, 1880

## **A Living Church**

A living church will be a working church. Practical Christianity will develop earnest workers for the advancement of the cause of truth. There is a great lack of this practical religion among us as a people. Worldliness and pride, love of dress and display, are steadily increasing among those who profess to be keeping God's commandments, and to be waiting for their Lord.

The great sin of ancient Israel was in turning from God to idols. This is also the great sin of modern Israel. The apostle Paul said to the Gentile churches that he had raised up, "Ye turned from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from Heaven." He could truly say to many of them, "In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." When he saw them becoming indifferent, the ardor of their faith chilled by backslidings, he exclaimed, "I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." He entreats them to be followers of God as dear children, and to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God. Again, he exhorts them to walk in Christ Jesus, even as they had received him, that they might be rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith. He reminds them, "Ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory." To the Thessalonians he writes, "We beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us [the ministers of Christ] how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more."

We long to see the true Christian character manifested in the church; we long to see its members free from a light, irreverent spirit; and we earnestly desire that they may realize their high calling in Christ Jesus. Some who profess Christ are exerting themselves to the utmost to so live and act that their religious faith may commend itself to people of moral worth, that they may be induced to accept the truth. But there are many who feel no responsibility, even to keep their own souls in the love of God, and

who, instead of blessing others by their influence, are a burden to those who would work and watch and pray. These careless, indifferent ones are a dead weight upon our churches everywhere. Their principal study is not how they can let their light so shine that others will be drawn to God and the truth, but how they will manage, by affectation and display, to attract attention to themselves. Those who are seeking in humbleness of mind to exalt the truth of Christ by their exemplary course, are represented in the word of God as fine gold; while the class whose chief thought and study is to exhibit themselves, are as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.

The latter class are far more numerous in our churches than the former. These idle, frivolous persons will never be anything better than driftwood unless there is a decided change in their life and character. They are Christians only in profession; their life, their deportment, is a constant testimony to the world that they know nothing of experimental godliness, of a self-denying life of cross-bearing for Christ's sake. They are ever studying their convenience, ever planning for their own comfort, their amusement or gratification. They are as salt without the savor. In the day when the Judge of all the earth shall balance the accounts of men, this class will be pronounced wanting.

What the church needs is to be cleansed of those who defile it. The spirit of reformation must be kindled among us, and this class must be converted or be separated from the church. We entreat those who have a connection with God to pray earnestly and in faith, and not to stop here, but to work as well as pray, for the purification of the church. The present time calls for men and women who have a moral fixedness of purpose, men and women who will not be molded or subdued by any unsanctified influences. Such persons will make a success in the work of perfecting Christian character through the grace of Christ so freely given. For those who are ready to be discouraged at every unfavorable circumstance, the great enemy of souls will so shape circumstances as to give them abundant reason to be always discouraged.

Oh that I could speak in language so plain and convincing as to move souls from their position of careless ease and worldly conformity! A genuine experience alone will qualify us to join the throng who come up out of great tribulation, having washed our robes of character, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. I am alarmed because of the indifference and inactivity of those who profess the truth. Satan is untiring in his efforts; he is on the alert continually, to delude and ensnare. How are the

watchmen on the walls of Zion doing their work? Are they watching for souls as they that must give account? Are they awake? Are they in earnest? and do they show that they are in full faith of the doctrines they hold?

No man can succeed in the service of God unless his whole soul is in the work, and he counts all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. Whoever makes any reserve, whoever refuses to give all that he has, cannot be the disciple of Christ; much less can he be his co-laborer. The consecration must be complete. Father, mother, wife and children, houses and lands, everything which the servant of Christ possesses, must be held subject to God's call,--bound upon the sacred altar. He must be earnest, he must be willing to deny self and lift the cross, to do and suffer cheerfully and with fortitude whatever may be required of him to push forward the great work of reform. The glory of God and the salvation of souls will be his grand aim and purpose of life. He will not go here and there to please himself; but, when duty calls, he will be found, if need be, in the thickest of the fight, and will suffer without reluctance, without repining, irrespective of worldly interest or personal consequences. All this we pledge ourselves to do when we accept the name of Christian, and more especially when we consent to take upon ourselves the work of Christ's ambassadors.

I think of the many cities and towns, even in our own country, that have never heard a discourse upon present truth, and have no knowledge of our faith, or of us as a people. The solemn warnings for this time have never fallen upon their ears or convicted their consciences. My burdened heart goes up to God in the wakeful hours of the night that he would work by whom he will, to warn the world of their coming doom. Who are living out their faith? Who, with singleness of purpose, are lifting up to the view of the impenitent, Jesus Christ and his matchless love? Where is the living zeal that will make the impression upon minds paralyzed with sin, that we believe what we profess, that the end of all things is at hand, and that what is done in the work of preparation must be done quickly?

The people of God should awaken to a keen perception of the grievous character of transgression. Sin is disguised, and many are deceived in regard to its nature. Satan has planned it thus, that the understanding may be clouded, the spiritual vision obscured, the perceptive faculties of the soul blunted. But God would not have one of us to be ensnared, therefore the nature of sin is faithfully portrayed in the inspired pages,--its offensive character before God, its corruption, its shame, and its results. Everything

has been done that God could do to save man from the power of sin, which defaces the divine image, frustrates God's purpose in man's existence, degrades his God-given powers, narrows his capacity, leads to unholy imaginations, and gives loose rein to unsanctified passions. Sin! how hateful in the sight of God! Holy angels look upon it with abhorrence.

What is sin? The transgression of God's law. God wants all connected with him to loathe sin, to hate anything that approaches to it. Transgression is a serpent with a deadly sting. Grant it no indulgence, for it will imperil the soul. Rather choose privation, suffering, hunger, reproach, imprisonment, and death, than the indulgence of sin.

Will the professed followers of Christ cleanse the soul-temple of its defilement? Will those who profess to be his representatives sacrifice anything and everything rather than offend God? A deep-settled conviction is needed in every soul to strengthen the abhorrence of sin. Meditation should be encouraged. We should view ourselves as ever in the presence of God, whose eye searches the soul and reads the most secret thoughts. Since we know this to be true, why is there such a careless disregard of God's claims? Why such thoughtlessness in regard to the solemn realities of life?

I call upon you, my dear brethren and sisters, to cultivate spirituality, to put away your idols, and in the fear of God, to work for time and for eternity. Again and again have our sisters been warned against indulging pride of dress, which is idolatry; yet they pass on, making no change, and their example is leading others away from Christ, instead of leading to him. Why is it so hard to arouse the conscience upon this subject, when the inspired apostle has spoken so explicitly upon this point? Will my sisters dress plainly for Christ's sake? for the love of souls for whom he died? Will they remember that they must meet their life-record at the bar of God, and must answer for the money and the time squandered in needless adornment?

Those who seek by earnest study of God's word and fervent prayer the guidance of his Spirit, will be led by him. The pillar of cloud will guide them by day, the pillar of fire by night; and with an abiding sense of God's presence it will not be possible to disregard his holy law. The reason why there is so much transgression is that little time is devoted to meditation and prayer. Dress and display and sinful gratification put God out of the thoughts, and sin does not appear exceeding sinful. Satan's angels are at hand



to gloss it over with a semblance of righteousness. If the light from the burning glory of the throne of God should shine forth upon the sinful practices of professors of religion, how terrible would sin appear, how perilous would seem its indulgence. Oh, how soon the desire for sinful gratifications would perish in the withering light of the glory from the Divine Presence!

We are in great danger of looking upon sin as a small matter, unworthy of notice. Sins of unkindness, of impatience, of fault-finding, of unthankfulness, of pride in imitating the fashions of a doomed world, should not be lightly regarded. The channels of thought and action are worn deep and broad by repetition. The longer one pursues a given course of conduct, the greater is the probability that he will continue the same course during life. Evil habits are like chains. to hold one to a wrong course. Then how earnestly should we begin the work of reformation.

Let the habits be formed in a safe line of conduct. And for the very reason that religious habits are not so easily established as are those of an opposite character, the more earnest efforts should be put forth to form habits of devotion, of studying the Scriptures, of strict integrity. This will require deliberate purpose, and persistent effort; for the natural heart is opposed to such an education. These habits must be acquired by performing Christian duties with faithfulness and regularity. Make it a habit to attend the prayer-meeting, to be willing and earnest in doing good to others. Let it become a habit to engage in profitable conversation, instead of indulging in idle talk upon temporal concerns, upon dress, or upon the faults of others. "Our conversation is in Heaven," says the apostle, "from whence also we look for the Saviour." God has given us our talents, and requires that they be used to glorify him and not ourselves.

What grief to the Saviour who bought us with his own blood, that multitudes who profess his name have formed habits which bring them directly under the control of the Prince of darkness! These habits are formed gradually, and almost imperceptibly. Little duties have been neglected. The professed followers of Christ have shunned his cross. Worldly influences have corrupted their purity of soul. They feel no burden for those who are out of Christ, but leave them to go down to death unrebuked and unwarned. Selfish indulgence has hardened the heart and weakened the moral faculties. The Christian course of this class is uncertain. They are looked upon as the representatives of Christ; but they have no living experience, and they are constantly doubting the Saviour's love. They have a spasmodic religion, and walk in the light of others. They

have not a strong, firm, earnest hope of Heaven. Their faith is so feeble that they cannot claim and urge the promises of God. Trials crush them, and make them disconsolate and despairing.

I lift my warning voice against such a life, and beseech my brethren and sisters to diligently search their own hearts, and see if they have a living faith, which works, yes, works by love, and purifies the soul. May God impress our ministers to teach the young converts by precept and example, that they must start right on the Christian course, and continue right, if they would end right. True conversion of soul is essential; theoretical religion will not take the place of heart-work. We all need to connect more closely with God, and then we may teach others the art of believing. The true, humble, earnest Christian will be receiving the mold of a perfect character, and his heart will ever be conforming to the image of Christ. His life will flow out in channels of beneficence and love. Such will be established in God. The work which grace began, if combined with earnest effort to press close to Jesus, glory shall finish in the kingdom of God.

How can I impress upon our dear people, whom God has made the depositaries of his law, a sense of how much is at stake with them. If they sin in words or deportment, they bring dishonor upon the cause they profess to love, and by their example many will be encouraged to turn away from the mirror which discovers the defects of their moral character. What an account will the professed followers of Christ have to render in the day when the Lord will make inquiry for the souls lost in consequence of their unrighteous course. Let us, as the peculiar people of God, elevate the standard of Christian character, lest we come short of the reward that will be given to the good and the faithful. Our probation will soon be ended. We must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. It is those who hold fast the beginning of their confidence steadfast unto the end, that will receive the crown of immortal glory. Those who make so exalted a profession of truth must answer for the intrusted capital. Simplicity, purity, forbearance, benevolence, and love should characterize our Christian experience. We must labor continually, by study of the Scriptures and earnest prayer, to keep ourselves unspotted from the world.

Jesus has gone to prepare mansions for those who are waiting and watching for his appearing. There they will meet the pure angels and the redeemed host, and will join their songs of praise and triumph. There the Saviour's love surrounds his people, and the city of God is irradiated with the light of his countenance,--a city whose walls, great and

high, are garnished with all manner of precious stones, whose gates are pearls, and whose streets are pure gold, as it were transparent glass. "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." The shadows of night never fall on that city; it has no need of the sun, neither of the moon; its inhabitants rejoice in the undimmed glory of the Lamb of God.

June 10, 1880

## **Christ's Commission**

After the resurrection of Christ, before he ascended to Heaven, he gave to his disciples, and through them to all who should believe on his name to the end of time, this commission: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." God has claims upon the service of all,--men and women, youth and children; and the earlier they are led out of and away from themselves, and taught to engage in unselfish labor for others, the nearer will they come to fulfilling this holy commission. There is work for every one of us to do; not one is excused. Many select a course of life for themselves, without thought or reference to the glory of God; and yet they profess to be his servants, following his directions, when they are, in fact, only serving themselves.

Some are ever ready to make excuses for not giving more attention to matters pertaining to the cause of God. In the parable of the marriage supper, Christ mentions a class who, with one consent, began to make excuses. One had bought a piece of land, and must needs go and see it; another had purchased a yoke of oxen, and must prove them; another had married a wife, and therefore he could not accept the invitation. This parable illustrates the frivolous and vain excuses which are made by those who, if they would, might come to the marriage supper of the Lamb; and it also conveys a reproof to those who might be workers in the vineyard of the Lord, but who will not, because their temporal affairs are placed above things of eternal interest.

Christ left his exalted position as commander of all Heaven, and came to this world as man's Redeemer. While here he was not treated as a sovereign, or even as a benefactor. His life was a scene of continual self-denial and sacrifice for the good of others. Said he, "I came down from Heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." All was laid upon the altar. How can we better show our appreciation of the great sacrifice made by the Lamb of God than by following his example, and carrying forward the work which he commenced. All who remain inactive when there is so much to be done, will at last be found guilty before God. In the words of the poet,

"Do something--do it soon--with all thy might; An angel's wing would droop if

long at rest, And God himself, inactive, were no longer blest."

Those who profess to believe the truth, but feel no burden for the souls of others, will be continually backsliding, and it will require time and strength on the part of the minister to keep them from making shipwreck of faith, when they should be laboring with all their might to present the way of life and salvation to their friends and neighbors. Hundreds of men and women who at the present time are professedly engaged in the work of God, are not doing one-tenth that they might do if they would only improve all the powers God has given them. Some are doing literally nothing for the truth, and by their example of indifference are bringing others into the same position of uselessness, and thus are scattering from Christ. This latter class includes by far the greater number. They are thinking and planning only for themselves. Fathers and mothers with their little ones around them make their little circle their world. Every power of their being is centered on "me and mine," and they are becoming narrower and more circumscribed every year of their lives. They do not open their hearts to the grace and love of Christ, and liberalize their nature and ennoble their being by placing themselves in sympathy with their fellow-men.

Many who are now left to darkness and ruin could have been helped, had their brethren--common men and women--come to them with the love of Christ glowing in their hearts, and put forth personal efforts for them. Many are waiting to be thus personally addressed. Humble, earnest conversation with such persons, and prayer for them, heart being brought close to heart, would in most cases be wholly successful. But instead of this, those who profess to be following their Saviour rest content with expressing a desire that some brother or minister may come and help them. Thus they neglect the very work that God has left for them to do. Just the way in which this work is to be done in every case cannot be rigidly prescribed, but as they come in closer connection with the world's Redeemer, ways and means will be suggested to their minds.

The true Christian is bent on doing good, not only to his own family, but to all who come within the sphere of his influence. Many ways of usefulness will open before the willing, aspiring, devoted soul, who wants to labor for the salvation of others, thus improving the only means God has provided whereby Christians can grow to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. The more such persons do, the more they will see to do, and the more earnest will they be to have a part in every good work for

the up-building of the kingdom of Christ. It will be their meat and drink to benefit their fellow-men and glorify God.

Let this question come home to every heart, "How much owest thou unto my Lord?" Jesus, the Master, became poor that we might have eternal riches; he died that we might have life, immortal life. Should we not be willing to follow his example, and do for others as nearly as possible as he has done for us? In so doing, our own character will be disciplined and improved, our faith will grow stronger, our zeal will become more steady and earnest, our love for God and the truth and the souls for whom Christ died will become intensified, and precious souls will be saved as the result of our labors. What greater and more ennobling work can be engaged in, than seeking to attract souls to Christ. This has been successfully done time and again by ordinary men and women, not by the most learned, eloquent or wealthy, but by the true and faithful who do their work in simplicity. One soul thus reached may, in turn, bring an army into the service of Christ. But every worker must depend wholly and constantly upon Jesus Christ for wisdom and strength.

As I travel from Maine to Washington Territory, and see the many cities and towns which have never heard the warning message, my heart is burdened. We must devise more thorough and extensive plans in order to obey the divine commission and reach every creature. Our own family, village, or neighborhood is not all the world. If every member of the church would work in any branch suited to his capability, much more might be done than is now being done to obey the command of the Master. "But," says one, "I do not know of anything I can do in the work of God. I am willing to work, but what can I do?" To such we would say, Go to God; he will teach you. He who prays successfully will labor tirelessly for the salvation of souls. There are many things that persons may do if they only have a mind to work. There are many who will not go to church to hear the truth preached. By personal efforts in simplicity and wisdom these might be persuaded to turn their feet to the house of God. Conviction may fasten upon their minds the first time they hear a discourse upon present truth. Should your solicitations be refused, do not be discouraged. Persevere till success crowns your efforts.

Our sisters are doing comparatively nothing, when they might do very much. Christ is searching the life and character for fruit, and he finds many professed Christians, like the fruitless fig-tree, bearing nothing but leaves. The sisters can work

efficiently in obtaining subscribers for our periodicals, in this way bringing the light before many minds. The distribution of tracts, and the work of Christian canvassers and colporteurs, can be done as well by our sisters as by our brethren. Satan is busy in this department of his work, scattering literature which is debasing the morals and poisoning the minds of the young. Infidel publications are scattered broadcast throughout the land. Why should not every member of the church be as deeply interested in sending forth publications that will elevate the minds of the people, and bring the truth directly before them? These papers and tracts are for the light of the world, and have often been instrumental in converting souls. Our publications are now sowing the gospel seed, and are instrumental in bringing as many souls to Christ as the preached word. Whole churches have been raised up as the result of their circulation. In this work every disciple of Christ can act a part. Let the leaflets and tracts, the papers and books, go in every direction. Carry with you, wherever you go, a package of select tracts, which you can hand out as you have opportunity. Sell what you can, and lend or give them away as the case may seem to require. Important results will follow.

Another work in which all may engage is gathering children and youth into the Sabbath-school. The young may in this way labor efficiently for the dear Saviour. They may shape the destinies of souls. They may do a work for the church and the world the extent and greatness of which will never be known until the day of final accounts, when the "Well done" is spoken to the good and faithful.

Sisters, do not become weary of vigilant missionary labor. This is a work you may all engage in successfully, if you will but connect with God. Before writing letters of inquiry, always lift up your heart to God in prayer that you may be successful in gathering some wild branches which may be grafted into the true vine, and bear fruit to the glory of God. All who with humble hearts take part in this work, will be continually educating themselves as workers in the vineyard of the Lord.

Our ministers should not give all their powers to preaching discourses, and let the work end there. They should instruct the members of the church how to take hold of and successfully carry forward this branch of the work, which is to our tract and missionary society like a wheel within a wheel. The movement of this inner wheel keeps in healthful, powerful action the outer wheel. Let this inner wheel cease its action, and the result will be seen in diminished life and activity in the tract and missionary society.

It is a mystery to me how any can be indifferent and careless in reference to the souls of their fellow-men in these last days. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," says the commandment. Can we do this, and have no special interest in their salvation? There is work to be done for those who know not the truth, just such work as was done for you when you were in darkness. It is too late to sleep, too late to become indolent do-nothings. To every one the Householder has given a work. Let us go forward, and not backward. We want a new conversion daily. We want the love of Jesus throbbing in our hearts, that we may be instrumental in saving many souls.

No one who loves Jesus can long retain the divine favor, if he feels no burden for sinners around him. If coldness and indifference have crept over your spiritual senses, and your interest for those who are perishing in their sins is decreasing, it is time you were converted. Your best course will be to engage at once in personal efforts to save others. In blessing them, you will yourself be blessed. No matter how heavy the crosses you must bear to do this, the blood and agonies of the Son of God appeal to you to work on, to sow beside all waters. The rich promises of the word of God are for the workers, the good and faithful. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him." "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal."

The Christian has an inexhaustible supply of strength from which to draw, if he will only take God at his word, and with living faith claim the blessings he so much needs. Few have so closely studied the Bible, and contemplated the great work involved in the plan of salvation, that they can comprehend their responsibility to their fellow-men. Those who profess Christ and yet indulge in sloth and indolence know not how many will be lost through their failure to conform to the principles laid down in the word of God. And they know not how many they might have been the means of bringing under the blood-stained banner of Christ, if they had only taken up their cross and followed him wherever he might lead. It is to those, and those only, who are engaged in carrying forward the commission of our Saviour, that the blessed "Well done" will be spoken, and upon whose brows crowns of immortal glory will be placed.



June 17, 1880

### **Incidents by the Way**

While on our way from Michigan to California a few months since, we had occasion to stop over one night in Council Bluffs. Thinking to improve this opportunity to visit a friend residing in the place, we took the street-car for her house, only to find that she was out of town and probably would not return for several days. Retracing our steps, we took lodging in the nearest hotel, and in the morning, after breakfasting from our well-filled lunch-basket provided by our friends at the Battle Creek Sanitarium, we took the transfer car across the Mississippi to Omaha. Here we were obliged to wait several hours in the depot, where we had a favorable opportunity to study human nature.

Among the many who were continually thronging this way and that, there was one lady who particularly attracted our attention. She was apparently about forty years of age, and was surrounded by a flock of children all the way from four to twenty-four years old. One of the boys, of about ten summers, caused her a great amount of trouble. Curiosity and willfulness seemed to be more fully developed in him than in the rest of the little ones, who sat demurely perched upon the seats, with their arms folded and their feet dangling, while he, keeping close watch of his mother's eyes, would, when they were turned, improve every opportunity to dodge out of the door and watch the engines as they were moving back and forth. His mother, fearing he might get hurt, and becoming vexed at his repeated disobedience, at last went out after him, and soon returned dragging him in with her. She scolded, and he resisted at every step. They finally reached the seat, into which she pushed him with such violence as to bring his head with considerable force against the seat, really hurting the lad.

Then came screech after screech, equaled only by the loud blasts of the engines without. The mother threatened, but to no purpose. He was desperate. When he became too tired to scream longer, he lowered his voice to a monotonous, long-drawn-out wail, which continued for something like half an hour. The mother looked troubled; but who was most at fault? The boy was stubborn; she was passionate.

We afterward had some conversation with the mother. She stated that the boy refused to come in when called, and threw himself at full length upon the platform to

provoke her. Then she brought him in by main force, and, said she, "Oh, if I only had him alone in some place, I would pay him well for this behavior!" "But," said I, "that would not change his inward feelings. Violence would only raise his combativeness, and make him still worse. The more calm a mother can keep at such times, however provoking the conduct of her children, the better will she maintain her influence and dignity as a mother, and the easier will they be controlled." She admitted that it might be so.

I then inquired how many children she had. She replied, "Eleven," and, pointing to two bright-looking little girls, said, "These are my youngest; one is four, the other six. My eldest are grown-up boys. We are now on our way from Iowa City to Nebraska, where there is plenty of land, and work for the children." Not a bad idea, certainly, to give those sharp, active boys employment. There is nothing so good to keep boys from being ruined by the temptations and allurements of evil as plenty of work.

In this little incident we have a good illustration of the kind of management quite commonly adopted by mothers, although so public a demonstration of it is seldom seen. Had this mother oiled the machinery with patience and self-command, as every mother should, she would not have aroused the combative spirit of her children. But all she seemed to know of government was to threaten and intimidate, to reprove and scold. Her younger children seemed afraid to stir, others looked hard and defiant, while the older ones appeared ashamed and distressed at the exhibition they were making.

The mother had not learned the all-important lesson of self-control. "He that is slow to anger," says the Wise Man, "is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city." The man or woman who preserves the balance of the mind when tempted to indulge passion, stands higher in the sight of God and heavenly angels than the most renowned general that ever led an army to battle and to victory. Said a celebrated emperor when on his dying bed, "Among all my conquests, there is but one which affords me any consolation now, and that is the conquest I have gained over my own turbulent temper." Alexander and Caesar found it easier to subdue a world than to subdue themselves. After conquering nation after nation they fell--one of them "the victim of intemperance, the other of mad ambition."

Had this mother realized her responsibility, she never would have pursued the course she did. Her burdens were necessarily heavy, but how much heavier was she

making them by her lack of self-control. Every harsh word, every passionate blow, would sometime be reflected upon herself. If she had been ever kind, patient, and calm in her discipline, it would have been seen in the deportment of her children. How much she needed the Christian graces and the help of Jesus to mold their minds and fashion their characters. Such mothers will gain no souls to the fold of Christ. They train, they rule, they ruin, but do not bless and save.

Having purchased our sleeping-car tickets for Ogden, we soon found ourselves and numerous baskets and satchels well disposed of in an elegant palace sleeping-car. There were only seventeen passengers in our car,--no babies, no invalids, no one to cry, "Please close the ventilators." "Will you be so kind as to shut down that window?" We were at perfect liberty to open and close windows as best suited our convenience.

While crossing the plains there was nothing in the scenery to especially engage our attention but the prairie fires. These looked grand and awful in the distance. As the train moved slowly onward, we could see the lurid flames stretching like walls of fire for miles across the prairies; and, as the wind would rise, the flames would leap higher and higher, brightening the darkness of night with their awful light. Farther on we could see where deep furrows had been broken with the plow around haystacks and settlers' homes to protect them; and we could see also dark objects in the distance. They were persons guarding their homes.

Thursday noon we reached Cheyenne, having been three days on our journey. After leaving this place we had an interesting view of the Rocky Mountains. But suddenly dark clouds obstruct our view, and as we near Laramie, a hail-storm dashes down upon us. Occasionally the sunshine would break through the clouds, striking full upon the snow-clad mountain-tops, and causing them to sparkle like diamond beds. An additional engine is hitched on to help draw the train up to Sherman, the highest point on the route. The distance between Cheyenne and Sherman is about thirty-three miles, and the difference in altitude is more than two thousand feet. The train moves slowly and smoothly along, giving the passengers a good opportunity to view the scenery.

At length the summit is reached, and the descent begins. Two miles west of Sherman we pass Dale Creek Bridge, one of the most interesting places on the route. It looks frail, and incapable of sustaining the weight of so ponderous a train; but it is built of iron, and is really very substantial. It is six hundred and fifty feet long, and one

hundred and thirty feet high. A beautiful, silvery stream winds its way in the depths below, and as we look down upon the dwellings they seem in the distance like mere pigeon houses.

At Ogden we receive additional passengers. A tall, dignified gentleman enters, accompanied by his wife and little daughter. We learned that he was an active temperance worker, and had for some time been delivering lectures on that subject in the great Mormon Temple at Salt Lake City. Noticing that our party were all busily engaged in writing most of the time, and having some curiosity to know who we were and what we were doing, he made himself known to us toward evening. He stated that he had traveled extensively in the East, and had established several institutions in which to treat inebriates, and that he was now visiting California to establish a similar institution, having already obtained pledges for that purpose to the amount of several thousand dollars.

This celebrated temperance lecturer, we are sorry to say, was an inveterate tobacco-user. Oh, what ideas of temperance! Would that he might see the utter inconsistency of his position in trying to reform inebriates while himself indulging in a habit which every year leads hundreds to a drunkard's grave! Could he but reform in this respect, we are sure that his influence for good in the world would be increased a hundred-fold.

Near us sits the far-famed Stokes, a pleasant-appearing, middle-aged man, but whose hair is as white as a person's usually is at a much more advanced age. Having retreated to the mountains, he is now actively engaged in mining operations, and was on his way to Sacramento on business.

Moving slowly over the great American Desert, with not an object in view but the sage brush and distant mountain-tops, we seem much like a ship at sea. Finally our faithful iron horse, steaming along so grandly, and seeming like a thing of life, begins to ascend the Sierra Nevadas. The scenery is beautiful. Passing Truckee in our descent on the opposite side, we enter snow-sheds. From light to darkness and from darkness to light is the only change for miles. Most of our last night on the train was spent in viewing the scenery. A winter view of the Sierra Nevadas is indeed grand. Pen cannot describe it, as the soft light of the moon sifted down through the grand, frosted evergreens, revealing the deep canyons below and the lofty mountain peaks above. We

chose to enjoy this rather than to spend the time in sleeping.

We arrived at Oakland several hours before we had expected, and rejoiced that we had completed our journey without accident, and with hardly a feeling of weariness. People making this trip across the plains usually patronize the eating-houses along the line, and partake of three hearty meals per day, besides an almost endless variety of nuts and candies, cigars and liquors, between times. But we preferred to limit ourself to only one meal per day, that we might have a better opportunity to rest, and thus be prepared to enter upon arduous labor as soon as we reached our destination. For seventeen years we have eaten only two meals a day while engaged in almost incessant labor.

At that time the light of health reform dawned upon us, and since that time the questions have come home every day, "Am I practicing true temperance in all things?" "Is my diet such as will bring me in a position where I can accomplish the greatest amount of good?" If we cannot answer these questions in the affirmative, we stand condemned before God, for he will hold us all responsible for the light which has shone upon our path. The time of ignorance God winked at, but as fast as light shines upon us he requires us to change our health-destroying habits, and place ourselves in a right relation to physical law.

We have crossed the plains fifteen times, and we would recommend to those contemplating such a journey strict temperance in all things. Take your lunch-baskets with you, well filled with fruits and plainly cooked bread. Eat at regular hours, and nothing between meals; and whenever the train stops for any length of time improve the opportunity by taking a brisk walk in the open air. By so doing, the journey will not only be more enjoyable, but far more beneficial healthwise.

July 8, 1880

### **Extravagance in Dress**

In Christ's sermon on the mount he exhorts his followers not to be over-anxious in regard to earthly things, and plainly says, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" "And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

These words are full of meaning. They were applicable in the days of Christ, and they are applicable in our day. Jesus here contrasts the natural simplicity of the flowers of the field with the artificial adorning of raiment. He declares that the glory of Solomon could not bear comparison with one of the flowers in natural loveliness. Here is a lesson for all who desire to know and do the will of God. If Jesus has noticed the devotion and care given to dress, and has cautioned us, yea, commanded us, not to bestow too much thought upon it, it is time we were thinking seriously of the matter ourselves. Solomon was so engrossed with thoughts of outward display, that he failed to elevate his mind by a constant connection with the God of wisdom. Perfection and beauty of character were overlooked in his attempt to obtain outward beauty. He sold his honor and integrity of character in seeking to glorify himself before the world, and finally became a despot, supporting his extravagance by a grinding taxation upon the people. He first became corrupt at heart, then he apostatized from God, and finally became a worshiper of idols.

As we see our sisters departing from simplicity in dress, and cultivating a love for the fashions of the world, we feel troubled. By taking steps in this direction, they are separating themselves from God and neglecting the inward adorning. Our sisters should not feel at liberty to spend their God-given time in the unnecessary ornamentation of their clothing. How much better were it employed in searching the Scriptures, thus obtaining a thorough knowledge of the prophecies and of the practical lessons of Christ.

As Christians, we ought not to engage in any employment upon which we cannot conscientiously ask the blessing of the Lord. Do you, my sisters, in the needless work

you put upon your garments, feel a clear conscience? Can you, while perplexing your mind over ruffles, and bows, and ribbons, be uplifting your soul to God in prayer that he will bless your efforts? The time spent in this way might be devoted to doing good to others, and to cultivating your own minds; and the means expended would be better used in helping some poor sisters to more comfortable and respectable clothing, so that the contrast between your dress and theirs would not be so marked. This would be an excellent way of showing that you love your neighbor as yourself.

There are many of our sisters who are persons of good ability, and if their talents were used to the glory of God, they would be successful in saving many souls to Jesus Christ. Will they not be responsible for the souls they might have saved had not extravagance in dress and the cares of this world so crippled and dwarfed their God-given powers that they felt no burden of the work? Satan invented the fashions, in order to keep the minds of women so engrossed with the subject of dress that they could think of but little else.

The duties devolving upon mothers to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord cannot be discharged while they continue their present manner of dress. They have no time to pray or to search the Scriptures that they may understand the truth and teach it to their children. It is not only the privilege, but the duty, of every one to increase daily in the knowledge of God and the truth. But Satan's object is gained if he can invent anything which shall so attract the mind that this cannot be the case. The reason why so many are not desirous of attending prayer-meeting and of engaging in religious exercises, is because their minds are devoted to other things. They are conforming to the world in the matter of dress; while they are so doing, souls whom they might have helped by letting their light shine in good works, are being strengthened in their unbelief by the inconsistent course of these professed Christians.

God would be pleased to see our sisters clad in neat, simple apparel, and earnestly engaged in the work of the Lord. They are not deficient in ability, but if they would put to a right use the talents they already have, their ability would be greatly increased. If they would devote one-half the time they now spend in needless work to searching the word of God and explaining it to others, their minds would be enriched with gems of truth, and they would be strengthened and ennobled by the effort made to understand the reasons of our faith. Were our sisters conscientious Bible Christians, seeking to improve every opportunity to enlighten others, we should see scores of souls embracing

the truth through their self-sacrificing endeavors alone. Sisters, in the day when the accounts of all are balanced, will you feel a pleasure in reviewing your life, or will you feel that the beauty of the outward man was sought while the inward beauty of the soul was almost entirely neglected?

Some have said, "After I wear out this dress, I will make the next more plain." Now, if conformity to the fashions of the world is right and pleasing to God, where is the need of making a change at all? But if it is wrong, is it best to continue in the wrong any longer than is positively necessary to make the change? Right here we would remind you of the zeal and earnestness, the skill and perseverance, you manifested in fashioning your dress according to the fashion. Would it not be praise worthy to manifest at least an equal earnestness to make it conform to the Bible standard? Precious, God-given time and means were used in fashioning those garments; and now what are you willing to sacrifice, to correct the wrong example you have been giving to others?

Have not our sisters sufficient zeal and moral courage to place themselves without excuse upon the Bible platform? The inspired apostle has given most explicit directions on this point: "Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." Here the Lord, through his apostle, speaks expressly against the wearing of gold. Let those who have had experience see to it that they do not lead others astray on this point by their example. That ring encircling your finger may be very plain, but it is useless, and the wearing of it has a wrong influence upon others.

Especially should the wives of our ministers be careful not to depart from the plain teachings of the Bible on the point of dress. Many look upon these injunctions as being too old-fashioned to be worthy of notice; but He who gave them to his disciples understood the dangers from the love of dress in our time, and sent to us the note of warning. Will we heed the warning, and be wise? Extravagance in dress is continually increasing. The end is not yet. Fashion is constantly changing, and our sisters follow in its wake, regardless of time or expense. There is a great amount of means expended upon dress which should be returned to God, the giver.



The plain, neat dress of the poorer class often appears in marked contrast with the attire of their more wealthy sisters, and this difference often causes a feeling of embarrassment on the part of the poor. Some try to imitate their sisters, and will frill, and ruffle, and trim goods of an inferior quality, so as to approach as near as possible to them in dress. Poor girls, receiving but two dollars a week for their work, will expend every cent to dress like others who are not obliged to work for their living. These youth have nothing to put into the treasury of God; for their little fund is too soon exhausted. Besides, their time is so thoroughly occupied in making their dress as fashionable as that of their sisters, that they have no time for the improvement of the mind, for the study of God's word, for secret prayer, or for the prayer-meeting. The mind is entirely taken up with planning how to appear as well as their sisters. To this end, physical, mental, and moral health are sacrificed. Nor is this all. Happiness and the favor of God are laid upon the altar of fashion.

Many will not attend the service of God upon the Sabbath because their dress would appear so unlike that of their Christian sisters in style and adornment. Will my sisters consider these things as they are, and will they fully realize the weight of their influence upon others? By walking in a forbidden track themselves, they lead others in the same path of disobedience and backsliding. Christian simplicity is sacrificed to outward display. My sisters, how shall we change all this? How shall we recover ourselves from the snare of Satan, and break the chains that have bound us in slavery to fashion? How shall we recover our wasted opportunities, how do we bring our powers into healthful, vigorous action? There is only one way, and that is to make the Bible our rule of life. Then, dear sisters, work earnestly to do good to others, watch unto prayer, take up your long-neglected cross, and heed the warnings and injunctions of Him who has said, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

My Christian sisters, those of you who have thought enough of the fashions of this age to patronize them, face the mirror, the law of God, and test your course of action by the first four commandments. These explicitly define the duty of man to God. He claims the undivided affections; and anything which tends to absorb the mind and divert it from God assumes the form of an idol. The true and living God is crowded out of the thoughts and heart, and the soul temple is defiled by the worship of other gods before the Lord. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." says the commandment. Search the heart, compare the life and character with the statutes and precepts of

Jehovah, and then look diligently for the defects of character.

Take the last six commandments, specifying the duties of man to his fellow-men. Here are shown solemn obligations which are trampled upon every day by professed commandment-keepers. Those who have been enlightened by the grace of God, who have been adopted into the royal family, ought not always to be children in the work of the Lord. If they use, to the best of their ability, the grace given, their capacity will increase, and their knowledge become more extensive, and they will be intrusted with a still greater measure of divine power. In putting forth earnest, well-directed efforts to bring their fellow-men to a knowledge of the truth, they will become strong in the Lord; and for working righteousness on the earth, they will receive the reward of eternal life in the kingdom of Heaven. This is the privilege of our sisters. And when we see them using God's time and money in needless display of dress, we can but warn them that they are breaking, not only the first four but the last six commandments. They cannot make God the supreme object of their worship, neither can they love their neighbor as themselves.

Christ is our example. We must keep the Pattern continually before us, and contemplate the infinite sacrifice he has made to redeem us from the thralldom of sin. As we look into the mirror, if we find ourselves condemned, let us not venture farther in transgression, but face right about and wash our robes of character in the blood of the Lamb, that they may be spotless. Let us cry as did David: "Open thou' mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." Those to whom God has intrusted time and means that they might be a blessing to humanity, but who have squandered these gifts needlessly upon themselves and children, will have a fearful account to meet at the bar of God.

Dear sisters, shall this order of things continue; or will you resolve to put off your ornaments, and turn your attention fully to seeking the Lord? Bring in your trespass-offerings, your thank-offerings, and your freewill-offerings; humble your hearts before the Lord, and he will be found ever ready to receive and pardon.

January 4, 1881

## Literary Societies

It is often asked, Are literary societies a benefit to our youth? To answer this question properly, we should consider not only the avowed purpose of such societies, but the influence which they have actually exerted, as proved by experience. The improvement of the mind is a duty which we owe to ourselves, to society, and to God. But we should never devise means for the cultivation of the intellect at the expense of the moral and the spiritual. And it is only by the harmonious development of both the mental and the moral faculties that the highest perfection of either can be attained. Are these results secured by literary societies as they are generally conducted?

As the question was first stated, it would appear very narrow-minded to answer in the negative; but in every case where a literary society has been established among our people, its influence has proved to be unfavorable to religious life, and has led to backsliding from God. This has been tried in Battle Creek and in other places, and the result has ever been the same. In some cases, long-standing evils have grown out of these associations.

The irreligious and unconsecrated in heart and life are usually admitted, and are often placed in the most responsible positions. Rules and regulations may be adopted that are thought to be sufficient to hold in check every deleterious influence; but Satan, a shrewd general, is at work to mold the society to suit his plans, and in time he too often succeeds. The great adversary finds ready access to those whom he has controlled in the past, and through them he accomplishes his purpose. The association of the God-fearing with the unbelieving in these societies does not make saints of sinners. For a short time, there may be nothing seriously objectionable, but minds that have not been brought under the control of the Spirit of Christ will not take readily to those things which savor of truth and righteousness. If they had heretofore had any relish for spiritual things, they would have placed themselves in the ranks of Jesus Christ. The two classes are controlled by different masters, and are opposites in their purposes, hopes, tastes, and desires. The followers of Jesus enjoy sober, sensible, and ennobling themes, while those who have no love for sacred things cannot take pleasure in these gatherings, unless the superficial and unreal shall make a prominent feature in the

exercises.

The purposes and objects which lead to the formation of literary societies may be good; but unless wisdom from God shall control these organizations, they will become a positive evil. Various entertainments are introduced to make the meetings interesting and attractive for worldlings, and thus the exercises of the so-called literary society too often degenerate into demoralizing theatrical performances, and cheap non-sense. All these gratify the carnal mind, that is at enmity with God; but they do not strengthen the intellect nor confirm the morals. Little by little, the spiritual element is ruled out by the irreligious, and the effort to harmonize principles which are antagonistic in their nature proves a decided failure. When God's people voluntarily unite with the worldly and unconsecrated, and give them the pre-eminence, they will be led away from him by the unsanctified influence under which they have placed themselves.

Many literary societies are in reality young theaters on a cheap scale, and they create in the youth a taste for the stage. While writing upon this point, my eye falls upon the following striking incident from real life:

"It is of no use, Mrs. W., I have tried again and again, and I cannot become a Christian.'

"So you said a year ago, yet you thought there was nothing in the way.'

"I don't think there is now, but I don't feel any different from what I did then, and I don't believe I ever shall be a Christian.'

"The first speaker was a bright girl somewhat over twenty, who, on a previous visit nearly a year before, had confided to her elder friend her earnest desire to become a Christian. Of her evident sincerity there could be no doubt, and the visitor was sorely puzzled to understand why her young friend had not yet found peace. The two were standing by the half-opened door of the Sunday-school room, where a rehearsal for an 'entertainment' was in progress; and the girl, looking in, seemed suddenly to find there a suggestion for further thought.

"I believe,' she said hesitatingly, 'there is one thing I cannot give up.'

"Give it up at once, dear.'

"But I can't.'

"Come to Jesus first then, and he will give you the power.'

"I don't want him to. I believe if I knew I should die and be lost in three weeks from tonight, I would rather be lost than give up my passion.'

"And what is this dearly loved thing, worth so much more than your salvation?'

"Oh, it isn't worth more, only I love it more, and I can't and won't give it up. It's that I--I want to be an actress; I know I have the talent; I've always hoped the way would open for me to go upon the stage, and I can't help hoping so still.'

"Do you think it would be wrong for you to do so, provided the way did open?'

"I don't know that it would be a sin; but I couldn't do it and be a Christian; the two things don't go together.'

"How did you come by such a taste? I am sure you do not belong to a theater-going family?'

"Oh no! my father and mother are Methodists; they always disapproved of the theater. I've been in Sunday-school all my life. They used to make me sing and recite at the entertainments when I was four years old, and I acted the angel and fairy parts in the dialogues; and when I grew older, I always arranged the tableaux, charades, etc. Then I joined a set of sociables got up by our church young people. At first we did "Mrs. Jarley's Wax-works," and sung "Pinafore" for the benefit of the church; and then we got more ambitious, studied, and had private theatricals, and last winter we hired Mason's Hall and gave a series of Shakespearean performances, which cleared off a large part of the church debt. But that's only second-class work, after all. I want to do the real thing, to go upon the stage as a profession. My father won't hear of it; but I hope some time the way will be opened that I may realize my heart's desire.'

"And meantime, will you not come to Jesus and be saved?'"

"No, I cannot do it and keep to this hope, and I will not give this up.'

"And so the visitor turned sadly away, thinking for what miserable messes of pottage men and women are willing to sell their glorious birthright as children of God; thinking also of the seeds which are being sowed in our Sunday-schools, the tares among the wheat, and the terrible harvest that may yet spring up from this well-meant but injudicious seed-sowing."

It has been our study to devise some plan for the establishment of a literary society which shall prove a benefit to all connected with it,--a society in which all its members shall feel a moral responsibility to make it what it should be, and to avoid the evils that have made such associations dangerous to religious principle. Persons of discretion and good judgment, who have a living connection with Heaven, who will see the evil tendencies, and, not deceived by Satan, will move straight forward in the path of integrity, continually holding aloft the banner of Christ,--such a class are needed to control in these societies. Such an influence will command respect, and make these gatherings a blessing rather than a curse. If men and women of mature age would unite with young persons to organize and conduct such a literary society, it might become both useful and interesting. But when such gatherings degenerate into occasions for fun and boisterous mirth, they are anything but literary or elevating. They are debasing to both mind and morals.

Bible reading, the critical examination of Bible subjects, essays written upon topics which would improve the mind and impart knowledge, the study of the prophecies or the precious lessons of Christ,--these will have an influence to strengthen the mental powers and increase spirituality. And why should not the Bible be brought into such meetings? There is a deplorable ignorance of God's word, even with those who are thought to be intelligent.

"Most wondrous book! bright candle of the Lord! Star of eternity! the only light By which the bark of man can navigate The sea of life, and gain the coast of bliss securely."

Why should not this book--this precious treasure--be exalted and esteemed as a valued friend? This is our chart across the stormy sea of life. It is our guide-book,

showing us the way to the eternal mansions, and the character we must have to inhabit them. There is no book the perusal of which will so elevate and strengthen the mind as the study of the Bible. Here the intellect will find themes of the most elevated character to call out its powers. There is nothing that will so endow with vigor all our faculties as bringing them in contact with the stupendous truths of revelation. The effort to grasp and measure these great thoughts expands the mind. We may dig down deep into the mine of truth, and gather precious treasures with which to enrich the soul. Here we may learn the true way to live, the safe way to die.

A familiar acquaintance with the Scriptures sharpens the discerning powers, and fortifies the soul against the attacks of Satan. The Bible is the sword of the Spirit, which will never fail to vanquish the adversary. It is the only true guide in all matters of faith and practice. The reason why Satan has so great control over the minds and hearts of men, is that they have not made the word of God the man of their counsel, and all their ways have not been tried by the true test. The Bible will show us what course we must pursue to become heirs of glory. Says the psalmist, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." But this is not the case when it is left unopened and unread.

Literary societies are almost universally exerting an influence contrary to that which the name indicates. As generally conducted, they are an injury to the youth; for Satan comes in to put his stamp upon the exercises. All that makes men manly, or women womanly, is reflected from the character of Christ. The less we have of Christ in such societies, the less we have of the elevating, refining, ennobling element which should prevail. When worldlings conduct these meetings to meet their wishes, the spirit of Christ is excluded; for the Lord's enemies are not pleased with that which would strengthen and confirm a love for spiritual and eternal things. The mind is drawn away from serious reflection, away from God, away from the real and substantial, to the imaginary and the superficial. Literary societies--would that the name expressed their true character! "What is the chaff to the wheat?"

The mind is so constituted that it must be occupied with either good or evil. If it takes a low level, it is generally because it is left to deal with common-place subjects--unimportant matters,--not being called out and reined up to grasp those grand and elevated truths which are as enduring as eternity. The understanding will gradually adapt itself to the subjects with which it is familiarized. Man has the power to regulate and control the workings of the mind, and give direction to the current of his thoughts.

But this requires greater effort than we can make in our own strength. We must stay our minds on God, if we would have right thoughts, and proper subjects for meditation.

Few realize that it is a duty to exercise control over their thoughts and imaginations. It is difficult to keep the undisciplined mind fixed upon profitable subjects. But if the thoughts are not properly employed, religion cannot flourish in the soul. The mind must be pre-occupied with sacred and eternal things, or it will cherish trifling and superficial thoughts. Both the intellectual and the moral powers must be disciplined, and they will strengthen and improve by exercise.

To understand this matter aright, we must remember that our hearts are naturally depraved, and we are unable, of ourselves, to pursue a right course. It is only by the grace of God, combined with the most earnest efforts on our part, that we can gain the victory.

There are, in the Christian faith, subjects upon which every one should accustom his mind to dwell. The love of Jesus, which passeth knowledge, his sufferings for the fallen race, his work of mediation in our behalf, and his exalted glory,--these are the mysteries into which angels desired to look. Heavenly beings find in these themes enough to attract and engage their deepest thoughts; and shall we, who are so intimately concerned, manifest less interest than the angels, in the wonders of redeeming love?

The intellect, as well as the heart, must be consecrated to the service of God. He has claims upon all there is of us. However innocent or laudable it may appear, the follower of Christ should not indulge in any gratification, or engage in any enterprise, which an enlightened conscience tells him would abate his ardor, or lessen his spirituality

Pleasure-seeking, frivolity, and mental and moral dissipation, are flooding the world with their demoralizing influence. Every Christian should labor to press back the tide of evil, and save our youth from the influences that would sweep them down to ruin. May God help us to press our way against the current!



January 4, 1881

## **The House of the Lord**

"How much owest thou unto my Lord?" Let this question come home to every heart. All that we possess, all that we are, we owe to our Redeemer. He gives us every earthly blessing, and every spiritual good. Are we, by self-denial and sacrifice, doing all in our power to relieve the needy, and to sustain the cause of God? The poor are the Lord's, and the cause of religion is his. Every good thing we enjoy was placed in our hands by his bountiful mercy, as an expression of his love. Christ requires us to do as he has done,--deny self that we may be laborers together with God.

The new year is right upon us, and we should recount the blessings of the past, the favors we have received of God, and then bring to the Lord our freewill-offerings, our thank-offerings, and our sin-offerings. The Sabbath-keepers at Battle Creek have been a liberal people; most of them are poor, but as they have manifested liberality in the past, we hope they will pursue the same course in the future. There are but few who cannot do something. If it costs the poor greater self-denial than it does the rich, the reward will be proportionate. The Lord's bounties are continually flowing in upon us, and he would have us to be living channels, through which his mercies may flow out in deeds of beneficence to our fellow-men. In no case let us rob God.

We have the privilege of listening to God's word in our place of worship; but this building, called the Lord's house, has a heavy debt. Shall not we who worship in this commodious edifice put forth earnest efforts to do our share in lifting the debt from the Tabernacle? The poor may be encouraged by the thought that the smallest sums, given in sincerity and cheerfulness, are as acceptable to God as are the thousands cast into the treasury by the rich. There are but few as poor as the widow who gave her two mites as an offering to God. The gift was small, yet it was all her living, and she was commended by the Master. He regarded the two mites of the poor widow as a greater contribution than the rich gifts of the wealthy. He did not measure the value of the offering by its amount, but by the motive, the cheerfulness and purity of the action. Although this small contribution was mingled with the thousands in the treasury, it was not lost to the eye of the great Giver of all good. That little rill which started in the two mites has gathered to itself other tiny streams from thousands of sources, and has had an

influence to rebuke selfishness and encourage the giving of larger sums.

All have a work to do, if they would make their life a blessing. We ask our brethren and sisters to act their part as nobly this year as they did last year in contributing toward our house of worship. Open your hearts, and open your purses, and do what you can. Freely and continuously our Redeemer bestows his gifts upon us. Ought we not, then, to give back to the Lord his own? Can we exercise a greater love than God has shown toward us? He has done all that he can do for our good. He appeals to us whether he has left anything undone which our highest interests demand: "Judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?" We cannot express our gratitude to God by bestowing anything to enrich him, for he is the giver of all our mercies; but he points us to the poor and the afflicted, and to his cause in all its branches, and assures us that he accepts the good done to the least of his followers as if done to himself. God has manifested a deep interest in the welfare of the fallen sons of Adam. He "so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." All the love that men and angels are capable of exercising, sinks into insignificance in comparison with the love of God toward the human family.

The Lord requires us to give liberally for the support of his cause. Should we compare our offerings with those which were constantly required of the Jews, we would find that we fall far below them in beneficence. Their contributions amounted to fully one-fourth of their entire income. At the lowest estimate, the amount expended upon the tabernacle in the wilderness and the temple at Jerusalem exceeded the cost of all the church edifices in the United States.

Many regard these demands upon the Jews as far above the possible standard of duty required of us. But are there grounds for this conclusion? Are our advantages inferior to those of the Jews? or has God been less beneficent with us than with them? We hear ministers in the various churches extolling the blessings of the gospel, and representing the glory of this age as exceeding in every respect that of the Jewish age. They call the Mosaic dispensation one of darkness, and exalt the present as an age of far greater light and privilege. If this is so, will not God hold us accountable for these increased blessings? Just in proportion to the gifts bestowed, will be his claims upon us. Are the calls of beneficence less numerous now than they were in the Jewish age? It

should be the reverse.

The systematic demands upon the Jews were healthful in their influence, and were preventive of pauperism. A poor man was rarely seen among that people. While they rendered willing obedience to God's requirements, his blessing rested upon them, and prosperity attended all their labors. Anciently, the Hebrews were separated from every other nation on the face of the earth. Their field of labor was limited to their own people. Now the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile is broken down, and the way is open for foreign missionary enterprises. The field of our labor is the world. Every nation, tongue, and people can be reached by the saving truth for this time. God has freely intrusted to us, as his stewards, the bread of life, and the means to carry that bread to those who are ready to perish. In view of this, should not our standard of liberality be higher than that of God's ancient people?

In proportion to their income, the rich are doing less than the poor. Many who give something are not blessed of God, because they do not give more. The Lord would have his people so constrained by the love of Christ that they will gladly meet the wants of his cause. We should ever acknowledge our allegiance to him, and regard it as our reasonable service to devote our energies, our property, and our lives to his work.

When, on account of their faith, the Christians at Jerusalem were reduced to poverty, other churches showed their liberality by supplying the wants of those brethren. Though the Macedonian churches were in great affliction, yet the apostle Paul declares that "the abundance of their joy, and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality."

We do not urge our brethren to contribute, but as they have hitherto shown a willingness to assist in the work of God, we invite them now to come forward with their offerings, and lessen the debt upon our Tabernacle. We hope to be as much surprised on New Year's eve as was David when he saw the offerings for the temple of the Lord:

"And they with whom precious stones were found gave them to the treasure of the house of the Lord, by the hand of Jehiel the Gershonite. Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord; and David the king also rejoiced with great joy. Wherefore David blessed the Lord before all the congregation; and David said, Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel

our father, forever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come of thee, and thou reignest over all; and in thine hand is power and might; and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee."

January 4, 1881

## **The New Year**

We should invite our brethren and sisters of other churches, not only in Michigan but in the different States, to consider our situation at Battle Creek. Our institutions being located here, this is a place of no small importance to our cause. In so large a church, there are many more demands for means than in the smaller churches. Many of your poor, your unfortunate, your sick, have for some reason located here. Our College is no financial benefit to the cause in this place, for at this late date it has a heavy debt, which is carried by the Review Office. Yet those who live at a distance are really as much benefited by the College as are our people at Battle Creek.

The house in which we worshiped for a number of years would have accommodated our people in this city. But our congregations have rapidly increased in size since the establishment of the College. Families moved to Battle Creek to educate their children, and students came in to attend the school. These additions, with the patients who came to the Sanitarium, made it a positive necessity to build a larger house of worship. To meet the demands created by the presence of our institutions here, the Tabernacle was erected. It is a commodious building, yet is not extravagant in its design or workmanship. Nothing less than this, in architecture or expense, would we desire to offer to our God as his house.

The erection of this building necessarily required a large outlay of means. Battle Creek, a poor church, has lifted the load nobly; others in the different States have responded to the calls made; and yet our house of worship is encumbered with a debt, which is also carried by the Review Office. This debt should be lifted. Will our brethren and sisters help us at this time?

In the interchange of presents at the commencement of the new year, we trust that our people, not only at Battle Creek but in all other places, will remember the wants of God's cause. The Lord is not honored by the practice of bestowing costly presents upon a few favorites because it is the custom. These favorites are seldom the Lord's poor. There are but few whose chief interest at this holiday season is to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and lift up the discouraged and oppressed. Many are really perplexed

to decide what gifts they can select that will give pleasure to those who are abundantly supplied with the good things of this life. Let the money usually expended for these gifts, flow into the Lord's treasury. When tempted to purchase expensive ornaments, or other needless articles to please the eye and indulge the fancy, let every one ask himself, "Can I do this to the glory of God, or is it merely to please my friends?" How many, at the commencement of the new year, consider their indebtedness to God while they are making their holiday presents?

There is no harm in presenting to our friends gifts which they really need. But I entreat you, my brethren and sisters, do not, because it is the custom, bestow gifts upon those who have no real need, while you do little for the poor, and entirely neglect to make your offerings to God. All that we possess belongs to God, and he has made us his stewards. Let us not expend our means for idols to please the fancy and engage the affection of our friends, while we at the same time neglect our best Friend,--the one to whom we owe everything.

I plead with our brethren and sisters everywhere in behalf of our Tabernacle. In this building, students and visitors from all parts of the country assemble weekly to listen to the word of God. It is the duty of other churches to help us in our efforts in this missionary field. The selfish and stingy may say, "I am tired of this continual solicitation for means; will it never cease?" No, never, never! until Christ shall clothe himself in garments of vengeance, and the fiat shall go forth from his lips, He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still.

When our Heavenly Benefactor forgets our returning wants; when God forgets to be gracious, and none of his gifts flow into our barns, our granaries, and our cellars,--then may we plead an excuse for withholding our offerings. God has never left us without expressions of his love, "in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." He has declared that "while the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." He guards us every moment by his care, and upholds us by his power. He sends us the cheering sunshine, and the invigorating air; our path is crowded with the tokens of his everlasting love. He spreads our tables with food; he gives us rest and sleep. Weekly he brings to us the Sabbath, the day which he has blessed and sanctified for the good of man. We enjoy freedom from the world's hurry and bustle and wearisome labor, and may worship God in his house according to

the dictates of our own conscience, with none to molest, or make afraid. The prophets and apostles suffered torture and death for their religion; but there is no gaping prison or cruel rack awaiting us for our fidelity to God. And as oft as we lift our hearts to him with true penitence and faith, he opens to us the windows of Heaven and gives us the blessings of his grace. Goodness and mercy constantly surround us.

God has given us his holy word to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. As we peruse its teachings, we find ourselves addressed in counsels of wisdom: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." The lesson is repeated to us, both by the word of God and by his providence, "Freely ye have received, freely give,"--give to help the needy, and to sustain the cause of God. The Lord's claims upon us are paramount to all others. We are not to consecrate to him what may remain after all our imaginary wants have been satisfied; but before supplying our own needs, we should present to him the portion which he has specified. And in addition to all this, the thank-offering is of perpetual obligation.

Our Redeemer has set us an example in his own life, and we are required to be merciful to our fellow-men as he has been merciful to us, needy, dependent creatures of his care. The calls for our beneficence are from God. He works continuously for us, and he requires us to work continually for his cause. When we wish the Infinite Father to withhold from us his gifts, then it will be more reasonable to inquire, "Is there no end of giving?"

When Mary poured the precious ointment on Jesus' head, our Lord commended the act, and also said, "Ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will, ye may do them good." In this instance, Christ teaches his followers that they should bless the needy with their substance and render back to God in gifts and offerings the blessings he has bestowed upon them.

I counsel you, my brethren and sisters, to commence the new year with a clean record. For the truth's sake and for Christ's sake, make every effort in your power to right your wrongs. Search your hearts critically, analyze your feelings, and remove every cause of dissension. If you have defrauded your brother, angels have written it against you. If you have failed to make his case your own, and to manifest toward him

tenderness and compassion, you have neglected your duty, and thus it stands registered against you. Whatever have been the mistakes and errors of the past year, let them be canceled now; let them not be brought into the new year, to mar the purity of its unwritten pages. Come to the Lord with hearts overflowing with thankfulness for past and present mercies, and manifest your appreciation of God's bounties by bringing to him your thank-offerings, your freewill-offerings, and your trespass offerings.

The Chinese new year is sacredly kept for one week, with great ceremony. Old debts are paid, old grudges are forgiven. If an individual cannot pay his debts, his fellow-Chinamen assist him, so that old accounts may not be carried into the new year. They say Joss (their god) will be angry with them if they neglect this work. Although these heathen are ignorant of the true God, yet in these things their example is worthy of imitation, even by Christians.

The worshipers of idols should not be in advance of the children of the living God. Shall not faults be confessed, and differences be put away, before we enter upon the new year? Oh that in every church in our land there might be a settlement of old difficulties, that jealousies and wrongs between brethren might be made right! Would not the world's Redeemer and the holy angels look down upon such a scene with pleasure? Would not the heavenly arches ring with the sweet music, Peace on earth, good-will to men? Let us try to set things in order among us, that we may have the approbation of Heaven. Let us bring all our tithes into the store-house, and prove our Lord therewith, and see if he will not open the windows of Heaven, and pour us out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

I advise my brethren and sisters to supply themselves the coming year with a home missionary box, wherein to deposit small bits of money for offerings to God, besides the regular tithe. Whenever there is an extra outlay for the gratification of the appetite, let an equal amount also be dropped into this savings-bank. The sisters should have a separate box; and for every needless expenditure for ribbons, ruffles, or ornaments of any kind, they should drop the same amount into this receptacle. Let parents prepare a box for each of their children, and after explaining the principle, leave them with their conscience and their God.

Old and young frequently expend means for candies and other hurtful indulgences, and for dainties of which they have no real need. Let them put the same



amount into these savings banks the coming year, and they will be surprised at the result. They will find quite a sum, which represents that which they have thoughtlessly squandered to please the taste and gratify pride, when had they practiced self-denial, they would have had for benevolent purposes an amount just double that which they have saved.

As Christians, let us show our faith by our works; and at the commencement of the year, let us enter upon a course of action which will meet the approval of God. Do not neglect to provide yourselves and your children with the little banks. The very fact that for every penny needlessly expended another must be deposited here, will prevent many an unnecessary outlay.

I now ask my brethren and sisters for a New Year's present, not for myself, but for the cause of God. This request will reach many after the new year has come in, but I trust they will not excuse themselves, thinking that it is too late to present their offerings. Let your gifts come in during the entire month of January; and if you cannot command the means now, send in your pledges, stating what you will do, and then redeem these pledges as soon as possible.

I appeal to the congregation that regularly assemble at our Tabernacle: Will you not bring in your offerings to lift the debt from the Lord's house? I appeal to those who send their children to Battle Creek, where they unite with us in the worship of God: Will you not assist us to lift this debt? I invite all to be especially liberal at this time. Let cheerful freewill-offerings be brought to the Lord, let us consecrate to Him all that we are, and all that we have, and then may we all unite to swell the songs,

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise him, all creatures here below; Praise him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

January 11, 1881

## **Bible Study**

The study of the Bible is superior to all other study in strengthening the intellect. What fields of thought the youth may find to explore in the word of God! The mind may go deeper and still deeper in its research, gathering strength with every effort to comprehend truth; and yet there is an infinity beyond.

Those who profess to love God and reverence sacred things, and yet allow the mind to come down to the superficial and unreal, are placing themselves on Satan's ground, and are doing his work. If the young would study the glorious works of God in nature, and his majesty and power as revealed in his word, they would come from every such exercise with faculties quickened and elevated. A vigor would be received, having no kin to arrogance. By a contemplation of the marvels of divine power, the mind will learn that hardest but most useful of all lessons, that human wisdom, unless connected with the Infinite, and sanctified by the grace of Christ, is foolishness.

The work of God's dear Son in undertaking to link the created with the Uncreated, the finite with the Infinite, in his own divine person, is a subject that may well employ our thoughts for a lifetime. This work of Christ was to confirm the beings of other worlds in their innocency and loyalty, as well as to save the lost and perishing of this world. He opened a way for the disobedient to return to their allegiance to God, while by the same act he placed a safeguard around those who were already pure, that they might not become polluted.

While we rejoice that there are worlds which have never fallen, these worlds render praise, and honor, and glory to Jesus Christ for the plan of redemption to save the fallen sons of Adam, as well as to confirm themselves in their position and character of purity. The arm that raised the human family from the ruin which Satan had brought upon the race through his temptations, is the arm which has preserved the inhabitants of other worlds from sin. Every world throughout immensity engages the care and support of the Father and the Son; and this care is constantly exercised for fallen humanity. Christ is mediating in behalf of man, and the order of unseen worlds also is preserved by his mediatorial work. Are not these themes of sufficient magnitude and importance

to engage our thoughts, and call forth our gratitude and adoration to God?

Open the Bible to our youth, draw their attention to its hidden treasures, teach them to search for its jewels of truth, and they will gain a strength of intellect such as the study of all that philosophy embraces could not impart. The grand subjects upon which the Bible treats, the dignified simplicity of its inspired utterances, the elevated themes which it presents to the mind, the light, sharp and clear, from the throne of God, enlightening the understanding, will develop the powers of the mind to an extent that can scarcely be comprehended, and never fully explained.

The Bible presents a boundless field for the imagination, as much higher and more ennobling in character than the superficial creations of the unsanctified intellect as the heavens are higher than the earth. The inspired history of our race is placed in the hands of every individual. All may now begin their research. They may become acquainted with our first parents as they stood in Eden, in holy innocency, enjoying communion with God and sinless angels. They may trace the introduction of sin, and its results upon the race, and follow, step by step, down the track of sacred history, as it records the disobedience and impenitence of man and the just retribution for sin.

The reader may hold converse with patriarchs and prophets; he may move through the most inspiring scenes; he may behold Christ, who was Monarch in Heaven, equal with God, coming down to humanity, and working out the plan of redemption, breaking off from man the chains wherewith Satan had bound him, and making it possible for him to regain his godlike manhood. Christ taking upon himself humanity, and preserving the level of man for thirty years, and then making his soul an offering for sin, that man might not be left to perish, is a subject for the deepest thought and the most concentrated study.

If they fulfill the purpose of God, even the most experienced Christians will be continual learners in the school of Christ, that they may become efficient teachers. And it is impossible to explain and enforce the great truths of the Bible without seeing clearer light ourselves. Our own views will become extended, and the effort to make plain to others the words of God will fasten them in our own minds. Men may have enjoyed the training of the schools, and may have made themselves acquainted with the great writers on theology, yet truth will open to the mind, and impress it with new and striking power, as the word of God is searched and pondered with an earnest, prayerful

desire to understand it.

Let the mind grasp the stupendous truths of revelation, and it will never be content to employ its powers upon frivolous themes; it will turn with disgust from the trashy literature and idle amusements that are demoralizing the youth of today. Those who have communed with the poets and sages of the Bible, and whose souls have been stirred by the glorious deeds of the heroes of faith, will come from the rich fields of thought far more pure in heart and elevated in mind than if they had been occupied in studying the most celebrated secular authors, or in contemplating and glorifying the exploits of the Pharaohs and Herods and Caesars of the world.

The powers of the youth are mostly dormant, because they do not make the fear of God the beginning of wisdom. The Lord gave Daniel wisdom and knowledge, because he would not be influenced by any power that would interfere with his religious principles. The reason why we have so few men of mind, of stability and solid worth, is that they think to find greatness while disconnecting from Heaven.

God is not feared, and loved, and honored, by the children of men. Religion is not lived out, as well as professed. The Lord can do but little for man, because he is so easily exalted, is so ready to think himself of consequence. God would have us enlarge our capabilities, and avail ourselves of every privilege to unfold, to cultivate, to strengthen the understanding. Man was born for a higher, nobler life than that which he develops. The period of our mortal existence is preparatory to the life which measures with the life of God.

What subjects are presented in the Sacred Scriptures for the mind to dwell upon! Where can be found higher themes for contemplation? Where are themes so intensely interesting? In what sense are all the researches of human science comparable in sublimity and mystery with the science of the Bible? Where is anything that will so call out the strength of the intellect in deep and earnest thought?

If we will let it speak to us, the Bible will teach us what nothing else can teach. But alas! everything else is dwelt upon except the word of God. Worthless literature, fictitious stories are greedily devoured, while the Bible, with all its treasures of sacred truth, lies neglected upon our tables. The Sacred Word, if made the rule of life, will refine, elevate, and sanctify. It is the voice of God to man. Will we heed it?

"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."  
Angels stand beside the searcher of the Scriptures, to impress and illuminate the mind.  
The command of Christ comes to us with the same force today as when addressed to the first disciples eighteen hundred years ago: "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me."

January 11, 1881

## **The Barren Fig-Tree**

The treatment of the barren fig-tree by the Saviour of the world, shows how all pretenders to godliness will be treated. He pronounced upon it his withering curse, and left it seared and sapless, rejected by God. This tree represents the Jews, who refused to respond to the love of Christ. Despite all the privileges and opportunities granted them, they brought forth only briars and thorns,--no fruit to the glory of God. This blighted tree was a parable to the house of Israel,--a most impressive lesson. It is also a lesson to the professed followers of Christ in every age. Reaching through all time, it speaks in unmistakable language to all formalists and boasters of godliness who stand forth to the world with high profession, but are utterly devoid of that vital piety which alone God recognizes as fruit.

There is a decided lack of piety among us as a people. The true burden of the work for the salvation of souls does not rest upon us as it should. Like the barren fig-tree, many flaunt their foliage-covered branches before the Lord, proudly claiming to be his commandment-keeping people, while the heart-searching God finds them destitute of fruit.

We boast of our advancement in the truth; but our works do not correspond with our profession. We are sadly deficient in spirit, energy, and life. Leaf-covered trees are plenty, but they are destitute of fruit. The fearful condition of lukewarmness and unfaithfulness which would exist in the last days was described by the great apostle in these words:

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away."

We learn from the Sacred Record that this tree, upon which hung not a redeeming

cluster of fruit, was clothed with green foliage. Notice the words. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." The doom of the fruitless fig-tree has an application to individual professors who manifest the natural tendencies of the unrenewed heart, and contradict their faith by their daily life. They do not represent to the world the character of Christ, because they have not Christ in them.

Our Saviour never turned away from the truly penitent, no matter how great their guilt. But he hates all hypocrisy and vain display. He addressed with the most severe and unqualified reproof the Pharisees and hypocrites represented by the fig-tree covered with green foliage, but destitute of fruit.

Fruitless professors, sad indeed is your fate; for the open sinner stands in a more favorable position in the sight of God. The blight of God's curse is upon that class who hide the deformity of their lives under a profession of godliness. John, that bold, undaunted reprove of sin, who came to prepare the way for Christ's first advent, thus addressed the multitude that flocked to hear him: "Therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire" Terrible words! And as we see the many who profess to be God's commandment-keeping people, whose lives show that they do not the will of our Father which is in Heaven, we can come to only one conclusion,--that in the doom of the fig-tree which bore no fruit, and upon which fell the withering curse of God, they may read their own fate.

The compassion and tender love of Jesus for those for whom he died, is without parallel. But when his love and mercy are insulted, when his life and example are misrepresented by those professing to be his followers, severe retribution will surely follow. Christ has bought man with an infinite price. Soul, body, and spirit,--all that constitutes the man,--is the rightful property of our Saviour; and when he sees the body, the temple of the soul, defiled and degraded by indulgence of appetite and lustful passion, and the heart polluted and defiled by sin,--when he sees the soul which was the purchase of his blood, proving a curse rather than a blessing to the world, he dooms it as he did the fig-tree, and it becomes a fearful monument of his righteousness and avenging wrath.

Jesus is wounded and insulted by his professed followers whose unconsecrated lives disgrace their profession. He would purify the temple courts of the soul; but if his efforts to warn and reprove are not heeded, his forbearance and compassion will be

changed to severity and judgment.



January 11, 1881

### **Moving to Battle Creek**

Upon opening my mail one morning, I found letters from two of our sisters making most urgent appeals for advise and assistance in regard to coming to Battle Creek. One sister stated that she wished to educate her children here, and also that she had decided to leave her present home. On account of the cruel course of her husband, she felt that she could no longer live with him.

Another sister wrote that her husband had left her for Kansas some months before, and she had heard nothing from him. She had concluded that he must have died, and that she was a widow. She had four little girls whom she was very anxious to bring to Battle Creek that they might enjoy the privileges offered by the church and the school here. She asked that suitable rooms be provided for her, and that some employment be found whereby she could support herself. She also desired help to begin housekeeping, and she hoped, if prospered, sometime to be able to repay these favors. She begged for assistance, and said she was almost wild with trouble and discouragement.

These letters are but a sample of a large number which we are constantly receiving. Should we encourage all who desire to come to Battle Creek, it would be necessary to build an asylum for poor widows, forsaken wives, and homeless orphans. If this is the best thing to be done, and our people in the different churches will furnish means to build such an asylum, and to sustain these unfortunate and bereaved ones, then Battle Creek can open her arms to welcome all who shall come. But would it not be a better plan for every State to examine into these unfortunate cases, and then help the worthy, and counsel those who are not doing what they might do where they are? If these dependent ones are not subject to the voice of the church, they prove themselves unworthy of help from their own brethren or from Battle Creek.

We are ignorant of the real character and situation of many who are appealing to us for help. We have often been imposed upon. There is a right way to have these matters receive due attention. Let the unfortunate make their appeals to the president of their own Conference, and if he desires the counsel of persons of experience at Battle Creek, let him present the particulars of the case by letter. Those who will rush to Battle

Creek without seeking advice, and fall as a dead weight upon the church, deserve censure for their presumption.

For years the widow, the fatherless, the forsaken wife, the unfortunate, the sick and the poor have been moving to Battle Creek, until she is carrying a heavy burden that her sister churches know nothing of. A duty rests upon the churches in the different States to care for their own poor, helping them, as far as possible, to help themselves. Should they do this, there would not be so many coming to Battle Creek with their families who must be cared for or suffer.

In the country, where fruits and vegetables can be raised in abundance, the poor can be supported at far less expense than in the city where the people must pay cash for nearly everything they live upon. Again, in a place like Battle Creek the poor feel compelled to wear better clothing than in the country. Almost any of our country churches could easily support two or three worthy families who are unable to support themselves. Said Christ, "Ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will, ye may do them good." In receiving so many of the poor and unfortunate, Battle Creek has robbed other churches of blessings which they might have enjoyed.

Our ministers, laboring in different places, listen to the sad story of poverty and suffering told by individuals and families, and, without consideration, advise them to go to Battle Creek, where they can find work in our institutions. The persons thus advised may be the most worthy, or, as has sometimes proved to be the case, the most unworthy. Elements have thus floated into Battle Creek that have been a burden to the church. They require constant care and anxiety, and consume the finances raised by a church that are nearly all poor, and obliged to labor diligently for their daily bread.

Many of the poor who come here feel that they must do something for their own support. They plead for a position in our institutions. Some of these have been employed in the folding department at the publishing house, and have been paid Chicago prices for all the labor performed. In no other department are the employees paid Chicago prices. These persons are a burden to the Office as well as to the Sanitarium when sick. They are not the most profitable help. A sufficient number of efficient hands must be employed to supply their places when they are unable to work. Thus a greater number of hands than are really needed are employed. The reliable and efficient laborers cannot be dispensed with, and out of pity the unfortunate ones are

retained, who can earn but little at most, even when paid liberally for all the work they do.

Although poor in this world, yet if they were rich in faith, and had a genuine religious experience, and would help to bear the burdens in spiritual matters, they would be welcomed. But many of this class drifting in among us seem to feel no burden of the cause and work of God. If they do not receive especial attention, they become dissatisfied, and decide that the church have not done their duty. Some will not listen to caution or reproof. The unruly tongue is far more active than the hands. They indulge in fault-finding, and some go from Battle Creek to lay the reproach at the door of their neighbors, who unwisely take it up, and Battle Creek is made a subject of unholy complaints and jealousies. We would ask these complainers whether they went to Battle Creek to help lift the burdens or to lay their own weight as an additional load upon an already overburdened church.

The reliable members of the Battle Creek church have donated liberally to all our institutions, and reflections upon this church are unjust.

Some who move to Battle Creek are actuated by covetousness. They come here for gain, and they watch greedily for every opportunity to benefit themselves at the expense of others. These are not the men who have sacrificed for the cause of God, and have invested means in our institutions. They are men who count gain as godliness, and they must be watched, lest they take advantage of the widow and the fatherless, the poor student, and the afflicted who come to the Sanitarium. These men are responsible to God for the influence they exert, and those who sustain them are also responsible for their dishonest, selfish course.

We plead in behalf of the Battle Creek church. Brethren of other churches, do not allow your inefficient, irresponsible members to drift here. Give Battle Creek the help of godly men who possess integrity of character; men who will not be swayed from duty, who will battle for the right, and maintain the honor of the cause of God. Many ask complainingly, "Why are they so worldly at Battle Creek? Why is it that they are at work almost unceasingly?" Every additional family that the sister churches allow to come to Battle Creek to receive care and financial help increases the necessity for this constant labor. If these complainers were more diligent in business and more fervent in spirit, they might be a help to us at Battle Creek. As long as there is a continual demand,

not only for funds, but for anxious labor to keep this shifting, changing element from demoralizing the church, the treasury will be drained, and the faithful members overworked.

Battle Creek might have paid for the Tabernacle ere this, if every church had borne her own burdens of responsibility, instead of letting them fall here. You who express so much anxiety lest the church at Battle Creek become worldly, please help us by keeping your poor and unfortunate and unconsecrated ones at home. If you send them here, send with them men of Christian experience, and men who have means to help us bear these burdens. Do not, I beseech you, stifle the very life out of the heart of the body by forcing your burdens upon Battle Creek.

The promises of God are broad and positive to those who love their neighbor as themselves. Those who neglect the poor among them, neglect Christ in the person of his saints. How much easier for each church to care for its own poor, bearing the few burdens Providence has laid upon it, than to crowd them upon the already overburdened church at Battle Creek. Cannot our brethren and sisters see that with increased numbers there is an increase of care? There are men and women of all kinds of organization, with every peculiarity of character, to require attention and discipline; and unless there are a sufficient number of God-fearing, responsible men standing at the head of the work, some must be overworked and fall at their post.

God is not pleased with this disposition to move without a plain indication of duty from him. Some men who are useful in their little churches, get the moving mania, and become restless and discontented. They think some other location would be better for their families. Without seeking counsel from God, they move to Battle Creek, and then, instead of feeling, as every one ought to feel, that it is their duty in the fear of God to help the church, to be present at the prayer-meeting, ready to speak and pray, bearing the responsibilities which some one must bear in the church, they take exactly the opposite course. They see that the members of the church are not all right, and the principal business of some is to seek something to find fault about, and go and tell to others.

There is pride and vanity and lack of sobriety in the church at Battle Creek. But the very ones who make complaint of this, choose for associates this unconsecrated class. They seem to be of the same mind and judgment. We need men and women who

shall see and appreciate the good, the pure, and the steadfast, and then stand by their side to support and encourage them.

January 18, 1881

## **Sanctification**

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

There is in the religious world a theory of sanctification which is false in itself, and dangerous in its influence. We have met many who claim to be sanctified; but in many cases those who profess sanctification do not possess the genuine article. Their sanctification consists in talk and will-worship. Those who are really seeking to perfect Christian character will never indulge in the thought that they are sinless. Their lives may be irreproachable, they may be living representatives of the truth which they have accepted; but the more they discipline their minds to dwell upon the character of Christ, and the nearer they approach to his divine image, the more clearly will they discern its spotless perfection, and the more deeply will they feel their own defects.

When persons claim that they are sanctified, it is sufficient evidence that they are far from being holy. They fail to see their own weakness and utter destitution. They look upon themselves as reflecting the image of Christ, because they have no true knowledge of him. The greater the distance between them and their Saviour, the more righteous they appear in their own eyes.

While with penitence and humble trust we meditate upon Jesus, whom our sins have pierced and our sorrows have burdened, we may learn to walk in his footsteps. By beholding him we become changed into his divine likeness. And when this work is wrought in us, we shall claim no righteousness of our own, but shall exalt Jesus Christ, while we hang our helpless souls upon his merits.

Our Saviour ever condemned self-righteousness. He taught his disciples that the highest type of religion is that which manifests itself in a quiet, unobtrusive manner. He cautioned them to perform their deeds of charity quietly; not for display, not to be praised or honored of men, but for the glory of God, expecting their reward hereafter. If they should perform good deeds to be lauded by men, no reward would be given them

by their Father in Heaven.

The followers of Christ were instructed not to pray for the purpose of being heard of men. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Such expressions as this from the lips of Christ show that he did not regard with approval that kind of piety so prevalent among the Pharisees. His teachings upon the mount show that acts of benevolence assume a noble form, and offices of religious worship reflect a most precious fragrance, when performed in an unpretending manner, in penitence and humility. The pure motive sanctifies the act.

True sanctification is an entire conformity to the will of God. Rebellious thoughts and feelings are overcome, and the voice of Jesus awakens a new life, which pervades the entire being. Those who are truly sanctified will not set up their own opinion as a standard of right and wrong. They are not bigoted or self-righteous; but they are jealous of self, ever fearing, lest a promise being left them, they should come short of complying with the conditions upon which the promises are based.

Many who profess sanctification are entirely ignorant of the work of grace upon the heart. When proved and tested, they are found to be like the self-righteous Pharisee. They will bear no contradiction. They lay aside reason and judgment, and depend wholly upon their feelings, basing their claims to sanctification upon emotions which they have at some time experienced. Around that point they center all their experience. They are stubborn and perverse in their tenacious claims of sanctification, giving many words, but bearing no precious fruit as proof. These professedly sanctified persons are not only deluding their own souls by their pretensions, but are exerting an influence to lead astray many who earnestly desire to conform to the will of God. They may be heard to reiterate again and again, "God leads me! God teaches me! I am living without sin!" Many who come in contact with this spirit encounter a dark, mysterious something which they cannot comprehend. But it is that which is altogether unlike Christ.

Sanctification does not consist in strong emotional feelings. Here is where many are led into error. They make feelings their criterion. When they feel elated or happy, they claim that they are sanctified. Happy feelings or the absence of joy is no evidence that a person is or is not sanctified. There is no such thing as instantaneous sanctification. True sanctification is a daily work, continuing as long as life shall last.

Those who are battling with daily temptations, overcoming their own natural tendencies, and seeking for holiness of heart and life, make no boastful claims of holiness. They are hungering and thirsting for righteousness. Sin appears to them exceedingly sinful.

There are those claiming sanctification who make a profession of the truth, like their brethren, and it may be difficult to make a distinction between them; but the difference exists, nevertheless. The testimony of those claiming such an exalted experience will cause the sweet spirit of Christ to withdraw from a meeting, and will leave a chilling influence upon those present, while if they were truly living without sin, their very presence would bring holy angels into the assembly, and their words would indeed be "like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

In summer, as we look upon the trees of the distant forest, all clothed with a beautiful mantle of green, we may not be able to distinguish between the evergreens and the other trees. But as winter approaches, and the frost king incloses them in his icy embrace, stripping the other trees of their beautiful foliage, the evergreens are readily discerned. Thus will it be with the meek who walk in humility, distrustful of self, but clinging tremblingly to the hand of Christ. While those who are self-confident, and trust to perfection of character, are soon robbed of their false robe of righteousness when subjected to the storms of trial, the truly righteous, who sincerely love and fear God in humility, wear the robe of Christ's righteousness in prosperity and adversity alike.

Self-denial, self-sacrifice, benevolence, kindness, love, patience, fortitude, and Christian trust are the daily fruits borne by those who are truly connected with God. Their acts may not be published to the world, but they themselves are daily wrestling with evil, and gaining precious victories over temptation and wrong. Solemn vows are renewed and kept through the strength gained by earnest prayer and constant watching thereunto. The ardent enthusiast does not discern the struggles of these silent workers; but the eye of Him who seeth the secrets of the heart, notices and regards with approval every effort put forth in lowliness and meekness. It requires the testing time to reveal the true gold of love and faith in the character. When trials and perplexities come upon the church, then the steadfast zeal and warm affections of the Christian are developed.

We feel sad to see professed Christians led astray by the false but bewitching theory that they are perfect, because it is so difficult to undeceive them and get them on



the right track. They have sought to make the exterior fair and pleasing, while the inward adorning, the meekness and lowliness of Christ, is wanting. The testing time will come to all, when the hopes of many who have for years thought themselves secure, will be seen to be without foundation. When in new positions, under varied circumstances, some who have seemed to be pillars in the house of God reveal only rotten timber beneath the paint and varnish. But the humble in heart, who have daily felt the importance of riveting their souls to the eternal Rock, will stand unmoved amid the tempests of trial, because they trusted not to themselves. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his."

Those who take pains to call attention to their good works, constantly talking of their sinless state, and endeavoring to make their religious attainments prominent, are only deceiving their own souls by so doing. A healthy man, who is able to attend to the vocations of life, and who goes forth day after day to his labor, with buoyant spirits and with a healthful current of blood flowing through his veins, does not call the attention of every one he meets to his soundness of body. Health and vigor are the natural conditions of his life, and therefore he is scarcely conscious that he is in the enjoyment of so rich a boon.

Thus it is with the truly righteous man. He is unconscious of his goodness and piety. Religious principle has become the spring of his life and conduct, and it is just as natural for him to bear the fruits of the Spirit as for the fig-tree to bear figs, or for the rose-bush to yield roses. His nature is so thoroughly imbued with love for God and his fellow-men that he works the works of Christ with a willing heart.

All who come within the sphere of his influence perceive the beauty and fragrance of his Christian life, while he himself is unconscious of it, for it is in harmony with his habits and inclinations. He prays for divine light, and loves to walk in that light. It is his meat and drink to do the will of his Heavenly Father. His life is hid with Christ in God; yet he does not boast of this, nor seem conscious of it. God smiles upon the humble and lowly ones who follow closely in the footsteps of the Master. Angels are attracted to them, and love to linger about their path. They may be passed by as unworthy of notice by those who claim exalted attainments, and who delight in making prominent their good works; but heavenly angels bend lovingly over them, and are as a wall of fire round about them.

Our Saviour was the light of the world; but the world knew him not. He was constantly employed in works of mercy, shedding light upon the pathway of all; yet he did not call upon those with whom he mingled to behold his unexampled virtue, his self-denial, self-sacrifice, and benevolence. The Jews did not admire such a life; they considered his religion worthless, because it did not accord with their standard of piety. They decided that Christ was not religious in spirit or character; for their religion consisted in display, in praying publicly, and in doing works of charity for effect. They trumpeted their good deeds, as do those who claim sanctification. They would have all understand that they were without sin. But the whole life of Christ was in direct contrast to this. He sought neither honor nor applause, His wonderful acts of healing were performed in as quiet a manner as possible, although he could not restrain the enthusiasm of those who were the recipients of his great blessings. Humility and meekness characterized his life. And it was because of his lowly walk and unassuming manners, which were in such marked contrast to their own, that the Pharisees would not accept him.

The most precious fruit of sanctification is the grace of meekness. When this grace presides in the soul, the disposition is molded by its influence. There is a continual waiting upon God, and a submission of the will to his. The understanding grasps every divine truth, and the will bows to every divine precept, without doubting or murmuring. True meekness softens and subdues the heart, and gives the mind a fitness for the ingrafted word. It brings the thoughts into obedience to Jesus Christ. It opens the heart to the word of God, as Lydia's was opened. It places us with Mary as learners at the feet of Jesus. "The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way."

The language of the meek is never that of boasting, but that of the child Samuel,--"Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." When Joshua was placed in the highest position of honor, as commander of Israel, he was bidding defiance to all the enemies of God. His heart was filled with noble thoughts of his great mission. Yet upon the intimation of a message from Heaven, he places himself in the position of a little child to be directed. "What saith my Lord unto his servant?" was his response. The first words of Paul after Christ was revealed to him were, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

Meekness in the school of Christ is one of the marked fruits of the Spirit. It is a grace wrought by the Holy Spirit as a sanctifier, and enables its possessor at all times to

control a rash and impetuous temper. When the grace of meekness is cherished by those who are naturally sour or hasty in disposition, they will put forth the most earnest efforts to subdue their unhappy temper. Every day they will gain self-control, until that which is unlovely and unlike Jesus is conquered. They become assimilated to the Divine Pattern, until they can obey the inspired injunction, "Be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath."

When a man professes to be sanctified, and yet in words and works may be represented by the impure fountain sending forth its bitter waters, we may safely say, that man is deceived. He needs to learn the very alphabet of what constitutes the life of a Christian. Some who profess to be servants of Christ have so long cherished the demon of unkindness that they seem to love the unhallowed element, and to take pleasure in speaking words that displease and irritate. These men must be converted, before Christ will acknowledge them as his children.

Meekness is the inward adorning, which God estimates as of great price. The apostle speaks of this as more excellent and valuable than gold, or pearls, or costly array. While the outward adorning beautifies only the mortal body, the ornament of meekness adorns the soul, and connects finite man with the infinite God. This is the ornament of God's own choice. He who garnished the heavens with the orbs of light, has by the same Spirit promised that he will "beautify the meek with salvation." Angels of Heaven will register as best adorned, those who put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and walk with him in meekness and lowliness of mind.

There are high attainments for the Christian. He may ever be rising to higher attainments. John had an elevated idea of the privilege of a Christian. He says, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." It is not possible for humanity to rise to a higher dignity than is here implied. To man is granted the privilege of becoming an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ. To those who have been thus exalted, are unfolded the unsearchable riches of Christ, which are of a thousand fold more value than the wealth of the world. Thus, through the merits of Jesus Christ, finite man is elevated to fellowship with God and with his dear Son.

January 25, 1881

## **Sanctification**

The Life of Daniel an Illustration of True Sanctification.

Text: And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

The prophet Daniel was an illustrious character. He was a bright example of what men may become when united with the God of wisdom. A brief account of the life of this holy man of God is left on record for the encouragement of those who should afterward be called to endure trial and temptation.

When the people of Israel, their king, nobles, and priests, were carried into captivity, four of their number were selected to serve in the court of the king of Babylon. One of these was Daniel, who early gave promise of the remarkable ability developed in later years. These youth were all of princely birth, and are described as "children in whom was no blemish, but well-favored, and skillful in all wisdom, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them." Perceiving the superior talents of these youthful captives, King Nebuchadnezzar determined to prepare them to fill important positions in his kingdom. That they might be fully qualified for their life at court, according to oriental custom, they were to be taught the language of the Chaldeans, and to be subjected for three years to a thorough course of physical and intellectual discipline.

The youth in this school of training were not only to be admitted to the royal palace, but it was provided that they should eat of the meat, and drink of the wine, which came from the king's table. In all this the king considered that he was not only bestowing great honor upon them, but securing for them the best physical and mental development that could be attained.

Among the viands placed before the king were swine's flesh and other meats which were declared unclean by the law of Moses, and which the Hebrews had been

expressly forbidden to eat. Here Daniel was brought to a severe test. Should he adhere to the teachings of his fathers concerning meats and drinks, and offend the king, probably losing not only his position but his life? or should he disregard the commandment of the Lord, and retain the favor of the king, thus securing great intellectual advantages and the most flattering worldly prospects?

Daniel did not long hesitate. He decided to stand firmly for his integrity, let the result be what it might. He "purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank."

There are many among professed Christians today who would decide that Daniel was too particular, and would pronounce him narrow and bigoted. They consider the matter of eating and drinking of too little consequence to require such a decided stand,--one involving the probable sacrifice of every earthly advantage. But those who reason thus will find in the day of Judgment that they turned from God's express requirements, and set up their own opinion as a standard of right and wrong. They will find that what seemed to them unimportant was not so regarded of God. His requirements should be sacredly obeyed. Those who accept and obey one of his precepts because it is convenient to do so, while they reject another because its observance would require a sacrifice, lower the standard of right, and by their example lead others to lightly regard the holy law of God. "Thus saith the Lord" is to be our rule in all things.

Daniel was subjected to the severest temptations that can assail the youth of today; yet he was true to the religious instruction received in early life. He was surrounded with influences calculated to subvert those who would vacillate between principle and inclination; yet the word of God presents him as a faultless character. Daniel dared not trust to his own moral power. Prayer was to him a necessity. He made God his strength, and the fear of God was continually before him in all the transactions of his life.

Daniel possessed the grace of genuine meekness. He was true, firm, and noble. He sought to live in peace with all, while he was unbending as the lofty cedar wherever principle was involved. In everything that did not come in collision with his allegiance to God, he was respectful and obedient to those who had authority over him; but he had so high a sense of the claims of God that the requirements of earthly rulers were held subordinate. He would not be induced by any selfish consideration to swerve from his

duty.

The character of Daniel is presented to the world as a striking example of what God's grace can make of men fallen by nature and corrupted by sin. The record of his noble, self-denying life is an encouragement to our common humanity. From it we may gather strength to nobly resist temptation, and firmly, and in the grace of meekness, stand for the right under the severest trial.

Daniel might have found a plausible excuse to depart from his strictly temperate habits; but the approbation of God was dearer to him than the favor of the most powerful earthly potentate,--dearer even than life itself. Having by his courteous conduct obtained favor with Melzar, the officer in charge of the Hebrew youth, Daniel made a request that they might not eat of the king's meat, or drink of his wine. Melzar feared that should he comply with this request, he might incur the displeasure of the king, and thus endanger his own life. Like many at the present day, he thought that an abstemious diet would render these youth pale and sickly in appearance and deficient in muscular strength, while the luxurious food from the king's table would make them ruddy and beautiful, and would impart superior physical activity.

Daniel requested that the matter be decided by a ten-days' trial,--the Hebrew youth during this brief period being permitted to eat of simple food, while their companions partook of the king's dainties. The request was finally granted, and then Daniel felt assured that he had gained his case. Although but a youth, he had seen the injurious effects of wine and luxurious living upon physical and mental health.

At the end of the ten days the result was found to be quite the opposite of Melzar's expectations. Not only in personal appearance, but in physical activity and mental vigor, those who had been temperate in their habits exhibited a marked superiority over their companions who had indulged appetite. As a result of this trial, Daniel and his associates were permitted to continue their simple diet during the whole course of their training for the duties of the kingdom.

The Lord regarded with approval the firmness and self-denial of these Hebrew youth, and his blessing attended them. He "gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams." At the expiration of the three years of training, when their ability and acquirements were tested

by the king, he "found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm."

Here is a lesson for all, but especially for the young. A strict compliance with the requirements of God is beneficial to the health of body and mind. In order to reach the highest standard of moral and intellectual attainments, it is necessary to seek wisdom and strength from God, and to observe strict temperance in all the habits of life. In the experience of Daniel and his companions we have an instance of the triumph of principle over temptation to indulge the appetite. It shows us that through religious principle young men may triumph over the lusts of the flesh, and remain true to God's requirements, even though it cost them a great sacrifice.

What if Daniel and his companions had made a compromise with those heathen officers, and had yielded to the pressure of the occasion, by eating and drinking as was customary with the Babylonians? That single instance of departure from principle would have weakened their sense of right and their abhorrence of wrong. Indulgence of appetite would have involved the sacrifice of physical vigor, clearness of intellect, and spiritual power. One wrong step would probably have led to others, until, their connection with Heaven being severed, they would have been swept away by temptation.

God has said, "Them that honor me, I will honor." While Daniel clung to God with unwavering trust, the spirit of prophetic power came upon him. While he was instructed of man in the duties of court life, he was taught of God to read the mysteries of future ages, and to present to coming generations, through figures and similitudes, the wonderful things that would come to pass in the last days.

The life of Daniel is an inspired illustration of what constitutes a sanctified character. Bible sanctification has to do with the whole man. Paul writes to his Thessalonian brethren, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul did not exhort his brethren to aim at a standard which it was impossible for them to reach. He did not pray that they might have blessings which it was not the will of God to give. He knew that all who would be fitted to meet Christ in

peace must possess a pure and holy character. "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

It is impossible for any to enjoy the blessing of sanctification while they are selfish and gluttonous. These groan under a burden of infirmities because of wrong habits of eating and drinking, which do violence to the laws of life and health. Many are enfeebling their digestive organs by indulging perverted appetite. The power of the human constitution to resist the abuses put upon it is wonderful; but persistent wrong habits in excessive eating and drinking will enfeeble every function of the body. Let these feeble ones consider what they might have been, had they lived temperately, and promoted health instead of abusing it. In the gratification of perverted appetite and passion, even professed Christians cripple nature in her work, and lessen physical, mental, and moral power. Some who are doing this, claim to be sanctified to God; but such a claim is without foundation.

Paul writes to his Christian converts, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Specific directions were given to ancient Israel that no defective or diseased animal should be presented as an offering to God. Only the most perfect were to be selected for this purpose. The Lord, through the prophet Malachi, most severely reproved his people for departing from these instructions.

"A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master; if then I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible. And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts. Ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering; should I



accept this of your hand? saith the Lord."

Let us give careful heed to these warnings and reproofs. Though addressed to ancient Israel, they are no less applicable to the people of God today. And we should consider the words of the apostle in which he appeals to his brethren, by the mercies of God, to present their bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." This is true sanctification. It is not merely a theory, an emotion, or a form of words, but a living, active principle, entering into the every-day life. It requires that our habits of eating, drinking, and dressing, be such as to secure the preservation of physical, mental, and moral health, that we may present to the Lord our bodies--not an offering corrupted by wrong habits, but--"a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God."

Let none who profess godliness regard with indifference the health of the body, and flatter themselves that intemperance is no sin, and will not affect their spirituality. A close sympathy exists between the physical and the moral nature. The standard of virtue is elevated or degraded by the physical habits. Excessive eating of the best of food will produce a morbid condition of the moral feelings. And if the food is not the most healthful, the effects will be still more injurious. Any habit which does not promote healthful action in the human system degrades the higher and nobler faculties. Wrong habits of eating and drinking lead to errors in thought and action. Indulgence of appetite strengthens the animal propensities, giving them the ascendancy over the mental and spiritual powers.

"Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul," is the language of the apostle Peter. Many regard this warning as applicable only to the licentious; but it has a broader meaning. It guards against every injurious gratification of appetite or passion. It is a most forcible warning against the use of such stimulants and narcotics as tea, coffee, tobacco, alcohol, and morphine. These indulgences may well be classed among the lusts that exert a pernicious influence upon moral character. The earlier these hurtful habits are formed, the more firmly will they hold their victim in slavery to lust, and the more certainly will they lower the standard of spirituality.

Bible teaching will make but a feeble impression upon those whose faculties are benumbed by indulgence of appetite. Thousands will sacrifice not only health and life, but their hope of Heaven, before they will wage war against their own perverted appetites. One lady who for many years claimed to be sanctified, made the statement

that if she must give up her pipe or Heaven she would say, "Farewell, Heaven, I cannot overcome my love for my pipe." This idol had been enshrined in the soul, leaving to Jesus a subordinate place. Yet this woman claimed to be wholly the Lord's!

Wherever they may be, those who are truly sanctified will elevate the moral standard by preserving correct physical habits, and, like Daniel, presenting to others an example of temperance and self-denial. Every depraved appetite becomes a warring lust. Everything that conflicts with natural law creates a diseased condition of the soul. The indulgence of appetite produces a dyspeptic stomach, a torpid liver, a clouded brain, and thus perverts the temper and spirit of the man. And these enfeebled powers are offered to God, who refused to accept the victims for sacrifice unless they were without a blemish! It is our duty to bring our appetite and our habits of life into conformity to natural law. If the bodies offered upon Christ's altar were examined with the close scrutiny to which the Jewish sacrifices were subjected, who, with our present habits, would be accepted?

With what care should Christians regulate their habits, that they may preserve the full vigor of every faculty to give to the service of Christ. If we would be sanctified, in soul, body, and spirit, we must live in conformity to the divine law. The heart cannot preserve consecration to God while the appetites and passions are indulged at the expense of health and life.

Those who violate the laws upon which health depends, must suffer the penalty. By intemperance in eating and drinking and dressing, they lessen physical, mental, and moral power, so that their bodies are an offering which the Lord cannot accept. They have so limited their abilities in every sense that they cannot properly discharge their duties to their fellow-men, and they utterly fail to answer the claims of God.

When Lord Palmerston, Premier of England, was petitioned by the Scotch clergy to appoint a day of fasting and prayer to avert the cholera, he replied, in effect, "Cleanse and disinfect your streets and houses, promote cleanliness and health among the poor, and see that they are plentifully supplied with good food and raiment, and employ right sanitary measures generally, and you will have no occasion to fast and pray. Nor will the Lord hear your prayers, while these, his preventives, remain unheeded."

Paul's inspired warnings against self-indulgence are sounding along the line down

to our time. He calls upon us to practice temperance in all things; for unless we do this we endanger the salvation of the soul: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin." He exhorts, "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

He presents for our encouragement the freedom enjoyed by the truly sanctified: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." He charges the Galatians to "walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." He names some of the forms of fleshly lust,--"idolatry, drunkenness, and such like." And after mentioning the fruits of the Spirit, among which is temperance, he adds, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts."

If James had seen his brethren using tobacco, he would have denounced the practice as "earthly, sensual, and devilish." As I have seen men who claimed to enjoy the blessing of entire sanctification, while they were slaves to tobacco, spitting and defiling everything around them, I have thought, How would Heaven appear with tobacco-users in it? The lips that were taking the precious name of Christ were defiled by tobacco spittle, the breath was polluted with the stench, and even the linen was defiled; the soul that loved this uncleanness and enjoyed this poisonous atmosphere must also be defiled. The sign was hung upon the outside, testifying of what was within.

Men professing godliness offer their bodies upon Satan's altar, and burn the incense of tobacco to his Satanic majesty. Does this statement seem severe? The offering must be presented to some deity. As God is pure and holy, and will accept nothing defiling its character, he refuses this expensive, filthy, and unholy sacrifice; therefore we conclude that Satan is the one who claims the honor.

Jesus died to rescue man from the grasp of Satan. He came to set us free by the blood of his atoning sacrifice. The man who has become the property of Jesus Christ, and whose body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, will not be enslaved by the pernicious habit of tobacco-using. His powers belong to Christ, who has bought him with the price of blood. His property is the Lord's. How, then, can he be guiltless in expending every day the Lord's intrusted capital to gratify an appetite which has no foundation in nature?

An enormous sum is yearly squandered for this indulgence, while souls are perishing for the word of life. How can Christians who are enlightened upon this subject, continue to rob God in tithes and offerings used to sustain the gospel, while they offer on the altar of destroying lust, in the use of tobacco, more than they give to relieve the poor or to supply the wants of God's cause? If they are truly sanctified, every hurtful lust will be overcome. Then all these channels of needless expense will be turned to the Lord's treasury, and Christians will take the lead in self-denial, in self-sacrifice, and in temperance. Then they will be the light of the world.

Tea and coffee, as well as tobacco, have an injurious effect upon the system. Tea is intoxicating; though less in degree, its effect is the same in character as that of spirituous liquors. Coffee has a greater tendency to becloud the intellect and benumb the energies. It is not so powerful as tobacco, but is similar in its effects. The arguments brought against tobacco may also be urged against the use of tea and coffee.

Those who are in the habit of using tea, coffee, tobacco, opium, or spirituous liquors, cannot worship God when they are deprived of the accustomed indulgence. Let them, while deprived of these stimulants, engage in the worship of God, and divine grace would be powerless to animate, enliven, or spiritualize their prayers or their testimonies. These professed Christians should consider the means of their enjoyment. Is it from above, or from beneath?

To a tobacco-user, everything is insipid and lifeless without the darling indulgence. Its use has deadened the natural sensibilities of body and mind, and he is not susceptible of the influence of the Spirit of God. In the absence of the usual stimulant, he has a hungering and yearning of body and soul, not for righteousness, not for holiness, not for God's presence, but for his cherished idol. In the indulgence of hurtful lusts, professed Christians are daily enfeebling their powers, making it impossible to glorify God.

February 1, 1881

## **The Life of Daniel an Illustration of True Sanctification**

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

In the same year that Daniel and his companions entered the service of the king of Babylon, events occurred that severely tested the integrity of these youthful Hebrews, and proved before an idolatrous nation the power and faithfulness of the God of Israel.

While King Nebuchadnezzar was looking forward with anxious forebodings to the future, he had a remarkable dream, by which "he was greatly troubled, and his sleep brake from him." But although this vision of the night made a deep impression on his mind, he found it impossible to recall the particulars. He applied to his astrologers and magicians,--a class of impostors who professed to have power to reveal secret events,--and with promises of great wealth and honor commanded them to tell him his dream and its interpretation. But they said, "Tell thy servants the dream, and we will show the interpretation."

Here their deceptive character was clearly exposed. The king knew that if they could really tell the interpretation, they could tell the dream as well. The Lord had in his providence given the king this dream, and had caused the particulars to be forgotten, while the fearful impression was left upon his mind, in order to expose the pretensions of the wise men of Babylon. The monarch saw through their subterfuge, and was very angry, threatening that every one of them should be slain if in a given time the dream was not made known. Daniel and his companions were to perish with the false prophets; but, taking his life in his hand, Daniel ventures to enter the presence of the king, begging that time may be granted that he may show the dream and the interpretation.

To this request the monarch accedes; and now Daniel gathers his three companions, and together they take the matter before God, seeking for wisdom from the Source of light and knowledge. Although they were in the king's court, surrounded with temptation, they did not forget their responsibility to God. They were strong in the

consciousness that his providence had placed them where they were; that they were doing his work,--meeting the demands of truth and duty. They had confidence toward God. They had turned to him for strength when in perplexity and danger, and he had been to them an ever-present help in time of need.

The servants of God did not plead with him in vain. They had honored him, and in the hour of trial he honors them. The secret was revealed to Daniel, and he hastens to request an interview with the king.

The Jewish captive stands before the monarch of the most powerful empire the sun had ever shone upon. The king is in great distress amid all his riches and glory; but the youthful exile is peaceful and happy in his God. Now, if ever, is the time for Daniel to exalt himself,--to make prominent his own goodness and superior wisdom. But his first effort is to disclaim all honor for himself, and to exalt God as the Source of wisdom:

"The secret which the king hath demanded, cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, show unto the king; but there is a God in Heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." The king listens with solemn attention as every particular of the dream is reproduced, and when the interpretation is faithfully given, he feels that he can rely upon it as a divine revelation.

The solemn truths conveyed in this vision of the night, made a deep impression on the sovereign's mind, and in humility and awe he fell down and worshiped, saying, "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets."

Light, direct from Heaven, had been permitted to shine upon King Nebuchadnezzar, and for a little time he was influenced by the fear of God. But a few years of prosperity filled his heart with pride, and he forgot his acknowledgment of the living God. He resumed his idol worship with increased zeal and bigotry.

From the treasures obtained in war, he made a golden image to represent the one that he had seen in his dream, setting it up in the plain of Dura, and commanding all the rulers and the people to worship it, on pain of death. This statue was about ninety feet in

height and nine in breadth, and in the eyes of that idolatrous people it presented a most imposing and majestic appearance.

A proclamation was issued, calling upon all the officers of the kingdom to assemble at the dedication of the image, and at the sound of the musical instruments, to bow down and worship it. Should any fail to do this, they were immediately to be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

The appointed day has come, and the vast company is assembled, when word is brought to the king that the three Hebrews whom he had set over the province of Babylon, had refused to worship the image. These are Daniel's three companions, who had been called by the king, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Full of rage, the monarch calls them before him, and pointing to the angry furnace, tells them the punishment that will be theirs if they refuse obedience to his will.

But all the crowned monarchs of earth could not turn these men from their allegiance to the great Ruler of nations. They had learned from the history of their fathers that disobedience to God is dishonor, disaster, and ruin; that the fear of the Lord is not only the beginning of wisdom, but the foundation of all true prosperity. They look with calmness upon the fiery furnace and the idolatrous throng. They have trusted in God, and he will not fail them now. Their answer is respectful, but decided,--"Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

The proud tyrant is surrounded by his great men, the officers of the government, and the army that has conquered nations; and all unite in applauding him as having the wisdom and power of the gods. In the midst of this imposing display stand the three youthful Hebrews, steadily persisting in their refusal to obey the king's decree. They had been obedient to the laws of Babylon, so far as these did not conflict with the claims of God; but they would not be swayed a hair's breadth from the duty they owed to their Creator.

The king's wrath knew no limits. In the very height of his power and glory, to be thus defied by these representatives of a despised and captive race, was an insult which his proud spirit could not endure. The fiery furnace had been heated seven times more than it was wont, and into it were cast the Hebrew exiles. So furious were the flames,

that the men who cast them in were burned to death.

Suddenly the countenance of the king paled with terror. His eyes were fixed upon the glowing flames, and turning to his lords he said, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" The answer was, "True, O king." And now, his terror and amazement increased, the monarch exclaimed, "Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

When the Son of God manifests himself to men, an unseen power speaks to the soul that this is God. And before his majesty, kings and nobles tremble, and acknowledge the superiority of the living God over every earthly power.

With feelings of remorse and shame, the king exclaimed, "Ye servants of the most high God, come forth." And they obeyed, showing themselves unhurt before that vast multitude, not even the smell of fire being upon their garments. This miracle produced a striking change in the minds of the people. The great golden image, set up with such display, was forgotten. The king published a decree that any one speaking against the God of these men should be put to death; "because there is no other god that can deliver after this sort."

These three Hebrews possessed genuine sanctification. True Christian principle will not stop to weigh consequences. It does not ask, What will people think of me if I do this? or how will it affect my worldly prospects if I do that? With the most intense longing, the children of God desire to know what he would have them do, that their works may glorify him. The Lord has made ample provision that the heart and life of all his followers may be controlled by divine grace, that they may be as burning and shining lights in the world.

These faithful Hebrews possessed great natural ability and intellectual culture, and they occupied a high position of honor; but all these advantages did not lead them to forget God. All their powers were yielded to the sanctifying influence of divine grace. By their godly example, their steadfast integrity, they showed forth the praises of Him who had called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. In their wonderful deliverance was displayed, before that vast assembly, the power and majesty of God. Jesus placed himself by their side in the fiery furnace, and by the glory of his presence



convinced the proud king of Babylon that it could be no other than the Son of God. The light of Heaven had been shining forth from Daniel and his companions, until all their associates understood the faith which ennobled their lives and beautified their characters. By the deliverance of his faithful servants, the Lord declares that he will take his stand with the oppressed, and overthrow, all earthly powers that would exalt their own glory and trample under foot the God of Heaven.

What a lesson is here given to the faint-hearted, the vacillating, the cowardly in the cause of God. What encouragement is given to those who will not be swayed from duty by threats or peril. These faithful, steadfast characters exemplify sanctification, while they have no thought of claiming the high honor. The amount of good which may be accomplished by comparatively obscure but devoted Christians, cannot be estimated until the life records shall be made known, when the Judgment shall sit and the books be opened.

Christ identifies his interest with this class; he is not ashamed to call them brethren. There should be hundreds where there is now one among us, so closely allied to God, their lives in such close conformity to his will, that they would be bright and shining lights, sanctified wholly, in soul, body, and spirit.

The great conflict is still between the children of light and the children of darkness. Those who name the name of Christ should shake off the lethargy that enfeebles their efforts, and should meet the momentous responsibilities that devolve upon them. All who do this may expect the power of God to be revealed in them. The Son of God, the world's Redeemer, will be represented in their words and in their works, and God's name will be glorified.

Nebuchadnezzar had another dream, which filled his heart with terror. In a vision of the night he saw a great tree growing in the midst of the earth, towering up to the heavens, and its branches stretching to the ends of the earth. In it the fowls of the air dwelt, and under it the beasts of the field found shelter. As the king gazed upon that lofty tree, he beheld a "watcher, even a holy one,"--a divine messenger, similar in appearance to the One who walked with the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace. This heavenly being approached the tree, and in a loud voice cried, "Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit; let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches; nevertheless, leave the stump of his

roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and brass."

The skill of the wise men proving ineffectual, Daniel is sent for to interpret the dream. Its signification filled him with astonishment, and "his thoughts troubled him." He faithfully told the king that the fate of the tree was emblematic of his own downfall; that he would lose his reason, and, forsaking the abodes of men, would find a home with the beasts of the field, and that he would remain in this condition for the period of seven years. He urged the proud monarch to repent and turn to God, and by good works avert the threatened calamity. But the king's heart had become hardened, and he felt independent of God.

About one year after he had received the divine warning, the king was walking in his palace and thinking of his power as ruler of earth's greatest kingdom, when he exclaimed, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?"

The proud boast had scarcely left his lips, when a voice from Heaven told him that God's appointed time of judgment had come. In a moment his reason was taken away, and he became as a beast. For seven years he was thus degraded. At the end of this time his reason was restored to him, and then looking up in humility to the great God of Heaven, he recognized the divine hand in this chastisement, and was again restored to his throne.

In a public proclamation, King Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged his guilt, and the great mercy of God in his restoration. This was the last act of his life as recorded in Sacred History.

February 8, 1881

## **The Life of Daniel an Illustration of True Sanctification**

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

Belshazzar was acquainted with the dealings of God with Nebuchadnezzar, but this knowledge had no effect upon his own course. He blindly clung to the worship of idols, and gave himself up to sensual indulgence. It was not long before reverses came. He had been defeated in battle by Cyrus, and for two years had been besieged in the city of Babylon. Within that seemingly impregnable fortress, with its massive walls and its gates of brass, protected by the river Euphrates, and supplied with provisions for a twenty years' siege, the voluptuous monarch felt secure, and passed his time in mirth and revelry.

One night he made a great feast to a thousand of his lords. All the attractions that wealth and royal power could command, combined to give splendor to the scene. Everything that could administer to the lusts of the flesh was there. Princes and statesmen drank wine like water, and reveled under its maddening influence. The king had commanded to bring to that sacrilegious feast the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple at Jerusalem, and which had been consecrated to the service of God, and employed by holy men in his worship. These were now to be used by the wicked revelers.

While they were that night in the midst of idolatrous mirth, the king's countenance suddenly pales, and he seems paralyzed with terror; for lo! a bloodless hand is tracing mystic characters on the wall over against him. The revelers discern the curious and, to them, unintelligible writing. The exciting merriment dies away, and a painful silence falls upon the throng. The king's thoughts troubled him, "the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another." Trembling with alarm, he "cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spake, and said to the wise men of Babylon, Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me the interpretation thereof, shall be clothed in scarlet, and have a chain of gold

about his neck, and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom." But these men are no more able to interpret the mystic characters traced by the hand of an angel of God than they were to interpret the dream of Nebuchadnezzar.

The terror of the king increases. He is conscious that this writing is a rebuke of his impious feast, and yet he cannot tell its exact import. The queen then reminds him that there is a man in his kingdom "in whom is the spirit of the holy gods," and that in the days of his father, "light and understanding and wisdom like the wisdom of the gods was found in him;" whom his father "made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers; forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar. Now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation."

Then is Daniel brought before the king without delay, and the monarch promises him great rewards if he will interpret the writing. Daniel looks upon that wicked throng bearing evidence of intemperate feasting and revelry. He stands before them in the quiet dignity of a servant of the most high God, not to speak words of flattery, as was the custom of the professedly wise men of the kingdom, but to speak the truth of God. Sternly disclaiming all desire for rewards or honor, he says, "Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation."

Daniel then proceeds to speak of the Lord's dealings with Nebuchadnezzar,--the dominion and glory bestowed upon him, the divine judgment for his pride, and his subsequent acknowledgment of the power and mercy of the God of Israel; and then in the most direct and emphatic words he rebukes the great wickedness of the impious king,--"And thou, his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of Heaven."

Daniel then gave the interpretation of the mystic writing: "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it." "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." "Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." That very night the words of the prophet were fulfilled. The city was occupied, the king slain, and the kingdom taken, by the Medes and Persians.

Darius now took possession of the throne of Babylon, and at once proceeded to re-organize the government. He "set over the kingdom a hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom; and over these, three presidents; of whom Daniel was first." And "Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm." The honors bestowed upon Daniel excited the jealousy of the leading men of the kingdom. The presidents and princes sought to find occasion against him concerning the kingdom. "But they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him."

What a lesson is here presented for all Christians. The keen eyes of jealousy were fixed upon Daniel day after day; their watchings were sharpened by hatred; yet not a word or act of his life could they make appear wrong. And still he made no claim to sanctification; but he did that which was infinitely better,--he lived a holy, sanctified life. The true test of sanctification is the daily deportment.

The more blameless the life of Daniel, the greater was the hatred excited against him by his enemies. They were filled with madness, because they could find nothing in his moral character or in the discharge of his duties, upon which to base a complaint against him. "Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." Three times a day, Daniel prayed to the God of Heaven. This was the only accusation that could be brought against him.

A scheme is now devised to accomplish his destruction. His enemies assembled at the palace, and asked the king to pass a decree, that no person in the whole realm should ask anything of either God or man, except of Darius the king, for the space of thirty days, and that any violation of this edict should be punished by casting the offender into the den of lions. The king knew nothing of the hatred of these men toward Daniel, and did not suppose that the decree would in any way injure him. Through flattery they made the monarch believe it would be greatly to his honor to pass such a decree. With a smile of Satanic triumph upon their faces, these men come forth from the presence of the king; and rejoice together, over the trap which they have laid for the servant of God.

The decree goes forth from the king. Daniel is aware of all that has been done. He

is acquainted with the purpose of his enemies to ruin him. But he does not change his course in a single particular. With calmness he goes about his accustomed duties, and at the hour of prayer he goes to his chamber, and with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he offers his petitions to the God of Heaven. By his course of action, he takes the position that no king or prince has the right to come between him and his God, and tell him to whom he should or should not pray. Noble man of principle! he stands before the world today a praiseworthy example of Christian boldness and fidelity. He turns to God with all his heart, although he knows that death is the penalty for his devotion.

His adversaries watch him an entire day. Three times he has repaired to his chamber, and three times the voice of earnest intercession has been heard. The next morning the complaint is made to the king that Daniel, one of the captives of Judah, has set at defiance his decree. When the monarch heard these words, his eyes were at once opened to see the snare that had been set. He is sorely displeased with himself for having passed such a decree, and labors till the going down of the sun to devise some plan by which Daniel may be delivered. But the prophet's enemies had anticipated this, and they came before the king with these words: "Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, that no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

"Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God, whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee." A stone is laid upon the mouth of the den, and sealed with the royal seal. "Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting; neither were instruments of music brought before him; and his sleep went from him."

Early in the morning the monarch hastened to the den of lions, and cried, "Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" The voice of the prophet is heard in reply, "O king, live forever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt.

"Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of

hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God." Thus was the servant of God delivered. And the snare which his enemies had laid for his destruction proved to be their own ruin. At the command of the king they were cast into the den, and instantly devoured by the wild beasts.

As the time approached for the close of the seventy years' captivity, Daniel's mind became greatly exercised upon the prophecies of Jeremiah. He saw that the time was at hand when God would give his chosen people another trial; and with fasting, humiliation, and prayer, he importuned the God of Heaven in behalf of Israel, in these words: "O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments'; we have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments; neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land."

Notice these words. Daniel does not proclaim his own fidelity before the Lord. Instead of claiming to be pure and holy, he identifies himself with the really sinful of Israel. The wisdom which God imparted to him was as far superior to the wisdom of the wise men of the world as the light of the sun shining in the heavens at noonday is brighter than the feeblest star. Yet ponder the prayer from the lips of this man so highly favored of Heaven. With deep humiliation, with tears, and with rending of heart, he pleads for himself and for his people. He lays his soul open before God, confessing his own vileness, and acknowledging the Lord's greatness and majesty. What earnestness and fervor characterize his supplications! He is coming nearer and nearer to God. The hand of faith is reached upward to grasp the never-failing promises of the Most High. His soul is wrestling in agony. And he has the evidence that his prayer is heard. He feels that victory is his. If we as a people would pray as Daniel prayed, and wrestle as he wrestled, humbling our souls before God, we should realize as marked answers to our petitions as were granted to Daniel. Hear how he presses his case at the court of Heaven:

"O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name; for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my

God; for thy city and thy people are called by thy name. And whilst I was speaking and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people, ... even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation."

As Daniel's prayer is going forth, the angel Gabriel comes sweeping down from the heavenly courts, to tell him that his petitions are heard and answered. This mighty angel has been commissioned to give him skill and understanding,--to open before him the mysteries of future ages. Thus, while earnestly seeking to know and understand the truth, Daniel was brought into communion with Heaven's delegated messenger.

The man of God was praying, not for a flight of happy feeling, but for a knowledge of the divine will. And he desired this knowledge, not merely for himself, but for his people. His great burden was for Israel, who were not, in the strictest sense, keeping the law of God. He acknowledges that all their misfortunes have come upon them in consequence of their transgressions of that holy law. He says, "We have sinned, we have done wickedly.... Because for our sins and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us." They had lost their peculiar, holy character as God's chosen people. "Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate." Daniel's heart turns with intense longing to the desolate sanctuary of God. He knows that its prosperity can be restored only as Israel shall repent of their transgressions of God's law, and become humble, and faithful, and obedient.

In answer to his petition, Daniel received not only the light and truth which he and his people most needed, but a view of the great events of the future, even to the advent of the world's Redeemer. Those who claim to be sanctified, while they have no desire to search the Scriptures, or to wrestle with God in prayer for a clearer understanding of Bible truth, know not what true sanctification is.

All who believe with the heart the word of God will hunger and thirst for a knowledge of his will. God is the author of truth. He enlightens the darkened understanding, and gives to the human mind power to grasp and comprehend the truths which he has revealed.

Daniel talked with God. Heaven was opened before him. But the high honors



granted him were the result of humiliation and earnest seeking. He did not think, as do many at the present day, that it is no matter what we believe, if we are only honest, and love Jesus. True love for Jesus will lead to the most close and earnest inquiry as to what is truth. Christ prayed that his disciples might be sanctified through the truth. He who is too indolent to make anxious, prayerful search for truth, will be left to receive errors which shall prove the ruin of his soul.

At the time of Gabriel's visit, the prophet Daniel was unable to receive further instruction; but a few years afterward, desiring to know more of subjects not yet fully explained, he again set himself to seek light and wisdom from God. "In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all.... Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz. His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in color to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude."

No less a personage than the Son of God appeared to Daniel. This description is similar to that given by John when Christ was revealed to him upon the Isle of Patmos. Our Lord now comes with another heavenly messenger to teach Daniel what would take place in the latter days. This knowledge was given to Daniel and recorded by inspiration for us upon whom the ends of the world are come.

The great truths revealed by the world's Redeemer are for those who search for truth as for hid treasures. Daniel was an aged man. His life had been passed amid the fascinations of a heathen court, his mind cumbered with the affairs of a great empire; yet he turns aside from all these to afflict his soul before God, and seek a knowledge of the purposes of the Most High. And in response to his supplications, light from the heavenly courts was communicated for those who should live in the latter days. With what earnestness, then, should we seek God, that he may open our understanding to comprehend the truths brought to us from Heaven.

"And I Daniel alone saw the vision; for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.... And there remained no strength in me; for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength." Such will be the experience of every one who is truly

sanctified. The clearer their views of the greatness, glory, and perfection of Christ, the more vividly will they see their own weakness and imperfection. They will have no disposition to claim a sinless character; that which has appeared right and comely in themselves will, in contrast with Christ's purity and glory, appear only as unworthy and corruptible. It is when men are separated from God, when they have very indistinct views of Christ, that they say, "I am sinless; I am sanctified."

Gabriel then appeared to the prophet, and thus addressed him; "O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright; for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel; for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words."

What great honor was shown to Daniel by the Majesty of Heaven! He comforts his trembling servant, and assures him that his prayer was heard in Heaven, and that in answer to that fervent petition, the angel Gabriel was sent to affect the heart of the Persian king. The monarch had resisted the impressions of the Spirit of God during the three weeks while Daniel was fasting and praying, but Heaven's Prince, the archangel, Michael, was sent to turn the heart of the stubborn king to take some decided action to answer the prayer of Daniel.

"And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb. And behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips.... And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee; be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me." So great was the divine glory revealed to Daniel that he could not endure the sight. Then the messenger of Heaven veiled the brightness of his presence and appeared to the prophet as "one like the similitude of the sons of men." By his divine power he strengthened this man of integrity and of faith, to hear the message sent to him from God.

Daniel was a devoted servant of the Most High. His long life was filled up with noble deeds of service for his Master. His purity of character, and unwavering fidelity, are equaled only by his humility of heart and his contrition before God. We repeat, The life of Daniel is an inspired illustration of true sanctification.

February 15, 1881

## **The Life of John an Illustration of True Sanctification**

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

The apostle John was distinguished above his brethren as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." While not in the slightest degree cowardly, weak, or vacillating in character, he possessed an amiable disposition, and a warm, loving heart, capable of the deepest and most earnest devotion. He seems to have enjoyed, in a pre-eminent sense, the friendship of Christ, and he received many tokens of the Saviour's confidence and love. He was one of the three permitted to witness Christ's glory upon the mount of transfiguration, and his agony in Gethsemane; and to the care of John our Lord confided his mother in those last hours of anguish upon the cross.

The Saviour's affection for the beloved disciple was returned with all the strength of ardent devotion. John clung to Christ as the vine clings to the stately pillar. For the Master's sake he braved the dangers of the judgment hall, and lingered about the cross; and at the tidings that Christ had risen, he hastened to the sepulcher, in his zeal outstripping even the impetuous Peter.

John's affection for his Master was not a mere human friendship, but the love of a repentant sinner, who felt that he had been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. He esteemed it the highest honor to work and suffer in the service of his Lord. His love for Jesus led him to love all for whom Christ died. His religion was of a practical character. He reasoned that love to God would be manifested in love to his children. He was heard again and again to say, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." "We love him because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?" The apostle's life was in harmony with his teachings. The love which glowed in his heart for Christ, led him to put forth the most earnest, untiring labor for his fellow-men, especially for his brethren in the Christian church. He was a powerful preacher, fervent, and deeply in earnest, and his

words carried with them a weight of conviction.

The confiding love and unselfish devotion manifested in the life and character of John, present lessons of untold value to the Christian church. Some may represent him as possessing this love independent of divine grace; but John had, by nature, serious defects of character; he was proud and ambitious, and quick to resent slight and injury.

The depth and fervor of John's affection for the Master was not the cause of Christ's love for him, but the effect of that love. John desired to become like Jesus, and under the transforming influence of the love of Christ, he became meek and lowly of heart. Self was hid in Jesus. He was closely united to the Living Vine, and thus became a partaker of the divine nature. Such will ever be the result of communion with Christ. This is true sanctification.

There may be marked defects in the character; evil temper, irritable disposition, envy, and jealousy may bear sway; yet if the man becomes a true disciple of Jesus, the power of divine grace will make him a new creature. Christ's love transforms, sanctifies him. But when persons profess to be Christians, and their religion does not make them better men and better women in all the relations of life,--living representatives of Christ in disposition and character,--they are none of his.

At one time, with several of his brethren, John engaged in a dispute as to which of their number should be accounted greatest. They did not intend their words to reach the ear of the Master; but Jesus read their hearts, and embraced the opportunity to give his disciples a lesson of humility. It was not only for the little group who listened to his words, but was to be recorded for the benefit of all his followers, to the close of time. "And he sat down, and called the twelve, and said unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all."

Those who possess the spirit of Christ will have no ambition to occupy a position above their brethren. It is those who are small in their own eyes who will be accounted great in the sight of God. "And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them; and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but Him that sent me."

What a precious lesson is this for all the followers of Christ! Those who overlook the life-duties lying directly in their pathway, who neglect mercy and kindness, courtesy and love, to even a little child, are neglecting Christ. John felt the force of this lesson, and profited by it.

On another occasion, his brother James and himself had seen a man casting out devils in the name of Jesus, and because he did not immediately connect himself with their company, they decided that he had no right to do this work, and consequently forbade him. In the sincerity of his heart, John related the circumstance to the Master. Jesus said, "Forbid him not; for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part."

Again, James and John came to Jesus with a request that he would honor them by permitting one to sit at his right hand and the other at his left hand in his glory. The Saviour answered, "Ye know not what ye ask." How little do many of us understand the true import of our prayers! Oh! Jesus knew the infinite price at which that glory must be purchased, when he, "for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame." That joy was to see souls saved by his humiliation, his agony, and the shedding of his blood.

This was the glory which Christ was to receive, and which these two disciples had requested that they might be permitted to share. Jesus asked them, "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can."

How little did they comprehend what that baptism signified! "Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized. But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared."

Jesus understood the motives which prompted the request, and thus reproved the pride and ambition of the two disciples: "The Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you; but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister; and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Upon one occasion, Christ sent messengers before him into a village of the Samaritans, requesting the people to prepare refreshments for himself and his disciples. But when Christ approached the town, he appeared to be passing on toward Jerusalem. This aroused the enmity of the Samaritans, and instead of sending messengers to invite and even urge him to tarry with them, they withheld the courtesies which they would have given to a common wayfarer. Jesus never urges his presence upon any, and the Samaritans lost the blessing which would have been granted them, had they solicited him to be their guest.

We may wonder at this rude and uncourteous treatment of the Majesty of Heaven; but how often are we who profess to be the followers of Christ, guilty of the same neglect. Do we urge Jesus to take up his abode in our hearts and in our homes? He is full of love, of grace, of blessing, and stands ready to bestow these gifts upon us; but, like the Samaritans, we are frequently content without them.

The disciples were aware of the purpose of Christ to bless the Samaritans with his presence; and when they saw the coldness, jealousy, and positive disrespect shown to their Master, they were filled with surprise and indignation. James and John were especially stirred. That the Master whom they so highly revered should be thus treated, seemed to them a crime too great to be passed over without immediate punishment. These disciples said, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from Heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?" referring to the destruction of the Syrian captains and their companies sent out to take the prophet Elijah.

Jesus rebuked his disciples, saying, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of; for the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." John and his fellow-disciples were in a school, in which Christ was teacher. Those who were ready to learn their mistakes, and anxious to improve in character, had ample opportunity. John treasured every lesson, and constantly sought to bring his character into harmony with the divine Pattern. The lessons of Christ, setting forth meekness, humility, and love as essential to growth in grace and a fitness for his work, were of the highest value to John. These lessons are addressed to us as individuals and as brethren in the church, as well as to the first disciples of Christ. There is no sanctification without the grace of humility.

An instructive lesson may be drawn from the striking contrast between the

character of John and that of Judas. John was a living illustration of sanctification. On the other hand, Judas possessed a form of godliness, while his character was more Satanic than divine. He professed to be a disciple of Christ, but in words and in works denied him.

Judas had the same precious opportunities as had John to study and to imitate the Pattern. He listened to the lessons of Christ, and his character might have been transformed by divine grace. But while John was earnestly warring against his own faults, and seeking to assimilate to Christ, Judas was violating his conscience, yielding to temptation, and fastening upon himself habits of dishonesty that would transform him into the image of Satan.

These two disciples represent the Christian world. All profess to be Christ's followers; but while one class walk in humility and meekness, learning of Jesus, the other show that they are not doers of the word, but hearers only. One class are sanctified through the truth; the other know nothing of the transforming power of divine grace. The former are dying daily to self, and are overcoming sin. The latter are indulging their own lusts, and becoming the servants of Satan.

John's early life was passed in the society of the rude and uncultivated fishermen of Galilee. He did not enjoy the training of the schools; but by association with Christ, the Great Teacher, he obtained the highest education which mortal man can receive. He drank eagerly at the fountain of wisdom, and then sought to lead others to that "well of water springing up into everlasting life." The simplicity of his words, the sublime power of the truths he uttered, and the spiritual fervor that characterized his teachings, gave him access to all classes. Yet even believers were unable to fully comprehend the sacred mysteries of divine truth unfolded in his discourses. He seemed to be constantly imbued with the Holy Spirit. He sought to bring the thoughts of the people up to grasp the unseen. The wisdom with which he spoke caused his words to drop as the dew, softening and subduing the soul.

February 22, 1881

## **The Life of John an Illustration of True Sanctification**

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

After the ascension of Christ, John stands forth a faithful, ardent laborer for the Master. With others, he enjoyed the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and with fresh zeal and power he continued to speak to the people the words of life. He was threatened with imprisonment and death, but he would not be intimidated.

Multitudes from all classes come out to listen to the preaching of the apostles, and are healed of their diseases through the name of Jesus, that name so hated among the Jews. The priests and rulers are frantic in their opposition, as they see that the sick are healed, and Jesus is exalted as the Prince of life. They fear that soon the whole world will believe on him, and then accuse them of murdering the Mighty Healer. But the greater their efforts to stop this excitement, the more accept him and turn from the teachings of the scribes and Pharisees. They are filled with indignation, and laying hands upon the apostles, thrust them into the common prison. But the angel of the Lord, by night, opens the prison doors, brings them forth, and says, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life."

With fidelity and earnestness, John bore testimony for his Lord upon every suitable occasion. He saw that the times were full of peril for the church. Satanic delusions were existing everywhere. The minds of the people were wandering through the mazes of skepticism and deceptive doctrines. Some who pretended to be true to the cause of God were deceivers; they denied Christ and his gospel, and were bringing in damnable heresies and living in transgression of the divine law.

John's favorite theme was the infinite love of Christ. No man stood higher before the believers in his day, and before men of all classes, than did John. He believed in God as a child believes in a kind and tender father. He understood the character and work of Jesus; and when he saw his Jewish brethren groping their way without a ray of



the Sun of Righteousness to illuminate their path, he longed to present to them Christ, the Light of the world.

The faithful apostle saw that their blindness, their pride, superstition, and ignorance of the Scriptures, were riveting upon their souls fetters which would never be broken. The prejudice and hatred against Christ which they obstinately cherished, was bringing ruin upon them as a nation, and destroying their hopes of everlasting life. But John continued to present Christ to them as the only way of salvation. The evidence that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah was so clear, that John declares no man need to walk in the darkness of error while such a light is proffered him.

John lived to see the gospel of Christ preached far and near, and thousands eagerly accepting its teachings. But he was filled with sadness as he perceived poisonous errors creeping into the church. Some who accepted Christ claimed that his love released them from obedience to the law of God. On the other hand, many taught that the letter of the law should be kept, also all the Jewish customs and ceremonies, and that this was sufficient for salvation, without the blood of Christ. They held that Christ was a good man, like the apostles, but denied his divinity. John saw the dangers to which the church would be exposed, should they receive these ideas, and he met them with promptness and decision. He wrote to a most honorable helper in the gospel, a lady of good repute and extensive influence:

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed is a partaker of his evil deeds."

John was not to prosecute his work without great hindrances, Satan was not idle. He instigated evil men to cut short the useful life of this man of God; but holy angels protected him from their assaults. John must stand as a faithful witness for Christ. The church in its peril needed his testimony.

By falsehood and misrepresentation the emissaries of Satan had sought to stir up

opposition against John, and against the doctrine of Christ. In consequence, dissensions and heresies were imperiling the church. John met these errors unflinchingly. He hedged up the way of the adversaries of truth. He wrote and exhorted that the leaders in these heresies should not have the least encouragement. There are at the present day evils similar to those that threatened the prosperity of the early church, and the teachings of the apostle upon these points should be carefully heeded. "You must have charity," is the cry to be heard everywhere, especially from those who profess sanctification. But charity is too pure to cover an unconfessed sin. John's teachings are important for those who are living amid the perils of the last days. He had been intimately associated with Christ, he had listened to his teachings, and had witnessed his mighty miracles. He bore a convincing testimony, which made the falsehoods of his enemies of none effect.

John enjoyed the blessing of true sanctification. But mark, the apostle does not claim to be sinless; he is seeking perfection by walking in the light of God's countenance. He testifies that the man who pretends to know God, and yet breaks the divine law, gives the lie to his profession. "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." In this age of boasted liberality, these words of John would be branded as bigotry. But the apostle would teach us that while endeavoring to perfect Christian character, we are authorized to call sin and sinners by their right names,--that this is true charity. While loving the souls for whom Christ died, and laboring for their salvation, we should not make a compromise with sin. We are not to unite with the rebellious, and call this charity. God requires his people in this age of the world to stand as did John in his time, unflinchingly for the right, in opposition to soul-destroying errors.

I have met many who claimed to live without sin. But when tested by God's word, these persons were found to be open transgressors of his holy law. The clearest evidences of the perpetuity and binding force of the fourth commandment, failed to arouse the conscience. They could not deny the claims of God, but ventured to excuse themselves in breaking the Sabbath. They claimed to be sanctified, and to serve God on all days of the week. Many good people, they said, did not keep the Sabbath. As they were sanctified, no condemnation would rest upon them if they did not observe it. God was too merciful to punish us for not keeping the seventh day. They would be counted odd and singular in community, should they observe the Sabbath, and would have no influence in the world. We must be subject to the powers that be.

A lady in New Hampshire bore her testimony in a public meeting, that the grace of God was ruling in her heart, and that she was wholly the Lord's. She then expressed her belief that this people were doing much good in arousing sinners to see their danger. She said, "The Sabbath that this people present to us, is the only Sabbath of the Bible;" and then stated that her mind had been very much exercised upon the subject. She saw great trials before her, which she must meet if she kept the seventh day. The next day, she came to meeting, and again bore her testimony, saying she had asked the Lord if she must keep the Sabbath, and he had told her she need not keep it. Her mind was now at rest upon that subject. She then gave a most stirring exhortation for all to come to the perfect love of Jesus, where there was no condemnation to the soul.

This woman did not possess genuine sanctification. It was not God who told her that she could be sanctified through disobedience to one of his plain commandments. God's law is sacred, and no one can transgress it with impunity. The being who told her that she could continue to transgress God's law and be sinless, was the prince of the powers of darkness,--the same who told Eve in Eden, through the serpent, "Thou shalt not surely die." Eve flattered herself that God was too kind to punish her for disobedience of his express commands. The same sophistry is urged by thousands in excuse of their disobedience of the fourth commandment. Those who have the mind of Christ will keep all of God's commandments, irrespective of circumstances. The Majesty of Heaven says, "I have kept my Father's commandments." Adam and Eve dared to transgress the Lord's requirements, and the terrible result of their sin should be a warning to us not to follow their example of disobedience. Christ prayed for his disciples in these words: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." There is no genuine sanctification, except through obedience to the truth. Those who love God with all the heart will also love all his commandments. The sanctified heart is in harmony with the precepts of God's law; for they are holy, just, and good.

God's character has not changed. He is the same jealous God today as when he gave his law upon Sinai, and wrote it with his own finger on the tables of stone. Those who trample upon God's holy law may say, "I am sanctified;" but to be indeed sanctified, and to claim sanctification, are two different things.

The New Testament has not changed the law of God. The sacredness of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is as firmly established as the throne of Jehovah. John writes, "Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth also the law; for sin is the

transgression of the law. And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth [transgresseth the law] hath not seen him, neither known him." We are authorized to hold in the same estimation as did the beloved disciple those who claim to abide in Christ, to be sanctified, while living in the transgression of God's law. He met with just such a class as we have to meet. He said, "Little children, let no man deceive you. He that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." Here the apostle speaks in plain terms, as he deemed the subject demanded.

The epistles of John breathe a spirit of love. But when he comes in contact with that class who break the law of God and yet claim that they are living without sin, he does not hesitate to warn them of their fearful deception. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth; but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

March 1, 1881

## **The Life of John an Illustration of True Sanctification**

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

The wonderful success which attended the preaching of the gospel by the apostles and their fellow-laborers increased the hatred of the unbelieving Jews. They made every effort to hinder its progress, and finally succeeded in enlisting the power of the Roman emperor against the Christians. A great persecution followed, in which many of the followers of Christ were put to death. The apostle John was now an aged man; but with great zeal and success he continued to preach the doctrine of Christ. He had a testimony of power, which his adversaries could not controvert, and which greatly encouraged his brethren.

When the faith of the Christians would seem to waver under the fierce opposition they were forced to meet, the apostle would repeat, with great dignity, power, and eloquence, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; .... that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

The bitterest hatred was kindled against John for his unwavering fidelity to the cause of Christ. He was the last survivor of the disciples who were intimately connected with Jesus; and his enemies decided that his testimony must be silenced. If this could be accomplished, they thought the doctrine of Christ would not spread; and if treated with severity, it might soon die out of the world. John was accordingly summoned to Rome to be tried for his faith. His doctrines were misstated. False witnesses accused him as a seditious person, publicly teaching theories which would subvert the nation.

The apostle presented his faith in a clear and convincing manner, with such simplicity and candor that his words had a powerful effect. His hearers were astonished

at his wisdom and eloquence. But the more convincing his testimony, the deeper the hatred of those who opposed the truth. The emperor was filled with rage, and blasphemed the name of God and of Christ. He could not controvert the apostle's reasoning, or match the power which attended the utterance of truth, and he determined to silence its faithful advocate.

Here we see how hard the heart may become when obstinately set against the purposes of God. The foes of the church were determined to maintain their pride and power before the people. By the emperor's decree, John was banished to the Isle of Patmos, condemned, as he tells us, "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." But the enemies of Christ utterly fail in their purpose to silence his faithful witness. From the Isle of Patmos, comes the apostle's voice, reaching even to the end of time, and revealing the most thrilling truths ever presented to mortals.

Patmos, a barren, rocky island in the Aegean Sea, had been chosen by the Roman government as a place of banishment for criminals. But this gloomy abode proved, to the servant of God, to be the gate of Heaven. He was shut away from the busy scenes of life, and from his active labors as an evangelist; but he was not excluded from the presence of God. In his desolate home he could commune with the King of kings, and study more closely the manifestations of divine power in the book of nature and the pages of inspiration. He delighted to meditate upon the great work of creation, and to adore the power of the Divine Architect. In former years his eyes had been greeted with the sight of wood-covered hills, green valleys, and fruitful plains; and in all the beauties of nature he had delighted to trace the wisdom and skill of the Creator. He was now surrounded with scenes that to many would appear gloomy and uninteresting. But to John it was otherwise. He could read the most important lessons in the wild, desolate rocks, the mysteries of the great deep, and the glories of the firmament. To him, all bore the impress of God's power, and declared his glory.

The apostle beheld around him the witnesses of the flood, which deluged the earth because the inhabitants ventured to transgress the law of God. The rocks, thrown up from the great deep and from the earth, by the breaking forth of the waters, brought vividly to his mind the terrors of that awful outpouring of God's wrath.

But while all that surrounded him below appeared desolate and barren, the blue heavens that bent above the apostle on lonely Patmos were as bright and beautiful as the

skies above his own loved Jerusalem. Let man once look upon the glory of the heavens in the night season, and mark the work of God's power in the hosts thereof, and he is taught a lesson of his own littleness. If he has cherished pride and self-importance because of talents or personal accomplishments, because he is rich in houses and lands, let him go out in the beautiful night, and look upon the starry heavens, and learn to humble his proud spirit in the presence of the Infinite One.

In the voice of many waters,--deep calling unto deep,--the prophet heard the voice of the Creator. The sea, lashed to fury by the merciless winds, represented to him the wrath of an offended God. The mighty waves, in their most terrible commotion restrained within the limits appointed by an invisible hand, spoke to John of an infinite power controlling the deep. And in contrast he saw and felt the folly of feeble mortals, but worms of the dust, who glory in their wisdom and strength, and set their hearts against the Ruler of the universe, as though God were altogether such an one as themselves. How blind and senseless is human pride! One hour of God's blessing in the sunshine and rain upon the earth, will do more to change the face of nature than man, with all his boasted knowledge and persevering efforts, can accomplish during a lifetime.

In the surroundings of his island home, the exiled prophet read the manifestations of divine power, and in all the works of nature held communion with his God. The most ardent longing of the soul after God, the most fervent prayers, went up to Heaven from rocky Patmos. As John looked upon the rocks, he was reminded of Christ, the rock of his strength, in whose shelter he could hide without a fear.

The Lord's day mentioned by John was the Sabbath,--the day on which Jehovah rested after the great work of creation, and which he blessed and sanctified because he had rested upon it. The Sabbath was as sacredly observed by John upon the Isle of Patmos as when he was among the people, preaching upon that day. By the barren rocks surrounding him, John was reminded of rocky Horeb, and how, when God spoke his law to the people there, he said, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

The Father and the Son spoke to Moses from the rocks. God made the rocks his sanctuary. His temple was the everlasting hills. The Divine Legislator descended upon the rocky mountain to speak his law in the hearing of all the people, that they might be impressed by the grand and awful exhibition of his power and glory, and fear to

transgress his commandments. God spoke his law amid thunders and lightnings and the thick cloud upon the top of the mountain, and his voice was as the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud. The law of Jehovah was unchangeable, and the tablets upon which he wrote that law were solid rock, signifying the immutability of its precepts. Rocky Horeb became a sacred place to all who loved and revered the law of God.

While John was contemplating the scenes of Horeb, the Spirit of God, who sanctified the seventh day, came upon him. He contemplated the sin of Adam in transgressing the divine law, and the fearful result of that transgression. The infinite love of God, in giving his Son to redeem a lost race, seemed too great for language to express. As he presents it in his epistle, he calls upon the church and the world to behold it. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." It was a mystery to John that God could give his Son to die for rebellious man. And he was lost in amazement that the plan of salvation, devised at such a cost to Heaven, should be refused by those for whom the infinite sacrifice had been made.

John was shut in with God. As he learned more of the divine character, through the works of creation, his reverence for God increased. He often asked himself, Why do not men, who are wholly dependent upon God, seek to be at peace with him by willing obedience? He is infinite in wisdom, and there is no limit to his power. He controls the heavens with their numberless worlds. He preserves in perfect harmony the grandeur and beauty of the things which he has created. Sin is the transgression of God's law; and the penalty of sin is death. There would have been no discord in Heaven or in the earth, if sin had never entered. Disobedience to God's law has brought all the misery that has existed among his creatures. Why will not men be reconciled to God?

It is no light matter to sin against God,--to set the perverse will of man in opposition to the divine will. It is for the best interest of man, even in this world, to obey God's commandments. And it is surely for his eternal interest to submit to God, and be at peace with him. The beasts of the field obey their Creator's law in the instinct which governs them. He speaks to the proud ocean, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further;" and the waters are prompt to obey his word. The planets are marshaled in perfect order, obeying the laws which God has established. He has given to man reasoning powers to understand the claims of the divine law, and a conscience to feel the guilt of transgression and the peace and joy of obedience. And yet, of all the



creatures that God has made upon the earth, man alone is rebellious. God has left man as a free moral agent, to obey or disobey. The reward of everlasting life,--an eternal weight of glory,--is promised to those who do God's will, while the threatenings of his wrath hang over all who defy his law.

As John meditated upon the glory of God displayed in his works, he was overwhelmed with the greatness and majesty of the Creator. Should all the inhabitants of this little world refuse obedience to God, he would not be left without glory. He could sweep every mortal from the face of the earth in a moment, and create a new race to people it and glorify his name. God is not dependent on man for honor. He could marshal the starry hosts of heaven, the millions of worlds above, to raise a song of honor and praise and glory to his name. "And the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O Lord; thy faithfulness also in the congregation of the saints. For who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him."

John calls to remembrance the wonderful incidents that he has witnessed in the life of Christ. In imagination he again enjoys the precious opportunities with which he had once been favored, and is greatly comforted. Suddenly his meditation is broken in upon; he is addressed in tones distinct and clear. He turns to see from whence the voice proceeds, and lo! he beholds his Lord, whom he had loved, with whom he had walked and talked, and whose sufferings upon the cross he had witnessed. But how changed is the Saviour's appearance! He is no longer "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." He bears no marks of his humiliation. His eyes are like a flame of fire; his feet like fine brass, as it glows in a furnace. The tones of his voice are like the musical sound of many waters. His countenance shines like the sun in its meridian glory. In his hand are seven stars, signifying the ministers of the churches. Out of his mouth issues a sharp, two-edged sword, representing the power of his word.

John, who had so loved his Lord, and who had steadfastly adhered to the truth in the face of imprisonment, stripes, and threatened death, cannot endure the excellent glory of Christ's majesty, but falls to the earth as one stricken dead. Jesus then lays his hand upon the prostrate form of his servant, saying, "Fear not. I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore." John was strengthened to live in the presence of his glorified Lord; and then were presented before him in holy vision the

purposes of God for future ages. The glorious attractions of the heavenly home were made known to him. He was permitted to look upon the throne of God, and to behold the white-robed throng of redeemed ones. He heard the music of heavenly angels, and the songs of triumph from those who had overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.

The humility of John did not consist in a mere profession; it was a grace that clothed him as naturally as a garment. He ever sought to conceal his own righteous acts, and to avoid everything that would seem to attract attention to himself. In his Gospel, John mentions the disciple whom Jesus loved, but conceals the fact that the one thus honored was himself. His course was devoid of selfishness. In his daily life he taught and practiced charity in the fullest sense. He had a high sense of the love that should exist among natural brothers and Christian brethren. He presents and urges this love as an essential characteristic of the followers of Jesus. Destitute of this, all pretensions to the Christian name are vain.

John was a teacher of practical holiness. He presents unerring rules for the conduct of Christians. They must be pure in heart, and correct in manners. In no case should they be satisfied with an empty profession. He declares in unmistakable terms that to be a Christian is to be Christlike.

John does not once claim to be sinless. But his life was one of earnest effort to conform to the will of God. It was a living representation of Christian sanctification. He followed his Saviour closely, and had such a sense of the purity and exalted holiness of Christ, that his own character appeared, in contrast, exceedingly defective. And when Jesus in his glorified body appeared to John, one glimpse was enough to cause him to fall down as one dead. Such will ever be the feelings of those who know best their Lord and Master. The more closely they contemplate the life and character of Jesus, the less will they be disposed to claim holiness of heart, or to boast of their sanctification.

March 8, 1881

## **The Law of God the Standard of True Sanctification**

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

Sanctification is obtained only in obedience to the will of God. Many who are willfully trampling upon the law of Jehovah, claim holiness of heart and sanctification of life. But they have not a saving knowledge of God or of his law. They are standing in the ranks of the great rebel. He is at war with the law of God, which is the foundation of the divine government in Heaven and in the earth. These men are doing the same work as their master has done in seeking to make of none effect God's holy law. No commandment-breaker can be permitted to enter Heaven; for he who was once a pure and exalted covering cherub, was thrust out for rebelling against the government of God.

With many, sanctification is only self-righteousness. And yet these persons boldly claim Jesus as their Saviour and sanctifier. What a delusion! Will the Son of God sanctify the transgressor of the Father's law,--that law which Christ came to exalt and make honorable? He testifies, "I have kept my Father's commandments." God will not bring his law down to meet the imperfect standard of man; and man cannot meet the demands of that holy law without exercising repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

"If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." But God has not given his Son to a life of suffering and ignominy and a shameful death to release man from obedience to the divine law. So great is the deceptive power of Satan, that many have been led to regard the atonement of Christ as of no real value. Christ died because there was no other hope for the transgressor. He might try to keep God's law in the future; but the debt which he had incurred in the past remained, and the law must condemn him to death. Christ came to pay that debt for the sinner which it was impossible for him to pay for himself. Thus, through the atoning sacrifice of Christ, sinful man was granted another trial.

It is the sophistry of Satan that the death of Christ brought in grace to take the place of the law. The death of Jesus did not change, or annul, or lessen in the slightest degree, the law of ten commandments. That precious grace offered to men through a Saviour's blood, establishes the law of God. Since the fall of man, God's moral government and his grace are inseparable. They go hand in hand through all dispensations. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

Jesus, our substitute, consented to bear for man the penalty of the law transgressed. He clothed his divinity with humanity, and thus became the Son of man, a Saviour and Redeemer. The very fact of the death of God's dear Son to redeem man, shows the immutability of the divine law. How easily, from the transgressor's standpoint, could God have abolished his law, thus providing a way whereby men could be saved, and Christ remain in Heaven! The doctrine which teaches freedom, through grace, to break the law, is a fatal delusion. Every transgressor of God's law is a sinner, and none can be sanctified while living in known sin.

The condescension and agony of God's dear Son were not endured to purchase for man liberty to transgress the Father's law and yet sit down with Christ in his throne. It was that through his merits, and the exercise of repentance and faith, the most guilty sinner might receive pardon, and obtain strength to live a life of obedience. The sinner is not saved in his sins, but from his sins.

The soul must first be convicted of sin, before the sinner will feel a desire to come to Christ. "Sin is the transgression of the law." "I had not known sin but by the law." When the commandment came home to Saul's conscience, sin revived, and he died. He saw himself condemned by the law of God. The sinner cannot be convinced of his guilt, unless he understands what constitutes sin. It is impossible for an individual to experience Bible sanctification while he holds that if he believes in Christ it is immaterial whether he obeys God's law or disobeys it.

Those who profess to keep the law of God, and yet at heart are indulging in sin, are condemned by the True Witness. They claim to be rich in a knowledge of the truth; but they are not in harmony with its sacred principles. The truth does not sanctify their lives. God's word declares that the professed commandment-keeper whose life

contradicts his faith, is blind, wretched, poor, and naked.

God's law is the mirror presenting a complete reflection of the man as he is, and holding up before him the correct likeness. Some will turn away and forget this picture, while others will employ abusive epithets against the law, as though this would cure their defects of character. Still others who are condemned by the law will repent of their transgressions, and, through faith in Christ's merits, will perfect Christian character.

The whole world is guilty in God's sight of transgressing his law. Because the great majority will continue to transgress, and thus remain at enmity with God, is no reason why none should confess themselves guilty and become obedient. To a superficial observer, persons who are naturally amiable, who are educated and refined, may appear perfect in life. "Man looketh on the outward appearance; but the Lord looketh on the heart." Unless the life-giving truths of God's word, when presented to the conscience, are understandingly received, and then faithfully carried out in the life, no man can see the kingdom of Heaven. To some, these truths have a charm because of their novelty, but are not accepted as the word of God. Those who do not receive the light when it is brought before them, will be condemned by it.

In every congregation in the land there are souls unsatisfied, hungering and thirsting for salvation. By day and by night, the burden of their hearts is, What shall I do to be saved? They listen eagerly to popular discourses, hoping to learn how they may be justified before God. But too often they hear only a pleasing speech, an eloquent declamation. There are sad and disappointed hearts in every religious gathering. The minister tells his hearers that they cannot keep the law of God. "It is not binding upon man in our day," he says. "You must believe in Christ; he will save you; only believe." Thus he teaches them to make feeling their criterion, and gives them no intelligent faith. That minister may profess to be very sincere; but he is seeking to quiet the troubled conscience with a false hope.

Many are led to think that they are on the road to Heaven, because they profess to believe in Christ, while they reject the law of God. But they will find at last that they were on the way to perdition, instead of Heaven. Spiritual poison is sugar-coated with the doctrine of sanctification, and administered to the people. Thousands eagerly swallow it, feeling that if they are only honest in their belief they will be safe. But sincerity will not convert error to truth. A man may swallow poison, thinking it is food;

but his sincerity will not save him from the effects of the dose.

God has given us his word to be our guide. Christ has said, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." He prayed for his disciples, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." Paul says, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." But this belief did not make his course right. When Paul received the gospel of Jesus Christ, it made him a new creature. He was transformed; the truth was planted in his soul, and gave him such faith and courage as a follower of Christ that no opposition could move him, no suffering daunt him. Men may make what excuse they please for their rejection of God's law; but no excuse will be accepted in the day of Judgment. Those who are contending with God, and strengthening their guilty souls in transgression, must very soon meet the great Lawgiver over his broken law.

The day of God's vengeance cometh,--the day of the fierceness of his wrath. Who will abide the day of his coming? Men have hardened their hearts against the Spirit of God; but the arrows of his wrath will pierce where the arrows of conviction could not. God will not far hence arise to deal with the sinner. Will the false shepherd shield the transgressor in that day? Can he be excused who went with the multitude in the path of disobedience? Will popularity or numbers make any guiltless? These are questions which the careless and indifferent should consider and settle for themselves.

April 26, 1881

## **Sanctification**

### Christian Character

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

The character of the Christian is shown by his daily life. Said Christ, "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." Our Saviour compares himself to a vine, of which his followers are the branches. He plainly declares that all who would be his disciples must bring forth fruit; and then he shows how they may become fruitful branches. "Abide in me, and I in you; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me."

The apostle Paul describes the fruit which the Christian is to bear. He says that it "is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." And again, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." These precious graces are but the principles of God's law carried out in the life.

Those who have genuine love for God will manifest an earnest desire to know his will and to do it. Says the apostle John, whose epistles treat so fully upon love, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." The child who loves his parents will show that love by willing obedience; but the selfish, ungrateful child seeks to do as little as possible for his parents, while he at the same time desires to enjoy all the privileges granted to the obedient and faithful. The same difference is seen among those who profess to be children of God. Many who know that they are the objects of his love and care, and who desire to receive his blessing, take no delight in doing his will. They regard God's claims upon them as an unpleasant restraint, his commandments as a grievous yoke. But he who is earnestly seeking for holiness of heart and life, delights in the law of God, and mourns only that he falls so far short of meeting its requirements.

We are commanded to love one another as Christ has loved us. He has manifested

his love by laying down his life to redeem us. The beloved disciple says that we should be willing to lay down our lives for the brethren. For "every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of Him." If we love Christ, we shall love those who resemble him in life and character. And not only so, but we shall love those who "have no hope and are without God in the world." It was to save sinners that Christ left his home in Heaven, and came to earth to suffer and to die. For this he toiled and agonized and prayed, until, heart-broken and deserted by those he came to save, he poured out his life on Calvary.

Many shrink from such a life as our Saviour lived. They feel that it requires too great a sacrifice to imitate the Pattern, to bring forth fruit in good works, and then patiently endure the pruning of God that they may bring forth more fruit. But when the Christian regards himself as only a humble instrument in the hands of Christ, and endeavors to faithfully perform every duty, relying upon the help which God has promised, then he will wear the yoke of Christ and find it easy; then he will bear burdens for Christ, and pronounce them light. He can look up with courage and with confidence, and say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him."

If we meet obstacles in our path and faithfully overcome them, if we encounter opposition and reproach, and in Christ's name gain the victory, if we bear responsibilities and discharge our duties in the spirit of our Master, then, indeed, we gain a precious knowledge of his faithfulness and power. We no longer depend upon the experience of others, for we have the witness in ourselves. Like the Samaritans of old, we can say, "We have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

The more we contemplate the character of Christ, and the more we experience of his saving power, the more keenly shall we realize our own weakness and imperfection, and the more earnestly shall we look to him as our strength and our Redeemer. We have no power in ourselves to cleanse the soul-temple from its defilement; but as we repent of our sins against God, and seek pardon through the merits of Christ, he will impart that faith that works by love and purifies the heart. By faith in Christ, and obedience to the law of God, we may be sanctified, and thus obtain a fitness for the society of holy angels and the white-robed redeemed ones in the kingdom of glory.



It is not only the privilege but the duty of every Christian to maintain a close union with Christ, and to have a rich experience in the things of God. Then his life will be fruitful in good works. Said Christ, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." In his letter to the church at Ephesus, Paul endeavors to set before his brethren the "mystery of the gospel," the "unsearchable riches of Christ," and then assures them of his earnest prayers for their spiritual prosperity:

"I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God."

Again, he writes to his Corinthian brethren, "to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus," "Grace be unto you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; that in everything ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you; so that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." These words are addressed not only to the church at Corinth, but to all the people of God to the close of time. Every Christian may enjoy the blessing of sanctification.

The apostle continues, in these words: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment." Paul would not have appealed to them to do that which was impossible. Unity is the sure result of Christian perfection.

In the epistle to the Colossians also are set forth the glorious privileges vouchsafed to the children of God. "Since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints, ... we also since the day we heard it do not cease to pray for you; and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-

suffering with joyfulness."

The apostle himself was endeavoring to reach the same standard of holiness which he set before his brethren. He writes to the Philippians: "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord....That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." There is a striking contrast between the boastful, self-righteous claims of those who profess to be without sin, and the modest language of the apostle. Yet it was the purity and faithfulness of his own life that gave such power to his exhortations to his brethren.

Paul did not hesitate to enforce, upon every suitable occasion, the importance of Bible sanctification. He says: "Ye know what commandment we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."

He bids Titus to instruct the church that while they should trust to the merits of Christ for salvation, divine grace, dwelling in their hearts, will lead to the faithful performance of all the duties of life. "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, to speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men. For we ourselves also were sometime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the

washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men."

Paul seeks to impress upon our minds the fact that the foundation of all acceptable service to God, as well as the very crown of the Christian graces, is love; and that only in the soul where love reigns will the peace of God abide. "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

May 3, 1881

## **Sanctification**

### The Christian's Privilege

Text: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

Many who are sincerely seeking for holiness of heart and purity of life seem perplexed and discouraged. They are constantly looking to themselves, and lamenting their lack of faith; and because they have no faith, they feel that they cannot claim the blessing of God. These persons mistake faith for feeling. They look above the simplicity of true faith, and thus bring great darkness upon their souls. They should turn the mind from self, to dwell upon the mercy and goodness of God and to recount his promises, and then simply believe that he will fulfill his word. We are not to trust in our faith, but in the promises of God. When we repent of our past transgressions of his law, and resolve to render obedience in the future, we should believe that God for Christ's sake accepts us, and forgives our sins.

Darkness and discouragement will sometimes come upon the soul, and threaten to overwhelm us; but we should not cast away our confidence. We must keep the eye fixed on Jesus, feeling or no feeling. We should seek to faithfully perform every known duty, and then calmly rest in the promises of God.

At times a deep sense of our unworthiness will send a thrill of terror through the soul; but this is no evidence that God has changed toward us, or we toward God. No effort should be made to rein the mind up to a certain intensity of emotion. We may not feel today the peace and joy which we felt yesterday; but we should by faith grasp the hand of Christ, and trust him as fully in the darkness as in the light.

Satan may whisper, "You are too great a sinner for Christ to save." While you acknowledge that you are indeed sinful and unworthy, you may meet the tempter with the cry, "By virtue of the atonement, I claim Christ as my Saviour. I trust not to my own

merits, but to the precious blood of Jesus, which cleanses me. This moment I hang my helpless soul on Christ." The Christian life must be a life of constant, living faith. An unyielding trust, a firm reliance upon Christ, will bring peace and assurance to the soul.

Be not discouraged because your heart seems hard. Every obstacle, every internal foe, only increases your need of Christ. He came to take away the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh. Look to him for special grace to overcome your peculiar faults. When assailed by temptation, steadfastly resist the evil promptings; say to your soul, "How can I dishonor my Redeemer? I have given myself to Christ; I cannot do the works of Satan." Cry to the dear Saviour for help to sacrifice every idol, and to put away every darling sin. Let the eye of faith see Jesus standing before the Father's throne, presenting his wounded hands as he pleads for you. Believe that strength comes to you through your precious Saviour.

By faith look upon the crowns laid up for those who shall overcome; listen to the exultant song of the redeemed, Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain and hast redeemed us to God! Endeavor to make these scenes a reality. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, in his terrible conflict with principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places, exclaimed, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." The Saviour of the world was revealed to him as looking down from Heaven upon him with the deepest interest; and the glorious light of Christ's countenance shone upon Stephen with such brightness that even his enemies saw his face shine like the face of an angel.

If we would permit our minds to dwell more upon Christ and the heavenly world, we should find a powerful stimulus and support in fighting the battles of the Lord. Pride and love of the world will lose their power as we contemplate the glories of that better land so soon to be our home. Beside the loveliness of Christ, all earthly attractions will seem of little worth.

Let none imagine that without earnest effort on their part they can obtain the assurance of God's love. When the mind has been long permitted to dwell only on earthly things, it is a difficult matter to change the habits of thought. That which the eye sees and the ear hears, too often attracts the attention and absorbs the interest. But if we would ever enter the city of God, and look upon Jesus in his glory, we must become accustomed to beholding him with the eye of faith here. The words and the character of

Christ should be often the subject of our thoughts and of our conversation; and each day some time should be especially devoted to prayerful meditation upon these sacred themes.

Sanctification is a daily work. Let none deceive themselves with the belief that God will pardon and bless them while they are trampling upon one of his requirements. The willful commission of one known sin silences the witnessing voice of the Spirit, and separates the soul from God. Whatever may be the ecstasies of religious feeling, Jesus cannot abide in the heart that disregards the divine law. God will honor those only who honor him.

"His servants ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey." If we indulge anger, lust, covetousness, hatred, selfishness, or any other sin, we become servants of sin. "No man can serve two masters." If we serve sin, we cannot serve Christ. The Christian will feel the promptings of sin, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit; but the Spirit striveth against the flesh, keeping up a constant warfare. Here is where Christ's help is needed. Human weakness becomes united to divine strength, and faith exclaims, "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

If we would develop a character which God can accept, we must form correct habits in our religious life. Daily prayer is as essential to growth in grace, and even to spiritual life itself, as is temporal food to physical well-being. We should accustom ourselves to often lift the thoughts to God in prayer. If the mind wanders, we must bring it back; by persevering effort, habit will finally make it easy. We cannot for one moment separate ourselves from Christ with safety. We may have his presence to attend us at every step, but only by observing the conditions which he has himself laid down.

Religion must be made the great business of life. Everything else should be held subordinate to this. All our powers of soul, body, and spirit, must be engaged in the Christian warfare. We must look to Christ for strength and grace, and we shall gain the victory as surely as Jesus died for us.

We must come nearer to the cross of Christ, Penitence at the foot of the cross is the first lesson of peace we have to learn. The love of Jesus--who can comprehend it? Infinitely more tender and self-denying than a mother's love! If we would know the value of a human soul, we must look in living faith upon the cross, and thus begin the

study which shall be the science and the song of the redeemed through all eternity. The value of our time and our talents can be estimated only by the greatness of the ransom paid for our redemption. What ingratitude do we manifest toward God when we rob him of his own by withholding from him our affections and our service. Is it too much to give ourselves to Him who has sacrificed all for us? Can we choose the friendship of the world before the immortal honors which Christ proffers,--" to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on his throne"?

Sanctification is a progressive work. The successive steps are set before us in the words of Peter: "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity;" "for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Here is a course by which we may be assured that we shall never fall. Those who are thus working upon the plan of addition in obtaining the Christian graces, have the assurance that God will work upon the plan of multiplication in granting them the gifts of his Spirit. Peter addresses those who have obtained like precious faith with us: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord." By divine grace, all who will may climb the shining steps from earth to Heaven, and at last, "with songs and everlasting joy," enter through the gates into the city of God.

Our Saviour claims all there is of us; he asks our first and holiest thoughts, our purest and most intense affection. If we are indeed partakers of the divine nature, his praise will be continually in our hearts and upon our lips. Our only safety is to surrender our all to him, and to be constantly growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.

The apostle Paul was highly honored of God, being taken in holy vision to the third heaven, where he looked upon scenes whose glories might not be revealed to mortals. Yet all this did not lead him to boastfulness or self-confidence. He realized the importance of constant watchfulness and self-denial, and plainly declares, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

Paul suffered for the truth's sake, and yet we hear no complaints from his lips. As he reviews his life of toil and care and sacrifice he says, "I reckon the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." The shout of victory from God's faithful servant comes down the line to our time,--"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? .... Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Though Paul was at last confined in a Roman prison,--shut away from the light and air of heaven, cut off from his active labors in the gospel, and momentarily expecting to be condemned to death,--yet he did not yield to doubt or despondency. From that gloomy dungeon came his dying testimony, full of a sublime faith and courage that has inspired the hearts of saints and martyrs in all succeeding ages. His words fitly describe the result of that sanctification which we have in these articles endeavored to set forth. "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."



August 2, 1881

## **Rest for the Weary**

Jesus invites the weary to come to him for rest: "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30.

Many who hear this invitation sigh for rest, and yet press on the rugged path, hugging their burdens closer to their heart. Jesus loves them, and longs to bear their burdens and themselves also in his strong arms of love. He invites them to lay the heavy burdens on him. Your fears and uncertainties, that rob you of peace and rest, he would remove; but you must come to him, and tell him the secret woes of your heart. He invites your confidence as the proof of your love for him. Jesus would rather have the gift of the humble, trusting heart than all the wealth riches can bestow. He invites through his messengers the gift of yourselves. Only come to him in the simplicity and confidence with which a child would come to its parents, and the divine touch from his hand will relieve you of your burdens.

Let us not forget that Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. The compassionate Saviour invites all to come to him. Let us believe the words of our Lord, and not make the way to him so hard. Let us not travel the precious road, cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, with murmuring, with doubts, with cloudy forebodings, groaning, as if forced to an unpleasant, exacting task. The ways of Christ are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace. If we have made rough paths for our feet, and taken upon us heavy burdens of care in laying up for ourselves treasures upon the earth, let us now change, and follow the path Jesus has prepared for us.

We are not always willing to give our burdens to Jesus. We sometimes pour our troubles into human ears, and tell our afflictions to those who cannot help us, and neglect to confide all to Jesus, that he may change the sorrowful ways to paths of joy and peace. Self-denying, self-sacrificing love gives glory and victory to the cross. The promises of God's word are very precious. We must study his word, if we would know his will. The words of inspiration, carefully studied and practically obeyed, will lead our

feet in a plain path, where we may walk without stumbling. Oh, that ministers and people would take all the burdens and perplexities to Jesus, who is waiting to receive them and give them peace and rest. Jesus will never forsake those who put their trust in him.

We are living in an age when wickedness prevails. The perils of the last days thicken around us, and because iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold. This need not be if all would come to Jesus, and confidently and in faith trust in him. His meekness and his lowliness, cherished, will bring peace and rest and moral power to every soul.

The shortness of time is urged as an incentive for us to seek righteousness and to make Christ our friend. This is not the great motive. It savors of selfishness. Is it necessary that the terrors of the day of God be held before us to compel us through fear to right action? This ought not to be. Jesus is attractive. He is full of love, mercy, and compassion. He proposes to be our friend, to walk with us through all the rough pathways of life. He says to you, I am the Lord thy God; walk with me, and I will fill thy path with light. Jesus, the Majesty of Heaven, proposes to elevate to companionship with himself those who come to him with their burdens, their weaknesses, and their cares. He will make them his dear children, and finally give them an inheritance of more value than the empires of kings, a crown of glory richer than has ever decked the brow of the most exalted earthly monarch.

It is our duty to love him as our Redeemer. He commands our love, and as a friend he invites our love. Christ's invitation to us all is a call to a life of peace and rest,--a life of liberty and love, and to a rich inheritance in the future immortal life. Why, then, should we resist his invitation and refuse his love? If we choose to live with Christ through the ceaseless ages of eternity, why not choose him as our best and most honored and loved companion here? Christ calls us to walk with him in this world in the path of humble, trustful obedience, which will secure a pure, holy, happy life. Which will we choose,--liberty in Christ, or bondage and tyranny in the service of Satan? It is our privilege to have a calm, close, happy walk with Jesus every day we live.

We need not be alarmed if this path of liberty is laid through conflicts and sufferings. The liberty we shall enjoy will be the more valuable because we made sacrifices to obtain it. The peace which passeth knowledge will cost us battles with the

powers of darkness, struggles severe against selfishness and inward sins. The victories gained daily through persevering, untiring effort in well-doing, will be precious through Christ who hath loved us, "who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." The excellence of Christ we should seek to obtain. In the face of temptation we should school ourselves to firm endurance, which will not provoke one murmuring thought, although we may be weary in toiling, and in fighting the good fight of faith.

Thank God that some have passed through afflictions with light undimmed. Their hope and faith are strong, because acquired by conflict and nurtured by suffering. If it were not for these heroes of faith, who have learned to endure, and to suffer and be strong, the outlook would be indeed discouraging. How could any of us know how to sympathize with the sorrowing, the burdened, the afflicted, and be to them the help they need, if we had never experienced similar trials ourselves? We cannot appreciate our Redeemer in the highest sense until we can see him by the eye of faith reaching to the very depths of human wretchedness, taking upon himself the nature of man, the capacity to suffer, and by suffering putting forth his divine power to save and lift sinners up to companionship with himself. Oh, why have we so little sense of sin? Why so little penitence? It is because we do not come nearer the cross of Christ. Conscience becomes hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, because we remain away from Christ. Consider the Captain of our salvation. He suffered shame for us that we might not suffer everlasting shame and contempt. He suffered on the cross, that mercy might be granted to fallen man. God's justice is preserved, and guilty man is pardoned. Jesus dies that the sinner might live. Shame is borne by the Son of the Highest for the sake of poor sinners, that they might be ransomed and crowned with eternal glory.

The cross of Calvary appeals in power, affording a reason why we should love Christ now, and why we should consider him first, and best, and last, in everything. We should take our fitting place in humble penitence at the foot of the cross. We may learn the lessons of meekness and lowliness of mind as we go up to Mount Calvary, and, looking upon the cross, see our Saviour in agony, the Son of God dying, the just for the unjust. Behold Him who could summon legions of angels to his assistance with one word, a subject of jest and merriment, of reviling and hatred. He gives himself a sacrifice for sin. When reviled, he threatened not; when falsely accused, he opened not his mouth. He prays on the cross for his murderers. He is dying for them. He is paying an infinite price for every one of them. He would not lose one whom he has purchased

at so great cost. He gives himself to be smitten, and scourged, without a murmur. And this uncomplaining victim is the Son of God. His throne is from everlasting, and his kingdom shall have no end.

Come, you who are seeking your own pleasures in forbidden joys and in sinful indulgences, you who are scattering from Christ. Look, O look upon the cross of Calvary; behold the royal victim suffering on your account, and be wise while you have opportunity, and seek now the fountain of life and true happiness. Come, you who complain and murmur at the little inconveniences and the few trials you must bear in this life. Look on Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith. He turns from his royal throne, his high command, and lays aside his royal robe, and clothes his divinity with humanity. For our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich.

The Son of God was rejected and despised for our sakes. Can you, in full view of the cross, beholding by the eye of faith the sufferings of Christ, tell your tale of woe, your trials? Can you nurse revenge of your enemies in your heart while the prayer of Christ comes from his pale and quivering lips for his revilers, his murderers,--"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do?"

A work is before us to subdue pride and vanity, that seek a place in our hearts, and through penitence and faith to bring ourselves into familiar and holy converse with Jesus Christ. We must not shrink from the depths of humiliation to which the Son of God submitted in order to raise us from the degradation and bondage of sin to a seat at his right hand. We must deny self, and fight continually against pride. We must hide self in Jesus Christ, and let him appear in our conversation and character as the One altogether lovely, and the chief among ten thousand. Our lives, our deportment, will testify how highly we prize Christ, and the salvation he has wrought out for us at such a cost to himself. While we look constantly to Him whom our sins have pierced, and our sorrows have burdened, we shall acquire strength to be like him. We shall bind ourselves in willing, happy, captivity to Jesus Christ. It is high time we devoted the few remaining precious hours of our probation to washing our robes of character, and making them white in the blood of the Lamb, that we may be of that white-robed company who shall stand about the great white throne.

August 16, 1881

## Doing for Christ

Christ says to his redeemed people, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

To be a patient toiler in that which calls for self-denying labor, is a glorious work, that Heaven smiles upon. Faithful work is more acceptable to God than the most zealous and thought-to-be, holiest, worship. True worship consists in working together with Christ. Prayers, exhortation, and talk are cheap fruits, which are frequently tied on, but fruits that are manifested in good works, in caring for the needy, the fatherless, and widows, are genuine fruits, and grow naturally upon a good tree.

Pure religion and undefiled before the Father is this: "To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." The doing principle is the fruit that Christ requires us to bear; doing deeds of benevolence, speaking kind words, and manifesting tender regard for the poor, the needy, the afflicted. When one's heart sympathizes with others burdened with discouragement and grief; when his hand clothes the naked, and the stranger is made welcome to a seat in his parlor and in his heart, then angels come very near, and an answering strain responds in Heaven. Every act, every deed of justice and mercy and benevolence, makes music in Heaven. The Father from his throne beholds and numbers the performer of them with his most precious treasures. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, when I make up my jewels." Every merciful act to the needy, or the suffering, is as though done to Jesus. Whoever succors the poor, or sympathizes with the afflicted and oppressed, and befriends the orphan, brings himself into a more close relationship to Jesus.

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal." Matthew 25:41-46.

Jesus here identifies himself with his suffering people. I was hungry and thirsty; I was a stranger; I was naked; I was sick; I was in prison. When you were enjoying your food from your bountifully spread tables, I was famishing of hunger in the hovel or street, not far from you. When you closed your doors against me, while your well-furnished rooms were unoccupied, I had not where to lay my head. Your wardrobes were filled with an abundant supply of changeable suits of apparel, upon which means had been needlessly squandered, which you might have given to the needy. I was destitute of comfortable apparel. When you were enjoying health, I was sick. Misfortune cast me into prison and bound me with fetters, bowing down my spirit, depriving me of freedom and hope, while you roamed free. What a oneness Jesus here expresses as existing between himself and his suffering disciples. He makes their case his own. He identifies himself as being, in their person, the very sufferer. Here, mark, selfish Christian, that every neglect of yours to the needy poor, the orphan, the fatherless, is a neglect to Jesus in their person.

But there are some persons who make high professions, whose hearts are so encased in self-love and selfishness that they cannot appreciate these things. They have all their lives thought and lived only for self. To make a worthy sacrifice to do others good, to disadvantage themselves for the purpose of benefiting others, is out of the question with them. They have not the least idea that God requires this of them. Self is their dear idol. Precious weeks, months, and years of valuable time pass into eternity, but they have no record in Heaven of kindly acts, of sacrificing for others' good, of feeding the hungry, of clothing the naked, or taking in the stranger. Entertaining strangers at a venture is not agreeable; if they knew that all who shared their bounty were worthy, then they might be induced to do something in that direction. But there is

virtue in venturing something. Perchance we may entertain angels.

There are orphans that can be cared for; but many will not venture to undertake such a work; for it involves more labor than they care to do, leaving them but little time to please themselves. But when the King shall make investigation, these do-nothing, illiberal, selfish souls will then learn that Heaven is for those who have been workers; those who have denied themselves for Christ's sake. No provisions have been made for those who have ever taken such special care in loving and looking out for themselves. The terrible punishment the King threatened those on his left hand, in this case, is not because of their great crimes. They are not condemned for the things which they did do, but for that which they did not do. They did not those things Heaven assigned them to do. They pleased themselves, and can take their portion with self-pleasers.

Has the injunction of the apostle no force in this age: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares"? Our Heavenly Father lays blessings disguised in our pathway, which some will not touch for fear they will detract from their enjoyment. Angels are waiting to see if we embrace opportunities within our reach of doing good--waiting to see if we will bless others, that they in their turn may bless us. The Lord himself has made our circumstances to differ, keeping some poor, and allowing others to become rich, that all may have an opportunity to develop character.

When Elijah came to the widow of Sarepta, she shared her morsel with the prophet of God, and he therefore wrought a miracle, so that in the act of making a home for God's servant, and sharing her morsel with him, she was herself sustained, and her life and that of her son preserved. Thus will it prove in the case of many, if they do this cheerfully for the glory of God. Others plead their poor health; they would love to do if they had strength. Such have so long shut themselves up to themselves, and thought so much of their own poor feelings, and talked so much of their sufferings, trials, and afflictions, that it is their present truth. They cannot think of any one else, however much they may be in need of sympathy and assistance. You who are suffering from poor health, there is a remedy for you. If you clothe the naked, and bring the poor that are cast out to your house, and deal your bread to the hungry, then shall your light break forth as the morning, and your health shall spring forth speedily.

Doing good is an excellent remedy for disease. Such are invited to bring their

prayers to God, and he has pledged himself to answer them. "His soul shall be satisfied in drought, and he shall be like a watered garden, whose waters fail not." Wake up, brethren and sisters. Don't be afraid of good works. "Be not weary in well doing, for in due time ye shall reap if ye faint not." Do not wait to be told your duty. Open your eyes, and see who is around you, and make yourselves acquainted with the helpless, afflicted, and needy. Hide not yourselves from them; close not your eyes to their needs. Who gives the proofs mentioned in James of possessing pure religion, untainted with any selfishness or corruption? Who is anxious to do all in his power to aid in the great plan of salvation?

As you regard your eternal interest, arouse yourselves, and begin to sow good seed. That which ye sow shall ye also reap. The harvest is coming,—the great reaping time, when you shall reap what you have sown. There will be no failure in the crop. The harvest is sure. Now is the sowing time. Now make efforts to be rich in good works, "ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for yourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that ye may lay hold on eternal life." I implore you, my brethren, in every church, rid yourselves of your icy coldness. Encourage in yourselves a love of hospitality, a love to help those who need help.

You may say that you have been disappointed by bestowing means upon those unworthy of your charity, and therefore have become discouraged in trying to help the needy. I present Jesus before you. He came to save fallen man. He came to bring salvation to his own nation; but they would not accept him. They treated his mercy with insult and contempt, and at length they put to death Him who came for the purpose of giving life to them. Did our Lord turn from all the fallen race because of this? If your efforts for good have been unsuccessful ninety-nine times, and you have received only insult, reproach, and hate; if the one-hundredth time proves a success, and one soul is saved, oh, what a victory is achieved! One soul wrenched from Satan's grasp, one soul benefited, one soul encouraged! This will a thousand times pay you for all your efforts. To you will Jesus say "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Should we not gladly do all we can to imitate the life of our divine Lord?

Many shrink at the idea of making any sacrifice for others' good. They are not willing to suffer for the sake of helping others. They flatter themselves that it is not required of them to disadvantage themselves for the benefit of others. To such we will



say, Jesus is our example.

When the request was made that the two sons of Zebedee might sit the one on his right hand and the other on his left in his kingdom, Jesus answered, "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he said, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with, but to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." How many can answer, We can drink of the cup; we can be baptized with the baptism; and make the answer understandingly? How many imitate the great Exemplar? All who profess to be followers of Jesus Christ, in taking this step pledge themselves to walk even as he walked. Yet the course many pursue who make high profession shows that their lives are far from being in conformity to that of the great Pattern. They shape their course to meet their own imperfect standard. They do not imitate the self-denial of Christ, or his life of sacrifice for the good of others.

I once heard a wealthy farmer describe the situation of a poor widow living near him. He lamented her straitened circumstances, and then said, "I don't know how she is going to get along this cold winter. She has close times now." Such have forgotten the work of Christ, and by their acts say, "Nay, Lord, we cannot drink of the cup of self-denial, humiliation, and sacrifice you drank of, nor be baptized with the suffering you were baptized with. We cannot live to do others good. It is our business to take care of ourselves."

Who should know how the widow will get along, unless it be those who have well-filled granaries? The means for her to get along is at hand; and dare those whom God has made his stewards, to whom he has intrusted means, withhold from the needy disciples of Christ? If so, they withhold from Jesus. Do you expect the Lord to rain down grain from Heaven to supply the needy? Has he not rather placed it in your hands to help and bless them through you? Has he not made you his instrument in this good work, to prove you, and to give you the privilege of laying up a treasure in Heaven? Hear what the prophet Isaiah says:

"Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I have

chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day. And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not."

The fast is described which God can accept. "to deal thy bread to the hungry," and to "bring the poor that are cast out, to thy house." You are with one hand to reach up, and by faith take hold of the mighty arm which bringeth salvation, while with the other hand of love you reach the oppressed, and relieve them. It is impossible for you to fasten upon the arm of God with one hand, while the other is employed in administering to your own pleasure.

If you engage in this work of mercy and love, will it prove too hard for you? Will you fail, and be crushed under the burden, and your family be deprived of your assistance and influence? Oh, no! God has carefully removed all doubts upon this question by a pledge to you on condition of your obedience. This promise covers all the most exacting, the most hesitating, could crave: "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health spring forth speedily." Only believe that He is faithful that has promised. God can renew the physical strength; and more, he says he will do it. And the promise does not end here. "Thy righteousness shall go before thee. The glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward." God will build a fortification around you. Neither does the promise end at this point. "Thou shalt call, and the Lord shall answer. Thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am." If you put down oppression and remove the speaking of vanity, if you draw out your soul to the hungry, "then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday. The Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought [famine], and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and a spring of water, whose waters fail not."

Read Isaiah 58, you who claim to be children of the light. Especially do you read it again and again who have felt so fearful to inconvenience yourselves by favoring the needy; you whose hearts and houses are too narrow to make a home for the homeless, read it. You who can see orphans and widows oppressed by the iron hand of poverty, and bowed down by the hard-hearted worldlings, read it.

Are you afraid that an influence will be introduced into your family that will cost you more labor, read that chapter. Your fears may be groundless, and a blessing may come, known and realized by you every day. But if otherwise, if extra labor is called for, you can draw upon One who has promised: "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily." Why God's people are not more spiritually-minded, and have no more faith, is because they are narrowed by selfishness. The prophet is addressing Christians; not sinners, not unbelievers, but those who make great pretensions to godliness. It is not the abundance of your meetings that God accepts. It is not the numerous prayers, but it is right-doing,--doing the right thing, and at the right time. It is to be less self-caring, and more benevolent. Our souls must expand. Then God will make them like a watered garden, whose waters fail not.

August 23, 1881

## **A Working Church**

Ministers should impress upon the people for whom they labor the importance of individual effort. No church can flourish unless its members are workers. The people must lift where the ministers lifts, thus seconding his efforts and helping him bear his burdens, and then he will not be overworked and become discouraged. There is no influence that can be brought to bear on a church that will be enduring unless the people shall move intelligently, from principle, to do all they can to forward the work. The individual members of the church should feel a responsibility resting upon them to overcome their own defects of character, and by doing this they encourage others to overcome. Those who profess to be Christians should arouse themselves, and take up their neglected duties; for the salvation of their own souls depends upon their individual efforts. Said the Prince of life, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." "Agonize," says the margin. There are vastly more seekers than strivers. Tame, half-hearted efforts will not insure success. There must be determined, persevering, untiring effort, proportionate to the value of eternal life, the object of our pursuit. We cannot trust to another to win the crown for us; we must individually fight the battles of the Lord. The ministers cannot save the people. He can be a channel through which God will impart light and knowledge; but after that light is given he cannot make the people walk in the light. Christ could not do this. It is left for those who have the light to appropriate the light, and in their turn let it shine forth in bright rays upon the pathway of others.

True Christians will represent Christ in deportment and in character. They will sanctify themselves through obedience to the truth, that the people they would save may be influenced by their Christ-like character, and see a beauty and harmony in the truth. Preachers and people will effect more for Christ by humble, devoted, and virtuous lives, that can be done by preaching where a godly example is wanting. Many, I fear, will not have zeal and earnestness to seek God for themselves, and know for themselves that Christ is formed in them the hope of glory. If they have the heart work, they can, if any man ask them, give a reason of the hope that is within them with meekness and fear. With meekness, because Jesus died for them as sinners that they might have eternal life; with meekness because there is no virtue or goodness in them. They are dependent upon

Christ every moment for this great salvation. With fear, lest they fail to represent their faith, which to them is so precious, in such a manner as to convince unbelievers that they have the truth. The meekness of wisdom will be seen in their deportment. They have the evidence that they are built upon the sure foundation, and will stand amid the perils of the last days. They purify their souls through the truth to unfeigned love of the brethren. The fire of affliction may kindle upon them, and although the removal of imperfections from their characters may be to them a severe process, yet they will endure the test and trial so essential to their eternal good.

We are not, as Christians, doing one-twentieth part that we might do in winning souls to Christ. There is a world to be warned, and every sincere Christian will be a guide and an example to others in faithfulness, in cross-bearing, in prompt and vigorous action, in unswerving fidelity to the cause of truth, and in sacrifices and labors to promote the cause of God. This is a great work. To meet the standard of God, men must be growing Christians, having root in themselves. Many are separated from God by wicked works, and need the help that growing Christians can give them by a holy life and godly example. When clouds and darkness overshadow us, we are inclined to seek for human sympathy; we do not take our burdens to Jesus; we do not exercise living faith in his promises. There is not a close searching of our own hearts to see if there is not some darling sin cherished, some idol that needs to be cast down in order to give Christ the entire heart's affections.

Said Christ, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." The promises contained in the word of God are exceedingly precious. The word of life, carefully and prayerfully studied, and practically obeyed, will thoroughly furnish us unto all good works. Ministers and people must learn to look to men less and to God more. He can save to the utmost all who put their trust in him. When power and grace in unlimited supply await our demand, why do we neglect to come in living faith for the things God knows we need, and that he longs to bestow upon us if we will only ask him in faith?

Enoch lived in a corrupt age, when moral power was very weak. Pollution was teeming all around him; yet he walked with God. He educated his mind to devotion,--to think on things that were pure and holy; and his conversation was upon holy and divine things. He was made a companion of God. He walked with him, and received his counsel. He had to contend with the same temptations that we do. The society

surrounding him was no more friendly to righteousness than is the society surrounding us at the present time. The atmosphere he breathed was tainted with sin and corruption, the same as ours; yet he was unsullied with the prevailing sins of the age in which he lived. And so may we remain as pure and uncorrupted as did the faithful Enoch. He was a representative of the saints living amid the perils and corruptions of the last days. For his faithful obedience to God, he was translated. So, also, those who are alive and remain, who are faithful, will be translated to Heaven. They will be removed from a sinful and corrupt world to the pure joys of Heaven.

The course of God's people should be upward and onward to victory. One is with us, even the Captain of our salvation, who has said for our encouragement? "Lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." "Be of good cheer. I have overcome the world." He will lead us on to certain victory. What God promises, he is able at any time to perform. And the work he gives his people to do, he is able to accomplish by them. If we live a life of perfect obedience, his promises will be fulfilled to us.

God requires his people to shine as lights in the world. It is not merely the ministers who are required to do this, but every disciple of Christ. Their conversation should be heavenly. And while they enjoy communion with God, they will wish to have intercourse with their fellowmen, in order to express by their words and acts the love of God which animates their hearts. In this way will they be lights in the world, and the light transmitted through them will not go out, or be taken away. It will indeed become darkness to those who will not walk in it; but it will shine with increasing brightness on the path of those who will obey and walk in the light.

The Spirit, wisdom, and goodness of God, as revealed in his word, should be exemplified by the disciples of Christ. God's requirements of his people are in accordance with the grace and truth given them. All his righteous demands must be fully met. Accountable beings must walk in the light that shines upon them. If they fail to do this, their light becomes darkness, and the degree of darkness is according to the abundance of light possessed.

It is not for lack of knowledge that God's people are now perishing. They will not be condemned because they do not know the way, the truth, and the life. The truth that has reached their understanding, the light which has shone on the soul, that has not been cherished, and which they have neglected, or refused to be led by, will condemn them.

What more could have been done for God's vineyard than has been done? Light, precious light, shines upon his people; but the light will not save them, unless they consent to be saved by it.

God calls upon his people to act. Will they awake? Will every one who professes godliness seek to put away every wrong, confess to God every secret sin, and afflict the soul before him? Will they, with great humility, investigate the motives of every action, and know that the eye of God reads all,--searches out every hidden thing? Let the work be thorough, the consecration to God be entire. He calls for a full surrender of all that we have and are. Ministers and people need a new conversion,--a transformation of the mind,--without which we are not savorers of life unto life, but of death unto death. Great privileges belong to the people of God. Great light has been given them, that they may attain to their high calling in Christ Jesus; yet they are not what God would have them to be, and what he designs they should be.

August 30, 1881

## **The Parents' Work**

God has made it the privilege and the duty of parents to become co-workers with himself in the education and training of their children. Parents are responsible, in a great degree, for the characters which their children develop. Would that every father and mother could see that in their own home is a missionary field in which they may work unitedly for the salvation of the precious souls committed to their care.

It is a sad fact, almost universally admitted and deplored, that the home-education and training of the youth of today have been neglected. The father, as the head of his own household, should understand how to train his children for usefulness and duty. This is his special work, above every other. During the first few years of a child's life, the molding of the disposition is committed principally to the mother; but she should ever feel that in her work she has the co-operation of the father. If he is engaged in business which almost wholly closes the door of usefulness to his family, he should seek other employment which will not prevent him from devoting some time to his children. If he neglects them, he is unfaithful to the trust committed to him of God.

The father may exert an influence over his children which shall be stronger than the allurements of the world. He should study the disposition and character of the members of his little circle, that he may understand their needs and their dangers, and thus be prepared to repress the wrong and encourage the right. Parents should remember that occupation is essential for children. If their hands are kept active in useful employment, a door will be closed against the temptations of Satan. Let children be taught, when quite young, to bear the smaller responsibilities of life, and the faculties thus employed will strengthen by exercise. Thus the youth may become efficient helpers in the greater work which the Lord shall afterward call them to do.

Children and youth who are allowed to devote much of their time to amusement and pleasure-seeking are never really happy; and in after-life they will be unprepared for positions of trust. Few have been trained to habits of industry, thoughtfulness, and care-taking. Indolence, inaction, is the greatest curse to children of this age. Wholesome, useful labor, will be a great blessing, by promoting the formation of good



habits and a noble character.

As they consider their duties and their responsibility, parents will often be led to inquire, Who is sufficient for these things? At times the heart may be ready to faint; but a living sense of the dangers threatening the present and future happiness of their loved ones, should lead Christian parents to seek more earnestly for help from the Source of strength and wisdom. It should make them more circumspect, more decided, more calm yet firm, while they watch for these souls, as they that must give account.

Parents should study the best and most successful manner of winning the love and confidence of their children, that they may lead them in the right path. They should reflect the sunshine of love upon the household. There are no influences so potent, no memories so enduring, as those of childhood. The parents' work must begin with the child in its infancy, that it may receive the right impress of character ere the world shall place its stamp on mind and heart.

While the spirit of love should pervade the household, it is the duty of parents not to be ruled, but to rule. All under the roof should respect the parental discipline. The law of the household should be held sacred. Parents should bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. By their own example they should lead the way to Heaven. The father, as priest of the household, should explain and enforce the word of God. Let the children be taught to honor and obey their parents, that they may also learn to honor and obey their Heavenly Father. Parents stand in God's place to their little ones. When fathers and mothers realize this, they will find at home a field wherein to exercise their powers for the accomplishment of great good.

There are two ways to deal with children,--ways that differ widely in principle and in results. Faithfulness and love, united with wisdom and firmness, in accordance with the teachings of God's word, will bring happiness in this life and in the next. Neglect of duty, injudicious indulgence, failure to restrain or correct the follies of youth, will result in unhappiness and final ruin to the children, and disappointment and anguish to the parents.

The history of Eli is a terrible example of the results of parental unfaithfulness. Through his neglect of duty, his sons became a snare to their fellow-men and an offense to God, forfeiting not only the present but the future life. Their evil example destroyed

hundreds, and the influence of these hundreds corrupted the morals of thousands. This case should be a warning to all parents. While some err upon the side of undue severity, Eli went to the opposite extreme. He indulged his sons to their ruin. Their faults were overlooked in their childhood, and excused in their days of youth. The commands of the parents were disregarded, and the father did not enforce obedience. The children saw that they could hold the lines of control, and they improved the opportunity. As the sons advanced in years, they lost all respect for their faint-hearted father. They went on in sin without restraint. He remonstrated with them, but his words fell unheeded. Gross sins and revolting crimes were daily committed by them, until the Lord himself visited with judgment the transgressors of his law.

We have seen the result of Eli's mistaken kindness,--death to the indulgent father, ruin and death to his wicked sons, and destruction to thousands in Israel. The Lord himself decreed that for the sins of Eli's sons no atonement should be made by sacrifice or offering forever. How great, how lamentable, was their fall,--men upon whom rested sacred responsibilities, proscribed, outlawed from mercy, by a just and holy God!

Such is the fearful reaping of the harvest sown when parents neglect their God-given responsibilities,--when they allow Satan to pre-occupy the field which they themselves should carefully have sown with precious seed of virtue, truth, and righteousness. If but one parent is neglectful of duty, the result will be seen in the character of the children; if both fail, how great will be their accountability before God! How can they escape the doom of those who destroy their children's souls?

It were well for parents to learn from the man of Uz a lesson of steadfastness and devotion. Job did not neglect his duty to those outside of his household; he was benevolent, kind, thoughtful of the interest of others; and at the same time he labored earnestly for the salvation of his own family. Amid the festivities of his sons and daughters, he trembled lest his children should displease God. As a faithful priest of the household, he offered sacrifices for them individually. He knew the offensive character of sin, and the thought that his children might forget the divine claims, led him to God as an intercessor in their behalf.

The will of God is the law of Heaven. As long as that law was the rule of life, all the family of God were holy and happy. But when the divine law was disobeyed, then envy, jealousy, and strife were introduced, and a part of the inhabitants of Heaven fell.

As long as God's law is revered in our earthly homes, the family will be happy. The authority of the parents should be absolute; yet this power is not to be abused. In the control of his children, the father should not be governed by caprice, but by the Bible standard. When he permits his own harsh traits of character to bear sway, he becomes a despot. Imperfect man, not the all-wise and merciful Heavenly Father, then makes laws which become a crushing burden.

Prompt and continual obedience to wise parental rule, will promote the happiness of the children themselves, as well as the honor of God and the good of society. Children should learn that in submission to the laws of the household is their perfect liberty. Christians will learn the same lesson,--that in their obedience to God's law is their perfect freedom.

The parent who permits his rule to become a despotism, is making a terrible mistake. He wrongs not only his children but himself, quenching in their young hearts the love that would flow out in acts and words of affection. Kindness, forbearance, and love, manifested to children, will be reflected back upon the parents. That which they sow, they will also reap.

While educating and disciplining their children, parents are in a continual school. It is impossible for them to teach self-control, unless they first learn to govern themselves. Fathers and mothers may study their own character in their children. They may often read humiliating lessons, as they see their own imperfections reproduced in their sons and daughters. While seeking to repress and correct in their children hereditary tendencies to evil, parents should call to their aid double patience, perseverance, and love. God has apportioned them their work, and he will require it at their hands. No minister or friend can supply their place. The harder the battle, the greater their need of help from their Heavenly Father, and the more marked will be the victory gained.

There is no discharge in this work. Parents should labor with reference to the future harvest. While they sow in tears, amid many discouragements, it should be with earnest prayer. They may see the promise of but a late and scanty harvest, yet that should not prevent the sowing. They should sow beside all waters, embracing every opportunity both to improve themselves and to benefit their children. Such seed-sowing will not be in vain. At the harvest time, many faithful parents will return with joy,

bringing their sheaves with them.

Parents, if you would succeed in this great work, you must have Christ enthroned in the heart. As an honored guest, he must be earnestly invited to the home circle. It is not enough merely to speak to your children of spiritual things. They must see you exemplify the principles of Christianity in your home. The power of divine grace should control all the regulations of the household. Let it be seen in your simplicity in dress and in the preparation of your food. All these things, as well as the society you choose, the amusements in which you indulge, and the whole round of duties of daily life, will have an abiding influence upon the characters of your children.

While you seek to administer justice, remember that she has a twin sister, which is mercy. The two stand side by side, and should not be separated. Be careful not to alienate the affections of your children by undue severity. Never correct them in anger. Many professedly Christian parents do this; but they make the case far worse than if they had administered no correction. They commit a greater sin than that of which the child has been guilty. Take time to reflect calmly and candidly before you correct your children, and then bow with them in prayer, interceding with God in their behalf. In most cases this will soften the hardest heart, and the object will be gained without using the rod. Oh, if this course were pursued, how many precious children might be won to obedience and love, and thus find happiness in this life, and through Christ secure the future life!

I entreat parents, and ministers also, to devote more time and attention to the children. Bring them to Jesus, as did the mothers of old, and intercede for his blessing upon them. Jesus loves all children, and he has a special care for the children of those who have given themselves to him in willing service. In his charge to Peter, the Saviour first bade him, "Feed my lambs." and afterward commanded him, "Feed my sheep." In addressing the apostle, Christ says to all his ministers, "Feed my lambs."

When Jesus admonished the disciples not to despise the little ones, he addressed all disciples, in all ages. His own love and care for children is a precious example for his followers. If teachers in the Sabbath-school felt the love which they should feel for these lambs of the flock, many more would be won to the fold of Christ. At every suitable opportunity, let the story of Jesus's love be repeated to the children. In every sermon, let a little corner be left for the benefit of the children. The servant of Christ

may have lasting friends in these little ones, and his words may be to them as apples of gold in pictures of silver.

September 6, 1881

## Scattered Churches

What can be done to maintain spiritual life and prosperity in our scattered churches? Many of these have but a small membership, and enjoy little or no preaching. Must they become weak and sickly, and permit discouragement to come upon them? No, never! If there are but six working members, each of these should feel a responsibility to keep up the interest of the church. Men who know how to conduct worldly business successfully should employ their talents for the upbuilding of the cause of God among them. The members of the church should give diligent attention to the word of God, that they may understand their duty, and then labor with all the energies of mind and heart to make their church one of the most prosperous in the land.

When Christ ascended, he left the church and all its interests as a sacred trust to his followers, bidding them see that it was kept in a flourishing condition. This work cannot be left to the ministers alone, or to a few leading men. Every member should feel that he has entered into a solemn covenant with the Lord to work for the best interests of his cause at all times and under all circumstances. Each should have some part to act, some burden to bear, thus investing something in time and interest, for the life and prosperity of the church. If all thus felt an individual responsibility, they would make greater advancement in spiritual things. The solemn burden resting upon them would cause them often to seek God in prayer for strength and grace.

The real character of the church is measured, not by the high profession she makes, not by the names enrolled upon the church book, but by what she is actually doing for the Master, by the number of her persevering, faithful workers. Personal interest, and vigilant, individual effort will accomplish more for the cause of Christ than can be wrought by sermons or creeds.

True Christians, the world over, will be Christlike. Said the Saviour, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." And again, "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." This evidence is conclusive. If Christ dwells in the heart, the precious fruits of his Spirit will as a natural result be manifested in the life. If

Satan controls the mind, evil traits will as surely be apparent.

Those who profess to be disciples of Christ, while in works they deny him, are serving Satan in disguise, robing themselves in the garments of righteousness to conceal a worldly, selfish, unregenerate nature. Their profession presents a false light to the world. In the field, in the workshop, in the family circle, in the church, they reveal the sad fact that their religion consists in hollow formalism. They are constantly exerting an influence contrary to true godliness.

Our Saviour has made it the duty of his followers to prove to the world that while Christianity will lead to industry and economy, to energy and zeal in the interest of the church and the cause of God everywhere, it will also condemn avarice, over-reaching, and every other form of dishonesty. We need God's presence to control, his wisdom to guide us in all the affairs of life. We cannot afford to separate ourselves from him in the smallest transaction. No bargain is ever made in which God has not an interest. We cannot exclude him from any matter in which the rights of his offspring are concerned. Unwavering integrity marked the character and the life of Christ. It was one of the principles of Heaven, thus exemplified on earth. If the course of his professed followers is contrary to the life given them as a pattern, they show that they have no part in him.

Satan will come with his temptations to every Christian as he came to Christ. "Be not overscrupulous," he whispers, "in regard to honor and honesty. If you would succeed in getting gain, you must look out sharply for your own interests." Many listen to these suggestions, and blindly peril their hope of eternal life for worldly, temporal gain. But though they may for a time appear to prosper, the end will be bitterness and woe.

Says the apostle James, "Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works." "Faith without works is dead." Every man will manifest in his life all the faith that he has. The Christian's unselfish zeal and earnestness in the cause of truth will make its impression upon the minds of all associated with him. Those who are out of Christ have a constant evidence of the power of divine grace, in the kindness, forbearance, and integrity of his faithful followers. Such Christians render effectual service to their Master.

That church whose members feel that they are not responsible for its prosperity

will fail to show to the world the unity, love, and harmony that exist with the true children of God. Worldlings are constantly watching and criticising with keenness and severity those who profess to love and serve God, yet who show by their lives that they are strangers to the influence of divine grace. "It is too bad," says the unbeliever, "to spoil a good worldling to make a bad Christian. That man is as sharp and eager to advance his own interests as before he professed religion. And what an unchristian spirit he manifests. How he loves to exalt himself. How unkindly he speaks of others. He sees something to find fault with in every man's character. I tell you, although he belongs to the church, that man will need watching. There is another who is harsh and severe with those whom he employs. He is impatient even to the animals under his control, and abuses them as if they had no feeling. Such men have made no change for the better." In too many cases this is a true picture. What a barrier have such professed Christians erected to hinder sinners from coming to Christ! They are a curse to their families, and a curse to the church. Christ's true disciples will manifest his meekness and gentleness in strong contrast to the storm and bluster and bravado of the great adversary and his followers.

The second great commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," will be faithfully kept by all true Christians. Our influence will be perpetuated. Our example, whether good or evil, will live when we are no more. Then let us so live that those with whom we associate may see and feel that we are governed by the divine rule, full of wisdom and love. This is the strongest argument that can be presented in favor of the religion we profess. A pure, unselfish Christian life will prove to all beholders that there is a divine reality in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Dear Christian friends, I repeat, if you are Christ's, you will work the works of Christ, and not the works of Satan. Jesus dwelling in the heart will be exemplified in the words, in the deportment, in all the acts and purposes of life. Such Christians will have favor with God and with men. Peace and joy are shed around their pathway, and glory is reflected back to God.

Our churches are sadly destitute of spirituality. They have a correct theory of truth, and, satisfied with this, they have indulged a spirit of pride and boasting, while they greatly lack the power of godliness. These churches must be aroused. Their members must seek an experience for themselves. If connected with the Living Vine, they will be nourished by it, and will bring forth fruit in good works.

Our religion requires self-denial, self-sacrifice, at every step. Jesus came down



from Heaven to teach us how to live; and while on earth he went about doing good. Those who are really representatives of Christ are working for the good of others. They delight in advancing the cause of God both at home and abroad. They are seen and heard, and their influence is felt, at the prayer-meeting. They will try to supply the place of the minister, whose labors they cannot have. They do not seek to exalt self, or to receive credit for doing a great work, but labor humbly, meekly, faithfully, doing small errands or doing a greater work, if necessary, because Christ has done so much for them.

It is because we have departed from God that he has withdrawn his Spirit from us. If the members of our churches will work unitedly with interest and zeal in the cause of Christ, the Holy Spirit will attend their efforts, and the power of God will again be seen among his people.

September 13, 1881

## **Safeguards for the Young**

We are living in an evil time. Iniquity abounds. Satan is working with all his power and cunning to ensnare and destroy. There is no class in greater danger than the young; but our Heavenly Father sees the temptations which surround the youth, and he invites them to come to him for strength to resist evil and to stand firm for the right. The fear of the Lord will be as a shield to the youthful heart, to turn aside the fiery darts of the adversary. The Holy Scriptures, as a light upon the path of life, will keep the feet of the young as well as the old from becoming entangled in the snares of Satan.

God's ancient people were admonished faithfully to instruct their children in the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." This was to be regarded as the most important of parental duties.

Israel were also required to preserve memorials of the wonderful deliverances which the Lord had wrought for his people. When their children should ask, "What mean ye by these tokens?" the parents were to rehearse the story of God's care and love. Thus the mighty manifestations of divine power would never be forgotten, and the youth would see the justice of God's claims to their heartfelt obedience, their willing service.

The words spoken to fathers in ancient times are as verily addressed to fathers today. There is no excuse for the neglect to instruct children concerning present truth and the fulfillment of the prophecies for this time. In our experience as a people we have had precious tokens of God's favor, solemn manifestations of his power, which are as valuable to our children as were his wonderful works in olden times to the children of ancient Israel. When parents shall manifest such an interest for their children as God would have them, he will hear their prayers, and work with their efforts; but God does not propose to do the work which he has left for parents to do. It is because of the

wicked neglect of fathers and mothers that so many of the youth are left to go to ruin. In most cases, parents are responsible for the weak morals and infidel sentiments of their children. They have failed to restrain and guard them, and have not given them right instruction, and a good example in their own life. Society is far below what it might be, if parents would do their duty to their children, in obedience to God's requirements.

One of the surest safeguards for the young is useful occupation. Had they been trained to industrious habits, so that all their hours were usefully employed, they would have no time for repining at their lot or for idle day-dreaming. They would be in little danger of forming vicious habits or associations. Let the youth be taught from childhood that there is no excellence without great labor. Aspirations for eminence will not avail. Young friends, the mountain-top cannot be reached by standing still, and wishing yourselves there. You can gain your object only by taking one step at a time, advancing slowly perhaps, but holding every step gained. It is the energetic, persevering worker that will scale the Alps. Every youth should make the most of his talents, by improving to the utmost present opportunities. He who will do this, may reach almost any height in moral and intellectual attainments. But he must possess a brave and resolute spirit. He will need to close his ears to the voice of pleasure; he must often refuse the solicitations of young companions. He must stand on guard continually, lest he be diverted from his purpose.

Many parents remove from their country homes to the city, regarding it as a more desirable or profitable location. But by making this change they expose their children to many and great temptations. The boys have no employment, and they obtain a street education, and go on from one step in depravity to another, until they lose all interest in anything that is good and pure and holy. How much better had the parents remained with their families in the country, where the influences are most favorable for physical and mental strength. Let the youth be taught to labor in tilling the soil, and let them sleep the sweet sleep of weariness and innocence.

Through the neglect of parents, the youth in our cities are corrupting their ways and polluting their souls before God. This will ever be the fruit of idleness. The almshouses, the prisons, and the gallows publish the sorrowful tale of the neglected duties of parents.

Fathers and mothers too often leave their children to choose for themselves their

amusements, their companions, and their occupation. The result is such as might reasonably be expected. Leave a field uncultivated, and it will grow up to thorns and briars. You will never see a lovely flower or a choice shrub peering above the unsightly, poisonous weeds. The worthless bramble will grow luxuriantly without thought or care, while plants that are valued for use or beauty require thorough culture. Thus it is with our youth. If right habits are formed, and right principles established, there is earnest work to be done. If wrong habits are corrected, diligence and perseverance are required to accomplish the task.

It has been truly said, "Show me your company, and I will show you your character." The young fail to realize how sensibly both their character and their reputation are affected by their choice of associates. A person seeks the company of those whose tastes, habits, and practices are most congenial to his own. When one prefers the society of the ignorant and vicious to that of the wise and good, he shows that his own character is defective. At first his tastes and habits and those of his companions might have been dissimilar; but as he mingles with this class, his thoughts and feelings change, he sacrifices right principles, and insensibly yet unavoidably loses his distinctive character, and comes down to the lower level of his companions. As the stream always partakes of the properties of the soil through which it runs, so the principles and habits of youth become invariably tinged by the character of the company in which they mingle.

More than human wisdom is needed by parents at every step, that they may understand how best to educate their children for a useful, happy life here, and for higher service and greater joy hereafter. Fathers and mothers, ever remember that to you is committed a sacred trust. The power of example is very great. If you fail to select proper society for your children, and allow them to associate with persons of questionable morals, you place them or permit them, to place themselves, in a school where lessons of depravity will be taught and practiced. You may feel that your children are strong enough to withstand temptation; but how can you be sure of this? It is far easier to yield to evil influences than to resist them. Ere you are aware of it, your children may become imbued with the spirit of their associates, and may be degraded and ruined.

Fathers and mothers, it is your duty to give more earnest and careful attention to your children. Guard their principles and their habits as the apple of your eye. Allow

them to associate with no one with whose character you are not well acquainted. Permit them to form no intimacy until you are assured that it will do them no harm. Accustom your children to trust to your judgment and experience. Teach them that you have a clearer perception of character than they in their inexperience can have, and that your decisions must not be disregarded.

Christian parents, I entreat you to awake. Have a jealous care for the souls of your children. Do not allow your time and attention to be so fully absorbed in other things that you cannot properly instruct your sons and daughters. If you neglect your duty and shirk your responsibility, expecting the Lord to do your work, you will be disappointed. When you have faithfully done all that you can do, bring your children to Jesus, and with earnest, persevering faith, make intercession for them. The Lord will be your helper; he will work with your efforts; in his strength you will gain the victory. In the great gathering day it shall be yours to say with joy, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me."

September 20, 1881

## The True Vine

"I Am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman." Our Heavenly Father planted on earth a goodly vine, whose fruit would impart to the children of men eternal life. But this precious plant appeared to human eyes as a root out of dry ground, seeming to have no form nor comeliness. When it was claimed to be of heavenly origin, the men of Nazareth became enraged, and cast it from them. The inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem took this vine of God's own planting, and bruised it, and trampled it under foot, hoping thus to destroy it forever. But now the Husbandman removed his precious vine, and planted it in his own garden, beyond the spoiler's reach. The stock and root were concealed from human sight, but still "the branches run over the wall." Thus grafts could be united to the vine, and, partaking of its nourishment, these became branches, and flourished and brought forth fruit.

This figure of the vine is a perfect symbol. God sent his Son from the heavenly courts to a world seared and marred with the curse. In Christ was righteousness, peace, life--every blessing necessary for man's happiness. But the world hated the Son of the infinite God. The world saw nothing attractive in him. The best gift of Heaven was slighted and spurned. Christ was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." Yet "he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." Christ was hated by evil men because his character was spotless, his works righteous. He came to be the Redeemer of the world, yet he was taken by wicked hands, and shamefully entreated, and crucified. God raised him from the dead, and he ascended to Heaven to present his blood as the propitiation for our sins.

Though hidden from mortal sight, Christ still lives as the world's Redeemer, the representative of man in the heavenly courts, and the medium through whom all blessings flow to the fallen race. Said the Saviour to his disciples, "I am the vine, ye are the branches. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me." In this vine is all spiritual life. From Christ's fullness alone can we obtain nourishment unto eternal life. The vine stock is unseen; but the branches,--members of his body,--are visible. The scion which before was leafless

and apparently lifeless, becomes, when grafted into the vine, a partaker of its life and fatness. Fiber by fiber, and vein by vein, the graft adheres to the parent stock, till the life-giving sap flows to the adopted member, causing it to bud, and blossom, and bear fruit.

The scion becomes a part of the living vine by forming a perfect union with it. Thus it is with the sinner. By repentance and faith, he becomes connected with Jesus Christ, and lives in him. This connection joins soul to soul,--the finite with the infinite. But, contrary to nature, the branch which has been united with the true vine brings forth, not fruit of its own kind, but the fruit of the vine of which it has become a part. The Spirit of Christ, flowing into the hearts of all who are indeed united with him, makes them partakers of the divine nature. They become pure, even as he is pure. Yet true disciples are the last to claim as their own this precious fruit. "Accepted in the Beloved," objects of their Heavenly Father's constant care and unfailing mercy, they feel unworthy of the divine favor, and have too vivid a sense of utter dependence upon God to boast of their exalted position.

Every branch of the vine, subjected to the pruning of the wise Husbandman, will bring forth clusters of precious fruit. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." The branch can maintain its connection with the living vine only on condition that it bear fruit. Said Christ, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love." And to each disciple is addressed the solemn warning, "Every branch in me [every one who claims connection with me] that beareth not fruit, he taketh away." Such a one is after a time overcome by temptation, and at last wholly separated from Christ.

It is a sad fact that many who profess to be branches of the true vine show by their lives that they have no connection with it. Their words and actions, destitute of grace and meekness, resemble the stinging branches of the noxious thorn-tree, rather than the lovely, fruit-laden boughs of the precious vine. Love to God and love to our neighbor is the sum and substance of true piety. Those who are destitute of this love, and yet claim high attainments in spiritual things, may for a time deceive their fellow-men, but they cannot deceive God. Says the True Witness, "I know thy works." And in the great day of final accounts, God "will render to every man according to his deeds."

Many who claim to be followers of Christ are withered branches, that must ere

long be separated from the living vine. The love of the world has paralyzed their spirituality, and they are not awake to the precious theme of redemption. The impression made upon the world by these professed Christians is unfavorable to the religion of Christ. Such dull, careless ones manifest ambition and zeal in the business of the world, but they have little interest in things of eternal importance. The voice of God through his messengers is a pleasant song; but its sacred warnings, reproofs, and encouragements are all unheeded. Eternal interests are placed on a level with common things. The Holy Spirit is grieved, and its influence is withdrawn.

Fruitful Christians are connected with God, and hence they are able to place a right value upon eternal things. The truth and the love of God are their meditation. They have feasted upon the words of life, and whenever they listen to the "message of glad tidings," they can say, as did the disciples to whom Christ explained the prophecies on the way to Emmaus, "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?" It is the duty of every child of God to store his mind with divine truth; and the more he does this, the more strength and clearness of mind he will have to fathom the deep things of God. And he will be more and more earnest and vigorous, as the principles of truth are carried out in his daily life.

That which will bless humanity is spiritual life. He who is in harmony with God, will constantly depend upon him for strength. "Be ye therefore perfect, as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect." It should be our life work to be constantly reaching forward to the perfection of Christian character, ever striving for conformity to the will of God. The efforts begun here will continue through eternity. The advancement made here will be ours when we enter upon the future life.

Those who are partakers of Christ's meekness, purity, and love, will be joyful in God, and will shed light and gladness upon all around them. The thought that Christ died to obtain for us the gift of everlasting life, is enough to call forth from our hearts the most sincere and fervent gratitude, and from our lips the most enthusiastic praise. God's promises are rich, and full, and free. Whoever will, in the strength of Christ, comply with the conditions, may claim these promises, with all their wealth of blessing, as his own. And being thus abundantly supplied from the treasure-house of God, he may, in the journey of life, "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing;" by a godly example blessing his fellow-men, and honoring his Creator. While our Saviour would guard his followers from self-confidence by the reminder, "Without me, ye can do



nothing," he has coupled with it for our encouragement the gracious assurance, "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit."

September 27, 1881

## **The Exalted Position of the Law of God**

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill."

What a contrast between the words of the Divine Teacher, and the language of those who claim that Christ came to abrogate the Father's law, and to do away with the Old Testament! Our Saviour, who knew all things, understood the wiles of Satan, the snares by which he would seek to entrap the children of men, and hence made this positive statement to meet the questioning doubts and the blind unbelief of all coming time.

The ceremonial law, given by God through Moses, with its sacrifices and ordinances, was to be binding upon the Hebrews until type met antitype in the death of Christ as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. Then all the sacrificial offerings and services were to be abolished. Paul and the other apostles labored to show this, and resolutely withstood those Judaizing teachers who declared that Christians should observe the ceremonial law.

The law of ten precepts, spoken from Mount Sinai, Christ himself declares that he came not to destroy. This testimony should forever settle the question. The law of God is as immutable as the throne of Jehovah. It will maintain its claims upon all mankind in all ages, unchanged by time or place or circumstances. The ritual system was of an altogether different character, added to guard the ten precepts of the Eternal.

Christ declares, that he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill,--"to magnify the law and make it honorable," as Isaiah, hundreds of years before, had prophesied would be the Messiah's work.

"To fulfill the law." By his own life he gives the children of men an example of perfect obedience to that law. In the sermon on the mount he made clear and distinct its every precept, in order to sweep away the rubbish of erroneous tradition, with which the Jews had encumbered its sacred statutes, to illustrate and enforce its principles, and to

show in all its particulars the length and breadth and height and depth of the righteousness required by the law of God.

The Pharisees were dissatisfied with the teachings of Christ. The practical godliness which he enjoined condemned them. They desired him to dwell upon the external observances of the ceremonial law, and the customs and traditions of the fathers. But Jesus teaches the spiritual nature of the law and its far-reaching claims. Love to God and to men must dwell in the heart and control the life,--the spring of every thought and every action.

Christ declares, "Verily I say unto you,"--making the assertion as emphatic as possible,--"Till Heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled." Here Christ teaches, not merely what had been and were then the claims of God's law upon mankind, but what shall be its claims so long as the heavens and the earth remain.

There is perfect harmony between the law of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ. "I and my Father are one," says the Great Teacher. The gospel of Christ is the good news of grace, or favor, by which man may be released from the condemnation of sin, and enabled to render obedience to the law of God. The gospel points to the moral code as a rule of life. That law, by its demands for undeviating obedience, is continually pointing the sinner to the gospel for pardon and peace.

Says the great apostle, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid. Yea, we establish the law." And again he declares that "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Enjoining supreme love to God, and equal love to our fellow-men, it is indispensable alike to the glory of God and to human happiness.

After the fall, it had been impossible for man with his sinful nature to render obedience to the law of God, had not Christ, by the offer of his own life, purchased the right to lift up the race where they could once more work in harmony with its requirements.

There are persons professing to be ministers of Christ, who declare with the utmost assurance that no man ever did or ever can keep the law of God. But, according

to the Scriptures, Christ "took upon himself our nature," he "was made in fashion as a man." He was man's example, man's representative, and he declares of himself, "I have kept my Father's commandments." The beloved disciple urges that every follower of Christ "ought himself also so to walk even as He walked." All who are Christ's will follow the example of Christ. All who justify the sinner in his transgression of God's law, belong to that class of whom our Saviour said, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of Heaven." They can have no part with Him who came to magnify the law and make it honorable. They are deceiving the people with their sophistry,--saying to the sinner, "It shall be well with thee," when God has declared that "the soul that sinneth ["transgresseth the law"] it shall die."

Christ's words are both explicit and comprehensive. "Whosoever"--minister or layman, wise or ignorant--"shall break one of these least commandments"--willfully or presumptuously, as did Adam and Eve--is included in the condemnation. Breaking one of the commandments makes man a commandment-breaker.

"Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." No excuse can avail for him who strictly obeys nine of the precepts of God's law, but ventures to break one because it is for his profit or convenience to do so. God demands implicit obedience to all his requirements.

"And shall teach men so." This is a point worthy of careful consideration. Christ foresaw that men would not only break the commandments of God themselves, but would in a special sense teach others to break them. Every Sabbath-breaker is by his example teaching others to transgress. But some are not content with this. They defend the sin of breaking the fourth commandment, and pervert the word of God to justify the transgressor. Such persons shall be of no esteem in the reign of Heaven,--shall have no part there. But the greatest guilt rests upon the professed watchmen, and they will receive the severest punishment. They are in the highest sense enemies of Christ, as they put on, over corrupt hearts, the livery of Heaven to serve the devil in. They do not hesitate to speak evil of the law, and even make those who do not study the Bible for themselves, believe that the curse of God is upon them if they keep it. All we have to do, say they, is to believe in Christ,--come to Christ. The most fatal delusion of the Christian world in this generation is, that in pouring contempt on the law of God they think they are exalting Christ. What a position! In so doing, they array Christ against

Christ. It was Christ who spoke the law from Sinai. It was Christ who gave the law to Moses, engraven on tables of stone. It was his Father's law; and Christ says, "I and my Father are one." The Pharisees held the reverse of the modern-position, but were in just as great an error. They rejected Christ, but exalted the law. And it makes little difference which position we take, so long as we ignore the true one,--that faith in Christ must be accompanied by obedience to the law of God.

Now, while we point the sinner to Jesus Christ as the one who can take away sin, we must explain to him what sin is, and show him the necessity of being saved from his sins, not in them. He must be made to feel that he must cease to transgress the law of God, which is to cease to sin. Paul makes the inquiry many years after the death of Christ, "Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Thus saying, Paul exalts the moral law. When this law is practically carried out in every-day life, it is found indeed to be the wisdom of God. It serves to detect sin. It discovers the defects in the moral character, and in the light of the law sin becomes exceeding sinful, revealing its true character in all its hideousness.

The law of God given from Sinai is a copy of the mind and will of the Infinite God. It is sacredly revered by the holy angels. Obedience to its requirements will perfect Christian character, and restore man, through Christ, to his condition before the fall.

The sins forbidden in the law could never find place in Heaven. It was the love of God to man that prompted him to express his will in the ten precepts of the decalogue. And when, through sin, man's understanding became darkened, God came down upon Mount Sinai and spoke his law with an audible voice, and wrote it on tables of stone. Afterward he showed his love for man by sending prophets and teachers to declare his law.

God has given man a complete rule of life in his law. Obeyed, he shall live by it, through the merits of Christ. Transgressed, it has power to condemn. The law sends men to Christ, and Christ points them back to the law.

October 11, 1881

## **Watchfulness and Prayer**

Our Redeemer perfectly understood the wants of humanity. He who condescended to take upon himself man's nature was acquainted with man's weakness. Christ lived as our example. He was tempted in all points as we are, that he might know how to succor all who should be tempted. He has trodden the path of life before us, and endured the severest tests in our behalf. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. Christ took upon himself our infirmities, and in the weakness of humanity he needed to seek strength from his Father. He was often to be found in earnest prayer, in the grove, by the lakeside, and in the mountains. He has enjoined upon us to watch and pray. It is the neglect of watchfulness and close searching of heart that leads to self-sufficiency and spiritual pride. Without a deep sense of our need of help from God, there will be but little earnest, heartfelt prayer for divine aid. Our hearts are deceitful; our foes, many and vigilant. If we neglect to fortify a single weak point in our character, Satan will assail us at that point with his temptations. He is constantly plotting the ruin of the soul, and he will take every advantage of our careless security.

Christ came to our world to engage in single-handed combat with this enemy of man, and thus to wrest the race from Satan's grasp. In the accomplishment of this object, he withheld not his own life. And now, in the strength that Christ will give, man must stand for himself, a faithful sentinel against the wily, plotting foe. Says the great apostle, "Walk circumspectly,"--guard every avenue of the soul, look constantly to Jesus, the true and perfect pattern, and seek to imitate his example, not in one or two points merely, but in all things. We shall then be prepared for any and every emergency. Unceasing watchfulness is a great help to prayer. It keeps the mind from drifting away from right principles. It shuts out that vanity and trifling which prevails in the world everywhere, and to an alarming extent among professed Christians. He whose mind loves to dwell upon God has a strong defense. He will be quick to perceive the dangers that threaten his spiritual life, and a sense of danger will lead him to call upon God for help and protection.

There are times when the Christian life seems beset by dangers, and duty seems hard to perform. But the clouds that gather about our way, and the perils that surround us, will never disappear before a halting, doubting, prayerless spirit. At such times unbelief says, We can never surmount these obstructions; let us wait until we can see our way clearly. But faith courageously urges an advance, hoping all things, believing all things.

Watchfulness and vigilance are needed now as never before in the history of the race. The eye must be turned off from beholding vanity. Lawlessness, the prevailing spirit of the age, must be met with a decided rebuke. Let none feel that they are in no danger. As long as Satan lives, his efforts will be constant and untiring to make the world as wicked as before the flood, and as licentious as were the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. The prayer may well be offered daily by those who have the fear of God before them, that he will preserve their hearts from evil desires, and strengthen their souls to resist temptation. Those who in their self-confidence feel no need of watchfulness and unceasing prayer, are near some humiliating fall. All who do not feel the importance of resolutely guarding their affections, will be captivated by those who practice their arts to ensnare and lead astray the unwary. Men may have a knowledge of divine things, and an ability to fill an important place in the work of God; yet, unless they cherish a simple faith in their Redeemer, they will be ensnared and overcome by the enemy.

It is because the duties of watchfulness and prayer have been so sadly neglected that there is so great a lack of moral power. This is why so many who have a form of godliness bring forth no corresponding works. A careless indifference, a carnal security concerning religious duties and eternal things, prevails to an alarming extent. The word of God exhorts us to be found "praying always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance;" and again, "Be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." Here is the Christian's safeguard, his protection amid the perils that surround his pathway.

October 18, 1881

## The Christian Race

"Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Hebrews 12:1.

In this text one of the public games so famous in Paul's time is used to illustrate the Christian race. The competitors in the race submitted to a painful training process, practicing the most rigid self-denial that their physical powers might be in the most favorable condition, and then they taxed these powers to the utmost to win the honor of a perishable wreath. Some never recovered from the effects. In consequence of the terrible strain, men would sometimes fall by the race-course, bleeding at the mouth and nose; others breathed out their life, firmly grasping the poor bauble that had cost them so dear.

Paul compares the followers of Christ to the competitors in a race. "Now," says the apostle, "they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we [mark the greater inducement] an incorruptible." Here Paul makes a sharp contrast, to put to shame the feeble efforts of professed Christians who plead for their selfish indulgences, and refuse to place themselves, by self-denial and strictly temperate habits, in a position that they will make a success of overcoming. All who entered the list in the public games were animated and excited by the hope of a prize if they were successful. In like manner a prize is held out before the Christian, the reward of faithfulness to the end of the race. If the prize is won, his future welfare is assured; an exceeding and eternal weight of glory is in reserve for the overcomer. Shall, then, the followers of Christ, with the attractions of the heavenly world before them, grudge the self-denial and spare the effort, needful to secure the imperishable crown?

"They do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we, an incorruptible." In the races, the crown of honor was placed in sight of the competitors, that if any were tempted for a moment to relax their efforts, the eye would rest on the prize, and they would be inspired with new vigor. So the heavenly goal is presented to the view of the Christian, that it may have its just influence, and inspire him with zeal and ardor. We may safely and earnestly look to this recompense of reward, that we may assure ourselves of its



excellence, and have an ardent desire to secure its possession.

All ran in the race, but only one received the prize. The other strugglers for the perishable laurel wreath, however thorough their preparation, however earnest and determined their efforts, were doomed to failure. It is not so with the Christian race. None who are earnest and persevering will fail of success. The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. The weakest saint as well as the strongest may obtain the crown of immortal glory, if he is thoroughly in earnest, and will submit to privation and loss for Christ's sake. The apostle calls our attention to the care and diligence which were required to secure the victory in these ancient games. He exhorts all who start in the Christian race to give all diligence to make success certain, while he presents before them for their encouragement the crown of glory which the righteous Judge will award to all who are faithful to the end of the race. He says, "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

Paul addresses the Hebrews in a similar style: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

Here we are cited to the example of the multitude of faithful witnesses who would not sacrifice their faith and principle for the sake of enjoying ease and self-gratification, but who gave up all, not withholding their lives, for the truth of God. Their example should quicken our zeal and increase our faith. But Jesus is our perfect pattern; and when we look to him who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, we should be aroused to greater earnestness. He has led the way to the heavenly reward in glory. He passed through fiercer conflicts than man will ever be able to endure.

"If a man strive for the mastery, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully." A man may make earnest efforts to overcome, while he is not in possession of the

physical, mental, and moral power which he might possess were he brought into harmony with the laws which govern his being. If through selfish indulgence he is an intemperate man, every organ in his body becomes enfeebled, and he is robbed of mental and moral power. He is not striving lawfully. He is not laying aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets. Every law governing the human system is to be strictly regarded; for it is as truly a law of God as is the word of Holy Writ; and every willful deviation from obedience to this law is as certainly sin as a violation of the moral law. All nature expresses the law of God, but in our physical structure Jehovah has written his law with his own finger upon every thrilling nerve, upon every living fiber, and upon every organ of the body. We shall suffer loss and defeat, if we step out of nature's path, which God himself has marked out, into one of our own devising.

We must strive lawfully, if we would win the boon of eternal life. The path is wide enough, and all who run the race may win the prize. If we create unnatural appetites, and indulge them in any degree, we violate nature's laws, and enfeebled physical, mental, and moral conditions will result. We are hence unfitted for that persevering, energetic, and hopeful effort which we might have made had we been true to nature's laws. If we injure a single organ of the body, we rob God of the service we might render to him. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

The apostle Paul compares himself to a man running in the ancient race-course, and straining every nerve and muscle to win the prize. He did not consider his work ended while he could labor in the cause of God. He never felt that he had graduated in the school of Christ, but he ever realized the necessity of strictly guarding his appetites and passions, lest they should so strengthen themselves as to overcome spiritual zeal. He strove with all his powers against natural inclinations which called for unlawful indulgence. His own testimony was, "I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." It was only when he was on trial for his life, which depended on a word or a nod from the tyrant Nero, and he was aware that his end was nigh, that he broke forth in the lofty, elevated strains of triumphant assurance: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept my faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day."

This crown is not a perishable chaplet of flowers, but the glorious crown of everlasting life, which awaits all who, having completed the Christian race, love the appearing of our Lord.

October 25, 1881

## **Walking in the Light**

"Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you."

There is a work for each of us to do, an individual work, which one cannot do for another. A solemn responsibility rests upon us as Christians to let our light so shine before the world, that others, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father in Heaven. We cannot exert a right influence upon others, unless we walk in the light ourselves. If we have experienced the pardoning grace of God, we should feel it a duty, as opportunity shall present, to speak in counsel and affectionate entreaty to those who are in danger of losing eternal life.

A life spent in active work for God is a blessed one. Multitudes who are wasting their time in trifles, in idle regrets, and in unprofitable murmurings, might have altogether a different experience, if they would appreciate the light God has given them, and let it shine upon others; and many make life miserable by their own selfishness and love of ease. By a diligent activity, their lives might become as bright rays of sunshine to guide those who are in the dark road to death into the pathway to Heaven. If they take this course, their own hearts will be filled with peace and joy in Jesus Christ. It is for our profit in this life, and for our eternal interest, that we manifest earnestness and zeal in the work of God.

Many say, "If I knew Jesus would come in five years, I would make it my first business to win souls to Christ; for this would be the all-important consideration." And these very persons may not live two years, or even one. We should first seek God, and his holiness. In his wise providence we are incapable of looking into the future, which often causes us disquietude and unhappiness. But one of the greatest evidences we have of the loving-kindness of God is his concealment of the events of the morrow. Our ignorance of tomorrow makes us more vigilant and earnest today. We cannot see what is before us. Our best-laid plans sometimes seem to be unwise and faulty. We think, "If we only knew the future!" but God would have his children trust in him, and be ready to go where he shall lead them. We know not the precise time when our Lord shall be revealed in the clouds of heaven, but he has told us that our only safety is in a constant

readiness,--a position of watching and waiting. Whether we have one year before us, or five, or ten, we are to be faithful to our trust today. We are to perform each day's duties as faithfully as though that day were to be our last.

We are not doing the will of God if we wait in idleness. To every man he has given his work, and he expects each one to do his part with fidelity. We are to sow beside all waters, and to work continuously for Jesus, hoping for the salvation to be given us, and quietly waiting for our reward. Sinners are to be warned; sinners are to be won to Christ.

There are many men of excellent ability,--men ambitious in worldly pursuits,--for whose salvation no one believing in present truth is making any efforts, because they fear a repulse. But the skill and energy which make them successful in worldly pursuits, will, if consecrated, make them useful in the service of Christ. We cannot tell the ambitious man that he must cease to be ambitious if he would become a Christian. God places before him the highest objects of ambition,--a spotless white robe, a crown studded with jewels, a scepter, a throne of glory, and honor that is as enduring as the throne of Jehovah. All the elements of character which help to make him successful and honored in the world,--the irrepressible desire for some greater good, the indomitable will, the strenuous exertion, the untiring perseverance,--are not to be crushed out. These are to remain, and through the grace of God received into the heart, to be turned into another channel. These valuable traits of character may be exercised on objects as much higher and noble than worldly pursuits as the heavens are higher than the earth. Jesus presents a white robe, a crown of glory richer than any that ever decked the brow of a monarch, and titles above those of honored princes. The recompense for a life devoted to the service of Christ exceeds anything that the human imagination can grasp. Christ does not call upon men to lay aside their zeal, their desires for excellence and elevation; but he would have them seek, not for perishable treasure or fleeting honor, but for that which is enduring.

God has no use for listless souls. Ministers sometimes tell the people that they have nothing to do but believe; that Jesus has done it all, and their own works are nothing. But the word of God plainly states that in the Judgment the scales will be balanced accurately, and the decisions will be based on the evidence adduced. One man becomes ruler of ten cities, another of five, another of two, each man receiving exactly in proportion to the improvement he has made on the talents intrusted to his keeping.

Our efforts in works of righteousness, in our own behalf and for the salvation of souls, will have a decided influence on our recompense.

God is well pleased if those striving for eternal life aim high. There will be strong temptations to indulge the natural traits of character by becoming worldly-wise, scheming, and selfishly ambitious, gathering wealth to the neglect of the salvation which is of so much higher value. But every temptation resisted is a priceless victory gained in subduing self; it bends the powers to the service of Jesus, and increases faith, hope, patience, and forbearance.

The Christian must be upright while dwelling with the corrupt and with traitors. With a heart true to God, and imbued with his Spirit, he will see much to grieve over while surrounded by commandment-breakers,--those who are on the side of the great rebel, having thrown off their allegiance to the God of Heaven. The fact that iniquity abounds is a strong reason why he should be watchful, and diligent, and faithful in his Master's service, that he may rightly represent the religion of Jesus Christ. On all sides the Christian soldier will hear treasonable plottings and rebellious utterances from those who make void the law of God. This should increase his zeal to act as a faithful sentinel for God, and to use every effort to bring souls to enlist beneath the blood-stained banner of Prince Immanuel. The more dense the moral darkness, the more earnest should be the endeavor to walk with God, that light and power from him may be reflected upon those in darkness. The love of genuine Christians will not grow cold because iniquity abounds. As society grows more and more corrupt, as in the days of Noah and of Lot, there will be yearning of soul over deceived, deluded, perishing sinners, who are preparing themselves for a fate similar to that of the transgressors who perished in the waters of the flood and in the fires of Sodom. The true follower of Christ will not do as the wicked worldlings do, because it is fashionable to be sinful. His soul will be vexed and indignant at the bold insults offered to the world's Redeemer; and he will be anxious to exert every power to help press back the tide of wretchedness and guilt that is flooding the world.

We have only a little while to urge the warfare; then Christ will come, and this scene of rebellion will close. Then our last efforts will have been made to work with Christ and advance his kingdom. Some who have stood in the forefront of the battle, zealously resisting incoming evil, fall at the post of duty; others gaze sorrowfully at the fallen heroes, but have no time to cease work. They must close up the ranks, seize the

banner from the hand palsied by death, and with renewed energy vindicate the truth and the honor of Christ. As never before, resistance must be made against sin,--against the powers of darkness. The time demands energetic and determined activity on the part of those who believe present truth. They should teach the truth by both precept and example. If the time seems long to wait for our Deliverer to come, if, bowed by affliction and worn with toil, we feel impatient for our commission to close, and to receive an honorable release from the warfare, let us remember--and let the remembrance check every murmur--that God leaves us on earth to encounter storms and conflicts, to perfect Christian character, to become better acquainted with God our Father and Christ our elder Brother, and to do work for the Master in winning many souls to Christ, that with glad heart we may hear the words: "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Be patient, Christian soldier. Yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come. The night of weary waiting, and watching, and mourning is nearly over. The reward will soon be given; the eternal day will dawn. There is no time to sleep now,--no time to indulge in useless regrets. He who ventures to slumber now will miss precious opportunities of doing good. We are granted the blessed privilege of gathering sheaves in the great harvest; and every soul saved will be an additional star in the crown of Jesus, our adorable Redeemer. Who is eager to lay off the armor, when by pushing the battle a little longer he will achieve new victories and gather new trophies for eternity?

We must not become weary or faint-hearted. It would be a terrible loss to barter away enduring glory for ease, convenience, and enjoyment, or for carnal indulgences. A gift from the hand of God awaits the overcomer. Not one of us deserves it; it is gratuitous on his part. Wonderful and glorious will be this gift, but let us remember that "one star differeth from another star in glory." But as we are urged to strive for the mastery, let us aim, in the strength of Jesus, for the crown heavy with stars. "They that be wise shall shine as the firmament, and they that win many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.

November 1, 1881

### **Cheerfulness in Affliction**

August 22, in company with my daughters, Emma and Mary K. White, I left Battle Creek for the West, hoping to receive benefit from a change of climate. Though still suffering from the effects of a severe attack of malarial fever, as well as from the shock of my husband's death, I endured the journey better than I had expected. We reached Boulder, Colorado, on Thursday, August 25, and on the following Sunday left that place by private carriage for our home in the mountains.

Here the clear, cool air, and the pure water, fresh from living springs, seemed to promise renewed health and vigor. But the altitude was too great, and in a short time I was again prostrated. It was nearly a week before my strength began slowly to return. The action of the heart seemed retarded, and breathing was difficult. Yet, suffering as I did from pain and weakness, I enjoyed the quiet solitude of the mountains. The solemn stillness reigning there seemed to accord with my feelings.

From our cottage I could look out upon a forest of young pines, so fresh and fragrant that the air was perfumed with their spicy odor. In former years, my husband and myself made this grove our sanctuary. Among these mountains we often bowed together in worship and supplication. All around me were the places which had been thus hallowed; and as I gazed upon them, I could recall many instances in which we there received direct and remarkable answers to prayer. Light from Heaven shone upon us, and we many times obtained clear indications of duty. The presence of Christ seemed to be with us, and his voice spoke to our hearts, "Peace be unto you."

With my husband I have stood on some lofty height, and looked upon the mountains rising peak above peak, until our souls were thrilled with a sense of God's majesty and power. At evening we delighted to look up to the blue heavens inlaid with glittering stars; and while thus beholding the splendors of the visible universe, we acknowledged with reverent awe that all was the handiwork of the Most High. We rejoiced that the God of creation is the God of the Bible, and that we can claim this infinite Being as our Father. We talked of the glories of his power and wisdom, and adored the matchless love which has made it possible, through Jesus Christ, for fallen



man to become a son and heir of the Maker and Sovereign of the universe.

How near we seemed to God, as in the clear moonlight we bowed upon some lonely mountainside to ask for needed blessings at his hand! What faith and confidence were ours! God's purposes of love and mercy seemed more fully revealed, and we felt the assurance that our sins and errors were pardoned. Upon such occasions I have seen my husband's countenance lighted up with a radiance that seemed reflected from the throne of God, as in changed voice he praised the Lord for the rich blessings of his grace. Amid earth's gloom and darkness, we could still discern on every hand gleams of brightness from the Fount of light. Through the works of creation we communed with Him who inhabiteth eternity. As we looked upon the towering rocks, the lofty mountains, we exclaimed, Who is so great a God as our God?

Surrounded, as we often were, with difficulties, burdened with responsibilities, finite, weak, erring mortals at best, we were at times almost ready to yield to despair. But when we considered God's love and care for his creatures, as revealed both in the book of nature and on the pages of inspiration, our hearts were comforted and strengthened. Surrounded by the evidences of God's power, and overshadowed by his presence, we could not cherish distrust or unbelief. Oh, how often have peace, and hope, and even joy, come to us in our experience amid these rocky solitudes!

Again I have been among the mountains, but alone. None to share my thoughts and feelings as I looked once more upon those grand and awful scenes! Alone, alone! God's dealings seem mysterious, his purposes unfathomable; yet I know that they must be just, and wise, and merciful. It is my privilege and my duty to wait patiently for him, the language of my heart at all times being, "He doeth all things well."

I had no strength now to climb the mountain steeps. If I desired to acknowledge God's mercies, I could not repair to the forest or the cliffs. If I would seek wisdom from above, I must make my room my sanctuary. But even here I have enjoyed sweet communion with God, and have received precious tokens of his abiding presence.

In my recent bereavement, I have had a near view of eternity. I have, as it were, been brought before the great white throne, and have seen my life as it will there appear. I can find nothing of which to boast, no merit that I can plead. "Unworthy, unworthy of the least of thy favors, O my God," is my cry. My only hope is in a crucified and risen

Saviour. I claim the merits of the blood of Christ. Jesus will save to the uttermost all who put their trust in him.

It is sometimes hard for me to preserve a cheerful countenance when my heart is rent with anguish. But I would not permit my sorrow to cast a gloom upon all around me. Seasons of affliction and bereavement are often rendered more sorrowful and distressing than they should be, because it is customary to give ourselves up to mourning without restraint. By the help of Jesus, I determined to shun this evil; but my resolution has been severely tested. My husband's death was a heavy blow to me, more keenly felt because so sudden. As I saw the seal of death upon his countenance, my feelings were almost insupportable. I longed to cry out in my anguish. But I knew that this could not save the life of my loved one, and I felt that it would be unchristian to give myself up to sorrow. I sought help and comfort from above, and the promises of God were verified to me. The Lord's hand sustained me. It is a sin to indulge, without restraint, in mourning and lamentation. By the grace of Christ, we may be composed and even cheerful under sore trial.

Let us learn a lesson of courage and fortitude from the last interview of Christ with his apostles. They were about to be separated. Our Saviour was entering the blood-stained path which would lead him to Calvary. Never was scene more trying than that through which he was soon to pass. The apostles had heard the words of Christ foretelling his sufferings and death, and their hearts were heavy with sorrow, their minds distracted with doubt and fear. Yet there were no loud outcries; there was no abandonment of grief. Those last solemn, momentous hours were spent by our Saviour in speaking words of comfort and assurance to his disciples, and then all united in a hymn of praise.

Instead of expressing the sadness of their hearts by the mournful measure of some solemn lament, they sung, as was customary on that occasion, the joyful Hallel, which abounded in expressions of faith, of gratitude, and of lofty praise: "The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation. The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous. The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. The right hand of the Lord is exalted. The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord." What a prelude to the agony in Gethsemane, the abuse and mockery of the judgment hall, and the awful scenes of Calvary, were those last hours spent in chanting the praises of the Most High!

When Martin Luther received discouraging news, he would often say, "Come, let us sing the forty-sixth psalm." This psalm commences with the words, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." Instead of mourning, weeping, and despairing, when troubles gather about us like a flood and threaten to overwhelm us, if we would not only pray for help from God, but would praise him for so many blessings left,--praise him that he is able to help us,--our course would be more pleasing to him, and we would see more of his salvation.

When difficulties and trials surround us, we should flee to God, and confidently expect help from Him who is mighty to save and strong to deliver. We must ask for God's blessing if we would receive it. Prayer is a duty and a necessity; but do we not neglect praise? Should we not oftener render thanksgiving to the Giver of all our blessings? We need to cultivate gratitude. We should frequently contemplate and recount the mercies of God, and laud and glorify his holy name, even when we are passing through sorrow and affliction.

On approaching the chamber where a husband and father had just breathed his last, we would be filled with astonishment to hear, not the voice of mourning, the melancholy strains of some funeral chant, but a song of sacred praise, joyous and triumphant as the Passover Hallel. Surely, the widow and fatherless would be deemed lacking in affection for the departed. Yet how could these afflicted ones, who have lost their staff and counselor, and who must now lean more entirely upon God--how could they more surely brace their souls for danger and conflict than by calling to mind what their Heavenly Father has done for them, how he has proved himself a present help in time of trouble?

The Lord's merciful kindness is great toward us. He will never leave nor forsake those who trust in him. If we would think and talk less of our trials, and more of the mercy and goodness of God, we would find ourselves raised above much of our gloom and perplexity. My brethren and sisters, you who feel that you are entering upon a dark path, and like the captives in Babylon must hang your harps upon the willows, let us make trial of cheerful song. You may say, How can I sing, with this dark prospect before me, with this burden of sorrow and bereavement upon my soul? But have earthly sorrows deprived us of the all-powerful Friend we have in Jesus? Should not the

marvelous love of God in the gift of his dear Son be a theme of continual rejoicing? When we bring our petitions to the throne of grace, let us not forget to offer also anthems of thanksgiving. "Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth God." As long as our Saviour lives, we have cause for unceasing gratitude and praise.

November 8, 1881

## **Temperance and the License Law**

Our Creator has bestowed his bounties upon man with a liberal hand. Were all these gifts of Providence wisely and temperately employed, poverty, sickness, and distress would be well-nigh banished from the earth. But alas, we see on every hand the blessings of God changed to a curse by the wickedness of men. There is no class guilty of greater perversion and abuse of his precious gifts than are those who employ the products of the soil in the manufacture of intoxicating liquors. The nutritive grains, the healthful, delicious fruits, are converted into beverages that pervert the senses and madden the brain. As a result of the use of these poisons, thousands of families are deprived of the comforts and even the necessaries of life, acts of violence and crime are multiplied, and disease and death hurry myriads of victims to a drunkard's grave.

This work of destruction is carried on under the protection of the laws of the land! For a paltry sum, men are licensed to deal out to their fellow-men the potion that shall rob them of all that makes this life desirable and of all hope of the life to come. Neither the law-maker nor the liquor-seller is ignorant of the result of his work. At the hotel bar, in the beer-garden, at the saloon, the slave of appetite expends his means for that which is destructive to reason, health, and happiness. The liquor-seller fills his till with the money that should provide food and clothing for the family of the poor drunkard.

This is the worst kind of robbery. Yet men in high position in society and in the church lend their influence in favor of license laws! And why?--because they can obtain higher rent for their buildings by letting them to liquor-dealers? because it is desirable to secure the political support of the liquor interest? because these professed Christians are themselves secretly indulging in the alluring poison? Surely, a noble, unselfish love for humanity would not authorize men to entice their fellow-creatures to destruction.

The laws to license the sale of spirituous liquors have filled our towns and cities, yes, even our villages and secluded hamlets, with snares and pit-falls for the poor, weak slave of appetite. Those who seek to reform are daily surrounded with temptation. The drunkard's terrible thirst clamors for indulgence. On every side are the fountains of destruction. Alas, how often is his moral power overborne! how often are his

convictions silenced! He drinks and falls. Then follow nights of debauchery, days of stupor, imbecility, and wretchedness. Thus, step by step, the work goes on, until the man who was once a good citizen, a kind husband and father, seems changed to a demon.

Suppose that those officials who at the beginning of 1881 granted license to liquor-dealers, could on New Year's of 1882 behold a faithful picture of the results of the traffic carried on under that license. It is spread out before them in its startling and frightful details, and they know that all is true to life. There are fathers, mothers, and children falling beneath the murderer's hand; there are the wretched victims of cold and hunger and of vile and loathsome disease, criminals immured in gloomy dungeons, victims of insanity tortured by visions of fiends and monsters. There are gray-haired parents mourning for once noble, promising sons and lovely daughters, now gone down to an untimely grave.

Look upon the drunkard's home. Mark the squalid poverty, the wretchedness, the unutterable woe that are reigning there. See the once happy wife fleeing before her maniac husband. Hear her plead for mercy as the cruel blows fall on her shrinking form. Where are the sacred vows made at the marriage altar? where is the love to cherish, the strength to protect her now? Alas, these have been melted like precious pearls in the fiery liquid, the cup of abominations! Look upon those half-naked children. Once they were cherished tenderly. No wintry storm, nor the cold breath of the world's contempt and scorn, was permitted to approach them. A father's care, a mother's love, made their home a paradise. Now all is changed. Day by day the cries of agony wrenched from the lips of the drunkard's wife and children go up to Heaven. And all this that the liquor-seller may add to his gains! And his hellish work is performed under the broad seal of the law! Thus society is corrupted, work-houses and prisons are crowded with paupers and criminals, and the gallows is supplied with victims. The evil ends not with the drunkard and his unhappy family. The burdens of taxation are increased, the morals of the young are imperiled, the property and even the life of every member of society is endangered. But the picture may be presented never so vividly, and yet it falls short of the reality. No human pen or pencil can fully delineate the horrors of intemperance.

Were the only evil arising from the sale of ardent spirits the cruelty and neglect manifested by intemperate parents toward their children, this alone should be enough to condemn and destroy the traffic. Not only does the drunkard render the life of his

children miserable, but by his sinful example he leads them also into the path of crime. How can Christian men and women tolerate this evil? Should barbarous nations steal our children and abuse them as intemperate parents abuse their offspring, all Christendom would be aroused to put an end to the outrage. But in a land professedly governed by Christian principles, the suffering and sin entailed upon innocent and helpless childhood by the sale and use of intoxicating liquors are considered a necessary evil!

The word of God plainly declares, "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken." Would that all who support the liquor traffic could realize that if, understanding its evils, they continue to uphold it, the curse of God is upon them, that retributive justice will one day overtake them, and they will see and feel the results of their sinful course.

There is a cause for the moral paralysis upon society. Our laws sustain an evil which is sapping their very foundations. Many deplore the wrongs which they know exist, but consider themselves free from all responsibility in the matter. This cannot be. Every individual exerts an influence in society. In our favored land, every voter has some voice in determining what laws shall control the nation. Should not that influence and that vote be cast on the side of temperance and virtue?

Many men are voted into office whose minds are deprived of their full vigor by indulgence in spirituous liquors, or constantly beclouded by the use of the narcotic tobacco. How often have the decisions made by courts of justice fastened suspicion upon those whose characters were untainted, wrenched hard-earned means from the rightful owners, or perchance immured innocent men in prison cells. And all this because the mental and moral powers of judge, jurors, or witnesses, mayhap of all, were impaired by the use of narcotics or stimulants. Who can feel secure when so many whose duty it is to enact or execute the laws, pervert judgment under the influence of these poisons? The peace of happy families, reputation, property, liberty, and even life itself, are at the mercy of intemperate men in our legislative halls and our courts of justice.

By giving themselves up to the indulgence of appetite, many who were once upright, once beneficent, lose their integrity and their love for their fellow-men, and unite with the dishonest and profligate, espouse their cause, and share their guilt. How

many sacrifice reason, conscience, and the fear of God, to the love for strong drink. How many forfeit their prerogative as citizens of a republic,--bribed with a glass of whisky to cast their vote for some villainous candidate. As a class, the intemperate will not hesitate to employ deception, bribery, and even violence against those who refuse unbounded license to perverted appetite.

Satan exults as he sees the slaves of evil habit daily crowding under his black banner, going down to misery, death, and hell. We may call upon the friends of the temperance cause to rally to the conflict and seek to press back the tide of evil that is demoralizing the world; but of what avail are all our efforts while liquor-selling is sustained by law? Must the curse of intemperance forever rest like a blight upon our land? Must it every year sweep like a devouring fire over thousands of happy homes? We talk of the results, tremble at the results, and wonder what we can do with the terrible results, while too often we tolerate and even sanction the cause. The advocates of temperance fail to do their whole duty unless they exert their influence by precept and example--by voice and pen and vote--in favor of prohibition and total abstinence. We need not expect that God will work a miracle to bring about this reform, and thus remove the necessity for our exertion. We ourselves must grapple with this giant foe, our motto no compromise and no cessation of our efforts till the victory is gained.

Our law-makers have endeavored to restrict the evils of intemperance by licensing the sale of intoxicating liquors. The result of their efforts is before us. It is evident to every intelligent observer that inebriety with its train of crime and misery is steadily increasing. The victims of alcohol are more numerous today than at any former period. The politicians' plan of licensing "for the public good" has proved itself a curse.

What can be done to press back the inflowing tide of evil? Let laws be enacted and rigidly enforced prohibiting the sale and the use of ardent spirits as a beverage. Let every effort be made to encourage the inebriate's return to temperance and virtue. But even more than this is needed to banish the curse of inebriety from our land. Let the appetite for intoxicating liquors be removed, and their use and sale is at an end. This work must to a great degree devolve upon parents. Let them, by observing strict temperance themselves, give the right stamp of character to their children, and then educate and train these children, in the fear of God, to habits of self-denial and self-control. Youth who have been thus trained will have moral stamina to resist temptation, and to control appetite and passion. They will stand unmoved by the folly and



dissipation that are corrupting society.

The prosperity of a nation is dependent upon the virtue and intelligence of its citizens. To secure these blessings, habits of strict temperance are indispensable. The history of ancient kingdoms is replete with lessons of warning for us. Luxury, self-indulgence, and dissipation prepared the way for their downfall. It remains to be seen whether our own republic will be admonished by their example and avoid their fate.

November 29, 1881

## **The Advent Faith**

"Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."

We profess to be pilgrims and strangers on earth, journeying to a better country, even an heavenly. If we are indeed but sojourners here, traveling to a land where none but the holy can dwell, we shall make it our first business to become acquainted with that country; we shall make diligent inquiry as to the preparation needed, the manners and character which we must have, in order to become citizens there. Jesus, the King of that land, is pure and holy. He has commanded his followers, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." If we are hereafter to associate with Christ and sinless angels, we must here obtain a fitness for such society.

This is our work,--our all-important work. Every other consideration is of minor consequence. Our conversation, our deportment, our every act, should be such as to convince our family, our neighbors, and the world, that we expect soon to remove to a better country. More than this, our godly example should keep ever before their minds the preparation needed by all who would enter that blessed home. Our acts must correspond with our faith, and faith will then be made perfect. We should not engage in the work of preparation merely as a duty, a necessity, but as a privilege which we are happy in accepting. Those whose faith is daily confirmed and strengthened by their works, will become acquainted with self-denial in restricting appetite, controlling ambitious desires, bringing every thought and feeling into harmony with the divine will. They will beware lest they be brought into the bondage of sin by conforming to a worldly standard, and thus, before many witnesses, denying their faith.

The land to which we are traveling is in every sense far more attractive than was the land of Canaan to the children of Israel. They were led by the hand of God. Christ himself gave them a description of the country in which they were to find a home; for he wished to place before them every incentive to press on with hope and courage. They were brought where they could look over into the land of Canaan, and behold its

pleasant landscapes, its wooded hills and fertile fields, and were permitted to eat of its rich fruit. But at the same time the difficulties to be encountered were not concealed from them. There was earnest effort before them if they possessed the land. They had need of courage and constant faith. If they would trust in God, his presence and power would be with them, and would at last bring them off victorious over all their enemies. But they become discouraged as the spies tell them of giants, warlike nations, and high-walled cities, which they must encounter. They doubt, hesitate, and propose to go back to Egypt. By their unbelief they doom themselves to suffering, humiliation, and defeat, and at last die in the wilderness.

What stayed their progress just in sight of the goodly land? The difficulties before them were not so great as they had previously encountered. The great obstacle was in themselves. It was their own willful unbelief that turned them back. They were unwilling to risk anything upon the promises of God. The land was good; but the giants were mighty, and the walls of the cities high. They lost sight of the great advantages to be gained in possessing Canaan. They ceased conversing about the good land and its blessings, and permitted their minds to dwell upon the trials and difficulties lying between them and the desired haven.

The more they conversed upon these things, the greater the difficulties appeared, and the more determined their opinion that the conditions imposed upon them were such as they could not meet; that the Lord was unreasonable and severe with them. Satan presented matters before them in the worst light, and they felt that they were an abused people. They appealed to their own sympathies, and forgot the wondrous works of God in their behalf. They lost faith in God at the very time when it should have been strongest. When the Lord was about to manifest to them his great power and goodness, to make his name glorious in the earth, and exalt his people as a nation favored and honored of Heaven, they became discouraged. They knew that whenever they had trusted in God he had mightily wrought for them. Yet their unbelief strengthened into rebellion; their own perverse wills obstructed the way, making walls before them higher than had been built by their enemies.

The history of the children of Israel is written as a warning to us, "upon whom the ends of the world are come." We are standing, as it were, upon the very borders of the heavenly Canaan. We may, if we will, look over on the other side, and behold the attractions of the goodly land. If we have faith in the promises of God, we shall show in

conversation and in deportment that we are not living for this world, but are making it our first business to prepare for that holy land.

The dangers and difficulties before us are increasing as we near the heavenly rest. Satan is filled with deadly hatred against all who are seeking to gain the land which was once his home. His envy has lost none of its bitterness since he was excluded from the brightness and glory of Heaven. Before his fall an enemy to Christ, seeking to rob him of his honor and glory, he is no less his enemy now. He has determined to take the world captive. He sees that his time is short, that a mightier than he will soon take away his power, and he will make one last mighty effort against Christ and his church.

Now is the time for the friends of Jesus to be decided, faithful, and valiant for the Captain of their salvation. Now is the time to show who are the true Calebs, who will not deny that the walls are high, the giants mighty, but who believe that this very fact will make the victory more glorious. There are great difficulties and trials before us. It will require strong courage and persevering effort to go forward. But all now depends on our faith in the Captain who has led us safely thus far. Shall we let unbelief come in now? Shall we weakly yield to distrust and fear? Shall we compromise with the world, and turn away from the heavenly Canaan? Shall we make extensive plans for this life, as did the inhabitants of the old world, planting, building, marrying, and giving in marriage?

The solemn message for this time has a certain sound which we all should heed. The signs of the times tell us that the end of all things is at hand. Prophecies fulfilled have become facts of history, clearly defining our position. We are standing upon the verge of the eternal world. Because iniquity abounds, the love of many is waxing cold. Instead of this, love for God, love for purity, truth, and holiness, should be increasing in our hearts. The increase of wickedness around us should awaken in us more earnest zeal and stronger determination. The faith of God's true people, manifested, as was Noah's, by their works, should stand as a beacon of warning to the world. If our works do not correspond with our profession, we present to the world a false light, and thus lure them on to destruction.

Our Lord forewarned his people that iniquity would abound in the last days, and would have a paralyzing influence upon true godliness. Wickedness is seen and heard and felt all around us. It seems to permeate the very atmosphere, and affects the faith

and love of God's professed people. It is difficult to hold fast Christian integrity. The fact is, much which is current in our day as Christianity is indebted for its very existence to the absence of persecution. When the test of fiery trial comes, a great proportion of these who profess the faith will show that their religion was hollow formalism. Instead of being strengthened and confirmed by opposition, their faith grows feeble and becomes extinct.

The days in which we live are days of peril. Carelessness, levity, love of pleasure and selfish gratification, are seen in the lives of very many professed Christians. Is this the time for Seventh-day Adventists to lose their faith and grow cold and formal? God forbid! Shall we turn traitor at the very moment when God would be most glorified by our steadfast adherence to principle? Shall we turn from the heavenly attractions now, when we can almost see the glories on the other shore? We are living in the most important period of earth's history. By maintaining our allegiance to God, we may bear the noblest testimony for Christ and the truth.

The true Christian will cling to the promises of God more firmly now than ever before. His heart is where he has laid up his treasure--in Heaven. When right principles are despised and forsaken, then the true and loyal will show their warmest zeal and deepest love; then they will stand most firmly for truth, unpopular though it be. The true soldier will be ready to fight the battles of the Lord when his enemies appear strongest; and it is then that the victory will be most complete and triumphant.

Brethren and sisters of like precious faith, shall we give heed to the last warning message? Is this a time to use the Lord's money in ministering to our pride and ambition?--a time to add land to land, or to build grand houses for ourselves and our children?--a time to lay up our treasures and fix our affections here? The Lord is coming. In his great mercy he has delivered us from the darkness of error, and has permitted the bright beams of truth to shine into our souls. We should manifest our gratitude by so reflecting the light from Heaven, in our words and works, that others may be led to believe the truths we advocate. Let us beware that we be not swept away by the current of worldliness, thus saying to unbelievers, "The time is not. Be not alarmed. My Lord delayeth his coming." Let us be consistent; let our works correspond with our profession of faith.

"The Lord is coming--let this be The herald note of jubilee."

December 6, 1881

### **Simplicity in Dress**

"Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel, but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

Human reasoning has ever sought to evade or set aside the simple, direct instructions of the word of God. In every age, a majority of the professed followers of Christ have disregarded those precepts which enjoin self-denial and humility, which require modesty and simplicity of conversation, deportment, and apparel. The result has ever been the same,--departure from the teachings of the gospel leads to the adoption of the fashions, customs, and principles of the world. Vital godliness gives place to a dead formalism. The presence and power of God, withdrawn from those world-loving circles, are found with a class of humbler worshipers, who are willing to obey the teachings of the Sacred Word. Through successive generations, this course has been pursued. One after another, different denominations have risen, and, yielding their simplicity, have lost, in a great measure, their early power.

As we see the love of fashion and display among those who profess to believe present truth, we sadly ask, Will the people of God learn nothing from the history of the past? There are few who understand their own hearts. The vain and trifling lovers of fashion may claim to be followers of Christ; but their dress and conversation show what occupies the mind and engages the affections. Their lives betray their friendship for the world, and it claims them as its own.

How can one that has ever tasted the love of Christ be satisfied with the frivolities of fashion? My heart is pained to see those who profess to be followers of the meek and lowly Saviour, so eagerly seeking to conform to the world's standard of dress. Notwithstanding their profession of godliness, they can hardly be distinguished from the unbeliever. They do not enjoy a religious life. Their time and means are devoted to the one object of dressing for display.

Pride and extravagance in dress is a sin to which woman is especially prone. Hence the injunction of the apostle relates directly to her: "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."

We see steadily gaining ground in the church an evil which the word of God condemns. What is the duty of those in authority, in regard to this matter? Will the influence of the church be what it should be, while many of its members obey the dictates of fashion, rather than the clearly expressed will of God? How can we expect the presence and aid of the Holy Spirit, while we suffer these things to exist among us? Can we remain silent while the teachings of Christ are set aside by his professed followers? These things bring grief and perplexity to those who have the oversight of the church of God. Will not my Christian sisters themselves reflect candidly and prayerfully upon this subject? Will they not seek to be guided by the word of God? The extra time spent in the making up of apparel according to the fashions of the world should be devoted to close searching of heart and the study of the Scriptures. The hours that are worse than wasted in preparing unnecessary adornings, might be made more valuable than gold if spent in seeking to acquire right principles and solid attainments. My heart aches as I see young ladies professing to be followers of Christ who are practically ignorant of his character and his will. These youth have been satisfied to feed on husks. The glittering tinsel of the world appears more valuable to them than the eternal riches. The mental powers, that might be developed by thought and study, are suffered to lie dormant, and the affections are undisciplined, because the outward apparel is considered of more consequence than spiritual loveliness or mental vigor.

Will the followers of Christ seek to obtain the inward adorning, the meek and quiet spirit which God pronounces of great price, or will they squander the few short hours of probation in needless labor for display? The Lord would have woman seek constantly to improve both in mind and heart, gaining intellectual and moral strength that she may lead a useful and happy life,--a blessing to the world and an honor to her Creator.

I would ask the youth of today who profess to believe present truth, wherein they deny self for the truth's sake. When they really desire an article of dress, or some ornament or convenience, do they lay the matter before the Lord in prayer to know if his

Spirit would sanction this expenditure of means? In the preparation of their clothing, are they careful not to dishonor their profession of faith? Can they seek the Lord's blessing upon the time thus employed? It is one thing to join the church, and quite another thing to be united to Christ. Unconsecrated, world-loving professors of religion are one of the most serious causes of weakness in the church of Christ.

In this age of the world, there is an unprecedented rage for pleasure. Dissipation and reckless extravagance everywhere prevail. The multitudes are eager for amusement. The mind becomes trifling and frivolous, because it is not accustomed to meditation, or disciplined to study. Ignorant sentimentalism is current. God requires that every soul shall be cultivated, refined, elevated, and ennobled. But too often every valuable attainment is neglected for fashionable display and superficial pleasure. Women permit their souls to be starved and dwarfed by fashion, and thus they become a curse to society, rather than a blessing.

I have seen poor families struggling under a weight of debt, and yet the children were not trained to deny themselves to remove this burden. They had never learned to practice self-denial in order to aid their parents. In one family where I visited, the daughters expressed a desire for an expensive piano. Gladly would the parents have gratified this wish, but they were embarrassed with debt. The daughters knew this, and had they been taught to practice self-denial, they would not have given their parents the pain of denying their wishes. But although told that it would be impossible, they did not permit the matter to end there. The desire was expressed again and again, thus continually adding to the heavy burden of the parents. On another visit I saw the coveted instrument of music in the house, and some hundreds of dollars were added to the burden of debt. I hardly knew whom to blame most, the indulgent parents or the selfish children. Both are guilty before God.

This one case will illustrate many. These young persons, although they profess to be Christians, have never taken the cross of Christ; for the very first lesson to be learned is the lesson of self-denial. Said our Saviour, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me." In no way can we become disciples of Christ, except by complying with this condition.

We must know more of Jesus and his love than of the fashions of the world. In the name of my Master, I call upon the youth to study the example of Christ. When you



wish to make an article, you carefully study the pattern, that you may reproduce it as nearly as possible. Now set to work to copy the Divine Exemplar. Your eternal interest demands that you possess the Spirit of Christ. You cannot be like Jesus, and cherish pride in your heart. You cannot give any place to envy or jealousy. You must consider it beneath the character of a Christian to harbor resentful thoughts or indulge in recrimination. Let the law of kindness be sacredly observed. Never comment upon the character or the acts of others in a manner to injure them. In no case make their failures or defects the subject of ridicule or unkind criticism. You lessen your own influence by so doing, and lead others to doubt your sincerity as a Christian. Let peace and love dwell in your soul, and ever cherish a forgiving spirit.

I repeat, Study the fashions less, and the character of Jesus more. The greatest and holiest of men was also the meekest. In his character, majesty and humility were blended. You will find this to exist today in the greatest minds. The Majesty of Heaven came to earth, veiling his divinity with humanity. He had the command of worlds, he could summon the hosts of Heaven at his will; yet he for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. The attractions of this world, its glory and its pride, had no fascination for him. Meekness and humility he makes prominent in the cluster of Christian graces. He would have his disciples study these divine attributes, and seek to possess them. "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Of how little value are gold or pearls or costly array, in comparison with the meekness and loveliness of Christ. Natural loveliness consists in symmetry, or the harmonious proportion of parts, each with the other; but spiritual loveliness consists in the harmony or likeness of our souls to Jesus. This will make its possessor more precious than fine gold, even the golden wedge of Ophir. The grace of Christ is indeed a priceless adornment. It elevates and ennobles its possessor, and reflects beams of glory upon others, attracting them also to the Source of light and blessing.

Said the apostle Paul, "Our conversation is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour." While others are dwarfing the intellect, hardening the heart, and robbing their Maker by devoting themselves to the service of the world, the true Christian is lifting his soul above the follies and vanities of earth, seeking God for pardon, peace, and righteousness; for glory, immortality, and eternal life. And he seeks not in vain. His fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ. Through

this close intercourse with God, the soul becomes transformed. By beholding we are changed into the divine image, while those who seek only to gratify the desires of the unconsecrated heart, will float with the current of worldliness and fashion. They talk of what they love the most, give study and thought to that, until by beholding they are changed to the same image. Their conformity to worldly customs holds them in captivity to Satan, the god of this world. "His servants ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey."

The dress worn by many of our sisters testifies against them,--professors in name, but lovers of the world by practice. We propose that the means which is needlessly expended in dress and display, be made to flow in a different channel. Let all that has heretofore been expended to obliterate the line of demarkation between Christians and the world be now used to provide food and clothing for the Lord's poor, and to send the truth to those who are in darkness. Means are needed for the various enterprises connected with the work of God. Our sisters can do much to supply this want. If saved with care, the means that has been worse than wasted in the indulgence of pride, will amount to more than they imagine. My sisters, dress as Christians should dress,--simply, plainly; adorn yourselves as becometh women professing godliness, with good works. Let your tea and coffee money flow into the Lord's treasury. Let the means expended for every other hurtful indulgence of appetite also be placed there. You can do much for the cause of God by practicing self-denial in what seems to you little things. God will bless you in this work.

We have each an individual responsibility. No friend or neighbor can be a criterion for us. Jesus is the only safe pattern. Have you not, my sisters, given to the world a wrong example in your dress and in your selfish indulgence? Will you not have to render an account to God for the influence you have exerted in favor of needless adornment and display? Our faith must be tested in this world. Christ overcame in our behalf, and thus made it possible for us also to overcome. We must endure trial and temptation here, and then, if faithful, we shall receive the crown. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive a crown of life." We shall be exposed to manifold temptations, but these, if rightly borne, will refine and purify us, even as gold is purified in the fire. Yet when exposed to the allurements of the world, that which we had thought to be gold, proves to be but dross. Our Redeemer sees the situation, and he counsels all to buy of him gold tried in the fire; which is true faith and genuine love, the grace that will not be destroyed by fierce temptations.

The apostle exhorts Christians, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." Compare your character with the mirror of God's word, see if that law condemns you. If so, wash your robe of character in the blood of the Lamb. Whether we do or do not try ourselves by God's law, we may be sure that he will try us. He will bring us through the furnace. Trials do not come upon us to inform God of what we are, for his eye reads the intents and purposes of the heart; but it is for our own enlightenment, that we may learn our own defects, and remedy them before it is too late. We cannot tell what we are, whether our graces are true or false, until brought to the test.

The life of Christ was one continuous experience of privation, self-denial, and sorrow. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Seeing that our Saviour has endured all this for us, what will we endure for him? Will we show our love and gratitude by self-denial in obeying his words, and manifesting his spirit? There is work to be done for the Master. How many souls might be saved, if each professed follower of Christ would do all that lay in his power to do! My brother, my sister, there are all around us the poor, who may receive from you the words of Christ, after you have fed and clothed them. There are the sick, whom it is your duty to visit. There are sorrowing ones to be comforted and prayed for. If the Lord has blessed you with this world's goods, it is not that you may greedily hoard it, or expend it in the indulgence of pride. Remember that he will one day say, "Give an account of thy stewardship." Let us invest our means in the bank of Heaven by using it to supply the wants of the needy or to advance the cause of God. Then the Master at his coming, having found us faithful over a few things, will make us each ruler over "many things" in the kingdom of glory.

December 13, 1881

### **Longevity, and Habits of Life**

The book of Genesis gives quite a definite account of social and individual life during the first twenty-five hundred years of man's history, and yet we have no account of an infant born blind, deaf, crippled, deformed, or imbecile. There is not an instance upon record in that book, of a natural death in infancy, childhood, or early manhood. There is no account of men and women dying of disease. Obituary notices in the book of Genesis run thus: "And all the days of Adam were nine hundred and thirty years, and he died." "And all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years, and he died." Concerning others, the record states, "He lived to a good old age, and he died." It was so rare for a son to die before the father that such an occurrence was considered worthy of record. "And Haran died before his father Terah." Yet Haran himself was a father before his death.

The violation of physical law, and human suffering as the consequence, has so long prevailed, that many look upon the present state of sickness, suffering, debility, and premature death, as the appointed lot of humanity. But God did not create the race in its present feeble condition. This is not the work of Providence, but the work of man. It was brought about by violation of the laws of God. Through the temptation of appetite, Adam and Eve first fell from their holy and happy estate. Through the same temptation have the race become enfeebled. They have permitted appetite and passion to take the throne, and to bring into subjection reason and conscience.

Man came from the hand of his Creator perfect in organization, and beautiful in form. The fact that he has for six thousand years withstood the ever-increasing weight of disease and crime, is conclusive proof of the power of endurance with which he was first endowed. And although the antediluvians generally gave themselves up to sin without restraint, it was more than two thousand years before the violation of natural law was sensibly felt. Had Adam originally possessed no greater physical power than men now have, the race would ere this have become extinct.

With few exceptions, the patriarchs from Adam to Noah lived nearly a thousand years. Upon succeeding generations the burden of disease and suffering continued to

rest more heavily, and the length of life greatly diminished. So rapidly had the race degenerated at the time of Christ's first advent, that from every town, city, and village, the sick were brought to him to be healed. Since that time, physical deterioration has steadily progressed. And because of the continued violation of the laws of life, the years of man have been shortened, so that the present generation are passing off to the grave at an earlier age than that at which the antediluvians came upon the stage of active life.

Not only has disease been transmitted from generation to generation, but parents bequeath to their children their own wrong habits, their perverted appetites, and corrupt passions. Men are slow to learn wisdom from the history of the past. The strange absence of principle that characterizes the present generation, the disregard of the laws of life and health, is astonishing. Although a knowledge of these things can be readily obtained, a deplorable ignorance prevails. With the majority, the principal anxiety is, "What shall I eat? what shall I drink? and wherewithal shall I be clothed?" Notwithstanding all that has been said and written upon the importance of health and the means to preserve it, appetite is the great law which governs men and women generally.

What can be done to stay the tide of disease and crime that is sweeping our race down to ruin and to death? As the great cause of the evil is to be found in the indulgence of appetite and passion, so the first and great work of reform must be to learn and practice the lessons of temperance and self-control. To effect a permanent change for the better in society, the education of the masses must begin in early life. The habits formed in childhood and youth, the tastes acquired, the self-control gained, the principles inculcated from the cradle, are almost certain to determine the future of the man or woman. The crime and corruption occasioned by intemperance and lax morals might be prevented by the proper training of the youth.

One of the greatest aids in perfecting pure and noble characters in the young, strengthening them to control appetite and refrain from debasing excesses, is sound physical health. And, on the other hand, these very habits of self-control are essential to the maintenance of health.

It is of the highest importance that men and women be instructed in the science of human life, and the best means of preserving and acquiring health. Especially is youth the time to lay up a stock of knowledge to be put in daily practice through life. Youth is

the time to establish good habits, to correct wrong ones already contracted, to gain and to hold the power of self-control, and to lay the plan, and accustom one's self to the practice, of ordering all the acts of life with reference to the will of God and the welfare of our fellow-creatures. Youth is the sowing time, that determines the harvest both of this life and the life beyond the grave.

The youth of our time should be patiently instructed by both parents and teachers in the laws of health, and the means provided for its restoration when once impaired. Jesus did not ignore the claims of the body. He had respect for the physical condition of man, and went about healing the sick and restoring their faculties to those suffering from their loss. How incumbent, then, is it upon us to preserve the natural health with which God has endowed us, and to avoid dwarfing or weakening our powers.

Parents should impress upon their children the fact that all their powers are from God; that he has claims upon every faculty; that in sinning against their bodies, by abusing health in any manner, they sin against God, and slight one of his choicest blessings. God gives us health to use in his service; and the greater physical strength we possess, and the stronger our powers of endurance, the more we should do for the Master. Instead of abusing and overtaxing our strength, we should sacredly preserve it for his use.

The young should be shown that they are not at liberty to do as they please with their lives. Now is their day of trust, and by and by will come their day of reckoning. God will not hold them guiltless for treating lightly his precious gifts; the world's Redeemer has paid an infinite price for them, and their lives and talents belong to him; and they will finally be judged according to the faithful or unfaithful stewardship of the capital which God has intrusted to their care. They should be taught that the greater their endowment of means and opportunities, the more heavily does the responsibility of God's work rest upon them, and the more are they required to do. If the youth are thus brought up to feel their responsibility to their Creator, and the important trust given them in their own lives, they will hesitate to plunge into the vortex of dissipation and crime that swallows up so many of the promising young men of our age.

Parents, let the work of reform begin at home; train up the child to habits of industry, and serious reflection; present life to him as a grave reality; show him his duty to his God, his neighbor, and himself; inculcate moral and religious principles; give him

a suitable education, the means of earning an honest living; let him know you are ever ready to give him tender sympathy and sound advice, to help him if he stumbles, and to encourage him onward; and he will not be likely to go far astray, or miss of being a blessing to the world.

In conclusion, let all, both old and young, give diligent heed to the words of the Lord penned by the wise man three thousand years ago: "My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments. For length of days, and long life, and peace shall they add to thee. Let not mercy and truth forsake thee. Bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart. So shalt thou find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man."

December 20, 1881

## **Witnesses for Christ**

"Ye shall be witnesses unto me," were the parting words of our Saviour to his disciples, ere the cloud received him from their sight. In his absence, they were to be his representatives in the world. How faithfully they fulfilled their high commission, is testified by their life of self-denial for their Master's cause; by their joyful, triumphant witness for Christ and the truth in the face of torture, imprisonment, and death.

These words of Jesus have lost none of their force through the lapse of ages. Our Saviour calls for faithful witnesses in these days of hypocrisy and religious formalism. But how few, even among the professed ambassadors for Christ, are ready to give a faithful, personal testimony for their Master. Many can tell what the great and good men of generations past have done, and dared, and suffered, and enjoyed. They become eloquent in setting forth the power of the gospel which has enabled others to rejoice in trying conflicts, and to stand firm against fierce temptations. But while so earnest in bringing forward other Christians as witnesses for Jesus, they seem to have no fresh, timely experience of their own to relate.

Ministers of Christ, what have you to say for yourselves? What soul-conflicts have you experienced that have been for your good, for the good of souls, and for the glory of God? You who profess to be proclaiming the last solemn message to the world, what is your experience in the knowledge of the truth and its effect upon your own hearts? Will your character testify for Christ? Can you speak of the refining, ennobling, sanctifying influence of the truth as it is in Jesus? What have you seen, and what have you known, of the power of Christ?

This is the kind of witness for which the Lord calls, and for which churches are suffering. The spirit of Christ--true faith, that works by love and purifies the heart--is a priceless jewel, rare indeed in this degenerate age. "If ye love me," says the Saviour, "keep my commandments." Do we obey the law of God, or are we cherishing idols in our hearts? How many manifest their love by willing obedience, making the service of Christ their first consideration, and worldly things secondary?



Unbelievers sometimes look upon our faith as unattractive, cold, and forbidding. There is reason for this. Ministers of the gospel present to the people the theory of truth, while He who is the Truth and the Life is left in the background. Some preachers are more zealous to make a good argument upon doctrinal points, than to present a self-denying, crucified Saviour to the people.

A minister may gain a reputation for ability and shrewdness, and yet not be the acknowledged witness of Christ. He may talk of the truth, and boast of the truth, while yet his heart has not felt its sanctifying power. Self is exalted, and the glory of God forgotten. If true piety and the influence of the Holy Spirit are wanting, a minister's labors will be an injury to the people and to the cause of truth. He does not preach Christ from an experimental knowledge of him, but, parrot-like, he repeats what he has learned from others. The Lord addresses to this class the question, "What hast thou to do to declare my statutes?"

Lift up Jesus,--lift him up before the people; dwell upon his matchless love. But the heart must first be imbued with that love, in order to speak it, to preach it, to pray it, to live it. We must have personal communion with Christ, in order to reveal him to the people. The graces of his Spirit, the loveliness of his character, must be shining forth in the characters of his witnesses.

How many cling with tenacious grasp to their self termed dignity, which is only self-esteem. These seek to honor themselves, instead of waiting in humbleness of heart for Christ to honor them. In conversation, more time is spent in talking of self than in exalting the riches of the grace of Christ. These persons teach others just how to perfect a Christian character, but they do not these things themselves. They have not learned of Him who says, "I am meek and lowly of heart."

True holiness and humility are inseparable. The nearer the soul comes to God, the more completely is it humbled and subdued. When Job heard the voice of the Lord out of the whirlwind, he exclaimed, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." It was when Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord and heard the cherubim crying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts," that he cried out, "Woe is me, for I am undone!" Daniel, when visited by the holy messenger, says, "My comeliness was turned in me to corruption." Paul, after he was caught up into the third Heaven and heard things that it was not lawful for a man to utter, speaks of himself as "less than the least of all saints." It was

the beloved John, that leaned on Jesus' breast, and beheld his glory, who fell as one dead before the angel. The more closely and continuously we behold our Saviour, the less shall we see to approve in ourselves.

There is a feverish love of pleasure at this time, a fearful increase of licentiousness, a contempt for all authority. Not only worldlings, but professed Christians also, are governed by inclination rather than duty. The words of Christ are sounding down through the ages, "Watch and pray." Says Paul, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." The signs of the times are pointing us to the near approach of our Lord. Is it indeed true that the end of this world's history is near? that Christ is at the door? Are we preparing for the great judgment scene?

Where are our responsible men at this crisis? Are they living like men who wait for their Lord? Are there not men in the ministry who are indifferent and careless? Are there any among us who are eating and drinking with the drunken? Inebriates are not the special ones here meant; all are included whose senses are so confused and benumbed by the spirit of the times that eternal things are not realized. If there was ever a time when men of God should stand aloof from the corruptions of the world, it is now. The Lord is at hand. Let the trumpet have a certain sound. Let the people be warned.

"Ye are my witnesses," saith the Lord. A living Christian will have a living testimony to bear. If you have been following Jesus step by step, you will have something right to the point to relate of the way he has led you. You can tell how you tested his promise, and found the promise true. You can point to the living spots in your experience, without going back for years into the past. Would that we could oftener hear the simple, earnest testimony of heart conflicts and victories:

"I have been fighting the battles of the Lord, and have made conquests over self. I was sorely assaulted by the great adversary, tempted to neglect prayer, and to seek my own pleasure. I did not faithfully discharge my duty to God. He has bestowed upon me Heaven's richest blessing, in the gift of his Son; yet I made his service secondary to my own. But I have seen my sin in so doing, and have repented before the Lord. I have battled against self, which was striving for the mastery. The conflict was grievous, but I would not yield to the clamors of the carnal heart. I humbled my soul before God, and wept in penitence before him. My trembling faith grasped the promises, and

appropriated them to myself. Jesus revealed himself as a present help in my emergency. I have gained the victory." What a blessed, softening, subduing influence such testimonies would have upon the hard heart of the unconverted or the backslider. God is speaking through clay. Religion seems a reality.

At this time of general intemperance and worldliness, every true Christian will have a battle to fight to practice the principles of truth as well as to assent to them. It is genuine, personal experience in the Christian life, the Christian warfare, that ministers of the gospel need. The Captain of our salvation calls for witnesses fresh from the field of action. Those who have been fiercely assaulted by the enemies of truth and the adversary of souls, and who have conducted themselves as did Jesus in his hour of trial, will have a testimony to bear which will thrill the hearts of the hearers. They will indeed be witnesses for Jesus.

Brethren, the biographies of good men of the past will not meet the demand for this time. The Saviour whom you profess to love and serve, wants you to have an experience of your own to relate. What do you believe? Is probation soon to close? Is the time at hand when the Judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened, and we be judged according to our works?

Witnesses for Christ will manifest piety at home. Those who fail to do this are denying their faith. Ministers who preach close, practical discourses to the people, should themselves give a practical illustration of the truths taught. Piety in the daily life will give power to the public testimony. Patience, forbearance, and love will make an impression upon hearts that sermons have failed to reach. Christ is not pleased with the fruit that many bear. He pronounces the tree corrupt, for its character is determined by the fruit.

There is a sad lack of tenderness and sympathy among the servants of Christ. They do not love as brethren. They are harsh and dictatorial. Especially is their conduct toward the erring destitute of pity or compassion. Said the apostle, "Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." We shall surely be judged by our Heavenly Father in the same manner that we have judged others. "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." "He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy." Oh that these hard-hearted, exacting ones would fall upon the Rock and be broken, lest theirs be the terrible alternative, that the Rock shall fall upon them and grind them to powder.

Jesus has given us in his life an example of pity and love for the erring. While he fearlessly reproved sin, he regarded the sinner with compassion. Looking upon the cross of Calvary, where Christ poured out his life to atone for our sins, let us recall his words, "Love one another, as I have loved you." Oh that we all, both ministers and people, might heed the tender entreaty!

But while the servant of Christ should seek with all patience and love to save sinners, he should on no account give license to sin. He must not allow his perceptions to be dulled by contact with iniquity, or his judgment to be perverted by the world's opinion. By excusing and palliating sin, we lose a sense of its heinous character. Compassion for the erring should not degenerate into indulgence for transgression. In order to preserve the safe mean, the Christian must add to patience godliness. Then he will see as God sees.

The Good Shepherd laid down his life for the sheep. Under-shepherds should watch for souls as they that must give account, remembering that they are to be "ensamples to the flock." He who takes upon himself the responsibility of instructing others in the things of God, should himself be a constant learner in the school of Christ. God will accept the labors of all who obey the Saviour's call, "Follow me." As they continue to follow Jesus, they will become more like him in character. Love to God and man will pervade the life. The thoughts will linger naturally upon heavenly things. The theme of conversation will be the subject of greatest interest, the Christian's hope. The very countenance will express the peace which passeth knowledge. Such a life is the best testimony that can be borne for Christ.

January 3, 1882

## **A Happy New Year**

"I wish you a happy New Year," will soon be repeated far and near, by parents and children, brothers and sisters, acquaintances and friends. In a world like ours, this New Year's greeting seems far more appropriate than the Merry Christmas so lately echoed from lip to lip. On every hand are pale faces, brows furrowed with pain and care, or forms bowed with age. Wherever we turn may be seen the garb of mourning. The suffering, the care-worn, and the aged can no longer be merry. In many a household there is a vacant chair; a beloved child, a husband and father, whose presence gladdened the last Christmas and New Year's festivity, is gone from the circle. A merry Christmas seems a mockery to that bereaved family.

But whatever the cares and sorrows of life, whatever the mistakes and errors of the past, the "Happy New Year," when uttered as an expression of love or respect, falls pleasantly upon the ear. And yet, are not these kindly wishes often forgotten with the utterance? How often we fail to carry their import into the daily life, and thus to aid in their fulfillment. The New Year's greeting is frequently uttered by insincere lips, from hearts that would not forego one selfish gratification in order to make other's happy. Recipients of gifts and favors every new year, many accept these as their due. Receiving daily the bounties of Heaven, sunshine and shower, food and raiment, friends and home,--all the unnoted yet priceless blessings of life,--they forget the claims of the Giver; forget that God has left them a legacy in his poor; and that Christ, the Majesty of Heaven, identifies himself with suffering humanity in the person of his saints.

Says our Saviour, "It was I whom you neglected. While your wardrobe was supplied with costly apparel, I had no comfortable clothing; while you feasted, I was hungry; while you were absorbed in pleasure, I was sick, a stranger, and uncared for. Let those who would have a happy new year, seek to honor God and make all around them happy. Let them share the gifts of Providence with those more needy, and bring to the Lord their offerings of gratitude, their sin-offerings, and their free-will offerings.

Let us review our own course during the past year, and compare our life and character with the Bible standard. Have we withheld from our gracious Benefactor that

which he claims from us in return for all the blessings he has granted? Have we neglected to care for the poor, and comfort the sorrowing? Here, then, is work for us.

Upon many, God has bestowed his gifts with a lavish hand. Will they make corresponding returns? Some of these persons, when in poverty, were faithful in the smallest trust committed to them. They would sooner deny themselves of the comforts, or even the necessaries of life, than to withhold their offerings from the Lord's treasury. God has rewarded their faithfulness by prosperity. But now a change comes over the recipients of his bounty. Their wants increase faster than their income, and they no longer return to God the portion which is his due. Thus is developed that same spirit of covetousness which proved the ruin of Judas.

Let us each bring our souls to task. Let us see if we have brought all our offerings to God. I would do this for myself as an individual. It may be that I have been remiss during the past year. I know not when or where, but to make sure that I have done my whole duty, I will at the first of the year bring an offering to God to be appropriated as may seem best, to some one of the branches of his work. If any of you, my brethren and sisters, are convicted that you have failed to render to God the things that are his; if you have not kindly considered the wants of the poor; or if you have withheld from any man his due, I entreat you to repent before the Lord, and to restore fourfold. Strict honesty toward God and men will alone meet the divine requirements. Remember that if you have defrauded a neighbor in trade, or in any manner deprived him of his own, or if you have robbed God in tithes and offerings, it is all registered in the books of Heaven.

Many are bemoaning their backsliding, their want of peace and rest in Christ, when the past year's record shows that they have separated themselves from God by their departure from strict integrity. When they will faithfully examine their hearts, when they will open their eyes to see the selfishness of their motives,--then their prayer will be, "Create in me a clean heart O God; and renew a right spirit within me." God requires us to have a pure heart and clean hands. Let those who have committed wrong give proof of their repentance by seeking to make full restitution, let them in their after-life give evidence of a genuine reformation, and they will assuredly enjoy the peace of Heaven.

Let us enter upon the new year with a clean record. Let faults be corrected. Let bitterness and malice be uprooted. Let right triumph over wrong. Let envy and jealousy

between brethren be put away. Heartfelt, honest confession will heal grave difficulties. Then, with the love of God in the soul, there may flow from sincere lips the greeting, "I wish you a happy New Year."

Many who were with us at the beginning of 1881 are not here to welcome 1882. We ourselves may not live to see another year. Shall we not seek to improve the little time allotted us? Will not the church of Christ turn from their backslidings? Will they not cast aside their idols, repent of their love of the world, overcome their selfish greed, and open the door of the heart to bid the Saviour welcome? May the beginning of this year be a time that shall never be forgotten,--a time when Christ shall come in among us, and say, "Peace be unto you."

Brethren and sisters, I wish you, one and all, a happy New Year.

"We live in deeds, not years; in thought, not breath; In feelings, not in figures on the dial. We should count time by heart-throbs when they beat For man, for duty. He most lives Who thinks most, feels noblest, acts the best."

January 10, 1882

## Thoughts on Education

No work ever undertaken by man requires greater care and skill than the proper training and education of youth and children. There are no influences so potent as those which surround us in our early years. Says the wise man, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." The nature of man is three-fold, and the training enjoined by Solomon comprehends the right development of the physical, intellectual, and moral powers. To perform this work aright, parents and teachers must themselves understand "the way the child should go." This embraces more than a knowledge of books or the learning of the schools. It comprehends the practice of temperance, brotherly-kindness, and godliness; the discharge of our duty to ourselves, to our neighbors and to God.

The training of children must be conducted on a different principle from that which governs the training of irrational animals. The brute has only to be accustomed to submit to its master; but the child must be taught to control himself. The will must be trained to obey the dictates of reason and conscience. A child may be so disciplined as to have, like the beast, no will of its own, his individuality being lost in that of his teacher. Such training is unwise, and its effect disastrous. Children thus educated will be deficient in firmness and decision. They are not taught to act from principle; the reasoning powers are not strengthened by exercise. So far as possible, every child should be trained to self-reliance. By calling into exercise the various faculties, he will learn where he is strongest, and in what he is deficient. A wise instructor will give special attention to the development of the weaker traits, that the child may form a well-balanced, harmonious character.

In some schools and families, children appear to be well trained, while under the immediate discipline, but when the system which has held them to set rules is broken up, they seem to be incapable of thinking, acting, or deciding for themselves. Had they been taught to exercise their own judgment as fast and as far as practicable, the evil would have been obviated. But they have so long been controlled by parents or teachers as to wholly rely upon them. He who seeks to have the individuality of his scholars merged in his own, so that reason, judgment, and conscience shall be subject to his



control, assumes an unwarranted and fearful responsibility. Those who train their pupils to feel that the power lies in themselves to become men and women of honor and usefulness, will be the most permanently successful. Their work may not appear to the best advantage to careless observers, and their labor may not be valued so highly as that of the instructor who holds absolute control; but the after-life of the pupils will show the results of the better plan of education.

Both parents and teachers are in danger of commanding and dictating too much, while they fail to come sufficiently into social relation with their children or their scholars. They maintain too great a reserve, and exercise their authority in a cold, unsympathizing manner, which tends to repel instead of winning confidence and affection. If they would oftener gather the children about them, and manifest an interest in their work, and even in their sports, they would gain the love and confidence of the little ones, and the lesson of respect and obedience would be far more readily learned; for love is the best teacher. A similar interest manifested for the youth will secure like results. The young heart is quick to respond to the touch of sympathy.

Let it never be forgotten that the teacher must be what he desires his pupils to become. Hence, his principles and habits should be considered as of greater importance than even his literary qualifications. He should be a man who fears God, and feels the responsibility of his work. He should understand the importance of physical, mental, and moral training, and should give due attention to each. He who would control his pupils must first control himself. To gain their love, he must show by look and word and act that his heart is filled with love for them. At the same time, firmness and decision are indispensable in the work of forming right habits, and developing noble characters.

Physical training should occupy an important place in every system of education. It is the duty of parents and teachers to become acquainted with the human organism and the laws by which it is governed, and so far as possible, to secure to their children and pupils that greatest of all earthly blessings, "a sound mind in a sound body." Myriads of children die annually, and many more are left to drag out a life of wretchedness, perhaps of sin, because of the ignorance or neglect of parents and teachers.

Many a mother spends hours and even days in needless work merely for display,

and yet has no time to obtain the information necessary that she may preserve the health of her children. She trusts their bodies to the doctor, and their souls to the minister, that she may go on undisturbed in her worship of fashion. To become acquainted with the wonderful mechanism of the human frame, to understand the dependence of one organ upon another, for the healthful action of all, is a work in which she has no interest. Of the mutual influence of mind and body, she knows little. The mind itself, that wonderful endowment which allies the finite with the infinite, she does not understand.

For generations, the system of popular education, for children especially, has been destructive to health, and even to life itself. Five and even six hours a day young children have passed in school-rooms not properly ventilated nor sufficiently large for the healthful accommodation of the scholars. The air of such rooms soon becomes poisonous to the lungs that inhale it. And here the little ones, with their active, restless bodies, and no less active and restless minds, have been kept unoccupied during the long summer days, when the fair world without called them to gather health and happiness with the birds and flowers. Many children have at best but a slight hold on life. Confinement in school makes them nervous and diseased. Their bodies become dwarfed from want of exercise and the exhausted condition of the nervous system. If the lamp of life goes out, parents and teachers are far from suspecting that they themselves had ought to do with quenching the vital spark. The sad bereavement is looked upon as a special dispensation of Providence, when the truth is, inexcusable ignorance and neglect of nature's laws had destroyed the life of these children. God designed them to live, in the enjoyment of health and vigor, to develop pure, noble, and lovely characters, to glorify him in this life and to praise him forever in the future life.

Who can estimate the lives that have been wrecked by cultivating the intellectual to the neglect of the physical powers? The course of injudicious parents and teachers in stimulating the young mind by flattery or fear, has proved fatal to many a promising pupil. Instead of urging them on with every possible incentive, a judicious instructor will rather restrain the too active mind until the physical constitution has become strong enough to sustain mental effort.

That the youth may have health and cheerfulness, which are dependent upon normal physical and mental development, care must be given to the proper regulation of study, labor, and amusement. Those who are closely confined to study to the neglect of physical exercise, are injuring the health by so doing. The circulation is unbalanced, the

brain having too much blood and the extremities too little. Their studies should be restricted to a proper number of hours, and then time should be given to active labor in the open air.

Little children should be permitted to run and play out of doors, enjoying the fresh, pure air, and the life-giving sunshine. Let the foundation of a strong constitution be laid in early life. Parents should be the only teachers of their children, until they are eight or ten years of age. Let the mother have less care for the artificial, let her refuse to devote her powers to the slavery of fashionable display, and find time to cultivate in herself and her children a love for the beautiful things of nature. Let her point them to the glories spread out in the heavens, to the thousand forms of beauty that adorn the earth, and then tell them of Him who made them all. Thus she can lead their young minds up to the Creator, and awaken in their hearts reverence and love for the Giver of every blessing. The fields and hills--nature's audience chamber--should be the school-room for little children. Her treasures should be their text-book. The lessons thus imprinted upon their minds will not be soon forgotten.

God's works in nature have lessons of wisdom and gifts of healing for all. The ever-varying scenes of the recurring seasons constantly present fresh tokens of his glory, his power, and his love. Well were it for older students, while they labor to acquire the arts and learning of men, to also seek more of the wisdom of God,--to learn more of the divine laws, both natural and moral. In obedience to these are life and happiness, in this world and in the world to come.

January 24, 1882

## **The Light of the World**

"I am the light of the world." The feast of tabernacles had just passed when our Saviour uttered these words in the temple at Jerusalem. Around the court were the golden lamps whose brilliant light had illuminated the city. Pointing to these, and beyond them to the glorious sun just risen in full-orbed splendor above the Mount of Olives, he declares himself to be the light of men.

Jesus sought to make every object around him the medium of divine truth. As the day previous he had likened the Spirit's power to the refreshing, life-giving water, so now he compared himself to the all-pervading light, the source of life and gladness to nature and to man. The only light that can illuminate the darkness of a world lying in sin must come from Christ, and this light is granted to all who will receive it. "For," said the great Teacher, "he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Those who receive the divine radiance are in turn to become light-bearers to the world. Thus our Saviour taught his disciples: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." It is not merely the conviction of the mind, it is not the acceptance of a theory, however correct, that can make us Christians. It is the indwelling of Christ in the soul, the development of his spirit in the life. The Christian experience is a constant effort to conform the human will to the will of Christ, and to form the character according to the divine model.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." Religion is not to be held as a precious treasure, jealously hoarded, and enjoyed only by the possessor. True religion cannot be thus held; for such a spirit is contrary to the very principle of the gospel. "Freely ye have received, freely give," are the words of our Master; and again he bids us, "Love one another as I have loved you." If Christ is dwelling in the heart, it is impossible to conceal the light of his presence; it is impossible for that light to grow dim. It will grow brighter and brighter, as day by day the mists of selfishness and sin that envelop the soul are dispelled by its bright beams.

The world lies in darkness. There are all around us souls going down to ruin and to death. As Christ sheds the light of his love upon his followers, they are to reflect this light upon others. God's word declares that the children of this world are wiser in their day and generation than the children of light. The zeal and steadfastness of the lighthouse keeper, in his efforts to save men from temporal destruction, put to shame the faith and devotion of many a professed Christian.

"The watchman at Calais light-house was boasting of the brilliancy of his lantern, which can be seen ten leagues out at sea, when a visitor said to him,

"You speak with enthusiasm, sir, and that is well. I like to hear men tell what they are sure they have and know; but what if one of the lights should chance to go out?"

"Never, never! Absurd, impossible!" replied the sensitive watchman, in consternation at the mere supposition of such a thing. 'Why, sir,' he continued, and pointed to the ocean, 'Yonder, where nothing can be seen, there are ships going by to every port in the world. If, tonight, one of my burners were out, within six months would come a letter, perhaps from India, perhaps from Australia, perhaps from some port I never heard of before,--a letter, saying that on such a night, at such an hour, at such a minute, the light at Calais burned low and dim; that the watchman neglected his post; that vessels were consequently put in jeopardy on the high seas. Ah, sir,' and his face shone with the intensity of his thought, 'sometimes, in the dark nights, and in the stormy weather, I look out upon the sea and feel as if the eye of the whole world were looking at my light. Go out? Burn dim? That flame flicker low or fail? No, sir, never!'

"Shall Christians, shining for tempted sinners, allow their light to fail? Forever out upon life's billowy sea, are souls we see not, strange sailors in the dark, passing by, struggling, it may be, amid the surges of temptation. Christ is the light, and the Christian is appointed to reflect the light. The ocean is vast, its dangers are many, and the eyes of far-away voyagers are turned toward the Calais light-house--the church of Jesus Christ. The church is set to be the light of the world. Are its revolving lamps all trimmed and brightly burning?"

Think of this, professed Christians! A failure to let your light shine, a neglect to obtain heavenly wisdom that you may have light from God, may cause the loss of a

soul! What is the life lost at sea, in comparison with the eternal life which may be lost through your unfaithfulness? Can you endure the thought? Can you go on from day to day indifferent and careless, as though there were no God and no hereafter; as though you were not Christ's servant; as though you had no blood-bought privileges? It is of the highest consequence that you stand at your post, like the faithful watchman, that your light may shine out before others. You should be so impressed with the importance of your work that to the question, "What if your light should go out?" your whole soul would respond, "Never, never! for then souls would be lost!"

You may never know the result of your influence from day to day, but be sure that it is exerted for good or evil. Many who have a kind heart and good impulses, permit their attention to be absorbed in worldly business or pleasure, while the souls that look to them for guidance drift on to hopeless wreck. Such persons may make a high profession, and may stand well in the opinion of men, even as Christians, but in the day of God, when our works shall be compared with the divine law, then it will be found that they have not come up to the standard. Others who saw their course fell a little below them; and still others fell below the latter class, and thus the work of degeneracy went on.

Throw a pebble into the lake, and a wave is formed, and another, and another; and as they increase, the circle widens, until they reach the very shore. Thus our influence, though apparently insignificant, may continue to extend far beyond our knowledge or control. It is as impossible for us to determine the result as it was for the watchman to see the ships that were scattered upon the sea.

We are dealing with stern realities. Our life record will be what we make it. What are we now doing with our God-given abilities and privileges? Are we making the very most of the blessings that are granted us here? Are we abiding in Christ, and is He in us? Is our light, kindled at the divine altar, shining out as a guide to tempest-tossed souls upon the sea of life?

"Let the lower lights be burning! Send a gleam across the wave! Some poor fainting, struggling seaman You may rescue, you may save."

February 28, 1882

### **Should Christians Dance?**

Dear Sister in Christ, You inform me in your letter that you have been recently converted from error to truth. You now see and acknowledge the claims of God's law. You see the true Sabbath plainly brought to view in the fourth commandment, and have begun to keep it. You feel a joy that you never experienced before. In all this I rejoice with you. Then you ask if it is sinful to attend dancing parties. You say that this amusement possesses great attractions for you, but if sinful you will relinquish it.

Before answering this question directly, I ask you to consider briefly the position and work of God's people at the present day. John the Revelator, looking down the stream of time, beheld the third angel flying in the midst of heaven, crying, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." From the prophecies we learn that this heavenly messenger represents a class of religious teachers who are instructing the people to obey the law of God and to look for his Son from Heaven. The solemn message of the third angel must be given by those who see and feel its truthfulness. The world are going on careless and Godless in the way of error. Ministers are saying from their pulpits, "Be not troubled. Christ will not come for thousands of years. All things continue as they were from the beginning." Others pour contempt upon the law of God, declaring that it is a yoke of bondage. But while professed Christians are asleep, Satan is manifesting intense earnestness and persevering zeal. His hellish work will soon be ended, his power be chained; therefore he has come down in great wrath, to "deceive, if possible, even the very elect." Is this a time for us to unite with the ungodly in levity and worldly pleasure? Will they be more inclined to accept the solemn truths we hold, when they see us in the theater or the ball-room?

Infidelity runs riot. Professed Christians not only disclaim all faith in the warnings of future judgments upon the world, but they deny the record of past judgments. There are not wanting those who declare that the flood is a myth and the book of Genesis a fable. But not so did our Saviour. He refers to Noah as a real person, to the flood as a fact, to the characteristics of that generation as prefiguring the characteristics of ours. In the days before the flood, it is written that "the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only

evil continually." "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." Here is a picture drawn by one inspired of God; and such, it is declared, will be the state of the world prior to Christ's second coming. In the days of Noah, men found their highest enjoyment in the gratification of sensual desires. This world was their all. "Eat, drink, and be merry," was the cry echoed from lip to lip. The same insane love of pleasure, the same all-absorbing spirit of worldliness, characterize the people of this age. How little do they consider that their deeds and words are passing into judgment, and that every sin must have its retribution in the future!

There was a God to call to account the inhabitants of the antediluvian world. There is a God to try the deeds of the men of this generation, and to give every man according to his works. The faithful sentinels for God have a work to do, to keep these things vividly before the people. Every lay member of the church has also a duty, to show that there is a reality in the truth, that we are indeed living in the last days, and the Lord is at the door. The words of the great apostle are addressed directly to us: "But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." The great question for us to settle is, What part are we to act in this fearfully important period? Shall we yield to the indulgence of worldliness and pride, or engage in mirth and revelry?

The true Christian will not desire to enter any place of amusement or engage in any diversion upon which he cannot ask the blessing of God. He will not be found at the theater, the billiard hall, or the bowling saloon. He will not unite with the gay waltzers, or indulge in any other bewitching pleasure that will banish Christ from the mind. To those who plead for these diversions, we answer, We cannot indulge in them in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. The blessing of God would not be invoked upon the hour spent at the theater or in the dance. No Christian would wish to meet death in such a place. No one would wish to be found there when Christ shall come. When we come to the final hour, and stand face to face with the record of our lives, shall we regret that we have attended so few parties of pleasure? that we have participated in so few scenes of thoughtless mirth? Shall we not, rather, bitterly regret that so many precious hours have been wasted in self-gratification,--so many opportunities neglected, which, rightly improved, would have secured for us immortal treasures?



It has become customary for professors of religion to excuse almost any pernicious indulgence to which the heart is wedded. By familiarity with sin, they become blinded to its enormity. Many who claim to be children of God, gloss over sins which his word condemns, by linking some purpose of church charity with their Godless carousals. Thus they borrow the livery of Heaven to serve the devil in. Souls are deceived, led astray, and lost to virtue and integrity by these fashionable dissipations.

In many religious families, dancing and card-playing are made a parlor pastime. It is urged that these are quiet home amusements, which may be safely enjoyed under the parental eye. But a love for these exciting pleasures is thus cultivated, and that which was considered harmless at home will not long be regarded dangerous abroad. It is yet to be ascertained that there is any good to be obtained from these amusements. They do not give vigor to the body nor rest to the mind. They do not implant in the soul one virtuous or holy sentiment. On the contrary, they destroy all relish for serious thought and for religious services. It is true that there is a wide contrast between the better class of select parties and the promiscuous and degraded assemblies of the low dance-house. Yet all are steps in the path of dissipation.

The amusement of dancing, as conducted at the present day, is a school of depravity, a fearful curse to society. If all in our great cities who are yearly ruined by this means could be brought together, what histories of wrecked lives would be revealed. How many who now stand ready to apologize for this practice, would be filled with anguish and amazement at the result. How can professedly Christian parents consent to place their children in the way of temptation, by attending with them such scenes of festivity? How can young men and young women barter their souls for this infatuating pleasure?

The great mass of mankind are engrossed in the things of this life, and divine truth can find no abiding-place in their hearts. And yet all the blessings which the world can give fail to satisfy the wants of the soul. There is a nameless longing for something which they have not, a peace and rest that is not born of earth. It was thus with the worshipers in the temple of old; amid the imposing ceremonies, the dazzling display, the music and rejoicing, they were still unsatisfied. Then how welcome the call that fell upon their ears, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." It was the same message that had gladdened the heart of the Samaritan woman, at Jacob's

well,--"Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Christ alone can satisfy that sense of want in the human soul. His gracious invitation reaches down even to our time. From the Fountain of life the cry still goes forth to a lost world, "Come unto me and drink."

Thousands of our race would compass sea and land to gain possessions which at best must soon perish, and yet they turn away with indifference from the proffer of eternal riches. The Saviour's loving invitations, his earnest pleadings and faithful instruction, fall upon dull ears and hard hearts. To many who have time and opportunity to gain a knowledge of the truth and of its Author, Christ will say, "Ye would not come to me, that ye might have life."

My sister, when you carefully study the life of Christ as recorded in Bible history, and when he is revealed to you as he is, by the Holy Spirit, then you will be convinced for yourself that dancing has no place in the Christian's life. When you feel a desire to engage in this amusement, go in imagination to Gethsemane, and behold the anguish which Christ endured for us. See the world's Redeemer wrestling in superhuman agony, the sins of the whole world upon his soul. Hear his prayer, borne upon the sympathizing breeze, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done." The hour of darkness has come. Christ has entered the shadow of his cross. Alone he must drink the bitter cup. Of all earth's children whom he has blessed and comforted, there is not one to console him in this dreadful hour. He is betrayed into the hands of a murderous mob. Faint and weary, he is dragged from one tribunal to another. His own nation are his accusers, the Romans his executioners. And thus He who knew not the taint of sin, pours out his life as a malefactor upon Calvary.

This history should stir every soul to its depths. It was to save us that the Son of God became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was wounded for our transgressions, and with his stripes we are healed. God holds us each responsible for the soul estimated of such value. Let a sense of the infinite sacrifice made for our redemption be ever with you, and the ball-room will lose its attractions.

Not only did Christ die as our sacrifice, but he lived as our example. In his human nature he stands, complete, perfect, spotless. To be a Christian is to be Christlike. Our entire being, soul, body, and spirit, must be purified, ennobled, sanctified, until we shall

reflect his image and imitate his example. My sister, such is the work before us as Christians. We need not fear to engage in any pursuit or pleasure that will aid us in this work. But it is our duty to shun everything that would divert our attention or lessen our zeal. In this light, is it hard to decide on which side dancing should be placed?

March 21, 1882

## **The Home and the School**

It is the boast of the present age that never before did men possess so great facilities for the acquirement of knowledge, or manifest so general an interest in education. Yet despite this vaunted progress, there exists an unparalleled spirit of insubordination and recklessness in the rising generation; mental and moral degeneracy are well-nigh universal. Popular education does not remedy the evil. The lax discipline in many institutions of learning has nearly destroyed their usefulness, and in some cases rendered them a curse rather than a blessing. This fact has been seen and deplored, and earnest efforts have been made to remedy the defects in our educational system. There is urgent need of schools in which the youth may be trained to habits of self-control, application, and self-reliance, of respect for superiors and reverence for God. With such training, we might hope to see the young prepared to honor their Creator and to bless their fellow-men.

It was to secure these objects that our own College at Battle Creek was founded. But those who endeavor to accomplish such a work, find that their undertaking is fraught with many and grave difficulties. The evil which underlies all others, and which often counteracts the efforts of the best instructors, is to be found in the home discipline. Parents do not see the importance of shielding their children from the gilded temptations of this age. They do not exercise proper control themselves, and hence do not rightly appreciate its value.

Many fathers and mothers err in failing to second the efforts of the faithful teacher. Youth and children, with their imperfect comprehension and undeveloped judgment, are not always able to understand all the teacher's plans and methods. Yet when they bring home reports of what is said and done at school, these are discussed by the parents in the family circle, and the course of the teacher is criticised without restraint. Here the children learn lessons that are not easily unlearned. Whenever they are subjected to unaccustomed restraint, or required to apply themselves to hard study, they appeal to their injudicious parents for sympathy and indulgence. Thus a spirit of unrest and discontent is encouraged, the school as a whole suffers from the demoralizing influence, and the teacher's burden is rendered much heavier. But the

greatest loss is sustained by the victims of parental mismanagement. Defects of character which a right training would have corrected, are left to strengthen with years, to mar and perhaps destroy the usefulness of their possessor.

As a rule, it will be found that the students most ready to complain of school discipline are those who have received a superficial education. Having never been taught the necessity of thoroughness, they regard it with dislike. Parents have neglected to train their sons and daughters to the faithful performance of domestic duties. Children are permitted to spend their hours in play, while father and mother toil on unceasingly. Few young persons feel that it is their duty to bear a part of the family burden. They are not taught that the indulgence of appetite, or the pursuit of ease or pleasure, is not the great aim of life.

The family circle is the school in which the child receives its first and most enduring lessons. Hence parents should be much at home. By precept and example, they should teach their children the love and the fear of God; teach them to be intelligent, social, affectionate, to cultivate habits of industry, economy, and self-denial. By giving their children love, sympathy, and encouragement at home, parents may provide for them a safe and welcome retreat from many of the world's temptations.

"No time," says the father, "I have no time to give to the training of my children, no time for social and domestic enjoyments." Then you should not have taken upon yourself the responsibility of a family. By withholding from them the time which is justly theirs, you rob them of the education which they should have at your hands. If you have children, you have a work to do, in union with the mother, in the formation of their characters. Those who feel that they have an imperative call to labor for the improvement of society, while their own children grow up undisciplined, should inquire if they have not mistaken their duty. Their own household is the first missionary field in which parents are required to labor. Those who leave the home garden to grow up to thorns and briars, while they manifest great interest in the cultivation of their neighbor's plot of ground, are disregarding the word of God.

I repeat, it is the lack of love and piety, and the neglect of proper discipline at home, that creates so much difficulty in schools and colleges. There is a fearful state of coldness and apathy among professed Christians. They are unfeeling, uncharitable, unforgiving. These evil traits, first indulged at home, exert their baleful influence in all

the associations of daily life. If the spirit of kindness and courtesy were cherished by parents and children, it would be seen also in the intercourse between teacher and pupil. Christ should be an honored guest in the family circle, and his presence is no less needed in the class-room. Would that the converting power of God might soften and subdue the hearts of parents and children, teachers and students, and transform them into the likeness of Christ.

Fathers and mothers should carefully and prayerfully study the characters of their children. They should seek to repress and restrain those traits that are too prominent, and to encourage others which may be deficient, thus securing harmonious development. This is no light matter. The father may not consider it a great sin to neglect the training of his children; but thus does God regard it. Christian parents need a thorough conversion upon this subject. Guilt is accumulating upon them, and the consequences of their actions reach down from their own children to children's children. The ill-balanced mind, the hasty temper, the fretfulness, envy, or jealousy, bear witness to parental neglect. These evil traits of character bring great unhappiness to their possessors. How many fail to receive from companions and friends the love which they might have, if they were more amiable. How many create trouble wherever they go, and in whatever they are engaged!

Children have claims which their parents should acknowledge and respect. They have a right to such an education and training as will make them useful, respected, and beloved members of society here, and give them a moral fitness for the society of the pure and holy hereafter. The young should be taught that both their present and their future well-being depend to a great degree on the habits they form in childhood and youth. They should be early accustomed to submission, self-denial, and a regard for others' happiness. They should be taught to subdue the hasty temper, to withhold the passionate word, to manifest unvarying kindness, courtesy, and self-control. Fathers and mothers should make it their life-study that their children may become as nearly perfect in character as human effort, combined with divine aid, can make them. This work, with all its importance and responsibility, they have accepted, in that they have brought children into the world.

Parents must see that their own hearts and lives are controlled by the divine precepts, if they would bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They are not authorized to fret and scold and ridicule. They should never taunt

their children with perverse traits of character, which they themselves have transmitted to them. This mode of discipline will never cure the evil. Parents, bring the precepts of God's word to admonish and reprove your wayward children. Show them a "thus saith the Lord" for your requirements. A reproof which comes as the word of God is far more effective than one falling in harsh, angry tones from the lips of parents.

Wherever it seems necessary to deny the wishes or oppose the will of a child, he should be seriously impressed with the thought that this is not done for the gratification of the parents, or to indulge arbitrary authority, but for his own good. He should be taught that every fault uncorrected will bring unhappiness to himself, and will displease God. Under such discipline, children will find their greatest happiness in submitting their own will to the will of their Heavenly Father.

Some parents--and some teachers, as well--seem to forget that they themselves were once children. They are dignified, cold, and unsympathetic. Wherever they are brought in contact with the young,--at home, in the day-school, the Sabbath-school, or the church,--they maintain the same air of authority, and their faces habitually wear a solemn, reproving expression. Childish mirth or waywardness, the restless activity of the young life, finds no excuse in their eyes. Trifling misdemeanors are treated as grave sins. Such discipline is not Christlike. Children thus trained fear their parents or teachers, but do not love them; they do not confide to them their childish experiences. Some of the most valuable qualities of mind and heart are chilled to death, as a tender plant before the wintry blast.

Smile, parents; smile, teachers. If your heart is sad, let not your face reveal the fact. Let the sunshine from a loving, grateful heart light up the countenance. Unbend from your iron dignity, adapt yourselves to the children's needs, and make them love you. You must win their affection, if you would impress religious truth upon their heart.

Jesus loved the children. He remembered that he was once a child, and his benevolent countenance won the affections of the little ones. They loved to play around him, and to stroke that loving face with their innocent hands. When the Hebrew mothers brought their babes to be blessed by the dear Saviour, the disciples deemed the errand of too little importance to interrupt his teachings. But Jesus read the earnest longing of those mothers' hearts, and checking his disciples, he said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

Parents, you have a work to do for your children which no other can do. You cannot shift your responsibilities upon another. The fathers' duty to his children cannot be transferred to the mother. If she performs her own duty, she has burden enough to bear. Only by working in unison, can the father and mother accomplish the work which God has committed to their hands.

That time is worse than lost to parents and children which is devoted to the acquirement of wealth, while mental improvement and moral culture are neglected. Earthly treasures must pass away; but nobility of character, moral worth, will endure forever. If the work of parents be well done, it will through eternity testify of their wisdom and faithfulness. Those who tax their purses and their ingenuity to the utmost to provide for their households costly apparel and dainty food, or to maintain them in ignorance of useful labor, will be repaid only by the pride, envy, willfulness, and disrespect of their spoiled children.

The young need to have a firm barrier built up from their infancy between them and the world, that its corrupting influence may not affect them. Parents must exercise increasing watchfulness, that their children be not lost to God. If it were considered as important that the young possess a beautiful character and amiable disposition as it is that they imitate the fashions of the world in dress and deportment, we would see hundreds where there is one today coming upon the stage of active life prepared to exert an ennobling influence upon society.

The parents' work of education, instruction, and discipline underlies every other. The efforts of the best teachers must often bear little fruit, if fathers and mothers fail to act their part with faithfulness. God's word must ever be their guide. We do not endeavor to present a new line of duty. We set before all the teachings of that word by which our work must be judged, and we inquire, Is this the standard which we as Christian parents are endeavoring to reach?



March 28, 1882

### **Where Are We Drifting?**

Seventh-day Adventists profess to believe that the day of this world's history is far spent, and the night is at hand. Should we then manifest greater earnestness and zeal in the service of God as the end draws nigh, or may we now relax our energies, and participate in the pursuits and pleasures of the world? The Lord has ever required his people to show in all their habits of life a marked difference between themselves and worldlings. Even if the end were not near, it would be the duty of every Christian to be true to his profession of faith, and by an example of simplicity and self-denial, to rebuke the pride and selfishness of the ungodly. How much more, then, is it incumbent upon this people to manifest unflinching zeal and consecration to God. If when we first heard the message of warning we endeavored to live in accordance with our faith, if the convictions of the Holy Spirit led us to shun the habits and fashions of the world, should we not be more earnest and zealous and faithful now that we are so much nearer the great consummation?

The apostle Paul looking down to our day, declares, "It is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." And again, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting, and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." These words plainly set forth our duty. Every year is shortening our probation, and bringing us nearer the coming of our Lord. We should now put forth every energy to prepare for the great event. This life at the longest is represented as a vapor, which soon passes away. Its treasures, its honors, and its joys are transitory and uncertain. If we live for God and the immortal future, we shall secure all that is worth the having.

Only by our life can we prove to the world the genuineness of our solemn faith. But if the coming of Christ is indeed nearer than when we believed, why has there been such a change in the conduct of many? Why are they so careless, so indifferent to the teachings of God's word, so regardless of his claims upon them? Why are they seeking to unite with those whose influence would divert their minds from God, and from a

preparation for eternity? It is the love of the world that leads to the neglect of eternal interests. "Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light." This is our work. Let us not be diverted from it by the world's allurements, nor disheartened by its revilings. "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." We have not long to work. Our time, our talents, are too precious to be buried in the world.

A great responsibility rests upon all who have received the light of truth, and especially upon those to whom the people look for instruction and guidance. Those who occupy positions of responsibility in our institutions are exerting an influence scarcely less potent and wide-spread than that of our ministers. They should be men and women of moral worth and of deep and living experience in the things of God. By their influence and example they are either proclaiming to the world the truths we hold or declaring these truths to be of none effect.

The fearful effect of a worldly, unconsecrated influence at the head of the work is felt by our own people throughout the land. An instance of this came under my own notice not long since. A sister who had spent some weeks at one of our institutions in Battle Creek, said that she felt much disappointed in what she saw and heard there. She had thought to find a people far in advance of the younger churches, both in knowledge of the truth and in religious experience. Here she hoped to gain much instruction which she could carry to her sisters in the faith in a distant State. But she was surprised and pained at the lightness, the worldliness, and lack of devotion which she met on every hand.

Before accepting the truth, she had followed the fashions of the world in her dress, and had worn costly jewelry and other ornaments; but upon deciding to obey the word of God, she felt that its teachings required her to lay aside all extravagant and superfluous adorning. She was taught that Seventh-day Adventists did not wear jewelry, gold, silver, or precious stones, and that they did not conform to worldly fashions in their dress. When she saw among those who profess the faith such a wide departure from Bible simplicity, she felt bewildered. Had they not the same Bible which she had been studying, and to which she had endeavored to conform her life? Had her past experience been mere fanaticism? Had she misinterpreted the words of the apostle, "The friendship of the world is enmity with God, for whosoever will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God"?

Mrs. D., a lady occupying a position in the institution, was visiting at Sr.-----'s room one day, when the latter took out of her trunk a gold necklace and chain, and said she wished to dispose of this jewelry and put the proceeds into the Lord's treasury. Said the other, "Why do you sell it? I would wear it if it was mine." "Why," replied Sr.-----, "when I received the truth, I was taught that all these things must be laid aside. Surely they are contrary to the teachings of God's word." And she cited her hearer to the words of the apostles, Paul and Peter, upon this point, "In like manner, also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with brodered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but, as becometh women professing godliness, with good works." "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel. But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit."

In answer, the lady displayed a gold ring on her finger, given her by an unbeliever, and said she thought it no harm to wear such ornaments. "We are not so particular," said she, "as formerly. Our people have been over- scrupulous in their opinions upon the subject of dress. The ladies of this institution wear gold watches and gold chains, and dress like other people. It is not good policy to be singular in our dress; for we cannot exert so much influence."

We inquire, Is this in accordance with the teachings of Christ? Are we to follow the word of God, or the customs of the world? Our sister decided that it was safest to adhere to the Bible standard. Will Mrs. D. and others who pursue a similar course be pleased to meet the result of their influence, in that day when every man shall receive according to his works?

God's word is plain. Its teachings cannot be mistaken. Shall we obey it, just as he has given it to us, or shall we seek to find how far we can digress and yet be saved? Would that all connected with our institutions would receive and follow the divine light, and thus be enabled to transmit light to those who walk in darkness.

Conformity to the world is a sin which is sapping the spirituality of our people, and seriously interfering with their usefulness. It is idle to proclaim the warning message to the world, while we deny it in the transactions of daily life. I have received letters of inquiry concerning some of these things. One brother states that a few years ago he had money to build a new house, but a call came for means to sustain our

institutions. He felt that these institutions were the Lord's and he said to his wife, "It is true that our house is old and decaying; we need a plain, healthful house; but if you will agree to it, I will send this money to meet the call for means, and we will live on as we have done. Our house is inconvenient, and not always comfortable, but Jesus had not where to lay his head. If the Lord of glory could leave the royal mansions for a life of toil and poverty, those for whom he suffered and died should not complain of hardships. We have far more than he had."

"Not long since," says our brother, "the question of having a new house again came up. Again we prayed about it. We saw in the paper that our institutions were in debt. We could send this time easier than before; for that came rather hard on us. Now, we thought, we are several years nearer the end than when we sent our first offering. We will not indulge ourselves, and let our institutions suffer."

He adds: "I cannot harmonize with the experience I have had the course of some at Battle Creek. Those who are expounding the word of God to others are building large, expensive dwellings like the worldlings around them. What does this mean? I am not sorry that I put into the cause what I did; but I cannot interpret these things. Unbelievers taunt me with them, and laugh at my faith. Are not some of our brethren saying, 'My Lord delayeth his coming'? If they really believed that time is short, would they invest so much in their dwellings? One house is finished very fancifully, at considerable expense, and yet the owner is preaching that Christ is soon coming. What shall we do when our responsible men give us such an example? Please answer through the Review. Persons question me about these matters every day, and I am at loss how to answer."

My brother, tell them that however the professed followers of Christ may depart from his instructions, "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." You ask if Sr. White's testimony from God does not reprove these things. I answer, It does. The Lord has given warning and reproof to prevent this very state of things. The testimonies of God's word and of his Spirit have alike been disregarded. This is why there is such backsliding among us,--so little of the life and power of true godliness.

It may be necessary for our brethren at Battle Creek to build more commodious houses than they would need elsewhere; for there are several hundred students to find

homes among them. But we have no apology to offer for those who are expending in the indulgence of worldliness and pride the means which God has intrusted to their hands. As a people we should be distinct from the world. We should be separating ourselves more and more from that state of things which Christ describes as characteristic of a former age, and which made that people ripe for the vengeance of God. The world before the flood were wholly engrossed in the things of this life, in the gratification of their own desires. Just such a condition existed in Sodom before its destruction. How dangerous, how presumptuous, then, for us to enter the same path which has led so many to ruin!

Let none think to find, even at the great heart of the work, a faultless people. Christ himself has taught us that the gospel net gathers of every kind, and these are not wholly separated until the Judgment. Those who seek to maintain the standard of spirituality in that large church have difficulties to encounter of which our smaller churches know little. We must expect to be thrown in contact with unconsecrated and world-loving professors of godliness. But none need stumble over the example of even their brethren in the faith. We have one unerring Pattern. Says Christ, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

April 4, 1882

## **Our Publications**

Some things of grave importance have not been receiving due attention at our Offices of publication. Men in responsible positions should have worked up plans whereby our books could be circulated, and not lie on the shelves, falling dead from the press. Our people are behind the times, and are not following the opening providence of God.

Many of our publications have been thrown into the market at so low a figure that the profits are not sufficient to sustain the Office and keep good a fund for continual use. And those of our people who have no special burden of the various branches of the work at Battle Creek and at Oakland, do not become informed in regard to the wants of the cause, and the capital required to keep the business moving. They do not understand the liability to losses, and the expense every day occurring to such institutions. They seem to think that everything moves off without much care or outlay of means, and therefore they will urge the necessity of the lowest figures on our publications, thus leaving scarcely any margin. And after the prices have been reduced to almost ruinous figures, they manifest but a feeble interest in increasing the sales of the very books on which they have asked such low prices. The object gained, their burden ceases, when they ought to have an earnest interest and a real care to press the sale of the publications, thereby sowing the seeds of truth, and bringing means into the Offices to invest in other publications.

There has been, on the part of ministers, a very great neglect of duty in not interesting the churches in the localities where they labor, in regard to this matter. When once the prices of books are reduced, it is a very difficult matter to get them again upon a paying basis, as men of narrow minds will cry speculation, not discerning that no one man is benefited, and that God's instrumentalities must not be crippled for want of capital. Books that ought to be widely circulated are lying useless in our Offices of publication, because there is not interest enough manifested to get them circulated.

The press is a power; but if its products fall dead for want of men who will execute plans to widely circulate them, its power is lost. While there has been a quick

foresight to discern the necessity of laying out means in facilities to multiply books and tracts, plans to bring back the means invested, so as to reproduce other publications, have been neglected. The power of the press with all its advantages is in their hands, and they can use it to the very best account, or they can be half asleep, and through inaction, lose the advantages which they might gain. They can extend the light, by judicious calculation, in the sale of books and pamphlets. They can send them into thousands of families who now sit in the darkness of error.

With other publishers, there are regular systems of introducing into the market books of no vital interest. "The children of this world are wiser in their generations than the children of light." Golden opportunities occur almost daily where the silent messengers of truth might be introduced into families and to individuals; but no advantage is taken of these opportunities by the indolent, thoughtless ones. Living preachers are few. There is only one where there should be a hundred. Many are making a great mistake in not putting their talents to use in seeking to save the souls of their fellow- men. Hundreds of men should be engaged in carrying the light all through our cities, villages, and towns. The public mind must be agitated. God says, Let light be sent out into all parts of the field. He designs that men shall be channels of light, bearing it to those who are in darkness.

Missionaries are wanted everywhere. In all parts of the field canvassers should be selected, not from the floating element in society, not from men and women who are good for nothing else, and have made a success of nothing; but they should be persons of good address, of tact, keen foresight and ability. Such are needed to make a success as colporteurs, canvassers, and agents. Men suited to this work undertake it; but some injudicious minister will flatter them that their gift should be employed in the desk instead of simply working as colporteurs. Thus the work of the colporter is belittled. They are influenced to get a license to preach, and the very ones who might have been trained to make good missionaries to visit families at their homes, and talk and pray with them, are caught up to make poor ministers, and the field where so much labor is needed, and where so much good might be accomplished for the cause, is neglected. The efficient colporter, if his work is faithfully done, should have a sufficient remuneration for his services as well as the minister.

If there is one work more important than another, it is that of getting before the public our publications, which will lead men to search the Scriptures. Missionary

work--introducing our publications into families, conversing, and praying with and for them--is a good work, and one which will educate men and women to do pastoral labor.

Every one is not fitted for this work. Those of the best talent and ability, who will take hold of the work understandingly and systematically, and carry it forward with persevering energy, are the ones who should be selected. There should be a most thoroughly organized plan; and this should be faithfully carried out. Churches in every place should feel the deepest interest in the tract and missionary work.

The volumes of Spirit of Prophecy, and also the Testimonies, should be introduced into every Sabbath-keeping family, and the brethren should know their value, and be urged to read them. It was not the wisest plan to place these books at a low figure, and have only one set in a church. They should be in the library of every family, and read again and again. Let them be kept where they can be read by many, and let them be worn out in being read by all the neighbors.

There should be evening readings, in which one should read aloud to those assembled at the winter fireside. There is but little interest manifested to make the most of the light given of God. Much of it is concerning family duties, and instruction is given to meet almost every case and circumstance. Money will be expended for tea, coffee, ribbons, ruffles, and trimmings, and much time and labor spent in preparing the apparel, while the inward work of the heart is neglected. God has caused precious light to be brought out in publications, and these should be owned and read by every family. Parents, your children are in danger of going contrary to the light given of Heaven, and you should both purchase and read the books, for they will be a blessing to you and yours.

You should lend Spirit of Prophecy to your neighbors, and prevail upon them to buy copies for themselves. Missionaries for God, you should be earnest, active, vigorous workers.

Many are going directly contrary to the light which God has given to his people, because they do not read the books which contain the light and knowledge in cautions, reproofs, and warnings. The cares of the world, the love of fashion, and the lack of religion, have turned the attention from the light God has so graciously given, while books and periodicals containing error are traveling all over the country. Skepticism and



infidelity are increasing everywhere. Light, so precious, coming from the throne of God, is hid under a bushel. God will make his people responsible for this neglect. An account must be rendered to him for every ray of light he has let shine upon our pathway, whether it has been improved to our advancement in divine things, or rejected because it was more agreeable to follow inclination.

We now have great facilities for spreading the truth, but our people are not coming up to the privileges given them. They do not see and realize the necessity in every church of using their abilities in saving souls. They do not realize their duty to obtain subscribers for our periodicals, including our health journal, and to introduce our books and pamphlets. Men should be at work who are willing to be taught as to the best way of approaching individuals and families. Their dress should be neat, but not foppish, and their manners such as not to disgust the people. There is a great want of true politeness among us as a people. This should be cultivated by all those who take hold of the missionary work.

Our publishing houses should show marked prosperity. Our people can sustain them, if they will show a decided interest to work our publications into the market. But, should as little interest be manifested in the year to come as has been shown in the year past, there will be but small margin to work upon.

The wider the circulation of our publications, the greater will be the demand for books that make plain the Scriptures of truth. Many are becoming disgusted with the inconsistencies, errors, and the apostasy of the churches, and with the festivals, fairs, lotteries, and numerous inventions to extort money for church purposes. There are many who are seeking for light in the darkness. If our papers, tracts, and books, expressing the truth in plain Bible language, could be widely circulated, many would find that they are just what they want. But many of our brethren act as if the people were to come to them or send to our Offices to obtain publications, when thousands do not know that they exist.

God calls upon his people to act like living men, and not be indolent, sluggish, and indifferent. We must carry the publications to the people, and urge them to accept, showing them that they will receive much more than their money's worth. Exalt the value of the books you offer. You cannot regard them too highly.

Ministers are not doing one-half what they might do to educate the people for whom they labor upon all points of truth and duty; and as a consequence, the people are spiritless and inactive. The stake and scaffold are not appointed for this time to test the people of God, and for this very reason the love of many has waxed cold. When trials arise, grace is proportioned for the emergency. We must individually consecrate ourselves on the very spot where God has said he would meet us.--Testimonies for the Church 4:392

May 16, 1882

### **"Will a Man Rob God?"**

The Lord, by the prophet Malachi, asks the question, "Will a man rob God?" He would seem to imply that such a crime could not be possible. But despite the heinous character of the offense, he adds, "Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings." The fact that this solemn charge is brought against the professed people of God, should lead us to earnest self-examination, watchfulness, and prayer, lest we be included in its condemnation.

The Bible does not condemn the rich man because he is rich; it does not declare the acquisition of wealth to be a sin, nor does it say that money is the root of all evil. On the contrary, the Scriptures state that it is God who gives the power to get wealth. And this ability is a precious talent if consecrated to God and employed to advance his cause. The Bible does not condemn genius or art; for these come of the wisdom which God gives. We cannot make the heart purer or holier by clothing the body in sackcloth, or depriving the home of all that ministers to comfort, taste, or convenience.

The Scriptures teach that wealth is a dangerous possession only when placed in competition with the immortal treasure. It is when the earthly and temporal absorbs the thoughts, the affections, the devotion which God claims, that it becomes a snare. Those who are bartering the eternal weight of glory for a little of the glitter and tinsel of earth, the everlasting habitations for a home which can be theirs but a few years at best, are making an unwise choice. Such was the exchange made by Esau, when he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage; by Balaam, when he forfeited the favor of God for the rewards of the king of Midian; by Judas, when for thirty pieces of silver he betrayed the Lord of glory.

It is the love of money that the word of God denounces as the root of all evil. Money itself is the gift of God to men, to be used with fidelity in his service. God blessed Abraham, and made him rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold. And the Bible states, as an evidence of divine favor, that God gave David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, very much riches and honor.

Like other gifts of God, the possession of wealth brings its increase of responsibility, and its peculiar temptations. How many who have in adversity remained true to God, have fallen under the glittering allurements of prosperity. With the possession of wealth, the ruling passion of a selfish nature is revealed. The world is cursed today by the miserly greed and the self-indulgent vices of the worshipers of mammon.

The wealthy are tempted to employ their means in self-indulgence, in the gratification of appetite, in personal adornment, or in the embellishment of their homes. For these objects professed Christians do not hesitate to spend freely, and even extravagantly. But when solicited to give to the Lord's treasury, to build up his cause, and to carry forward his work in the earth, many demur. The countenance that was all aglow with interest in plans for self-gratification, does not light up with joy when the cause of God appeals to their liberality. Perhaps, feeling that they cannot well do otherwise, they dole out a limited sum, far smaller than they freely spend for needless indulgence. But they manifest no real love for Christ, no earnest interest in the salvation of precious souls. What marvel that the Christian life of this class is at best but a dwarfed and sickly existence! Unless such persons change their course, their light will go out in darkness.

The end of all things is at hand; and what is done for the salvation of souls must be done quickly. For this reason we are establishing institutions for the dissemination of the truth through the press, for the education of the young, and for the recovery of the sick. But the selfish and money-loving inquire "What is the use of all this, when time is so short? Is it not a contradiction of our faith to spend so much in publishing houses, schools, and health institutions?" We ask in reply, If time is to continue but a few years, why invest so much in houses and lands, or in needless and extravagant display, while so meager a sum is devoted to the work of preparation for the great event before us?

My brother, in no way can you more profitably employ your means than in aiding our various institutions. With God's blessing, the power of the press can hardly be over-estimated. It has been truly called the right arm of our strength. Let the publishing houses be sustained, and the message of truth be sent out to all the nations of the earth.

Schools have been established that our youth and children may receive the education and discipline needed to prepare them for the searching test so soon to come

to every soul. In these schools the Bible should be made one of the principal subjects of study. Attention should be given to the development of both the moral and the intellectual powers. We hope that in these schools many earnest workers may be prepared to carry the light of truth to those who sit in darkness.

In a health institution we provide a place where the sick can enjoy the benefit of nature's remedial agents, instead of depending upon deadly drugs. And many who thus find relief, will be ready to yield to the influence of the truth.

To advance this work, means are needed. Let all who have the ability come to our help. Here is an opportunity for those, who, possessing a competence, have no children to claim their love and care. Some of these are aged persons. Brethren, what will you do with the means which God has intrusted to you? Are you content to let it remain invested in houses and lands, in bonds and bank stock? We have a work to do for God,-- a solemn and important work. We are to give the last message of warning to the world. The various instrumentalities are crippled for want of the financial assistance which God has put it in your power to render. We are not doing the good which we might do, with your co-operation.

There are young men among us who can exert a good influence, and who should be encouraged to enter the ministry. But the want of means prevents us from offering them such a support that they need not sacrifice time, health, and even life itself, in the work of the gospel. Faithful workmen can earn good wages in the various departments of secular labor, mental or physical. Is not the work of disseminating truth, and leading souls to Christ, of more importance than any temporal consideration? Are not those who faithfully engage in this work justly entitled to at least an equal compensation? We show our appreciation of the heavenly in contrast to the earthly, by our estimate of the relative value of labor for moral and for physical good.

Wealth is a great blessing if used according to the will of God. But the selfish heart can make the possession of wealth a heavy curse. Those are not to be envied who shut up their sympathies within their own hearts. They are strangers to true happiness. The ones who obtain the most real enjoyment in this life are those who use God's bounty and do not abuse it; who live to a purpose, to bless their fellow-men and to glorify God.

We should feel that it is not only a duty but a pleasure to aid in the advancement of the highest, holiest work committed to men,--the work of presenting to the world the riches of goodness, mercy, and truth. If the stewards of God do their duty, there is no danger that wealth will increase so rapidly as to prove a snare; for it will be used with practical wisdom and Christlike liberality.

However large, however small the possessions of any individual, let him remember that it is his only in trust. For his strength, skill, time, talents, opportunities, and means, he must render an account to God. This is an individual work; God gives to us, that we may become like him, generous, noble, beneficent, by giving to others. Those who, forgetful of their divine mission, seek only to save or to spend in the indulgence of pride or selfishness, may secure the gains and pleasures of this world; but in God's sight, estimated by their spiritual attainments, they are poor, wretched, miserable, blind, naked.

When rightly employed, wealth becomes a golden bond of gratitude and affection between man and his fellow-men, and a strong tie to bind his affections to his Redeemer. The infinite gift of God's dear Son calls for tangible expressions of gratitude from the recipients of his grace. He who receives the light of Christ's love, is thereby placed under the strongest obligation to shed the blessed light upon other souls in darkness.

Jesus left the heavenly courts and came down to earth, that he might reach men where they are. He sought them in their wretchedness and debasement. He took their sorrows to his own heart. The King of glory became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. He lived a life of toil and humiliation, and suffered a shameful death, that he might exalt men to share his kingdom and his throne. His life is an example to all his followers.

God is the rightful owner of the universe. All things belong to him. Every blessing which men enjoy is the result of divine beneficence. He requires that a portion be returned to him, not because he needs our offerings, but that we may show our appreciation of his gifts and our gratitude to the Giver. He justly bids us consecrate to him the first and best of his intrusted capital. If we thus acknowledge his rightful sovereignty and gracious providence, he has pledged his word that he will bless the remainder. But if we fail to bring an offering to God, his curse will rest upon all our

possessions.

Even when our first parents, in their innocency, were placed in the garden of Eden, God did not give them unlimited control. One prohibition was given to test their loyalty and obedience. But they saw that the forbidden tree was beautiful and attractive, and, as they vainly imagined, "to be desired to make one wise." They appropriated what God had reserved to himself, and his curse fell upon them and upon the earth.

We deplore the disloyalty and ingratitude of our first parents, which opened the flood-gates of woe to our world, and yet how many are pursuing a similar course. They are not content with their rightful share of the bounties intrusted to them. The more abundant the gifts of God, the more eager are they to appropriate all to their own use, and the more unwilling to render to him that which he claims as his own. Like our first parents, many reach out their hands for the portion which belongs to God.

Let us turn to another scene. Cain and Abel each brought an offering to God. The object presented by each was good in itself, but the Lord accepted the offering of Abel, while he rejected that of Cain. Wherein lay the difference between these offerings? Abel brought the firstling of his flock, Cain the first-fruits of the earth. Abel presented his offering in faith, depending upon the merits of Christ's blood to make it acceptable. He felt that all he had was the Lord's; and he freely gave back to the Giver his own. Cain proudly brought his offering as a gift from himself, not acknowledging that all the blessings he received came through the mercy and love of Christ. He felt that he merited the divine favor, and he accepted the blessings of God as a right. Thus many professed Christians bring their gifts to the Lord's treasury, feeling that they are deserving of special commendation for their liberality, when, in fact, their offerings have fallen far below what the Lord claims as his own. Like Cain they are unwilling to acknowledge that all their blessings have been purchased by the blood of Christ. Like Cain they are rejected of the Lord.

When the magnificent temple erected by Solomon was dedicated to the service of God, the monarch prayed, "All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." Such is the spirit in which every acceptable offering must be presented.

"Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase." This command is positive. God's claims must be first met. We are not to consecrate to

him what remains of our income after all our real or imaginary wants are satisfied; but before any portion is consumed, we should set apart that which God has specified as his.

Many persons will meet all inferior demands and dues, and leave to God only the last gleanings, if there be any. If not, his cause must wait till a more convenient season. Such was not the course pursued by Abraham. Upon his return from a successful military expedition, he was met by Melchizedek, "king of Salem, and priest of the most high God." This holy man blessed Abraham, in the name of the Lord, and the patriarch gave him tithes of all the spoils as a tribute of gratitude to the Ruler of nations.

See also the example of another of the heroes of faith. While journeying from his father's home, a lonely, exile, Jacob entered into covenant with God. He entreated the Lord to be gracious unto him, and pledged himself to render in return grateful sacrifice and willing service. "If God will be with me, and will keep me in the way that I go, ... then shall the Lord be my God, and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

Such was the practice of patriarchs and prophets before the establishment of the Jews as a nation. But when Israel became a distinct people, the Lord gave them definite instruction upon this point: "All the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's; it is holy unto the Lord." This law was not to pass away with the ordinances and sacrificial offerings that typified Christ. As long as God has a people upon the earth, his claims upon them will be the same.

A tithe of all our increase is the Lord's. He has reserved it to himself to be employed for religious purposes. It is holy. Nothing less than this has he accepted in any dispensation. A neglect or postponement of this duty, will provoke the divine displeasure. If all professed Christians would faithfully bring their tithes to God, his treasury would be full. They would have no occasion to resort to fairs, lotteries, or parties of pleasure, to extort means from worldlings for the support of the gospel.

The very same language is used concerning the Sabbath as in the law of the tithe: "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Man has no right nor power to substitute the first day for the seventh. He may pretend to do this; "nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure." The customs and teachings of men will not lessen the claims of the divine law. God has sanctified the seventh day. That specified portion of



time, set apart by God himself for religious worship, continues as sacred today as when first hallowed by our Creator. In like manner a tithe of our income is "holy unto the Lord." The New Testament does not re-enact the law of the tithe, as it does not that of the Sabbath; for the validity of both is assumed, and their deep spiritual import explained.

God has made an absolute reservation of a specified portion of our time and our means. To ignore these claims is to rob God. Christians boast that their privileges far exceed those of the Jewish age. Shall we then be content to give less to the cause of God than did his ancient people? The tithe was but a part of their liberalities. Numerous other gifts were required besides the free-will offering, or offering of gratitude, which was then, as now, of perpetual obligation.

The claims of humanity and religion, the constantly increasing opportunities for usefulness, the providential openings for the truth to be presented to the people, demand of us liberal offerings to the cause of God. The popular churches of the day, being in harmony with the world, receive aid from them in educational and philanthropic enterprises. Our position as observers of the true Sabbath cuts us off from popular sympathy and support. Our institutions receive help only from those who are of the faith. Hence we should feel it our duty to do all in our power to keep the Lord's treasury supplied. While we as a people are seeking faithfully to give to God the time which he has reserved as his own, shall we not also render to him that portion of our means which he claims?

May 30, 1882

## **Growth in Grace**

We can never see our Lord in peace, unless our souls are spotless. We must bear the perfect image of Christ. Every thought must be brought into subjection to the will of Christ. As expressed by the great apostle, we must "come into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." We shall never attain to this condition without earnest effort. We must strive daily against outward evil and inward sin, if we would reach the perfection of Christian character.

Those who engage in this work will see so much to correct in themselves, and will devote so much time to prayer and to comparing their characters with God's great standard, the divine law, that they will have no time to comment and gossip over the faults or dissect the characters of others. A sense of our own imperfections should lead us to humility and earnest solicitude lest we fail of everlasting life. The words of inspiration should come home to every soul: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" If the professed people of God would divest themselves of their self-complacency and their false ideas of what constitutes a Christian, many who now think they are in the path to Heaven would find themselves in the way of perdition. Many a proud-hearted professor would tremble like an aspen leaf in the tempest, could his eyes be opened to see what spiritual life really is. Would that those now reposing in false security could be aroused to see the contradiction between their profession of faith and their every-day demeanor.

To be living Christians, we must have a vital connection with Christ. The true believer can say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." This intimate communion with our Saviour will take away the desire for earthly and sensual gratifications. All our powers of body, soul, and spirit should be devoted to God. When the affections are sanctified, our obligations to God are made primary, everything else secondary. To have a steady and ever-growing love for God, and a clear perception of his character and attributes, we must keep the eye of faith fixed constantly on him. Christ is the life of the soul. We must be in him and he in us, else we are sapless branches.

God must be ever in our thoughts. We must hold converse with him while we walk by the way, and while our hands are engaged in labor. In all the purposes and pursuits of life, we must inquire, What will the Lord have me to do? How shall I please Him who has given his life a ransom for me? Thus may we walk with God, as did Enoch of old; and ours may be the testimony which he received, that he pleased God.

To comprehend and enjoy God, is the highest exercise of the powers of man. This may be attained only when our affections are sanctified and ennobled by the grace of Christ: "No man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him." In Christ was "God manifested in the flesh, reconciling the world unto himself." In Christ was the brightness of his Father's glory, the express image of his person. Said our Saviour, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." In Christ is the life of the soul. In the outgoings of our hearts to him, in our earnest, affectionate yearnings for his excellence, in our eager searching into his glory, we find life. In communion with him we eat the bread of life.

When we allow objects of minor importance to absorb our attention, to the forgetfulness of Christ, turning away from him to accept other companionship, we set our feet in a path which leads away from God and from Heaven. Christ must be the central object of our affections, and then we shall live in him, then we shall have his spirit, and follow his example.

If we would walk in the light, we must follow Jesus, the light of life. What constitutes the brightness of Heaven? In what will consist the happiness of the redeemed? Christ is all in all. They will gaze with rapture unutterable upon the Lamb of God. They will pour out their songs of grateful praise and adoration to Him whom they loved and worshiped here. That song they learned and began to sing on earth. They learned to put their trust in Jesus while they were forming characters for Heaven. Their hearts were attuned to his will here. Their joy in Christ will be proportioned to the love and trust which they learned to repose in him here.

A living Christian will cultivate gratitude of heart. He will seriously, earnestly recount the blessings of his life and the precious results of all his afflictions. He will recall every occasion upon which the hand of Christ has lifted up a standard for him against the enemy. The great love of Jesus, the infinite sacrifice made for man's redemption, will be an unfailing theme for grateful, humble praise.

Those who are learning at the feet of Jesus will surely exemplify by their deportment and conversation the character of Christ. Their spiritual life is sustained in the closet, by secret communion with God. Their experience is marked less with bustle and excitement, than with a subdued and reverent joy. Their love for Christ is a quiet, peaceful, yet all-controlling power. The light and love of an indwelling Saviour are revealed in every word and every act. Outward troubles cannot reach that life which we live by faith on the Son of God. Its richest, purest joys are felt when Christ is the theme of thought and conversation.

The life of the soul cannot be sustained, except by the right exercise of the affections Heavenward, Christward, Godward. Repentance and faith in Christ for the forgiveness of sins are essential, but not all that is required. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." "This is eternal life, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ"--to know him by faith, to receive him into the affections. To accept Christ as our Saviour, we must see him in his work of atonement, and believe that he is able and willing to do what he has promised. The Christian's life is now but just begun. He must, as exhorted by the apostle, "go on unto perfection." He must bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. If we believe in Jesus, we will love to think of him, love to talk of him, love to pray to him. He is supreme in our affections. We love that which Christ loves, and hate that which Christ hates.

I have deep anguish of soul as I think that many who have great light and great knowledge of Bible truths, and some even who have taken the responsibility of presenting these truths to others, have yet so little of the love of Jesus in their own hearts. Like the religious teachers whom Christ reprov'd, they say and do not. They are fruitless branches. A mere profession of godliness is of but little account. A nominal, theoretical belief of the truth is of but little value. The devils also believe, and tremble. We must have that faith that works by love, and purifies the soul. Our experience in spiritual things must deepen and widen. We need more strength daily, and we may obtain it by constant communion with God.

The Christian life is never at a standstill. It is, it must be, progressive. Our love for Christ should become stronger and stronger. If the heart is devoted to Jesus, its love for earthly friends and worldly treasure becomes subordinate rather than supreme. As we by faith drink from the fountain of life, so will our joy and peace increase. Oh that

we were more trustful, and firm, and true, that Christ might not be ashamed to call us brethren!

My brother, my sister, is your soul in the love of God? Many of you have a twilight perception of Christ's excellence, and your soul thrills with joy. You long for a fuller, deeper sense of the Saviour's love. You long to entwine your affections about him more closely. You are unsatisfied. But do not despair. Give to Jesus the heart's best and holiest affections. Treasure every ray of light. Cherish every desire of the soul after God. Give yourselves the culture of spiritual thoughts and holy communings. Make haste to obtain a fitness for the mansions which Christ has gone to prepare for all that love him. The day is far spent, the night is at hand. Make haste to ripen for Heaven.

It is a great, a solemn work to obtain a moral fitness for the society of the pure and the blest. God's word presents the standard to which we are to conform our life and character. We may choose to follow some other standard, which is more in harmony with our own hearts, but we can never thus gain the divine approval. Only by conforming to the word of God, can we hope to come to "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." But we must do this, or we shall never enter Heaven. Without purity and holiness of heart, we cannot win the crown of immortal glory.

Many who ought to be teachers, have hardly learned the alphabet of the Christian life. They need constantly that one teach them. They do not grow in holiness, in faith, in hope, in joy, in gratitude. Christ opened the way, at an infinite cost, that we might live a Christian life. He has told us just what that life must be,--consistent, uniform, Christlike,--that at its close we may say with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith." It was by faith in Christ that the great apostle maintained the consistency and beauty of his course. He suffered opposition, insult, persecution, imprisonment, with a firmness and meekness which none but Christ could impart. Our obligations are no less than were his. Our privileges are great, our opportunities abundant. Great light is shining upon us, but it will become darkness to those who refuse to follow its guidance.

Measuring ourselves by the Bible standard will give us no exalted view of our own goodness or greatness. The truths of the gospel and the teachings of the Holy Spirit, will produce in us brokenness of heart, hatred of sin, and an understanding of self. But wishing for holiness of heart and purity of life will not bring us into possession of these blessings. Mourning over religious delinquencies will never make one

acquisition. There are thousands of sluggish hypocritical tears, of sighs and groans, that never bring to the soul one cheering beam of light, one manifestation of Christ's approval.

It will cost us something to obtain a Christian experience, and to develop a true and noble character. It requires sacrifice and earnest effort, and this is why so little advancement is made by professing Christians. They do not go to the great source of wisdom, because they shrink from the toil, the cost, the inconvenience. They wish to have righteousness put upon them as a garment. But the white-robed throng of the redeemed ones, are those who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Christ has presented the matter as it is: "Agonize to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able."

We have each a daily work to do, to correct our natural defects of character, and to cultivate the Christian graces. Only by the accomplishment of this work, can we hope to share in the reward of the righteous. Said Christ, "To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

June 13, 1882

## Home Discipline

The work of parents precedes that of the teacher. They have a home school,--the first grade. If they seek carefully and prayerfully to know and to do their duty, they will prepare their children to enter the second grade,--to receive instructions from the teacher. If parents are so engrossed in the business and pleasures of this life that they neglect the proper discipline of their children, the work of the teacher is not only made very hard and trying, but often rendered wholly fruitless.

We never needed close connection with God more than we need it today. One of the greatest dangers that beset God's people has ever been from conformity to worldly maxims and customs. The youth especially are in constant peril. Fathers and mothers should be on their guard against the wiles of Satan. While he is seeking to accomplish the ruin of their children, let not parents flatter themselves that there is no particular danger. Let them not give thought and care to the things of this world, while the higher, eternal interests of their children are neglected.

None should permit themselves, through the week, to become so absorbed in their temporal interests, and so exhausted by their efforts for worldly gain, that on the Sabbath they have no strength or energy to give to the service of God. We are robbing the Lord, when we unfit ourselves to worship him upon his holy day. And we are robbing ourselves as well; for we need the warmth and glow of association, as well as the strength to be gained from the wisdom and experience of other Christians.

Fathers and mothers should make it a rule that their children attend public worship on the Sabbath, and should enforce the rule by their own example. It is our duty to command our children and our household after us, as did Abraham. By example as well as precept we should impress upon them the importance of religious teaching. All who have taken the baptismal vow have solemnly consecrated themselves to the service of God; they are under covenant obligation to place themselves and their children where they may obtain all possible incentives and encouragement in the Christian life.

Those who take upon themselves the name of Christ, should be unmistakably

devoted to his cause, and identified with his people. But if all the thoughts and energies are given to temporal affairs, if they have no time, strength, or interest for the service of Christ, they are not his disciples. Their names should be dropped from the church records. Of what benefit to the church are names, without the interest and support of the persons whom the names represent?

When the children of Christian parents take delight in skepticism, deeming it a token of manly independence to doubt the Scriptures and sneer at religion; when they excuse their own delinquencies by pointing to the faults of church-members,--let the father and mother inquire if this is not the fruit of their own influence and example. The Lord will work with the efforts of those who seek him with all the heart. If world-loving parents would but labor as earnestly for the salvation of their children as they now labor to promote their temporal interests, they might see them faithful workers in the cause of Christ. We read in the word of God that as the result of apostolic prayers and labors, the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. Similar efforts put forth today will produce similar results.

Great is the sacrifice by which Christ has purchased his people; great are the privileges set before us in the gospel. A corresponding zeal and devotion are in return required from us. The great apostle writes to his Corinthian brethren, "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." And again he bids them, "Be ye followers of God as dear children," and "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called," "being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." But where is the simplicity and fervent piety which should be seen among those who make so exalted a profession? How much careful thought and study are now given to copying the character of Christ? How do they compare with the attention and interest given to our earthly, temporal affairs?

Let the words of Christ come home to the world-loving professors of godliness, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of Heaven. Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of Heaven as a little child, shall in nowise enter therein." We should teach our children lessons of simplicity and trust. We should teach them to love, and fear, and obey their Creator. In all the plans and purposes of life, his glory should be held paramount; his love should be the mainspring of every



action.

Worldly wisdom, intellectual ability, mental training, will not give the knowledge requisite for an entrance into Christ's kingdom. The wise and prudent of this world cannot comprehend it. The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

Children are committed to their parents as a precious trust, which God will one day require at their hands. We should give to their training more time, more care, and more prayer. They need more of the right kind of instruction. The word of God should be the man of our counsel, the guide and instructor of old and young. Parents can, if they will, interest their children in the varied knowledge found in its sacred pages. Children will learn to love that which the parents love. Those who would interest their sons and daughters in Bible study, and impress its truths upon their minds, must themselves feel its ennobling, sanctifying influence. They must exemplify its sacred principles in daily life.

If we desire our children to love and reverence God, we must talk of his goodness, his majesty, and his power, as displayed in the works of creation and in the sacred word. If we desire them to love and imitate the character of Christ, we must tell them of the sacrifice which he made for our redemption, of the humility and self-denial, the matchless love and sympathy, displayed in his life on earth, and then tell them that this is the pattern which we are to follow. We should tell them often the wonderful story of the Saviour's life; of his early youth, when he was subject to such temptations as they have to meet; of his obedience and filial love, as he toiled in the workshop at Nazareth, aiding his father to bear the burdens of life. We should tell them of his generous, self-denying course, his spotless purity, his love for little children, his compassion for the sorrowing and the sinful.

When children err, parents should take time to read to them tenderly from the word of God such admonitions as are particularly applicable to their case. When they are tried, tempted, or discouraged, cite them to its precious words of comfort, and gently lead them to put their trust in Jesus. Thus the young mind may be directed to that which is pure and ennobling. And as the great problems of life, and the dealings of God with the human race, are unfolded to the understanding, the reasoning powers are exercised, the judgment enlisted, while lessons of divine truth are impressed upon the heart. Thus parents may be daily molding the characters of their children, that they may have a

fitness for the future life.

Oh, what a field is committed to parents and teachers! How have they labored in this vineyard of the Lord? It is a sad fact that the most important objects to be secured in the education of the youth, are often neglected as of little moment. The value of the early years in forming right habits, and cherishing firm, pure principles, are appreciated by few.

Parents should not pass lightly over the sins of their children. When these sins are pointed out by some faithful friend, the parent should not feel that his rights are invaded, that he has received a personal offense. The habits of every youth and every child affect the welfare of society. The wrong course of one youth may lead many others in an evil way. Parents should not look on in silence while their children are corrupted by some vicious companion.

It is for the interest of all, that the youth be subjected to proper restraint. Yet it is often the case that when a God-fearing teacher attempts to correct in a pupil habits which have been fastened by the lax discipline of the parents, he will arouse the indignation of these parents. Not only do they neglect their own divinely-appointed responsibility, but they attempt to hinder the teacher from discharging his duty, and cast upon him the blame for the perversity of their evil-minded children.

Some indulgent, ease-loving parents fear to exercise wholesome authority over their unruly sons, lest they run away from home. It would be better for some to do this than to remain at home to live upon the bounties provided by the parents, and at the same time trample upon all authority, both human and divine. It might be a most profitable experience for such children to have to the full that independence which they think so desirable, to learn that it costs exertion to live. Let the parent say to the boy who threatens to run away from home, "My son, if you are determined to leave home rather than comply with just and proper rules, we will not hinder you. If you think to find the world more friendly than the parents who have cared for you from infancy, you must learn your mistake for yourself. When you wish to come to your father's house, to be subject to his authority, you will be welcome. Obligations are mutual. While you have food and clothing and parental care, you are in return under obligation to submit to home rules and wholesome discipline. My house cannot be polluted with the stench of tobacco, with profanity or drunkenness. I desire that angels of God shall come into my

home. If you are fully determined to serve Satan, you will be as well off with those whose society you love, as you will be at home."

Such a course would check the downward career of thousands. But too often children know that they may do their worst, and yet an unwise mother will plead for them, and conceal their transgressions. Many a rebellious son exults because his parents have not the courage to restrain him. They may expostulate, as did Eli, but they do not enforce obedience. Such parents are encouraging their children in dissipation, and are dishonoring God by their unwise indulgence. It is these rebellious, corrupt youth that form the most difficult element to control in schools and colleges.

Sin should be faithfully reproved, and right discipline promptly and firmly enforced. Yet harsh dealing will not help the wrong-doer to see his error or to reform. Let all needed reproof or correction be given in the spirit which actuated our Saviour. Let firmness and decision be blended with sympathy and love. By wise management, the wayward, stubborn youth may be transformed. Parents, to accomplish such work, you need Christ-like patience and self-command. Do not irritate by a sharp word or an angry look. Be calm; and let your heart often ascend in prayer to God for grace and wisdom. Angels will come to your side, and help you to raise up a standard against the enemy.

Make your children feel that you love them, and desire to do them good. Encourage every effort to do right. Show them that you have confidence in them. Remember that your example will be the most impressive lesson which you can give. Your courtesy and self-control will have greater influence upon the characters of your children than mere words could have.

You must yourselves labor for the spiritual welfare of those under your care. You should not seek to lay this burden upon others. You cannot transfer to others your responsibility. Converse with your children upon personal religion. Learn just where they stand. Pray with them and for them singly. Jesus won men by personal contact, his heart reaching the hearts of the people. We must work as Christ worked. Improve every opportunity. Make religion the vital question of life. Teach your children that every worldly consideration should be made second to their eternal interests.

Remember that your sons and daughters are younger members of God's family.

He has committed them to your care, to train and educate for Heaven. You must render an account to him for the manner in which you discharge your sacred trust.

June 20, 1882

## **Workers for God**

To every man God has intrusted talents for wise improvement. If rightly used, these talents will reflect glory to the Giver. But the most precious gifts of God may be perverted, and thus become a curse rather than a blessing. No man can even once devote his God-given powers to the service of worldliness or pride without placing himself on the enemy's ground, weakening his own soul, and misleading others.

Some who possess qualities which might render them highly useful to the cause of God, possess also serious defects of character, which they do not make sufficient effort to overcome. They seem almost powerless to resist the spirit and influence of the world. Some endeavor to change their surroundings in the hope of finding an easier path; but while they shun one temptation, they place themselves in the way of another. It is of little avail to change our position in order to escape temptation, unless God marks out our way and indicates our duty. The trouble is not so much in the surroundings as in the weakness of the man.

Those who have not a living connection with God, are actuated by a desire to exalt self. It is this desire which has opened the way for an irreligious influence to bear sway among us. Many have not pure, noble conceptions of truth and duty. Worldly customs and practices are introduced because the hearts of unconsecrated ministers and church-members still cling to the love of the world. These persons are not qualified to teach the truth, for they do not present to the world the safe standard. Words, however true and forcible, will have but little effect, if contradicted by the daily life.

No man can exert an influence for Christ, unless he is a decided and consistent Christian. Those who love and cherish the pure principles of Bible religion, will not be found weak in moral power. Under the elevating, ennobling influence of the Holy Spirit, the tastes and inclinations become pure and holy. Nothing will take so strong a hold upon the affections, nothing reaches so fully down to the deepest motives of action, nothing exerts so potent an influence upon the life, and gives so great firmness and stability to the character, as the religion of Christ. It is this which is lacking in the church. Many will be found wanting in the day of final accounts, because they did not

possess real godliness.

Pure religion leads its possessor ever upward, inspiring him with noble purposes, teaching him propriety of deportment, and imparting a becoming dignity to every action. True religion is possessed by few. The mass of mankind do not cordially embrace or faithfully practice its principles. At the last day the curse of God will rest upon many who had flattered themselves that they were in favor with him. "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness." God forbid that those who profess to teach the sacred, solemn truth that the end of all things is at hand, and who claim to be the repositories of the divine law, should cherish a love for pleasure, and look to the world for favor and approbation! Christ gives them no such example.

We should beware that we do not, by our trifling and indifferent course, belittle and disgrace our holy work. There is need of thoughtful men,--men who will not be satisfied with superficial knowledge or experience, and who will not be unsettled by every passing temptation. Men are needed of firm and earnest purpose, men whose highest aim is to do good, to gather souls to Christ. Talkative, restless, self-commending men, who stretch out their hands to the world, and whom the world is ever seeking to win to her embrace, are not the ones who will honor God at this important crisis.

The Lord has given man capacity for continual improvement, and has granted him all possible aid in the work. Through the provisions of divine grace, we may attain almost to the excellence of the angels. What shall be said of those who, having had many years of experience in the truth, and many precious advantages for growth in grace, are yet inclined toward the world, and find pleasure in its amusements and display? Instead of going on from strength to strength, they are, little by little, departing from God, and losing their spiritual life.

"Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation," is the admonition of our Saviour. A cunning and cruel foe attends our steps, and is working every moment, with all his strength and skill, to turn us out of the right way. He succeeds best when employing such instrumentalities as best conceal himself. He often appears as an angel of light, and those who have not walked in the light of Heaven, those who have not followed Christ in his humiliation, are deceived and ensnared by his devices.

Talent can never take the place of piety, nor can the applause of men recommend

us to the favor of God. What the majority of professed Christians need, is genuine conversion. If the heart is right, the actions will be right. An earthly, debasing influence marks the character and the life of those whose hearts do not glow with the fire of true goodness. Too many profess to be followers of Christ, and feel at liberty to follow their own judgment, and indulge the desires of their own hearts. He who would advance in the Christian life, must put his own hands and heart to the work. Friends may exhort and counsel, to urge him onward and upward; Heaven may pour its choicest blessings upon him; he may have all possible assistance on the right hand and on the left, and yet all will be in vain, unless he shall put forth earnest effort to help himself. He himself must engage in the warfare against sin and Satan, or he will fail of everlasting life.

Unbending principle will mark the course of those who sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of him. But alas! how many are to be found who are today engaging earnestly in the service of Christ, tomorrow equally earnest in uniting with worldlings in their frivolous amusements. They veer with every wind of temptation. Let the world hold out its bait,--fame or honor, pleasure or gain,--and there is no sacrifice of feeling or conscience that will not be made to gain the prize. Can Christ trust such men to give to the world the light of his truth? Never! Under favorable circumstances they may seem to lead a consistent life; but let temptation entice, and they venture upon the enemy's ground, and worst of all, lead others in the same path. Unsound at heart, they are unsound in life. When a crisis comes, when firmness is most required, they are found on the wrong side. He who has once yielded to temptation has become spiritually weak, and he will yield more readily the second time. Every repetition of the sin weakens his power of resistance, blinds his eyes, and stifles conviction. Every seed of indulgence sown, produces a harvest. "That which ye sow, ye shall also reap."

Satan trembles when the voice of God speaks through his instruments, giving cautions and warnings, and rebuking sin. The startling announcement, "Thou art the man," stirs the soul of the guilty. He may for a time put forth earnest efforts to subdue his favorite sin,--ambition, pride, love of display, emulation, avarice, or any other evil trait,--but it is too often the case that his zeal soon flags, and he falls back into his former error. When again reprov'd, he is rarely impressed as before. Having once stifled conviction, he finds it more easy to repeat the same course. He is hardening his heart against the convictions of the Holy Spirit. A further rejection of the truth places him where a far mightier influence will be ineffectual to stir the sluggish soul, and make an abiding impression.

The Lord sends us warning, counsel, and reproof, that we may have opportunity to correct our errors before they become second-nature. But if we refuse to be corrected, God does not interfere to counteract the tendencies of our own course of action. He works no miracle that the seed sown may not spring up and bear fruit. That man who manifests an infidel hardihood or a stolid indifference to divine truth, is but reaping the harvest which he has himself sown. Such has been the experience of many. They listen with stoical indifference to the truths which once stirred their very souls. They sowed neglect, indifference, and resistance to the truth; and such is the harvest which they reap. The coldness of ice, the hardness of iron, the impenetrable, unimpressible nature of rock--all these find a counterpart in the character of many a professed Christian. It was thus that the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh. God spoke to the Egyptian king by the mouth of Moses, giving him the most striking evidences of divine power; but the monarch stubbornly refused the light which would have brought him to repentance. God did not send a supernatural power to harden the heart of the rebellious king, but as Pharaoh resisted the truth, the Holy Spirit was withdrawn, and he was left to the darkness and unbelief which he had chosen.

By persistent rejection of the Spirit's influence, men cut themselves off from God. He has in reserve no more potent agency to enlighten their minds. No revelation of his will can reach them in their unbelief.

Would that I could lead every professed follower of Christ to see this matter as it is. We are all sowing either to the flesh or to the Spirit, and we reap the harvest from the seed we sow. In choosing our pleasures or employments, we should seek only those things that are excellent. The trifling, the worldly, the debasing, should have no power to control the affections or the will. The great apostle declared that he kept his body under, and this discipline must be maintained by every follower of Christ.

The bondage of worldly habits and customs is so pleasing to the natural heart that it has become well-nigh universal. Few can be found who are willing to deny self that they may walk in the light of Heaven. It is because they know not Christ and obey not the truth, that professed Christians can accept as their portion the pleasures of sense and the changing fashions of a fickle world. Not one of those who have come out from the world, in obedience to the injunctions of Christ, can find pleasure in its amusements or its display. Many are saying by their course of action, that the line of demarkation



between Christians and the world must not be too distinct. They conform to the customs and unite in the pursuits of the lovers of pleasure, in order to retain their friendship, and exert an influence to win them to the truth. The plea is not new. The same work has been often attempted since the opposing forces of good and evil first existed in the world. The result has ever been the same. Conformity to worldly customs converts the church to the world. It never converts the world to Christ. "The friendship of the world is enmity with God. Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." How can the loyal subjects of the Great King be in harmony with his bitterest foe? When the professed people of God choose the fellowship of the world, what marvel that the presence and blessing of Christ is shut out from the church?

In the fear of God, whom I love and whom I serve, I call upon the followers of Christ to come out from the world. If they would but be men of principle, in determination, in moral power, there are many who might become polished instruments in the hand of Christ. But if they at times yield themselves to the control of Satan, they cannot be trusted. He who does not himself resist inclination, or who has not a proper understanding of Christian obligation, would be an unsafe guide to others. One injudicious act may exert an influence which the most earnest effort will be powerless to counteract.

Good qualities, superior talents, are a curse rather than a blessing, when they are not consecrated to God. The greater the gifts, the more dangerous their influence to lead away from Christ. Those who present to others the solemn, searching truths for this time, should exemplify these truths in their own life. To preach what we do not practice, is but to confirm sinners in their impenitence. The most earnest exhortations to walk in the light will be unheeded, if the speaker himself neglects to follow the light which Christ has given.

By disregarding the teachings of God's word, many have dulled their keen perception of Christian consistency. Having no real connection with God, they mistake good impulses for religion. Said Christ to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." When the love of Jesus is abiding in the soul, many who are now but withered branches will become as the cedars of Lebanon, "whose root is by the great waters." The cedar is noted for the firmness of its roots. Not content to cling to the earth with a few weak fibers, it thrusts its rootlets, like a sturdy wedge, into the cloven rock, and reaches down deeper and deeper for strong holds to grasp. When

the tempest grapples with its boughs, that firm-set tree cannot be uprooted. What a goodly cedar might not every follower of Christ become, if he were but rooted and grounded in the truth, firmly united to the Eternal Rock.

The people of God cannot conform to the world, and yet enjoy his love and be sanctified through the truth. They may bear the outward semblance of the cedar, but their roots strike no deeper than the surface sand. When the tempest falls, they will be uprooted. Others, who have been content to follow their example, will perish in like manner.

My brethren and sisters, be careful what influence you exert upon the cause of God. Be careful what example you set before the youth. Satan and his angels are putting forth their utmost efforts to efface from the minds of the young every impression made by the Holy Spirit. Let the professed people of God beware that they do not aid the great deceiver in his work. Only those who are firm, true, devoted, living Christians, can be a help to the cause of God.

June 27, 1882

### **Shall We Consult Spiritualist Physicians?**

"Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick; and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover of this disease. But the angel of the Lord said unto Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Now therefore thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die."

This narrative most strikingly displays the divine displeasure against those who turn from God to Satanic agencies. A short time previous to the events above recorded, the kingdom of Israel had changed rulers. Ahab had fallen under the judgment of God, and had been succeeded by his son Ahaziah, a worthless character, who did only evil in the sight of the Lord, walking in the ways of his father and mother, and causing Israel to sin. He served Baal, and worshiped him, and provoked the Lord God of Israel to anger, as his father Ahab had done. But judgments followed close upon the sins of the rebellious king. A war with Moab, and then the accident by which his own life was threatened, attested the wrath of God against Ahaziah.

How much had the king of Israel heard and seen in his father's time, of the wondrous works of the Most High! What terrible evidence of his severity and jealousy had God given apostate Israel! Of all this, Ahaziah was cognizant; yet he acts as though these awful realities, and even the fearful end of his own father, were only an idle tale. Instead of humbling his heart before the Lord, he ventured upon the most daring act of impiety which marked his life. He commands his servants, "Go, inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, whether I shall recover of this disease."

The idol of Ekron was supposed to give information, through the medium of its priests, concerning future events. It had obtained such general credence that it was resorted to by large numbers from a considerable distance. The predictions there uttered, and the information given, proceeded directly from the prince of darkness. It is Satan who created, and who maintains the worship of idols, to divert the minds of men from

God. It is by his agency that the kingdom of darkness and falsehood is supported.

The history of King Ahaziah's sin and punishment has a lesson of warning which none can disregard with impunity. Though we do not pay homage to heathen gods, yet thousands are worshiping at Satan's shrine as verily as did the king of Israel. The very spirit of heathen idolatry is rife today, though under the influence of science and education it has assumed a more refined and attractive form. Every day adds sorrowful evidence that faith in the sure word of prophecy is fast decreasing, and that in its stead superstition and Satanic witchery are captivating the minds of men. All who do not earnestly search the Scriptures, and submit every desire and purpose of life to that unerring test, all who do not seek God in prayer for a knowledge of his will, will surely wander from the right path, and fall under the deception of Satan.

The heathen oracles have their counterpart in the spiritualistic mediums, the clairvoyants and fortune-tellers of today. The mystic voices that spoke at Ekron and Endor are still by their lying words misleading the children of men. The prince of darkness has but appeared under a new guise. The mysteries of heathen worship are replaced by the secret associations and seances, the obscurities and wonders, of the sorcerers of our time. Their disclosures are eagerly received by thousands who refuse to accept light from God's word or from his Spirit. While they speak with scorn of the magicians of old, the great deceiver laughs in triumph as they yield to his arts under a different form.

His agents still claim to cure disease. They attribute their power to electricity, magnetism, or the so-called "sympathetic remedies." In truth, they are but channels for Satan's electric currents. By this means he casts his spell over the bodies and souls of men.

I have from time to time received letters both from ministers and lay-members of the church, inquiring if I think it wrong to consult spiritualist and clairvoyant physicians. I have not answered these letters, for want of time. But just now the subject is again urged upon my attention. So numerous are these agents of Satan becoming, and so general is the practice of seeking counsel from them, that it seems needful to utter words of warning.

God has placed it in our power to obtain a knowledge of the laws of health. He

has made it our duty to preserve our physical powers in the best possible condition, that we may render to him acceptable service. Those who refuse to improve the light and knowledge that has been mercifully placed within their reach, are rejecting one of the means which God has granted them to promote spiritual as well as physical life. They are placing themselves where they will be exposed to the delusions of Satan.

Not a few, in this Christian age and Christian nation, resort to evil spirits, rather than trust to the power of the living God. The mother, watching by the sick-bed of her child, exclaims, "I can do no more. Is there no physician who has power to restore my child?" She is told of the wonderful cures performed by some clairvoyant or magnetic healer, and she trusts her dear one to his charge, placing it as verily in the hands of Satan as if he were standing by her side. In how many instances is the future life of the child controlled by a Satanic power, which it seems impossible to break.

Many are unwilling to put forth the needed effort to obtain a knowledge of the laws of life and the simple means to be employed for the restoration of health. They do not place themselves in right relation to life. When sickness is the result of their transgression of natural law, they do not seek to correct their errors, and then ask the blessing of God, but they resort to the physicians. If they recover health, they give to drugs and doctors all the honor. They are ever ready to idolize human power and wisdom, seeming to know no other God than the creature,--dust and ashes.

I have heard a mother pleading with some infidel physician to save the life of her child; but when I entreated her to seek help from the Great Physician who is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto him in faith, she turned away with impatience. Here we see the same spirit that was manifested by Ahaziah.

It is not safe to trust to physicians who have not the fear of God before them. Without the influence of divine grace, the hearts of men are "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Self-aggrandizement is their aim. Under the cover of the medical profession, what iniquities have been concealed; what delusions supported! The physician may claim to possess great wisdom and marvelous skill, when his character is abandoned, and his practice contrary to the laws of life. The Lord our God assures us that he is waiting to be gracious; he invites us to call upon him in the day of trouble. How can we turn from him to trust in an arm of flesh?

Go with me to yonder sick-room. There lies a husband and father, a man who is a blessing to society and to the cause of God. He has been suddenly stricken down by disease. The fire of fever seems consuming him. He longs for pure water to moisten the parched lips, to quench the raging thirst, and cool the fevered brow. But no; the doctor has forbidden water. The stimulus of strong drink is given, and adds fuel to the fire. The blessed, Heaven-sent water, skillfully applied, would quench the devouring flame, but it is set aside for poisonous drugs.

For a time, nature wrestles for her rights, but at last, overcome, she gives up the contest, and death sets the sufferer free. God desired that man to live, to be a blessing to the world; Satan determined to destroy him, and through the agency of the physician he succeeded. How long shall we permit our most precious lights to be thus extinguished?

Ahaziah sent his servants to inquire of Baal-zebub, at Ekron; but instead of a message from the idol, he hears the awful denunciation from the God of Israel, "Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die." It was Christ that bade Elijah speak these words to the apostate king. Jehovah Immanuel had cause to be greatly displeased at Ahaziah's impiety. What had Christ not done to win the hearts of sinners, and to inspire them with unwavering confidence in himself? For ages he had visited his people with manifestations of the most condescending kindness and unexampled love. From the times of the patriarchs, he had shown how his "delights were with the sons of men." He had been a very present help to all who sought him in sincerity. "In all their afflictions, he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and in his pity he redeemed them." Yet Israel had revolted from God, and turned for help to the Lord's worst enemy.

The Hebrews were the only nation favored with a knowledge of the true God. When the king of Israel sent to inquire of a pagan oracle, he proclaimed to the heathen that he had more confidence in their idols than in the God of his people, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. In the same manner do those who profess to have a knowledge of God's word dishonor him when they turn from the Source of strength and wisdom, to ask help or counsel from the powers of darkness. If God's wrath was kindled by such a course on the part of a wicked, idolatrous king, how can he regard a similar course pursued by those who profess to be his servants?

Why is it that men are so unwilling to trust Him who created man, who can, by a

touch, a word, a look, heal all manner of disease? Who is more worthy of our confidence than the One who made so great a sacrifice for our redemption? If the professed followers of Christ would, with purity of heart, exercise as much faith in the promises of God as they repose in Satanic agencies, they would realize in soul and body the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit. Christ condescended to take our nature, that he might reach to the very depths of human woe and degradation, to elevate and ennoble our race. With such evidence of his incomparable love, how can any turn from the God of light, the God of power, and give heed to Satan, the author of all our woes?

God has granted to this people great light, yet we are not placed beyond the reach of temptation. Who among us are seeking help from the gods of Ekron? Look on this picture--not drawn from imagination. In how many, even among Seventh-day Adventists, may its leading characteristics be seen? An invalid--apparently very conscientious, yet bigoted and self-sufficient--freely avows his contempt for the laws of health and life, which divine mercy has led us as a people to accept. His food must be prepared in a manner to satisfy his morbid cravings. Rather than sit at a table where wholesome food is provided, he will patronize restaurants, because he can there indulge appetite without restraint. A fluent advocate of temperance, he disregards its foundation principles. He wants relief, but refuses to obtain it at the price of self-denial.

That man is worshiping at the shrine of perverted appetite. He is an idolater. The powers which, sanctified and ennobled, might be employed to honor God, are weakened and rendered of little service. An irritable temper, a confused brain, and unstrung nerves are among the results of his disregard of nature's laws. He is inefficient, unreliable.

Whoever has the courage and honesty to warn him of danger, thereby incurs his displeasure. The slightest remonstrance or opposition is sufficient to rouse his combative spirit. But now an opportunity is presented to seek help from one whose power comes through the medium of witchcraft. To this source he applies with eagerness, freely expending time and money in hope of securing the proffered boon. He is deceived, infatuated. The sorcerer's power is made the theme of praise, and others are influenced to seek his aid. Thus the God of Israel is dishonored, while Satan's power is revered and exalted.

In the name of Christ, I would address his professed followers: Abide in the faith which you have received from the beginning. Shun profane and vain babblings. Instead

of putting your trust in witchcraft, have faith in the living God. Cursed is the path that leads to Endor or to Ekron. The feet will stumble and fall that venture upon the forbidden ground. There is a God in Israel, with whom is deliverance for all that are oppressed. Righteousness is the habitation of his throne.

There is danger in departing in the least from the Lord's instruction. When we deviate from the plain path of duty, a train of circumstances will arise that seem irresistibly to draw us farther and farther from the right. Needless intimacies with those who have no respect for God will seduce us, ere we are aware. Fear to offend worldly friends will deter us from expressing our gratitude to God or acknowledging our dependence upon him. We must keep close to the word of God. We need its warnings and encouragement, its threatenings and promises. We need the perfect example given only in the life and character of our Saviour.

Angels of God will preserve his people while they walk in the path of duty; but there is no assurance of such protection for those who deliberately venture upon Satan's ground. An agent of the great deceiver will say and do anything to gain his object. It matters little whether he calls himself a spiritualist, an "electric physician," or a "magnetic healer." By specious pretenses he wins the confidence of the unwary. He pretends to read the life-history and to understand all the difficulties and afflictions of those who resort to him. Disguising himself as an angel of light, while the blackness of the pit is in his heart, he manifests great interest in women who seek his counsel. He tells them that all their troubles are due to an unhappy marriage. This may be too true, but such a counselor does not better their condition. He tells them that they need love and sympathy. Pretending great interest in their welfare, he casts a spell over his unsuspecting victims, charming them as the serpent charms the trembling bird. Soon they are completely in his power, and sin, disgrace, and ruin are the terrible sequel.

These workers of iniquity are not few. Their path is marked by desolated homes, blasted reputations, and broken hearts. But of all this the world knows little; still they go on making fresh victims, and Satan exults in the ruin he has wrought.

The visible and the invisible world are in close contact. Could the vail be lifted, we would see evil angels pressing their darkness around us, and working with all their power to deceive and destroy. Wicked men are surrounded, influenced, and aided by evil spirits. The man of faith and prayer has yielded his soul to Divine guidance, and



angels of God bring to him light and strength from Heaven.

No man can serve two masters. Light and darkness are no more opposites than are the service of God and the service of Satan. The prophet Elijah presented the matter in the true light when he fearlessly appealed to apostate Israel: "If the Lord be God, serve him; but if Baal, then serve him."

Those who give themselves up to the sorcery of Satan, may boast of great benefit received thereby, but does this prove their course to be wise or safe? What if life should be prolonged? What if temporal gain should be secured? Will it pay in the end to disregard the will of God? All such apparent gain will prove at last an irrecoverable loss. We cannot with impunity break down a single barrier which God has erected to guard his people from Satan's power.

Our only safety consists in preserving the ancient landmarks. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

July 11, 1882

## **The Primal Object of Education**

"Education," says Webster, "is properly to draw forth, and implies not so much the communication of knowledge as the discipline of the intellect, the establishment of the principles, and the regulation of the heart." By a misconception of the true nature and objects of education, many have been led into serious and even fatal errors. Such a mistake is made when the regulation of the heart or the establishment of the principles is neglected in the effort to secure intellectual culture, or when eternal interests are overlooked in the eager desire for temporal advantage.

The great object of life is well defined in the old-time catechism, "to glorify God and to enjoy him forever." To make the possession of worldly honor or riches our ruling motive, is unworthy of one who has been redeemed by the blood of Christ. It should rather be our aim to gain knowledge and wisdom that we may become better Christians, and be prepared for greater usefulness, rendering more faithful service to our Creator, and by our example and influence leading others also to glorify God.

Here is something real, something tangible. Not only words, but deeds, not only the affections of the heart, but the service of the life, must be devoted to our Maker. To bring man back to harmony with God, to so elevate and ennoble his moral nature that he may again reflect the image of the Creator, is the great purpose of all the education and discipline of life. So important was this work, that our Saviour left the courts of Heaven, and came in person to earth, that he might teach men how to obtain a moral fitness for the higher life. For thirty years he dwelt as a man among men, passed through the experiences of human life as a child, a youth, a man, endured the severest trials, that he might present a living illustration of the truths he taught. For three years as a teacher sent from God he instructed the children of men; then, leaving the work to chosen co-laborers, he ascended to Heaven. But his interest in it has not abated. From the courts above, he watches with the deepest solicitude the progress of the cause for which he gave his life.

The character of Christ is the one perfect pattern which we are to copy. Repentance and faith, the surrender of the will, and the consecration of the affections to

God, are the means appointed for the accomplishment of this work. To obtain a knowledge of this divinely ordained plan should be our first study, to comply with its requirements our first effort. Solomon declares that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Concerning its value and importance he declares, "Wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom, and with all thy getting, get understanding." "For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her."

He who is following Divine guidance has found the only true source of happiness, and has gained the power of imparting happiness to all around him. No man can really enjoy life without religion. Love to God purifies and ennobles every taste and every desire, intensifies every affection, and brightens every worthy pleasure. It enables men to appreciate and enjoy all that is true, and good, and beautiful.

He who is seeking with diligence to acquire the wisdom of human schools, should remember that another school also claims him as a student. Christ was the greatest teacher the world ever saw. He brought to man knowledge direct from Heaven. The lessons which he has given us are what we need for both the present and the future state. He sets before us the true aims of life, and how we may secure them.

In the school of Christ, students never graduate. Among the pupils are both the old and the young. Those who give heed to the instructions of the Divine Teacher, constantly advance in wisdom, refinement, and nobility of soul, and thus they are prepared to enter that higher school, where advancement will continue throughout eternity.

Infinite Wisdom sets before us the great lessons of life,--the lessons of duty and of happiness. These are often hard to learn, but without them we can make no real progress. They may cost us effort and tears, and even agony, but we must not falter or grow weary. We shall at last hear the Master's call, "Child, come up higher."

It is in this world, amid its trials and temptations, that we are to gain a fitness for the society of the pure and the holy. Those who become so absorbed in less important studies that they cease to learn in the school of Christ, are meeting with an infinite loss. They insult the Divine Teacher by their rejection of the provisions of his grace. The

longer they continue in their course, the more hardened are they in sin. Their retribution will be proportioned to the infinite value of the blessings they have spurned.

Those who consider it brave and manly to treat the claims of God with indifference or contempt, are thereby betraying their own folly and ignorance. While they boast their freedom and independence, they are really in bondage to sin and Satan.

The religion of Christ lifts man above every debasing, groveling vice. Linked to the Infinite One, partakers of the Divine nature, we are clothed with a perfect panoply against the shafts of evil.

Every faculty, every attribute with which the Creator has endowed the children of men, is to be employed for his glory; and in this employment is found its purest, noblest, happiest exercise. While religious principle is held paramount, every advance step taken in the acquirement of knowledge or in the culture of the intellect, is a step toward the assimilation of the human with the Divine, the finite with the Infinite.

The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is allowed to dwell. If occupied with common-place matters only, to the exclusion of grand and lofty themes, it will become dwarfed and enfeebled. If never required to grapple with difficulties, it will after a time almost lose the power of growth. As an educator, the Holy Scriptures are without a rival. Nothing will so impart strength and vigor to all our faculties as requiring them to grasp the stupendous truths of revelation.

The Bible is the most comprehensive and the most instructive history that men possess. It came fresh from the fountain of eternal truth; and a Divine hand has preserved its purity through all the ages. Its bright rays shine into the far-distant past, where human research seeks vainly to penetrate. In God's word only we find an authentic account of creation. Here we behold the power that laid the foundation of the earth, and that stretched out the heavens. In this word only can we find a history of our race unsullied by human prejudice or human pride.

In the word of God the mind finds subjects for the deepest thought, the loftiest aspirations. Here we may hold communion with patriarchs and prophets, and listen to the voice of the Eternal as he speaks with men. Here we behold the Majesty of Heaven, as he humbled himself to become our substitute and surety, to cope singlehanded with

the powers of darkness, and to gain the victory in our behalf. A reverent contemplation of such themes as these cannot fail to soften, purify, and ennoble the heart, and at the same time to inspire the mind with new strength and vigor.

A clear conception of what God is, and what he requires us to be, will lead to humility. He who studies aright the sacred word will learn that human intellect is not omnipotent. He will learn that without the help which none but God can give, human strength and wisdom are but weakness and ignorance.

But that which, above all other considerations, should lead us to prize the Bible, is that in it is revealed to men the will of God. Here we learn the object of our creation, and the means by which that object may be attained. We learn how to improve wisely the present life, and how to secure the future life. No other book can satisfy the questionings of the mind or the cravings of the heart. By obtaining a knowledge of God's word, and giving heed thereto, men may rise from the lowest depths of degradation to become the sons of God, and the associates of sinless angels.

In the varied scenes of nature also are lessons of divine wisdom for all who have learned to commune with God. The pages that opened in undimmed brightness to the gaze of the first pair in Eden, bear now a shadow. A blight has fallen upon the fair creation. And yet, wherever we turn are traces of the primal loveliness. Wherever we may turn, we hear the voice of God, and behold his handiwork.

From the solemn roll of the deep-toned thunder and old ocean's ceaseless roar, to the glad songs that make the forests vocal with melody, Nature's ten thousand voices speak his praise. In earth, and air, and sky, with their marvelous tint and color, varying in gorgeous contrast or softly blended in harmony, we behold his glory. The everlasting hills tell us of his power. The trees wave their green banners in the sunlight, and point us upward to their Creator. The flowers that gem the earth with their beauty, whisper to us of Eden, and fill us with longings for its unfading loveliness. The living green that carpets the brown earth, tells us of God's care for the humblest of his creatures. The caves of the sea and the depths of the earth reveal his treasures. He who placed the pearls in the ocean and the amethyst and chrysolite among the rocks, is a lover of the beautiful. The sun rising in the heavens is the representative of Him who is the life and light of all that he has made. All the brightness and beauty that adorns the earth and lights up the heavens, speaks of God.

Shall we, in the enjoyment of the gifts, forget the Giver? Let them rather lead us to contemplate his goodness and his love. Let all that is beautiful in our earthly home remind us of the crystal river and green fields, the waving trees and the living fountains, the shining city and the white-robed singers, of our heavenly home,--that world of beauty which no artist can picture, no mortal tongue describe. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

To dwell forever in this home of the blest, to bear in soul, body, and spirit, not the dark traces of sin and the curse, but the perfect likeness of our Creator, and through ceaseless ages to advance in wisdom, in knowledge and holiness, ever exploring new fields of thought, ever finding new wonders and new glories, ever increasing in capacity to know and to enjoy and to love, and knowing that there is still beyond us joy and love and wisdom infinite,--such is the object to which the Christian hope is pointing, for which Christian education is preparing. To secure this education, and to aid others to secure it, should be the object of the Christian's life.

July 18, 1882

## **The First Prophecy**

"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

In this first prophecy contained in the Scriptures is found an intimation of redemption. Though a part of the sentence pronounced upon the serpent, it was uttered in the hearing of our first parents, and hence must be regarded as a promise. While it announces war between Satan and man, it declares that the power of the great adversary will finally be broken.

Adam and Eve stood as criminals before their God, awaiting the sentence which transgression had incurred. But before they hear of the thorn and the thistle, the sorrow and anguish which should be their portion, and the dust to which they should return, they listen to words which must have inspired them with hope. Though they must suffer from the power of their adversary, they might look forward to ultimate victory.

God declares, "I will put enmity." This enmity is supernaturally put, and not naturally entertained. When man sinned, his nature became evil, and he was in harmony, and not at variance, with Satan. The lofty usurper, having succeeded in seducing our first parents as he had seduced angels, counted on securing their allegiance and co-operation in all his enterprises against the government of Heaven. There was no enmity between himself and the fallen angels. Whatever discord might exist between them, all were united, as by bands of steel, in their opposition and hatred against God. But when Satan heard that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, he knew that though he had succeeded in depraving human nature, and assimilating it to his own, yet by some mysterious process, God would restore to man his lost power, and enable him to resist and overcome his conqueror.

It is the grace that Christ implants in the soul that creates the enmity against Satan. Without this grace, man would continue the captive of Satan, a servant ever ready to do his bidding. The new principle in the soul creates conflict where hitherto had been peace. The power which Christ imparts, enables man to resist the tyrant and

usurper. Whenever a man is seen to abhor sin instead of loving it, when he resists and conquers those passions that have held sway within, there is seen the operation of a principle wholly from above. The Holy Spirit must be constantly imparted to man, or he has no disposition to contend against the powers of darkness.

The spirit of enmity was most strikingly displayed in the world's reception of Christ. The Son of God came to man with a message of mercy from the Father. He came not to condemn the world--though they were deserving of condemnation, for rebellion was almost universal--but that the world through him might have life. Yet he was despised and hated by the very people he came to bless and save.

It was not so much that Christ appeared without worldly wealth, pomp, or grandeur, that the Jews were led to reject him. They saw that he possessed powers which would more than compensate for the lack of these outward advantages. The wonders which he wrought far exceeded the miracles performed by Moses, their great leader. But the purity and holiness of Christ called forth against him the hatred of the ungodly. His life of self-denial and sinless devotion was a perpetual reproof to a proud, sensual people.

They could not tolerate the fearless rebukes by which he unmasked hypocrisy and condemned vice. When he exhorted them to put away their iniquities, they turned from him with sneers and execrations. They could not endure the radiance of a sinless character. It too clearly revealed their own defects. As religious teachers, they were envious of his influence with the people, fearing that themselves and their teachings would be overlooked.

It was this that evoked enmity against the Son of man. Satan and evil angels join with evil men. All the energies of apostasy conspire against the champion of truth. He was fiercely buffeted by temptations, rent with anguish, lacerated with stripes, pierced by nails, and crowned with thorns.

But in all this, Satan gained no real advantage. He could but bruise the heel, while by every act of humiliation or suffering, Christ was bruising the head of his adversary. The anguish that sin has brought was poured into the bosom of the sinless; yet while Christ endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, he was paying the debt for sinful man, and breaking the bondage in which he had been held. Every pang of



anguish, every insult, was working out the deliverance of the race.

Could Satan have induced Christ to yield to a single temptation, could he have led him by one act or even thought to stain his perfect purity, the prince of darkness would have triumphed over man's surety, and would have gained the whole human family to himself. But while Satan could distress, he could not contaminate. He could cause agony, but not defilement. He made the life of Christ one long scene of conflict and trial, yet with every attack he was losing his hold upon humanity.

In the wilderness of temptation, in the garden of Gethsemane, and on the cross, our Saviour measured weapons with the prince of darkness. His wounds became the trophies of his victory in behalf of the race. When Christ hung in agony upon the cross, while evil spirits rejoiced, and evil men reviled, then indeed his heel was bruised by Satan. But that very act was crushing the serpent's head. "Through death He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." This act decided the destiny of the rebel chief, and made forever sure the plan of salvation. In death, he gained the victory over its power; in rising again, he opened the gates of the grave to all his followers. In that last great contest we see fulfilled the prophecy: "It shall bruise thy head; thou shalt bruise his heel."

The same enmity exists between the serpent and Christ's followers, as between him and their Master. He who is under the control of Satan submits willingly to the dominion of evil. But where he has received the grace of Christ, he will see the repulsive character of sin, and in strength from above, will resist the serpent. In the spirit of his Master, the converted man will labor for the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom. With all the power of a renewed nature, he will seek to win souls from the thralldom of sin to the purity and holiness of Christ. In so doing he will assuredly arouse the wrath of Satan and his followers. He will draw upon himself the reproach, dislike, and opposition of a large class of worldly acquaintances, who will ridicule him as narrow, bigoted, and austere.

Opposition to religion is not limited to any age or to any country. Hatred of the pure principles of truth, and reproach and persecution of its advocates, will exist so long as sin and sinners remain. The followers of Christ and the servants of Satan cannot harmonize. The offense of the cross has not ceased. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." No man can serve God and be in union with the world.

Evil angels are on the track of every Christian, redoubling their efforts to annoy and distress, as they see the prey escaping from their grasp. Angels of God, also, are watching with deep solicitude each struggling soul, ever seeking to inspire with hope, to comfort and sustain. With what gladness do they bear up to Heaven the tidings of victory. Oh that the curtain which shuts the eternal world from our view might be rolled back! Could we but behold the joy in the heavenly courts at the news that one sinner has repented and turned to God, could we hear the anthems of praise ascend before the throne with the music of the angel harpers, we would not be so listless, so indifferent in the work which God has left for us to do. The event which causes angels to rejoice spreads consternation through the hosts of Satan. Every soul that remains true to Christ is another evidence and reminder of the first prophecy. Satan may bruise the heel, but the faithful believer shall bruise the head of the serpent.

From righteous Abel falling under his brother's murderous hand, a long line of martyred prophets and holy men, faithful apostles and unnumbered millions of disciples who loved not their lives unto death, testify that Satan's enmity has not abated with the lapse of ages. As the end draws nigh, his wrath increases, and he renews his efforts to destroy God's chosen. Often his greatest victories are gained, not by open, bold attack, but as at first, by deceptive strategy.

At the present day, Satan gains power over God's people, by means of those false brethren who, while at heart friends of the world, exert an influence in the church. These are the most efficient workers that the great deceiver can employ. They are constantly seeking to lessen the enmity between the church of Christ and his deadliest foe. They supply the connecting link whereby he can unite the church and the world. Here lies our present danger,--a danger against which we must constantly guard. While we should make all possible effort to save souls, deeming no self-denial or sacrifice too great to effect this purpose, we must at the same time maintain our allegiance to God.

Without supreme love to God, we cannot glorify him. Those who walk in darkness cannot discern the excellence of heavenly things. No man can serve mammon, and yet build up the Redeemer's kingdom. Whatever diverts our affections from God or destroys our confidence in him, thereby becomes an idol. God calls for the whole heart. No reserve must be made. Said our Saviour, "He that is not with me is against me." We cannot safely disregard one injunction of God's word, to compromise with the enemies

of Christ and the truth.

Prophets and apostles have clearly set forth the exalted privilege of that people whom the Lord has set apart to himself, and through whom he would communicate to the world: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

A neglect to maintain this position is the reason why there is so little of the power of godliness with us as a people. God has made us the repositories of his law, and has intrusted us with truths in advance of every other people upon the earth; yet we are not obeying the injunction to come out from the world and be separate. We cannot in any degree form a union with the ungodly without becoming contaminated by their unholy customs. "Whosoever will be the friend of the world, is the enemy of God." The separation must be final, complete, unmistakable.

Christ is the head of the church. The members of his body follow the directions of the Head, just as the members of the human body obey the impulses of the mind.

He has ever required his people to keep themselves free from every unholy influence. In his infinite love he has provided the unsearchable riches of his grace, that they may be enabled to maintain the warfare against the hosts of sin. Through that grace they may render obedience to every command, and receive the fulfillment of every promise. I speak understandingly when I say that in these days of pride and world-loving it is impossible for us to realize what might have been the character and position of the church, had she been true to her holy calling.

As he draws near to God, the Christian gains a clearer knowledge of the divine character and requirements; he attains to a higher degree of holiness, and as a result, the line of distinction between himself and the world is more clearly marked. When the people of God will stand firmly and fearlessly on the holy ground of their solemn faith, not seeking to assimilate to the world, they will enjoy the presence of the Lord as in earlier years.

Wherever we turn, we behold sorrowful evidence that the hearts of men are at enmity with God. Behold what moral darkness enshrouds the world, what skepticism,

what indifference, what deadly hate, what filthy lusts, what infidelity, what downright atheism! How can we successfully resist the tide of evil? The preaching of the word produces little impression. Unless God's power is sent to our aid, our efforts will be fruitless.

Thousands are as unmoved by the warnings of God's word as the tenants of the grave. "Having eyes, they see not, and having ears, they hear not." The inhabitants of the earth are rushing on in their course of rebellion, as if eager to show defiance of their Maker. We must take hold by living faith upon the promises of God. His Spirit must speak through us, if we would reach the hearts of the people. We have no time to confer with self, no time to be careless or indifferent now. The day of God hasteth greatly; while the world and the popular churches are asleep, those who have received the truth should not yield to slumber.

Satan is marshalling his forces for the last great struggle, "to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." If we would be true to God, we cannot escape the conflict. But we are not left in doubt as to the issue. Beyond the smoke and heat of the battle, we behold "them that had gotten the victory" standing on Mount Zion with the Lamb. And still there come to us down through the ages, those words of our Saviour, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

August 15, 1882

### **Preparation for the Camp-Meeting**

Our annual camp-meetings are of great importance, and all who possibly can should attend them. They should feel that the Lord requires this of them. If God's people neglect the privileges which he has provided for them to become strong in him, they will grow weaker and weaker and have less and less desire to consecrate all to him'. The object of these holy convocation meetings is that the brethren may be separated from business cares and burdens, and devote a few days exclusively to seeking the Lord. But some of these meetings are far from being what the Lord designed they should be. The people come unprepared for the visitation of God's Holy Spirit. Generally the sisters devote considerable time before the meeting to the preparation of garments for the outward adorning, while they entirely forget the inward adorning which is in the sight of God of great price. There is also much time spent in needless cooking, in the preparation of rich pies and cakes and other articles of food that do positive injury to those who partake of them. Should our sisters provide good bread and some other healthful kinds of food, both they and their families would be better prepared to appreciate the words of life, and far more susceptible to the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Often the stomach is over-burdened with food which is seldom as plain and simple as that eaten at home, where the amount of exercise taken is double or treble. This causes the mind to be in such a lethargy that it is difficult to appreciate eternal things, and the meeting closes, and they are disappointed in not having enjoyed more of the Spirit of God.

While preparing for the meeting, each individual should closely and critically examine his own heart before God. If there have been unpleasant feelings, discord, or strife in families, it should be one of the first acts of preparation to confess these faults one to another and pray with and for one another. Humble yourselves before God, and make an earnest effort to empty the soul temple of all rubbish,--all envyings, all jealousies, all suspicions, all fault-findings. "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."

The Lord speaks; enter into your closet, and in silence commune with our own heart; listen to the voice of truth and conscience. Nothing will give such clear views of self as secret prayer. He who seeth in secret and knoweth all things, will enlighten your understanding and answer your petitions. Plain, simple duties that must not be neglected will open before you. Make a covenant with God to yield yourselves and all your powers to his service. Do not carry this undone work to the camp-meeting. If it is not done at home, your own soul will suffer, and others will be greatly injured by your coldness, your stupor, your spiritual lethargy.

The words of the prophet Ezekiel are applicable to the people who profess the truth at this time: "Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumbling-block of their iniquity before their face; should I be inquired of at all by them? Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumbling-block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet, I the Lord will answer him that cometh, according to the multitude of his idols."

If we love the things of the world and have pleasure in unrighteousness, or fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, we have put the stumbling-block of our iniquity before our face, and have set up idols in our heart. And unless by determined effort we put them away, we shall never be acknowledged as the sons and daughters of God.

Here is a work for families to engage in before coming up to our holy convocations. Let the preparation for eating and dressing be a secondary matter, but let deep heart-searching commence at home. Pray three times a day, and like Jacob be importunate. At home is the place to find Jesus; then take him with you to the meeting, and how precious will be the hours you spend there. But how can you expect to feel the presence of the Lord and see his power displayed, when the individual work of preparation for that time is neglected.

For your soul's sake, and for Christ's sake, and for the sake of others, work at home. Pray as you are not accustomed to pray. Let the heart break before God. Set your house in order. Prepare your children for the occasion. Teach them that it is not of so much consequence that they appear with fine clothes as that they appear before God

with clean hands and pure hearts. Remove every obstacle that may have been in their way,--all differences that may have existed between themselves, or between you and them. By so doing you will invite the Lord's presence into your homes, and holy angels will attend you as you go up to the meeting, and their light and presence will press back the darkness of evil angels. Even unbelievers will feel the holy atmosphere as they enter the encampment. Oh, how much is lost by neglecting this important work! You may be pleased with the preaching, you may become animated and revived, but the converting, reforming power of God will not be felt in the heart, and the work will not be so deep, thorough, and lasting as it should be. Let pride be crucified, and the soul be clad with the priceless robe of Christ's righteousness, and what a meeting you will enjoy. It will be to your soul even as the gate of Heaven.

The same work of humiliation and heart-searching should also go on in the church, so that all differences and alienations among brethren may be laid aside before appearing before the Lord at these annual gatherings. Set about this work in earnest, and rest not until it is accomplished; for if you come up to the meeting with your doubts, your murmurings, your disputings, you bring evil angels into the camp, and carry darkness wherever you go.

Because this preparation is neglected, these yearly meetings have accomplished but little. The ministers are seldom prepared to labor for God. There are many speakers,--those who can say sharp, crank things, going out of their way to whip other churches and ridicule their faith,--but there are but few earnest laborers for God. These sharp, self-important speakers, profess to have truth in advance of every other people, but their manner of labor and their religious zeal in no way correspond with their profession of faith.

I looked to see the humility of soul that should ever sit as a fitting garment upon our ministers, but it was not upon them. I looked for the deep love for souls that the Master said they should possess, but they had it not. I listened for the earnest prayers offered with tears and anguish of soul because of the impenitent and unbelieving in their own homes and in the church, but heard them not. I listened for the appeals made in the demonstration of the Spirit, but these were missing. I looked for the burden-bearers who in such a time as this should be weeping between the porch and the altar, crying, Spare thy people, Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach; but I heard no such supplications. A few earnest humble ones were seeking the Lord. At some of these

meetings one or two ministers felt the burden, and were weighed down as a cart beneath sheaves. But a large majority of the ministers had no more sense of the sacredness of their work than children.

These yearly gatherings should be meetings of earnest labor. Ministers should seek a heart preparation before entering upon the work of helping others, for the people are far in advance of many of the ministers. They should untiringly wrestle in prayer until the Lord blesses them. When the love of God is burning on the altar of their hearts, they will not preach to exhibit their own smartness, but to present Christ who taketh away the sins of the world.

In the early church, Christianity was taught in its purity; its precepts were given by the voice of inspiration; its ordinances were uncorrupted by the device of men. The church revealed the spirit of Christ, and appeared beautiful in its simplicity. Its adorning was the holy principles and exemplary lives of its members. Multitudes were won to Christ, not by display or learning, but by the power of God which attended the plain preaching of his word. But the church has become corrupt. And now there is greater necessity than ever that ministers should be channels of light.

There are many flippant talkers of Bible truth, whose souls are as barren of the Spirit of God as were the hills of Gilboa of dew and rain. But what we need is men who are thoroughly converted themselves, and can teach others how to give their hearts to God. The power of godliness has almost ceased to be in our churches. And why is this? The Lord is still waiting to be gracious; he has not closed the windows of Heaven. We have separated ourselves from him. We need to fix the eye of faith upon the cross, and believe that Jesus is our strength, our salvation.

As we see so little burden of the work resting upon ministers and people, we inquire, When the Lord comes, shall he find faith on the earth? It is faith that is lacking. God has an abundance of grace and power awaiting our demand. But the reason we do not feel our great need of it is because we look to ourselves and not to Jesus. We do not exalt Jesus and rely wholly upon his merits.

Would that I could impress upon ministers and people the necessity of a deeper work of grace in the heart, and more thorough preparation to enter into the spirit and labor of our camp-meetings, that they may receive the greatest possible benefit from the



meeting. These yearly gatherings may be seasons of special blessing, or they may be a great injury to spirituality. Which shall they be to you, dear reader? It remains for each to decide for himself.

October 10, 1882

## **Christian Work**

God works with the efforts of his people for the salvation of souls. Wise generalship is as much needed in advancing the cause of Christ as in directing the movements of an army. There is much close thinking to be done. We must not enter into the Lord's work hap-hazard, and expect success.

Mechanics, lawyers, merchants, men of all trades and professions, educate themselves for their business, that they may become masters of it. Should the followers of Christ be less intelligent? Should they, while professedly engaged in his service, be ignorant of the ways and means to be employed? The enterprise of gaining everlasting life is above every earthly consideration. In leading souls to Jesus, there must be a knowledge of human nature and a study of the human mind. It requires much careful thought and fervent prayer to know how to approach men and women upon the great subjects that concern their eternal welfare.

"The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." Businessmen and politicians study courtesy. It is their policy to make themselves as attractive as possible. They study to render their address and manners such that they may have the greatest influence over the minds of those about them. They use their knowledge and ability as skillfully as possible in order to gain this object. Should not the followers of Christ manifest at least equal wisdom, in a work infinitely more important? There are some persons who will come through every discouragement, and surmount every obstacle in order to gain the truth. But how many more might be rejoicing in its light, if those who have received it were doing all in their power to win their fellow-men!

After souls have been converted to the truth, they need watchful attention, help, and encouragement. They should not be left alone, a prey to Satan's temptations; they need to be educated in regard to their duties, to be kindly dealt with, to be led along, visited and prayed with. These souls need the meat apportioned to every man in due season.

Without the needed help, some become discouraged and linger by the way, and are left for wolves to devour. Satan is upon the track of all. He sends his agents forth to gather back to his ranks the souls that he has lost. There should be more fathers and mothers to take these newly converted ones to their hearts, and encourage them and pray for them.

Preaching is a small part of the work to be done for the salvation of souls. God's Spirit convicts sinners of the truth, and he places them in the arms of the church. The ministers may do their part, but they can never perform the work that the church should do. God requires his church to care for those who are young in faith and experience, to go to them, not for the purpose of gossiping with them, but to pray, to speak to them words that are "like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

We all need to study character and manner, that we may know how to deal judiciously with different minds, that we may use our best endeavors to help them to a correct understanding of the word of God, and to a true Christian life. We should read the Bible with them, and draw their minds away from temporal things to their eternal interests.

It is the duty of God's children to be missionaries for him, to become acquainted with those who need help. If one is fiercely assailed by temptation, his case should be taken up carefully and managed wisely; for his eternal interest is at stake, and the words and acts of those laboring for him may be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. By patient and judicious labor, many a wanderer may be brought back to the fold of Christ; many a doubting and wavering one may be bound with strong cords to Christ, and led to trust in God.

Oh, when a work like this is done, all the heavenly host rejoice; for a precious soul has been rescued from Satan's snare and saved from death! Shall we not work intelligently for the salvation of souls? Christ paid the price of his own life for them; and shall his followers ask, "Am I my brother's keeper? Shall we not work in unison with the Master?"

Earnest effort should be put forth to interest the children in the great truths of the word of God. Our Sabbath-schools should be made efficient and attractive. The public schools have of late years greatly improved their methods of teaching. Object lessons,

pictures, and blackboards are used to make difficult lessons clear to the youthful mind. Just so may present truth be simplified and made intensely interesting to the active minds of children.

Parents who could be approached in no other way, are frequently reached through their children. Sabbath-school teachers can instruct the children in the truth, and they will, in turn, take it into the home circle. The modes of teaching which have been adopted with so great success in the public schools, could be employed with similar results in the Sabbath-schools, and be the means of bringing children to Jesus and educating them in Bible truth. This will do far more good than religious excitement of an emotional character that passes off as rapidly as it comes.

The love of Christ should be cherished by all his followers. More faith is needed in the work which we believe is to be done before the coming of Christ. There should be more self-denying, self-sacrificing labor in the right direction. There should be thoughtful, prayerful study how to work to the best advantage. Careful plan should be matured. Great results will follow well-directed and intelligent efforts.

The prayer and social meetings should be the most interesting gatherings that are held. Plans should be laid, and wisdom sought of God, to conduct these meetings so that they will be interesting and attractive. The people hunger for the bread of life. If they find it at the prayer-meeting, they will go there to receive it. Long, prosy talks and prayers are out of place anywhere, and especially in the social meeting. They weary the angels as well as the people who listen to them. Our prayers should be short, and right to the point. Let the Spirit of God pervade the hearts of the worshipers, and it will sweep away all formality and dullness.

In our intercourse as Christians, we lose much by lack of sympathy one with another, by a want of sociability. He who talks of independence, and shuts himself up to himself, is not filling the position that God designed he should. We are all children of God, mutually dependent upon one another for happiness. The claims of God and of humanity are upon us. It is the proper cultivation of the social elements of our nature that brings us in sympathy with our brethren, and affords us happiness in our efforts to bless others. The happiness of Heaven is in the pure communion with holy beings, the harmonious social life with the blessed angels, and with the redeemed who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. We cannot be happy while

we are wrapped up in our interest for ourselves. We should live in this world to win souls to the Saviour. If we injure others, we injure ourselves also. If we bless others, we bless ourselves; for the influence of every good deed is reflected back upon our own hearts.

We are in duty bound to help one another. It is not always that we are brought in contact with social Christians, those who are amiable and mild. Many have not received a proper education, their characters are warped, they are hard and gnarled, and seem to be crooked in every way. While we help these to see and correct their defects, we must be careful not to become impatient and irritable over our neighbor's faults. There are disagreeable ones who profess Christ, but the beauty of Christian grace will transform them if they will set diligently about the work of obtaining the meekness and gentleness of Him they follow, remembering that "none of us liveth to himself."

Co-workers with Christ--what an exalted position! The Lord calls for workers in his vineyard. We should fear to rob God of the time he claims from us; we should fear to spend it in idleness or in the adornment of the body, appropriating to foolish purposes the precious hours which God has given us to become conversant with our Bibles, to devote to prayer, to labor for the good of our fellow-beings, and to fit ourselves and them for the great events of the future.

Mothers spend unnecessary labor upon garments with which to adorn themselves and their children. It is our duty to clothe ourselves and our children neatly, without useless ornament, embroidery, or display, taking care not to foster in them a love of dress that will prove their ruin, but seeking rather to cultivate the Christian graces. We can none of us be excused from our responsibilities, and in no case can we stand clear before the throne of God unless we do the work that the Master has left for us to do.

Missionaries for God are wanted, faithful men and women who will not shirk responsibility. Judicious labor will accomplish good results. There is real work to do. The truth should be brought before people in a careful manner by those who unite meekness with wisdom. We should not hold ourselves aloof from our fellowmen; for their souls are as precious as our own. We can carry the light into their homes, with a softened and subdued spirit plead with the unconverted to give their hearts to Christ, show the professed followers of Jesus that there are higher attainments for them to reach, pray with them when it seems proper, and carefully present to them the special

truths for this time.

Those who do little for the salvation of others or to keep themselves right before God, will gain but little spiritual power. We need to use continually the strength which we have, that it may increase and develop. As disease is the result of the violation of natural laws, so is spiritual declension the result of a continued transgression of the law of God. We must place ourselves in close connection with Heaven, and carry out the principles of God's law in our every-day lives, in order to be spiritually whole. God has given his servants ability, talents to be used for his glory, not to lie idle or be wasted. He has given them light and knowledge of his will, to be communicated to others; and, in imparting to others, we become living channels of light. If we do not exercise our spiritual strength, we become feeble, as the limbs of the body become powerless when the invalid is compelled to long inaction. It is use that gives power.

Nothing will give greater spiritual strength, or more surely increase earnestness and depth of feeling, than visiting and ministering to the sick and the desponding, helping them to see the light and to fasten their faith upon Jesus. There are duties that somebody must do, or souls will be left to perish. Christians will find a blessing in doing these duties, however unpleasant they may be. Christ took the disagreeable task upon himself of coming from the abode of purity and unsurpassed glory to dwell, a man among men, in a world seared and blackened by crime, violence, and iniquity. He did this to save souls; and shall the objects of such amazing love and unparalleled condescension excuse their lives of selfish ease? shall they choose their own pleasure, and follow their own inclinations, and leave souls to perish in darkness?

God wants prayerful, faithful workers, who will sow beside all waters. Those who labor thus will be surprised to find how trials, resolutely borne in the name and strength of Jesus, will give firmness to the faith and renew the courage. In the path of humble obedience is safety and power, comfort and hope. The reward will finally be lost by those who do nothing for Jesus. Weak hands will be unable to cling to the Mighty One, feeble knees will fail to support in the day of adversity. Christian workers will receive the glorious prize, and hear the "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

October 17, 1882

### **Christian Liberality**

The blessing of God will rest upon those who have the cause of Christ at heart. Free-will offerings, prompted by love to the crucified Redeemer, will bring back blessings to the giver; for God marks and remembers every act of liberality performed by his people. To carry forward the work of God for this time, there must be a constant exercise of faith in him. In business transactions men are willing to venture something, in the hope of gain. Should we be less willing to invest our means in the cause of truth, with the prospect of securing eternal riches?

Under the Jewish system, the people were required to cherish a spirit of liberality, both in sustaining the cause of God and in supplying the wants of the needy. At the harvest and the vintage, the first-fruits of the fields--corn, wine, and oil--were to be consecrated as an offering to the Lord. The gleanings and the corners of the fields were reserved for the poor. The first-fruits of the wool when the sheep were shorn, of the grain when the wheat was threshed, were to be offered to the Lord; and at the feast it was commanded that the poor, the widows, the orphans, and the strangers should be invited. At the close of every year all were required to make solemn oath whether or not they had done according to the command of God.

This arrangement was made by the Lord to impress upon the people that in every matter he must be first. They were, by this system of benevolence, reminded that their gracious Master was the true proprietor of their fields, their flocks, and their herds, that the God of Heaven sent them sunshine and rain for their seed-time and harvest, and that everything which they possessed was of his creation. All was the Lord's, and he had made them stewards of his goods.

The liberality of the Jews in the construction of the tabernacle evinced a spirit of benevolence which has not been equaled by the people of God at any later date. The Hebrews had just been freed from their long bondage in Egypt, they were wanderers in the wilderness; yet scarcely were they delivered from the armies of the Egyptians who pursued them in their hasty journey, when the word of the Lord came to Moses, "Speak unto the children of Israel that they bring me an offering; of every man that giveth it

willingly with his heart, ye shall take my offering."

His people had small possessions, and no flattering prospect of adding to them; but an object was before them, to build a tabernacle for God. The Lord had spoken, and they must obey his voice. They withheld nothing. All gave with a willing hand, not a certain amount of their increase, but a large portion of their actual possessions. They devoted it gladly and heartily to the Lord. They honored him by so doing. Was it not all his? Had he not given them all that they possessed? If he called for it, was it not their duty to give back to the lender his own? No urging was needed. The people brought even more than was required; and they were told to desist, for there was already more than could be appropriated.

Again, in building the temple, the call for means met with a hearty response. The people did not give reluctantly; they rejoiced in the prospect of a building being erected for the worship of God. They donated more than enough for the purpose. David blessed the Lord before all the congregation, and said, "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." Again, in his prayer David gives thanks in these words: "O Lord, our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee an house for thine holy name cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own."

David well understood from whom came all his bounties. Would that those of this day who rejoice in a Saviour's love could realize that their silver and gold is the Lord's, and should be used to promote his glory, not grudgingly retained to enrich and gratify themselves. He has an indisputable right to all that he has lent his creatures. All that they possess is his.

There are high and holy objects that require means; thus invested, it will yield to the giver more elevated and permanent enjoyment than if expended in personal gratification or selfishly hoarded for the greed of gain. When God calls for our treasure, whatever the amount may be, the willing response makes the gift a consecrated offering to him, and lays up for the giver a treasure in Heaven that moth cannot corrupt, nor fire consume, nor thieves break in and steal. The investment is safe. The money is placed in bags that have no holes.

Can Christians, who boast of a broader light than had the Hebrews, give less



freely than they? Can Christians, living near the close of time, be satisfied with their offerings when not half so large as were those of the Jews? Their liberality was to benefit their own nation; the work of God in these last days extends to the entire world. The message of truth is to go to all nations, tongues, and people; its publications, printed in many different languages, are to be scattered abroad like the leaves in autumn.

It is written, "Forasmuch as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind;" and again, "He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." Let us inquire, What would our Saviour do in our circumstances? what would be his efforts for the salvation of souls? This question is answered by the example of Christ. He left his royalty, laid aside his glory, sacrificed his riches, and clothed his divinity with humanity, that he might reach men where they were. He laid down his life for sinners.

The spirit of liberality is the spirit of Heaven. The spirit of selfishness is the spirit of Satan. Christ's self-sacrificing love is revealed upon the cross. He gave all that he had, and then gave himself, that man might be saved. The cross of Christ appeals to the benevolence of every follower of the blessed Saviour. The principle illustrated there is to give, give. This carried out in actual benevolence and good works is the true fruit of the Christian life. The principle of worldlings is to get, get, and thus they expect to secure happiness; but carried out in all its bearings, the fruit is misery and death.

To carry the truth to the population of the earth, to rescue them from their guilt and indifference, is the mission of the followers of Christ. Men must have the truth in order to be sanctified through it; and we are the channels of God's light. Our talents, our means, our knowledge, are not merely for our own benefit; they are to be used for the salvation of souls, to elevate man from his life of sin, and bring him, through Christ, to the infinite God.

We should be zealous workers in this cause, seeking to lead sinners, repenting and believing, to a divine Redeemer, to impress them with a sense of God's love to man. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." What an incomparable love is this! a theme for the most profound meditation! the amazing love of God for a world that did not love him! The thought has a subduing power upon the soul, and brings the mind into

captivity to the will of God. Men who are crazy for gain, and are disappointed and unhappy in their pursuit of the world, need the knowledge of this truth to quiet the restless hungering and thirsting of their souls.

Missionaries for God are wanted to carry light to those who sit in the shadow of death. Experienced hands are needed, in the meekness of wisdom and the strength of faith, to lift weary souls to the bosom of a compassionate Redeemer. Oh, selfishness! what a curse! It prevents us from engaging in the service of God. It prevents us from perceiving the claims of duty, which should set our hearts aglow with fervent zeal.

Ours is a great work. Yet how many who profess to believe these sacred truths are paralyzed by the sophistry of Satan, doing nothing for God, but rather hindering his cause. When will they act like those who wait for the Lord? When will they show a zeal in accordance with their faith? Many selfishly retain their means, and soothe their conscience with a plan for doing some great thing for the cause of God after their death. They make a will, donating a large sum to the church and its various interests, and then settle down with a feeling that they have done all that is required of them. Wherein have they denied self by this act? They have, on the contrary, exhibited only selfishness. When they have no further use for their money, they propose to give it to God. But they will retain it as long as they can, till they are compelled to relinquish it by a messenger that cannot be turned aside.

God has made us all his stewards, and in no case authorized us to neglect our duty or leave it for others to do. The call for means to advance the cause of truth will never be more urgent than now. Our money will never do a greater amount of good than at the present time. Every day of delay in rightly appropriating it, is limiting the period in which it will do good in the saving of souls. If we leave others to accomplish that which God has left for us to do, we wrong ourselves and Him who gave us all we have. How can others do our work of benevolence any better than we can do it ourselves? God would have every man an executor of his own will in this matter, during his lifetime.

Adversity, accident, or intrigue may cut off forever intended acts of benevolence, when he who has accumulated a fortune is no longer by to guard it. It is sad that so many neglect the golden opportunity to do good in the present, but wait to be cast out of their stewardship before giving back to the Lord the means which he has lent them to be used for his glory.

One marked feature in the teachings of Christ is the frequency and earnestness with which he rebuked the sin of covetousness and pointed out the danger of worldly acquisitions and the inordinate love of gain. In the mansions of the rich, in the temple, and in the streets, he warned those who inquired after salvation, "Take heed and beware of covetousness." "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

It is this increasing devotion to money-getting, the selfishness which the desire for gain begets, that deadens the spirituality of the church, and removes the favor of God from her. When the head and hands are constantly occupied with planning and toiling for the accumulation of riches, the claims of God and humanity are forgotten.

If God has blessed us with prosperity, it is not that our time and attention should be diverted from him and given to that which he has lent us. The giver is greater than the gift. We have been bought with a price, we are not our own. Have we forgotten that infinite price paid for our redemption? Is gratitude dead in the heart? Does not the cross of Christ put to shame a life of selfish ease and indulgence?

What if Christ had left his work, becoming weary in consequence of the ingratitude and abuse that met him on every side! What if he had never reached that period when he said, "It is finished!" What if he had returned to Heaven, discouraged by his reception! What if he had never passed through that soul agony in the garden of Gethsemane that forced from his pores great drops of blood!

Christ was joined to his plan of labor to work out redemption for the race, by a love that is without parallel and an unswerving devotion to the Father's will. He toiled for the good of man up to the very hour of his humiliation. He spent his life in poverty and self-denial, for the degraded sinner. In a world that was his own he had no place to lay his weary head. We are reaping the fruits of this infinite self-sacrifice; and yet, when labor is to be done, when our money is wanted to aid the work of the Redeemer in the salvation of souls, we shrink from duty and pray to be excused. Ignoble sloth, careless indifference, and wicked selfishness seal our senses to the claims of God.

Oh, must Christ, the Majesty of Heaven, the King of glory, bear the heavy cross, and wear the thorny crown, and drink the bitter cup, while we recline at ease, glorify ourselves, and forget the souls he died to redeem by his precious blood? No; let us give

while we have the power. Let us do while we have the strength. Let us work while it is day. Let us devote our time and our means to the service of God, that we may have his approbation, and receive his reward.

November 7, 1882

## **Christian Character**

The word of God not only sets forth the great principles of truth and duty which should govern our lives, but it presents also, for our encouragement, the history of many who have exemplified these principles. Men "subject to like passions as we are," have fought with temptation, and conquered in the strength of an Almighty Helper. Under difficulties greater than we are called to meet, men have been true to duty and to God.

Except the one perfect Pattern, there is not described in the sacred pages a single character more worthy of emulation than that of the prophet Daniel. Exposed in youth to all the allurements of a royal court, he became a man of unbending integrity and fervent devotion to God. He was subjected to the fierce temptations of Satan, yet his character was not vacillating, nor his course changeable. He was firm where many would be yielding; he was true where they would be false; he was strong where they would be weak. Daniel was a lofty cedar of Lebanon. The angel of the Lord addressed this faithful prophet, "O man greatly beloved, thy prayer is heard." Would that the faith, integrity, and devotion of the prophet Daniel might live in the hearts of God's people of today. Never were these noble qualities more needed in the world than now. Never was there greater need of men who will stand firmly and fearlessly for God and the right.

In the records of those who have done and suffered for the name of Jesus, there is no name that shines with a brighter or purer luster than the name of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. The love of Jesus, glowing in his heart, made him self-forgetful, self-denying. He had seen the risen Christ, and the Saviour's image was impressed upon his soul, and shone forth in his life. With faith, courage, and fortitude, that would not be daunted by danger or stayed by obstacles, he pressed his way from land to land to spread the knowledge of the cross. When summoned to stand before the judgment-seat of Nero, and forsaken by his brethren, he was at first thought almost dismayed. Then he gathered courage, as he looked upward to the Source of strength. Though human help forsook him, he declares, "The Lord stood by me, and strengthened me." He placed his hand in the hand of Jesus, and fearlessly went forward to a martyr's death.

Such noble characters have been; such noble characters will be. None can hide

them; none need misinterpret them. They are living epistles, known and read of all men. By the beauty of true goodness shining forth in the life of these chosen men, others were charmed, and were filled with a desire to imitate them. All who seek to reach the Bible standard will stimulate others also to press forward to higher attainments. One whom God is teaching will animate others by his ardent, active efforts for the honor of Christ, and his undying love for souls. In another, a Christ-like meekness and gentleness of spirit will be most apparent. Another will influence many by his fervent charity, his brotherly kindness and Christian courtesy. Still another will manifest such humility and brokenness of heart as will lead the proud and stubborn to self-abasement.

Are the professed followers of Christ thus exemplifying the principles of their faith? Where are the deep, living, holy experiences which men of God were wont to recount? Has the standard of Christianity been lowered to suit the present backslidden condition of God's professed people? No; that standard remains just where God placed it. Holy men of ages past were required to give up all for Christ, to cherish his spirit, and to imitate his example. Nothing less than this will he accept now.

The Christian will begin and end the day with God. His speech will not be frivolous or aimless. He does not indulge in idle jesting or malicious gossip. The peace of God rules in his heart. The power of divine grace strengthens every noble purpose, softens every harsh trait. In his life and character is seen that firm, undaunted principle with which worldliness dares not tamper. Such men are recognized by the world as followers of Christ. They have learned of him. The Sun of Righteousness shines into the heart, and lights up the countenance. Every faculty is strengthened, developed, by the influence of divine grace. Such Christians have an experience that is of some value.

It is the absence of personal religion, of a daily, living experience in the things of God, that creates such coldness and stupor in the church. We have enjoyed great light and many privileges. Shall we turn away from all these blessings, and sacrifice the peculiar, holy character which should distinguish us as children of God? If we thus slight the mercy of God, the judgments denounced against Capernaum will surely fall upon us. Our punishment will be heavier than if we had not enjoyed so great light. Thus the warnings, reproofs, and counsels, which, accepted and obeyed, would bring us untold blessings, become a curse when they are rejected.

The Lord commanded one of his ancient servants, "Pray not thou for this people,

neither lift up cry nor prayer for them; neither make intercession to me; for I will not hear thee." The prophet thus describes the sins which had called forth this fearful denunciation: "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof?" "From the least of them even unto the greatest of them, every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest, every one dealeth falsely. They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace."

The apostles declare that this state of things will find its counterpart in the last days. Many have a form of godliness, but in their daily life deny the power thereof. They have ceased to be convicted of their sins or alarmed at their state. They say in their hearts, "The church is flourishing. Peace and spiritual prosperity are within her borders." The words of the prophet may well apply to these self-deceivers, "They have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations. I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them."

The carnal mind is enmity against God. Not one of us can love and keep his commandments, only as we deny self, and take upon ourselves the yoke of Christ. Divine truth has never been in harmony with the traditions and customs of the world; it has never conformed to their opinions. Christ himself received not honor from men. He was meek and lowly of heart, and made himself of no reputation. His simple dress and unpretending manners were in so marked contrast to the pomposity, self-conceit, and vain display of the Pharisees, that they would not accept him. All witnessed the manifestation of divine power, but few saw in Christ, amid his sufferings and humiliation, the Saviour of the world.

At the present day a form of godliness is popular, even in the world. A profession of Christianity costs little. But those who follow Jesus must walk in the same path of self-denial and cross-bearing which the Master trod. They may be lightly esteemed by the world, but they are honored of God.

No stronger delusion can possess the human mind than that which makes men believe they are on the right foundation, and that God accepts their works, when they are sinning against him. When placed in the furnace fire to be tried by the great Refiner, much that has been esteemed fine gold will be consumed as dross. Can Christ say of his

professed followers, These are my peculiar people; I gave myself for them, to redeem them from all iniquity, that they should show forth my praise, who have called them out of darkness into my marvelous light. Would not the Lord say, rather, How is the beautiful city become a harlot, and my Father's house a place of merchandise. Because of your unbelief, I cannot do many mighty works among you.

We are not to call sin righteousness, or righteousness sin. While we should ever manifest pity and compassion for the erring, we should be governed by sanctified judgment and the fear of God. In their undue sympathy for the sinner, many are learning to palliate sin. The most hardened criminals in our land find a host of sympathizers. Special attention is shown them, simply because their crimes have brought them into disrepute, and exposed them to the penalty of the law. It is considered a virtue to throw the mantle of charity over sins that are misleading and corrupting thousands.

The same spirit is coming into the church. However guilty a wrong-doer may be, however lamentable the results of his course, he will find sympathizers. When he is reproved, there are unconsecrated ones who stand ready to sustain him. By their unwise sympathy, they lead him to look upon himself as abused, and thus they effectually bar his way to repentance and reform.

The approval of men--even of professed Christians--is no evidence of the favor of God. The Christian experience of thousands is gauged by the standard of those who profess to love the truth and to be servants of Christ, but who serve Satan. In their blindness and self-complacency, many are saying, "I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," when Christ declares that they are poor and miserable, blind and naked. To such he addresses the solemn admonition, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

Every one who shall at last enter the kingdom of God will be tested. It will be manifest whether we desire to know and do the will of God, or merely to please ourselves. When called to give up all for Christ, who will stand the test? Many have been guided by their own understanding, and have indulged the desires of their own heart. The treasures of divine grace and love do not overbalance the inducements and attractions of the world. They choose self-gratification rather than Christ and his grace



at the price of self-denial and self-consecration.

The cause of God today calls for men,--men in understanding and Christian experience,--men who are true to God and to the interests of his work. My brethren and sisters in the truth, I know the dangers which surround you. Search the Scriptures, examine your own hearts, meditate, pray, till you realize, by vivid conviction, your true state, till you see the peril which threatens you. Never rest till you know beyond all controversy that you have been transformed by the spirit of Christ; till you have clear evidence that you have been born again. Never rest till you know that Christ abideth in you. It will be vain for you to hope to meet the approval of God, until you come up to the Bible standard.

November 14, 1882

## **Separation from the World**

John the Baptist was a man filled with the Holy Ghost from his birth. If any one could remain unaffected by the corrupting influences of the age in which he lived, it was surely he. Yet he did not venture to trust his own strength; he separated himself from his friends and relatives, that his natural affections might not prove a snare to him. He would not place himself unnecessarily in the way of temptation, nor where the luxuries, or even the conveniences of life would lead him to indulge in ease or gratify his appetite, and thus lessen his physical and mental strength. By such a course the important mission which he came to fill would have failed of its accomplishment.

He subjected himself to a life of privation and solitude in the wilds, where he could preserve a sacred sense of the majesty of God by studying his great book of nature, and thus become acquainted with his character as manifested in his wonderful works. It was an atmosphere calculated to perfect moral culture, and keep the fear of the Lord continually before him. John, the forerunner of Christ, did not expose himself to evil conversation and the corrupting influences of the world. He feared its effects upon his conscience, that sin might not appear to him so exceedingly sinful. He chose rather to have his home in the wilderness, where his senses would not be perverted by his surroundings. We should learn a lesson from this example of one whom Christ honored, and of whom he said, Among those born of women there are none greater than John the Baptist.

The first thirty years of our Saviour's life was passed in retirement. Ministering angels waited upon the Lord of life, as he walked side by side with the peasants and laborers among the hills of Nazareth, unrecognized and unhonored. These high examples should teach us to avoid evil influences, and shun the society of those who do not live aright. We should not flatter ourselves that we are too strong for such influences to affect us, but we should, in humility, guard ourselves from danger.

Lot chose Sodom for his home because he saw advantages to be gained there from a worldly point of view. But after he had established himself, and grown rich in earthly treasure, he was convinced that he had made a mistake in not taking into

consideration the moral standing of the community in which he was to make his home.

The dwellers in Sodom were corrupt; vile conversation greeted his ears daily, and his righteous soul was vexed by the violence and crime which he was powerless to prevent. His children were becoming like these wicked people; for association with them had perverted their morals. Taking all these things into consideration, the worldly riches he had gained seemed small, not worth the price he had paid for them. His family connections were extensive, his children having married among the Sodomites.

The Lord's anger was finally kindled against the wicked inhabitants of the city. The angels of God visited Sodom to bring forth Lot, that he should not perish in the overthrow of the city. They bade him bring his family, his wife, and the sons and daughters who had married in wicked Sodom, and they told him to flee from the place; "for," said the angels, "we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it."

And Lot went out and warned his children. He repeated the words of the angel, "Up, get thee out of this place, for the Lord will destroy this city!" But he seemed to his sons-in-law as one who mocked. And the daughters were influenced by their husbands. They were well enough off where they were. They had great possessions, and could not believe it possible that beautiful Sodom, in a rich and fertile country, would be destroyed by the wrath of a sin-avenging God.

Lot returned sorrowfully to the angels, and repeated the story of his failure. Then the angels commanded him to arise, and take his wife, and the two daughters who were yet in his house and leave the city. But Lot was sad; the thought of leaving his children and his wife, for she refused to go without them, almost broke his heart. They would all have perished in the terrible ruin of Sodom, had not the Lord, in his great mercy, sent his angels to the rescue.

Lot was paralyzed by the great calamity about to occur; he was stupefied with grief at the thought of leaving all that he held dear on earth. But as he lingered, the angels of God laid hold upon his hand, and the hands of his wife and two daughters, and brought them out of the city, and charged them to flee for their lives, neither to look behind them, nor to stay upon all the plain, but to escape to the mountains. How reluctant was Lot to obey the angel, and go as far as possible from corrupt Sodom,

appointed to utter destruction.

Lot pleaded to remain; he distrusted God. Living in the wicked city had weakened his faith and confidence in the justice of the Lord. He pleaded that he could not do as he was required, lest some evil should overtake him, and he should die. Angels were sent on a special mission to save the lives of Lot and his family, but he had so long been surrounded by corrupting influences that his sensibilities were blunted, and he could not discern the works of God and his purposes; he could not trust himself in his hands to do his bidding. He was continually pleading for himself, and this unbelief caused the destruction of his wife.

She looked back to Sodom, murmuring against the dealings of God, and was changed to a pillar of salt, that she might stand as a warning to all those who disregard the special mercies and providences of Heaven. After this terrible retribution, Lot no longer dared to linger by the way, but fled into the mountains, according to the directions of the angels. The sinful conduct of his daughters after leaving Sodom was the result of wicked associations while there. The sense of right and wrong was confused in their minds, and sin did not appear as sin to them.

The case of Lot should be a warning to all those who wish to live a godly life, to separate themselves from all influences calculated to lead them away from God.

Ancient Israel was especially directed by God to be and remain a people separate from all other nations. They were not to witness the idolatry of those about them, lest their own hearts should be corrupted, lest familiarity with ungodly practices should make them appear less wicked in their eyes. Few realize their own weakness, and that the natural sinfulness of the human heart often paralyzes our noblest endeavors.

The baleful influence of sin poisons the life of the soul. Our only safety is in separation from those who live in its darkness. The Lord has enjoined upon us to come out from among them and be separate, and to touch not the unclean thing, and he will receive us and will be a Father unto us, and we shall be his sons and daughters. If we wish to be adopted into the family of God, children of the Heavenly King, we must comply with his conditions; we must come out from the world, and stand as a peculiar people before the Lord, obeying his precepts and serving him.

It is no small matter for a family in an unbelieving community to stand as representatives for Jesus, keeping God's law. We are required to be living epistles, known and read of all men. This position involves fearful responsibilities. In order to live in the light, we must come where the light shines. It is not well for the people of God to lose the privilege of associating with those of like faith with themselves; for the truth loses its importance in their minds, their hearts cease to be enlightened and vivified by its sanctifying influence, and they lose spirituality. They are not strengthened by the words of the living preacher. Worldly thoughts and worldly enterprises are continually exercising their minds to the exclusion of spiritual subjects.

The faith of most Christians will waver if they constantly neglect to meet together for conference and prayer. If it were impossible for them to enjoy such religious privileges, then God would send light direct from Heaven by his angels, to animate, to cheer, and to bless his scattered people. But he does not propose to work a miracle to sustain the faith of his children. They are required to love the truth enough to make some effort to secure the privileges and blessings vouchsafed them of God.

Many devote nearly all their time to their own temporal interests and pleasures, and grudge the time spent and expense involved in going a distance from their homes to meet with a company gathered together in the name of the Lord. The word of God defines covetousness as idolatry; then how many idolaters are there, even among those who profess to be the followers of Christ.

It is required that we meet together and bear testimony to the truth. The angel of God said:

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

It will pay, then, to improve the privileges within our reach, and, even at some sacrifice, to assemble with those who fear God and speak for him. For he is represented as hearkening to those testimonies, while angels write them in a book. God will remember those who have met together and thought upon his name, and he will spare

them from the great conflagration. They will be as precious jewels in his sight, when his wrath shall fall on the shelterless head of the sinner.

Said our Saviour, in his last prayer for his disciples, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." And, looking forward to the future life, he prays for these chosen and faithful ones, "that they may be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." It is not a vain thing to serve God. There is a priceless reward for those who, keeping themselves "unspotted from the world," devote their life to the service of their Creator.

November 21, 1882

## **Temperance a Christian Duty**

Man came from the hand of God perfect in every faculty of mind and body, in perfect soundness, therefore in perfect health. It took more than two thousand years of indulgence of appetite and lustful passions to create such a state of things in the human organism as would lessen vital force. Through successive generations the tendency was more swiftly downward. Indulgence of appetite and passion combined, led to excess and violence; debauchery and abominations of every kind weakened the energies, and brought upon the race diseases of every type, until the vigor and glory of the first generations passed away, and man began to show signs of decay in the third generation from Adam. Successive generations after the flood degenerated more rapidly.

All this weight of woe and accumulated suffering can be traced to the indulgence of appetite and passion. Luxurious living and the use of wine corrupt the blood, inflame the passions, and produce diseases of every kind. Parents leave maladies as a legacy to their children. As a rule, every intemperate man who rears children, transmits his inclinations and evil tendencies to his offspring, and the evil does not end here; he gives to them disease from his own inflamed and corrupted blood. Licentiousness, disease, and imbecility are transmitted as an inheritance of woe from father to son and from generation to generation, bringing anguish and suffering into the world, which is no less than a repetition of the fall of man.

The continual transgression of nature's laws is a continual transgression of the law of God. The present weight of suffering and anguish which we see everywhere, the present deformity, decrepitude, disease, and imbecility now flooding the world, make it, in comparison to what it might be, and what God designed it should be, a lazar-house. The present generation are feeble in mental, moral, and physical power.

All this accumulated misery from generation to generation is because fallen man will break the law of God. Sins of the greatest magnitude are committed through the indulgence of perverted appetite.

The effort made to create a taste for the disgusting, filthy poison, tobacco, leads

to the desire for stronger stimulants, as liquor, which is taken, on one plea or another, for some imaginary infirmity, or to prevent some possible disease. Thus an unnatural appetite is created for these hurtful and exciting stimulants. The increase of intemperance in this generation is alarming. Beverage-loving, liquor-drinking men may be seen everywhere. Their intellect is enfeebled, the moral powers are weakened, the sensibilities are benumbed; the claims of God and Heaven are not realized, and eternal things are not appreciated. The Bible declares that no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God. Every intemperate person renders himself accountable, not only for the sins which he commits in his own person, but for the evil results that his dissipated course of life has brought upon his family and upon the community.

The race is groaning under a weight of accumulated woe, because of the sins of former generations. And yet with scarcely a thought or care, men and women of the present generation indulge intemperance by surfeiting and drunkenness, and thereby leave, as a legacy for the next generation, disease, enfeebled intellects, and polluted morals.

Intemperance of any kind is the worst sort of selfishness. Those who truly fear God and keep his commandments look upon these things in the light of reason and religion. How can any man or woman keep the law of God, which requires man to love his neighbor as himself, and indulge intemperate appetite, which benumbs the brain, weakens the intellect, and fills the body with disease? Intemperance inflames the passions, and gives loose rein to lust. Reason and conscience are blinded by the lower passions.

It is not an easy matter to overcome established habits, to deny the appetite for narcotics and stimulants. In the name of Christ alone can this great victory be gained. Our Saviour paid a dear price for man's redemption. In the wilderness of temptation he suffered the keenest pangs of hunger; and while emaciated with fasting, Satan was at hand with his manifold temptations to assail the Son of God, to take advantage of his weakness and overcome him, and thus thwart the plan of salvation. But Christ was steadfast. He overcame in behalf of the race, that he might rescue them from the degradation of the fall. Christ's experience is for our benefit. His example in overcoming appetite points out the way for those who would be his followers, and finally sit with him on his throne. The Son of God sympathizes with the weaknesses of man. His love for the fallen race was so great that he made an infinite sacrifice to reach



man in his degradation, and through his divine power elevate him finally to his throne. But it rests with man whether Christ shall accomplish for him that which he is fully able to do.

Will man take hold of divine power, and with determination and perseverance resist Satan as Christ has given him example in his conflict with the foe in the wilderness of temptation? God cannot save man, against his will, from the power of Satan's artifices. Man must work with his human power, aided by the divine power of Christ, to resist and to conquer at any cost to himself. In short, man must overcome as Christ overcame. And then, through the victory which it is his privilege to gain by the all-powerful name of Jesus, he may become an heir of God and joint-heir with Christ.

This could not be the case if Christ alone did all the overcoming. Man must do his part. Man must be victor on his own account, through the strength and grace that Jesus gives him. Man must be a co-worker with Christ in the labor of overcoming, and then he will be partaker with Christ of his glory. It is a sacred work in which we are engaged. The apostle Paul exhorts his brethren, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

It is a sacred duty that we owe to God to keep the spirit pure, as a temple for the Holy Ghost. If the heart and mind are devoted to the service of God, obeying all his commandments, if we love him with all the heart, might, mind, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves, we shall be found loyal and true to the requirements of Heaven.

Again the apostle says: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." He also urges his brethren to earnest diligence and steady perseverance in their efforts for purity and holiness of life, in these words: "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we, an incorruptible."

He presents before us the spiritual warfare and its reward, in contrast with the various games instituted among the heathen in honor of their gods. For these games, young men were trained by the most severe discipline. Every indulgence which would have a tendency to weaken the powers of the body was forbidden. Those who submitted to the training process were not allowed luxurious food or wine; for this would lessen

personal vigor, healthful activity, fortitude, and firmness. It was considered the highest honor to gain a simple chaplet which would fade in a few short hours.

Many witnesses, kings and nobles, were present on these occasions. The competitors for this perishable crown, after they had exercised strict self-denial, and submitted to rigid discipline in order to obtain personal vigor and activity with the hope of becoming victors, were even then not sure of the prize. The prize could be awarded to but one. Some might labor fully as hard as others, and put forth their utmost efforts to gain the crowning honor, but, as they reached forth the hand to secure the prize, another, an instant before them, might secure the coveted treasure.

This is not the case in the Christian warfare. All may run this race, and may be sure of victory and immortal honor, if they submit to the conditions. Says Paul, "So run that ye may obtain." He then explains the conditions which are necessary for them to observe in order to be successful: "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things."

If heathen men, who are not controlled by enlightened conscience, who have not the fear of God before them, would deny themselves of every weakening indulgence merely for a wreath of perishable substance and the applause of the multitude, how much more should they who are running the Christian race in the hope of immortality and the approval of Heaven, be willing to deny themselves unhealthy stimulants and indulgences which degrade the morals, enfeeble the intellect, and bring the higher powers in subjection to the animal appetites and passions.

Multitudes in the world are witnessing this game of life, the Christian warfare. And this is not all. The Monarch of the universe, and the myriads of heavenly angels are spectators of this race--anxiously watching to see who will be successful overcomers, and win the crown of glory that fadeth not away. With intense interest, God and heavenly angels mark the self-denying, agonizing efforts of those who engage to run the Christian race. The reward given to every man will be in accordance with the persevering energy and faithful earnestness with which he has performed his part in the great contest.

In the games referred to, but one was sure of the prize. In the Christian race, says the apostle, I run "not as uncertainly." We are not to be disappointed at the end of the

race. To all those who fully comply with the conditions in God's word, with a sense of their responsibility to preserve physical vigor and activity of body, that they may have well-balanced minds and sound morals, the race is not uncertain. They all may gain the prize, and win and wear the crown of immortal glory.

The apostle Paul tells us that "we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." A cloud of witnesses are observing our Christian course. "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

The world should be no criterion for us. It is fashionable to indulge the appetite with luxurious food and unnatural stimulants, strengthening by indulgence the animal propensities, and crippling the growth and development of the moral faculties.

There is no encouragement given to the sons and daughters of Adam that they may become victorious overcomers in the Christian warfare unless they decide to practice temperance in all things. If they do this, they will not fight as one that beateth the air.

If Christians will keep the body in subjection and bring all their appetites and passions under the control of enlightened conscience, feeling it a duty that they owe to God and to their neighbor to obey the laws which govern health and life, they will have the blessing of physical and mental vigor. They will have moral power to engage in the warfare against Satan; and in the name of Him who conquered appetite in their behalf, they may be more than conquerors on their own account.

November 28, 1882

## **Love of the World**

In his sermon on the mount, our Saviour admonished his followers, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven." Notice, that those who lay up treasure in Heaven do it for themselves; they are thereby advancing their own interests. Those who lay up treasure upon earth will center their interest and affection here. They cultivate a love for money, for houses and lands, until it absorbs the powers of mind and body; their love for worldly possessions is greater than their love for souls for whom Christ died. The god of this world blinds their eyes, so that eternal things are not valued.

The great leading temptations that would assail man, Christ met in the wilderness of temptation. There he encountered, single-handed, the wily, subtle foe, and overcame him. The first great temptation was the indulgence of appetite; the second, presumption; the third, love of the world.

The thrones and kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, were offered to Christ, if he would bow down to Satan. Never will man be tried with temptations as powerful as those which assailed Christ. Satan came with worldly honor, wealth, and the pleasures of life, and presented them in the most attractive light to allure and deceive. "All this," said he to Christ, "will I give thee, if thou wilt worship me." Christ repelled the wily foe, and came off victor.

Satan has better success in approaching man. He whispers, "All this money, all this gain, this land, this power, honor and riches will I give thee." For what? His conditions generally are, that integrity shall be yielded, conscientiousness blunted, and selfishness indulged. Through devotion to worldly interests, Satan receives the homage which he asks. The door is left open for him to enter as he pleases, with his evil train of impatience, love of self, pride, avarice, over-reaching, and the whole catalogue of sinful traits. Man is charmed, and treacherously lured on to ruin. If we yield ourselves to worldliness of heart and life, Satan is satisfied.

Christ overcame Satan, showing us how we also may overcome. Christ resisted Satan with Scripture. He might have had recourse to his own divine power, and used his own words; but he said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." With the second temptation he says, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Christ's example is before us. If the sacred Scriptures were studied and followed, the Christian would be fortified to meet the wily foe; but the word of God is neglected, and disaster and defeat follow.

"What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Many are selling their souls at a cheap market. None can afford to make this great sacrifice. God has intrusted talents to our stewardship. To many he has given talents of means and of influence. If they would with industry, perseverance, and zeal, improve the capital placed in their hands, they might be successful in turning many souls from error to righteousness. These souls would labor for others, and thus influence and means would be constantly increasing and multiplying in the Master's cause. If the professed followers of Christ would engage in his service with the same earnestness which they manifest in acquiring property, what a work they might accomplish in extending the Redeemer's kingdom!

Those with but small capacity, sanctified by the love of God, can do good for the Master; but they who have quick, discerning minds may employ them in his work with grand results. To wrap them in a napkin, and hide them in the earth, and deprive God of the increase of the talents he has intrusted to them, is a great wrong.

We are probationers. The Master is coming to investigate our course, and he will inquire what use has been made of the talents lent us. My brethren and sisters in the faith, have you done what you could to enlighten the minds of men in regard to truth, or have you found no time from your business cares and perplexities to devote to this work? It is a crime to use the bounties of God to diminish physical strength, and separate your affections from God. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." You cannot love this world, and love the truths of God. "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

Will you gather together earthly treasure to be destroyed in the great

conflagration, or will you use your talents of means and of influence for the glory of God, and send your treasure before you into Heaven? The conflagrations and disasters by sea and land that have visited our country have been sent as a warning of what is about to come upon the world. God would show the children of men that he can kindle upon their idols a fire that water cannot quench. The great general conflagration is but just ahead, when all the wasted labor of life will be consumed. But the treasure laid up in Heaven will be safe. No thief can approach nor fire destroy it.

When the young man came to Christ saying, "Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" Jesus bade him keep the commandments. He returned answer, "All these have I kept from my youth up. What lack I yet?" Jesus looked with love upon the young man, and faithfully pointed out to him his deficiency in keeping the commandments. He did not love his neighbor as himself. Christ showed him his true character. His selfish love of riches was the defect which, if not removed, would debar him from Heaven. "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven; and come and follow me." Christ would have him understand that he required nothing of him more than he himself had experienced. All he asked was that he should follow his example.

Christ left his riches and glory, and became poor, that man through his poverty might be made rich. He now requires him for the sake of these riches to yield earthly things, and secure Heaven. Christ knew that while the affections were upon worldly treasure, they would be withdrawn from God; therefore he said to the lawyer, "Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven; and come and follow me." How did he receive the words of Christ? Was he rejoiced that he could secure the heavenly treasure? He was very sorrowful; for he had great possessions. Riches to him were honor and power. The great amount of his treasure made such a disposal of it seem like an impossibility.

Here is the danger of riches to the avaricious man. The more he gains, the harder it is for him to be generous. To diminish his wealth is like parting with life. Rather than do this, he turns from the attraction of the immortal reward in order to retain and increase his earthly possessions. He accumulates and hoards. Had he kept the commandments, his worldly possessions would not have been so great. How could he, plotting and striving for self, love God with all his heart, with all his mind, and with all his strength, and his neighbor as himself? Had he distributed to the necessities of the

poor, and blessed his fellow-men with a portion of his means, as their wants demanded, he would have been far happier, and would have had greater heavenly treasure, and less of earth to place his affections upon.

Christ assured the young man who came to him, that if he would obey his requirements he should have treasure in Heaven. This world-loving man was very sorrowful. He wanted Heaven, but he desired to retain his wealth. He renounced immortal life for the love of money and power. Oh, what a miserable exchange! Yet how many are pursuing the same course who profess to be keeping all the commandments of God. In their first experience their hearts were all aglow with love for the truth; their minds were absorbed in the study of the Scriptures; they saw new beauty in every line. Then the good seed sown in the heart was springing up, and bearing fruit to the glory of God; but after a time, the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches choke the good seed of the word of God sown in the heart; and they fail to bring forth fruit. The truth struggles for supremacy, but the cares of this life and the love of other things gain the victory. Satan seeks through the attractions of this world to enchain them, and paralyze their moral powers, that they should have no sense of God's claims upon them.

Thus the love of gain becomes, with many, the ruling passion. They become slaves to this world. Selfish interests are predominant. Their example tends to lead others away from the truth. They have, by profession, said to the world, "Our citizenship is not here, but above," while their works proclaim that they are dwellers on the earth. The word of God declares that the day of Judgment shall come as a snare upon all those who dwell on the earth. Their profession is only a hindrance to other souls,--a false light to lure them to destruction.

Christ commits talents to his servants, and bids them, Improve these till I come. When the Master cometh, and all are called to strict account for their use of the talents intrusted to them, how shall we bear the investigation? Who will be prepared to return to the Master his talents doubled, showing that they have been judicious as well as faithful and persevering workers in his service?

God holds us as his debtors, and also as debtors to our fellow-men who have not the light and truth. Said Paul, "I am debtor both to the Greeks and to the barbarians, both to the wise and to the unwise." God had revealed to Paul his truth, and in so doing

made him a debtor to those who were in darkness, to enlighten them. God has given us light, not to hide under a bushel, but to set on a candlestick, that all who are in the house may be benefited. Our light should shine to others to reveal to them the way of everlasting life.

How can the value of houses and lands bear comparison with precious souls for whom Christ died? Through our instrumentality, these souls may be saved with us in the kingdom of glory; but we cannot take there the smallest portion of our earthly treasure. Let men acquire what they may, and preserve it with all the jealous care which they are capable of exercising, yet the mandate may go forth from the Lord, and in a few hours a fire which no skill can quench may destroy the accumulations of an entire life; they may become a mass of smouldering ruins.

The sword of wrath is stretched out over a people who have by their pride and wickedness provoked the displeasure of a just God. Storms, earthquakes, whirlwinds, fire, and the sword will spread desolation everywhere, until men's hearts shall fail them for fear, looking for those things which shall come upon the earth. We know not how small a space is between us and eternity. We know not how soon our probation may close.

Of what advantage will be earthly treasures, when life here closes, or when Christ makes his appearance? How will the wealth for which many have bartered their souls be appropriated, should they be suddenly called to close their probation, and their voice no longer control it? What will it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Our means are of no more value than sand, only as used to provide for the daily necessities of life, and to bless others and advance the cause of God.

God is not pleased that his servants should be ignorant of his will, novices in spiritual understanding, but wise in worldly wisdom and knowledge. Our earthly interests can bear no comparison with our eternal welfare. God has a work for us to do higher than that of acquiring property.

The weight of the wrath of God will fall upon those who have misspent their time, and served mammon instead of their Creator. Those who live for God and for Heaven, pointing the way of life to others, will go onward and upward to higher and holier joys. They will be rewarded with the "Well done, thou good and faithful servant.



Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

December 12, 1882

## The Two Ways

"Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." These roads are distinct, separate, extending in opposite directions. One leads to eternal death, the other to eternal life. One is broad and smooth, the other narrow and rugged. So the parties that travel them are opposite in character, in life, in dress, and in conversation.

Those who travel in the narrow way are talking of the happiness they will have at the end of the journey. Their countenances are often sad, yet often beam with holy joy. They do not dress like the company in the broad road, nor talk like them, nor act like them. A pattern has been given them. A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief opened that road for them, and traveled it himself. His followers see his footprints, and are comforted and cheered. He went through safely; so can they, if they follow in his steps.

In the broad road all are occupied with their persons, their dress, and the pleasures in the way. They indulge freely in mirth and revelry, and think not of their journey's end, of the certain ruin at the termination of the path. Every day they approach nearer their destruction, yet they madly rush on faster and faster.

Many who travel in the broad road have the words written upon them, "Dead to the world. The end of all things is at hand. Be ye also ready." They appear like the gay, thoughtless ones around them, their conversation is like that of their companions; but they occasionally point with great satisfaction to the letters on their garments, calling for others to have the same upon theirs. They are in the broad way, yet profess to be of the number who are traveling the narrow path. Those around them say, "There is no distinction between us. We are all alike; we dress and talk and act alike."

When Christ shall come, will he accept a people who are conformed to the world? Will he acknowledge them as his people whom he has purified to himself? No, never, None but the pure and holy will he acknowledge as his. Only those who have been

purified and made white through suffering will Christ accept.

How was it with the people of God in 1843 and 1844? There was a spirit of consecration then that there is not now. What has come over the professed peculiar people of God? Whence is the conformity to the world, the unwillingness to suffer for the truth's sake? Whence so great a lack of submission to the will of God? There is a lesson for us in the experience of the children of Israel after they left Egypt. God in mercy called them out from the Egyptians that they might worship him without hindrance or restraint. He proved and tried them by bringing them into strait places; he wrought for them in the way by mighty miracles. Yet notwithstanding his wonderful dealings with them, and the manifestations of his power in their deliverance, they murmured when tried or proved by him. Their language was, "Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt."

Professed Christians often think it strange that the children of Israel murmured as they journeyed; that they could have been so ungrateful as to forget the gracious dealings of God with them. But many who think thus have done worse than they. God has given us light upon his word, revealing the great truths for this time, and making them so plain and clear that they cannot be misunderstood by the earnest seeker. Yet how few rightly prize this great blessing. When trials arise, how many are ready to look back and think that their lot is hard. They do not bear in mind that the way which they are traveling is a rugged, self-denying way, and that they must not expect everything to move on as smoothly as if they were in the broad road.

Why is it so hard to lead a humble, self-denying life? Because professed Christians are not dead to the world. It is easy living after we are dead to sin. But many are longing for the leeks and onions of Egypt. They have a disposition to dress and act as much like the world as possible and yet go to Heaven. Such are seeking to climb up some other way. They do not enter the strait gate, and walk in the narrow path.

The conformity of professed Christians to the world is a disgrace to their profession, a disgrace to the cause of God. They profess to have come out from the world and to be separate, yet are so near like them in dress, in conversation, and actions, that there is no distinction. While in the possession of life and health, many devote their God-given time and means to the adorning of the poor mortal bodies, forgetting that these are liable at any moment to be touched by the finger of God and laid upon a bed of

death. But as they approach their last change, and mortal anguish racks their frames, the great inquiry is, "Am I prepared to die? prepared to appear before God in judgment, and pass the grand review?" Ask them then how they feel about decorating their persons, and if they have any sense of what it is to be prepared to appear before God, they will tell you that if they could take back and live over the past, they would correct their lives and shun the folly of the world, its vanity and pride; they would live to the glory of God, and set an example to all around them.

Why are so few interested in their eternal welfare, so few preparing for their last change? Earth attracts them, its treasures seem of worth to them. They find enough to engross the mind, and have no time to prepare for Heaven. Satan is ever seeking to plunge them deeper and deeper into difficulty. As soon as one perplexity or trouble is off the mind, he stands ready to involve them in another by begetting within them an unholy desire for more of the things of earth. Thus their time passes, and when it is too late, they see that they have gained nothing substantial. They have grasped at shadows, and lost eternal life.

Many who imitate the customs and fashions of the world claim that they do this in order to have an influence with worldlings. But here they make a sad and fatal mistake. If they would have a true and saving influence, let them live out their profession, show their faith by their righteous works, and make wide the distinction between the Christian and the world. Our words, our dress, our actions, should tell for God. Then all will take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus. Unbelievers will see that the truth which we profess has a holy influence, that faith in Christ's coming affects our character. If any wish to have their influence tell in favor of the truth, let them live it out, and thus imitate the humble Pattern.

Parents, when you set an example of pride for your children, you are sowing seed that will spring up and bear fruit. That which you sow you will reap. The harvest will be plenteous and sure. It is easier to teach a lesson of pride than a lesson of humility. Satan and his angels stand ready to make the act of yours or the word that you may speak effectual to encourage your children to imitate the fashions of the world, and in their pride to mingle with society that is not holy. O parents, you thus plant in your own bosoms a thorn that you will often feel in anguish. When you would counteract the sad lesson you have taught your children, you will find it well-nigh impossible. You may deny them those things that would gratify their pride, yet it still lives in the heart, and

nothing can destroy it but the quick and powerful Spirit of God. When this finds its way to the heart, it will work like a refining fire, and pride and love of the world will be consumed.

Unless you awake to the eternal interests of your children, they will surely be lost through your neglect. And the possibility that unfaithful parents will be saved themselves is very small. The lives of parents should be exemplary. They should exert a holy influence in their families. As they value the eternal interests of their children, they should rebuke pride in them, faithfully rebuke it, and encourage it not in word or deed.

Jesus, the King of glory, who gave his life to redeem us, wore a crown of thorns. It was thus that our Master's sacred head was adorned. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." Yet the very ones that profess to be redeemed by the blood of Jesus, spilled for them, can indulge pride in the adornment of their persons, and still claim to be followers of the holy, humble, self-denying Pattern. Oh that all could see this as God sees it!

Israel have been asleep to the pride, and fashion, and worldliness in the very midst of them. It is these things that separate God from his people, that shut the ark away from them. When the truth affects their hearts, it will cause a death to the world. They will then lay aside the outward adorning, and if they are dead they will not be moved by the laugh, jeer, and scorn of unbelievers. They will feel an anxious desire to be separate from the world, like their Master. They will not imitate its pride, fashions, or customs. The noble object will be ever before them, to glorify God, and gain the immortal inheritance. This prospect will swallow up all beside of an earthly nature. God will have a people separate and distinct from the world. And as soon as any indulge a desire to imitate the fashions of the world, just so soon God ceases to acknowledge them as his children. They show that they are strangers to grace, strangers to the meek and lowly Jesus. If they had acquainted themselves with him, they would walk worthy of him.

A form of godliness will not save any. All must have a deep and living experience. This alone will save them in the time of trouble before us. Then their work will be tried, of what sort it is. If it is gold, silver, and precious stones, they will be hid as in the secret of the Lord's pavilion. But if their work is wood, hay, stubble, nothing

can shield them from the fierceness of Jehovah's wrath.

Many measure themselves among themselves and compare their lives with the lives of others. This should not be. No one but Christ is given us as an example, and each should strive to excel in imitating him. We are co-workers with Christ, or co-workers with the enemy. We either gather with Christ, or scatter abroad. We are decided, whole-hearted Christians, or none at all. None will enter Heaven without making a sacrifice. Those who are willing to make any and every sacrifice for eternal life will have it; and it will be worth suffering for, worth crucifying self for, and sacrificing every idol for. The far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory outweighs every earthly treasure, and eclipses every earthly attraction.

December 26, 1882

## Holiday Gifts

The holiday season is fast approaching with its interchange of gifts, and old and young are intently studying what they can bestow upon their friends as a token of affectionate remembrance. It is pleasant to receive a gift, however small, from those we love. It is an assurance that we are not forgotten, and seems to bind us to them a little closer.

Brethren and sisters, while you are devising gifts for one another, I would remind you of our heavenly Friend, lest you should be unmindful of his claims. Will he not be pleased if we show that we have not forgotten him? Jesus, the Prince of Life, gave all to bring salvation within our reach. Oh, matchless love! he left his royal home, his high command, and stooped to share our poverty and shame, that we might be exalted to share his riches and his throne. His glorious perfection called forth the admiration of the angelic host; yet he, their adored Commander, came down to a world sunken in sin, that he might give us a perfect example in his life. Step by step, he descended to the deepest humiliation, that he might reach fallen, guilty men, and lift them up to become sons of God. For us he submitted to insult and shameful abuse. For us he denied himself at every point. He suffered even unto death, that he might give us eternal life.

It is through Christ that we receive every blessing. We may come to him in our poverty and need, and he will listen to our petitions, and supply our every want. We are dependent upon him every moment for grace and strength to maintain our integrity and to continue in his love. How often we need to have the bread of life broken to our souls! How often we need to be refreshed at the fountain of living waters! Every temporal as well as every spiritual blessing, is a continual witness of his beneficence. The recurring seasons, with the rich and varied blessings which they bring, the refreshing rain and the glad sunshine, every good thing we receive, attests the continuance of our Creator's gift to man.

Shall not all these precious tokens of his love call forth a response from us in free-will offerings for his cause? Shall not our heavenly Benefactor share in the tokens of our gratitude and love? Come, brethren and sisters, come with your children, even the

babes in your arms, and bring your offerings to God according to your ability. Make melody to him in your hearts, and let his praise be upon your lips. Let us rejoice that our Saviour liveth to make intercession for us in the presence of Jehovah. As a people we have backslidden from God; let us return unto him, and he will return unto us, and will heal all our backslidings. Let us, upon the coming Christmas and New Year's festivals, not only make an offering to God of our means, but give ourselves unreservedly to him, a living sacrifice.

From this time till the opening of the new year, let the theme of our thoughts be, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people." You have taxed your inventive powers to prepare something that will surprise and gratify your friends. Let us in these last days of 1882, be as anxious, as earnest, as persevering, to render to God that which is due him.

While our heavenly Father has crowned our lives with abundance to supply our temporal wants, his mercies have been abused because they were so full and free. Many forget that their obligations to God increase with the continuous manifestations of his love and care, and that all these call for acknowledgment from us in gifts and offerings to sustain the various branches of his work. Such have now a precious opportunity to redeem the past, and to show that God has the first place in their affections. Let not our best thoughts, our most earnest efforts, our most precious offerings, be given to earthly friends, while our Creator is neglected and forgotten. I speak to those who profess to be his dear children: What will you bring to God as a token of your love and gratitude? However small the offering, he will accept it, if it is the best you have to bring, and is given in love and sincerity of heart.

I feel sad as I think how many are so engrossed with thoughts of their friends and the gifts they are preparing for them that they will lose sight of their obligations to God. They will not seek to purify the soul temple from defilement that they may present to the Lord an offering in righteousness. During the past year, Satan has been making most earnest effort to sow discord and dissension among brethren. Now, as the old year is passing away and the new year coming in, is a good time for those who have cherished alienation and bitterness to make confession to one another. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." This is the Lord's direction; will we obey him, or choose to remain in pride, and justify our course of wrong? Oh!



that many may seek to have the sins of the past year blotted out, and pardon written against their names in the heavenly record.

We must forgive those who trespass against us, if we would obtain pardon and grace when we approach the mercy-seat. Mercy and love must be cherished by all who would be followers of Jesus. When Peter asked, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" Jesus replied, "I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but Until seventy times seven." He then enforced the duty of forgiveness, by the parable of the two debtors. One was forgiven a debt of ten thousand talents, and then refused to show mercy to his fellow-servant who owed him a hundred pence. The pardon granted to that hard-hearted servant was revoked, and he was delivered to the tormentors. Our Lord makes the application of the parable in these impressive words: "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

Here is work for every family and every church. Make haste, brethren and sisters, to improve the few remaining days of 1882 in setting your own hearts in order, and making every wrong right. Remember that we shall be forgiven only as we forgive. Let all enmity, dissension, and bitterness die with the old year. Let kindness and brotherly and sisterly affection revive in our hearts. We may open the new year with a clean record. How happy the thought! Let us draw near to God "with a true heart in full assurance of faith," that the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, may keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

I entreat the followers of Jesus not to let the precious opportunities of these coming days pass unimproved. Let not time and means be spent in preparing gifts which will benefit neither giver nor receiver. Remember that both your time and means are intrusted you of God, and that he will call you to account for the manner in which you employ his gifts. As Christians we cannot honor a custom which is not approved of Heaven. Let us, rather, seek to bring our hearts into a right condition, to free ourselves from pride, vanity, selfishness, and every other evil, and let mercy, truth, goodness, and love dwell therein. Let us remember the Lord our Creator, and bring to him the offering of gratitude, and he will accept not only the gift but the giver. We may have such a spirit of love and joy in our hearts and homes as will make angels glad.

If all the means that will at this holiday season be expended to gratify

unsanctified desire, or that will be needlessly invested, were brought as an offering of gratitude to God, to be used in advancing his cause, what an amount would flow into the treasury! Who are willing this year to deviate from their usual custom? How many will turn their thoughts and plans into a more elevated, heavenly channel? In this time of peril and backsliding from God because of selfish indulgence, will we not look from the human to the divine? Will we not show our remembrance of God and our gratitude for his continual mercies, and, above all, for the gift of his dear Son? Shall we not seek to conform to the Divine Model? to imitate Him who went about doing good?

I address my brethren upon whom God has bestowed of this world's goods: What will you do at the beginning of this new year to show your gratitude to the Giver of all your mercies? Will you return to him in willing offerings a portion of the gifts he has freely bestowed upon you? Will you, by your Christmas and New Year's gifts, acknowledge that all things belong to God, and that all the blessings which we receive are the result of divine beneficence?

When Jesus ascended to Heaven, he committed his work on earth to his disciples, and bade them carry it forward in his name. As followers of Christ we are to be his representatives among men. The salvation of perishing souls calls for our personal effort and for our means. This should be the great object continually before us. It is to accomplish this that God has intrusted us with means. Let us then render to him that which is his own. Let the men of means make a free-will offering to God by liberal gifts for our publishing houses and other institutions. These important instrumentalities in the cause of God are heavily burdened and seriously crippled in their work for want of means. There are still debts upon some of our houses of worship. If we would this year deny ourselves, and by our offerings clear these from debt, would it not be pleasing to our heavenly Father?

And it is not the wealthy alone that can aid in advancing the work of God. If our young men would but deny self for the truth's sake, if they were willing to work hard and economize, they might have a capital with which to pay their expenses at college, and thus qualify themselves for greater usefulness, and they might also have a reserve fund to answer the calls for means for the different branches of our work. If our young sisters felt the claims which God has upon them, they would dispense with ornaments and needless trimming, and would earnestly seek for the inward adorning; and instead of expending all their earnings for clothing or in selfish indulgence, they would have

something to spare for the cause of Christ.

In every church, however small, special efforts should be made to show our gratitude to God by bringing our offerings for his cause. Let those who desire a Christmas tree make its boughs fruitful with gifts for the needy, and offerings for the treasury of God. And let the children learn the blessedness of giving by bringing their little gifts to add to the offerings of their parents.

The claims of God should take the precedence of any and every other, and should be met at any cost or sacrifice to ourselves. However small our income, we should faithfully reserve for him that which he claims as his. Saith the Lord, "Them that honor me I will honor." To withhold our tithes and offerings from the treasury of the Lord, is accounted of him as robbery. Yet are there not many, even among us, who meet all other claims before the claims of God? Some bring no offerings for his cause, and even withhold the tithe, which he has distinctly reserved for himself. Some of these persons are yet in apparent prosperity. In his great mercy God is still sparing them that they may see and put away their sin. Others are already feeling his curse upon them. They are brought into straitened circumstances, and feel less and less ability to give, when if they had made God's claims first, and had with a willing heart brought their offerings to him, they would have been blessed with more means to bestow.

"God loveth a cheerful giver," and if we with a grateful heart bring our gifts and offerings to him, "not grudgingly or of necessity," his blessing will attend us as he has promised, "I will open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing." And though it may have cost self-denial and sacrifice on our part, the approval of our conscience and the blessing of Heaven will make this holiday season one of the happiest we have ever experienced.

While urging upon all the duty of first bringing their offerings to God, I would not wholly condemn the practice of making Christmas and New Years gifts to our friends. It is right to bestow upon one another tokens of love and remembrance if we do not in this forget God, our best friend. We should make our gifts such as will prove a real benefit to the receiver. I would recommend such books as will be an aid in understanding the word of God, or that will increase our love for its precepts. Provide something to be read during these long winter evenings. For those who can procure it, D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation will be both interesting and profitable. From

this work we may gain some knowledge of what has been accomplished in the past in the great work of reform. We can see how God poured light into the minds of those who searched his word, how much the men ordained and sent forth by him were willing to suffer for the truth's sake, and how hard it is for the great mass of mankind to renounce their errors and to receive and obey the teachings of the Scriptures. During the winter evenings, when our children were young, we read from this history with the deepest interest. We made it a practice to read instructive and interesting books, with the Bible, in the family circle, and our children were always happy as we thus entertained them. Thus we prevented a restless desire to be out in the street with young companions, and at the same time cultivated in them a taste for solid reading.

Those in charge of our publishing houses at Battle Creek, Mich., and Oakland, Cal., have been led by a sense of duty to make a careful selection of the best books, which they offer for sale at reasonable rates. Those who wish books will do well to purchase these in preference to the great mass of current literature that will strengthen neither mind nor morals. Many of our people already have the "Life of Christ." The "Life of Paul," now offered for sale at this Office, is another useful and deeply interesting work which should be widely circulated. The volumes of "Spirit of Prophecy," should be in every family, and should be read aloud in the family circle. More than one-half of our people know little or nothing of the contents of these books, and they are losing much by their neglect.

The Testimonies contain instruction which meets the case of all, both parents and children. Should these be read aloud to the entire family, the children as well as the parents would be benefited by their counsels, warnings, and reproofs. While these are placed out of sight and neglected for the reading of fictitious, sensational literature, both yourselves and your children will be retrograding mentally and spiritually.

Many Sabbath-keepers neglect to take the Review, and some have neither the Review nor the Signs. They plead as an excuse that they cannot afford to take these papers which it is so important for them to have. But in many cases several secular papers will be found upon their tables for their children to peruse. The influence of most of the periodicals of the day is such as to render the word of God distasteful, and to destroy a relish for all useful and instructive reading. The mind assimilates to that which it feeds upon. The secular papers are filled with accounts of murders, robberies and other revolting crimes, and the mind of the reader dwells on the scenes of vice therein

depicted. But indulgence, the reading of sensational or demoralizing literature becomes a habit, like the use of opium or other baleful drugs, and as a result, the minds of thousands are enfeebled, debased, and even crazed. Satan is doing more through the productions of the press to weaken the minds and corrupt the morals of the youth than by any other means.

Let all reading of this character be banished from your houses, let books that are useful, instructive, and elevating, be placed in your libraries and upon your tables, with the Review and Herald, our church paper, and the Signs of the Times, our missionary paper, and the effect upon both parents and children will be good. During these long winter evenings, let parents see that all their children are at home, and then let the time be devoted to the reading of the Scriptures and other interesting books that will impart knowledge and inculcate right principles. Let the best reader be selected to read aloud, while other members of the family are engaged in useful occupations. Thus these evenings at home may be made both pleasant and profitable. Pure healthful reading will be to the mind what healthful food is to the body. You will thus become stronger to resist temptation, to form right habits, and to act upon right principles.

There is in many families professing to believe the truth, a shameful neglect of searching the Scriptures. They are ignorant, when it is their privilege to be wise. All should take time for the daily study of the word of God, with earnest prayer that they may learn the way of life and salvation. That holy word is a sure guide, and will enable all who search its pages to distinguish between its sacred truths and the false doctrines so widely taught in these times of peril. I urge upon you, my brethren and sisters, the necessity of searching the Scriptures. Your eternal destiny depends upon your understanding and obeying them for yourselves. There the plan of salvation is clearly set forth, God's claims are plainly stated, and if we are his obedient children we shall search carefully and prayerfully to learn his will that we may do it.

We need to think more of God and less of ourselves. If we would but think of him as often as we have evidence of his care for us, we would keep him ever in our thoughts, and would delight to talk of him and praise him. We talk of temporal things because we have an interest in them. We talk of our friends because we love them; our joys and our sorrows are bound up with them. Yet we have infinitely greater reason to love God than to love our earthly friends; we receive more from him than from any other friend, and it should be the most natural thing in the world to make God first in all our thoughts, to

talk of his goodness and tell of his power, and to respond to his love by our free-will gifts and offerings for his cause. All things belong to God; and the rich gifts he has bestowed upon us, the glories of the heavens, the beauties of nature, the bounties of his providence, are not for us to worship; they were not given to absorb our thoughts and love so that we should have naught to give to God; they are to constantly remind us of him, and to bind us in bonds of love and gratitude to our gracious Benefactor. Oh! I entreat you who profess to love God to be less self-caring. Center your affections upon Jesus, your Redeemer. Give up all for him, be willing to make any and every sacrifice to save souls for whom he died. Give him your loving homage, your willing service, and he will bestow upon you the priceless gift of everlasting life.

January 9, 1883

## **The Sacrifice of Separation**

The opinion is widely held, that the sacrifices and offerings of the Hebrews possess no significance for Christians, and can be of no interest to them. This opinion is without foundation. It is true that the ceremonies of the Mosaic law are not now to be observed; but, when rightly understood, they are seen to be all aglow with sacred and important truths. These rites, appointed by Jehovah himself, were like so many beacons to light up the path of God's ancient people, and to direct their minds to the great sacrifice to be offered for the sins of men. Viewed in the light of the cross, they contain most precious lessons for the people of God today.

The children of Israel were anciently commanded to make an offering for the entire congregation, to purify them from ceremonial defilement. For the sacrifice a red heifer was offered, representing the more perfect offering that should redeem from the pollution of sin. This was an occasional sacrifice for the purification of all those who had necessarily or accidentally touched the dead. All who came in contact with death in any way were considered ceremonially unclean. Thus the minds of the Hebrews were forcibly impressed with the fact that death came in consequence of sin, and therefore is a representative of sin. The one heifer, the one ark, the one brazen serpent, impressively point to the one great offering, the sacrifice of Christ.

This heifer was to be red without spot, which was a symbol of blood. It must be without blemish, and one that had never borne a yoke. Here again Christ was typified. The Son of God came voluntarily to accomplish the work of atonement. There was no obligatory yoke upon him, for he was independent and above all law. The angels, as God's intelligent messengers, were under the yoke of obligation; no personal sacrifice of theirs could atone for the guilt of fallen man. Christ alone was free from the claims of the law to undertake the redemption of the sinful race. He had power to lay down his life and to take it up again. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God."

Yet this glorious being loved the poor sinner, and took upon himself the form of a servant, that he might suffer and die in man's behalf. Jesus might have remained at his

Father's right hand, wearing his kingly crown and royal robes. But he chose to exchange all the riches, honor, and glory of Heaven for the poverty of humanity, and his station of high command for the horrors of Gethsemane and the humiliation and agony of Calvary. He became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, that, by his baptism of suffering and blood, he might purify and redeem a guilty world. "Lo, I come," was the joyful assent, "to do thy will O God!"

The sacrificial heifer was conducted without the camp, and slain in the most solemn manner. Thus Christ suffered without the gates of Jerusalem, for Calvary was outside the city walls. This was to show that Christ did not die for the Hebrews alone, but for all mankind. He proclaims to a fallen world that he has come to be their Redeemer, and urges them to accept the salvation which he offers.

The heifer having been slain, the priest, clothed in pure white garments, took the blood in his hands as it issued from the body of the victim, and cast it toward the temple seven times. Thus Christ in his own spotless righteousness, after shedding his precious blood, entered into the heavenly sanctuary to minister in the sinner's behalf. And there the crimson current is brought into the service of reconciling God to man. "And having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

The body of the heifer was burned to ashes, which signified a whole and ample sacrifice. The ashes were then gathered up by a person uncontaminated by contact with the dead, and laid up in a clean place without the camp. When the ceremony of cleansing was to be performed, these were placed in a vessel containing water from a running stream. This clean and pure person then took a cedar stick with scarlet cloth and a bunch of hyssop and sprinkled the contents of the vessel upon the tent and the persons therein. This ceremony was repeated several times in order to be thorough, and was done as a purification from sin.

The cleansing water sprinkling the unclean, symbolized the blood of Christ spilled to cleanse us from moral impurities. The repeated sprinklings illustrate the thoroughness of the work that must be accomplished for the repenting sinner. All that he has must be consecrated. Not only should his own soul be washed clean and pure, but he should strive to have his family, his domestic arrangements, his property, and his



entire belongings consecrated to God.

After the sprinkling with hyssop of the tent, over the door of those cleansed was written, I am not my own; Lord, I am thine. Thus should it be with those who profess to be cleansed by the blood of Christ. God is no less exacting now than he was in olden times. The psalmist, in his prayer, refers to this symbolic ceremony when he says, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." The blood of Christ is efficacious, but needs continually to be applied. God wants his servants to make a consecration of themselves to his cause, and to use for his glory the means which he has intrusted to them. If any have become selfish, and are withholding from the Lord that which they should cheerfully give to his service, then they need the blood of sprinkling thoroughly applied, consecrating them and all their possessions to God.

Many who profess to be followers of Christ have not that earnest and unselfish devotion to his cause that he requires of them. They give their attention to temporal matters, and train their minds for business, in order to benefit themselves thereby. But God calls for them to come more closely into union with him, that he may mold and train them for his work. A solemn statement was made to ancient Israel that the man who should remain unclean, and refuse to purify himself, should be cut off from among the congregation. This has a special meaning for us. If it was necessary in ancient times for the unclean to be purified by the blood of sprinkling, how essential for those living in the perils of the last days, exposed to the fierce temptations of Satan, to have the blood of Christ applied to their hearts daily. "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

Christ designed that his believing children should be the light of the world, the salt of the earth. The holy life and Christian example of one good man in a community, sheds a light that is reflected upon others. How great, then, should be the influence of a company of believers all walking in the commandments of God. The preaching of the word is ordained of God, to arouse and convict sinners. And when the living preacher exemplifies in his own life the self-denial and sacrifice of Christ, when his conversation and acts are in harmony with the Divine Pattern, then he will exert a powerful influence upon those who listen to his voice. But all cannot be teachers of the word in the pulpit.

The individual duties of different persons vary, but there is work for all to do. All can aid the cause by giving unselfishly of their means to help the various branches of the work, to furnish means for the publication of tracts and periodicals to scatter among the people, and disseminate the truth. Those who give money to promote the cause, are bearing a part of the burden of the work; they are co-laborers with Christ, for God has furnished men with means, in trust, that they may use it for wise and holy purposes. This is among the instrumentalities which Heaven has ordained for doing good, one of the talents which men are to put out to the exchangers.

We should ever bear in mind that we are the stewards of God, and that he holds us accountable for the temporal talents he has lent us to use wisely for his glory. Shall we not closely search our hearts, and investigate the motives which prompt us to action? The danger of many is in loving their possessions. Their ears are not quick to hear the Master's call in the person of his saints and in the wants of his cause. They do not gladly invest their treasure in the enterprise of Christianity. If we desire a treasure in Heaven, we should be securing it while we have the opportunity. Those who feel safer to apply their means toward the greater accumulation of earthly riches, and invest sparingly in the cause of God, should feel satisfied to receive heavenly treasure according to their investment in heavenly stock.

Many desire to see the cause of God progress, but make little personal effort toward that end. If these could see their true position, and realize their accountability to God, they would become more earnest co-laborers with Jesus. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." There can be no divided interest in this, for the whole heart and mind and strength is all that composes the man.

Says the apostle, "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." When the poor, condemned sinner was lying under the curse of the Father's law, Jesus so loved him that he gave himself for the transgressor. He redeemed him by the virtue of his blood. We cannot estimate the precious ransom paid to redeem fallen man. The heart's best and holiest affections should be given in return for such wondrous love. The temporal gifts which we enjoy are merely lent us to aid in the advancement of the kingdom of God.

I speak of the tithing system, yet how meager it looks to my mind! How small the

estimate! How vain the endeavor to measure, with mathematical rules, time, money, and love against a love and a sacrifice that is measureless and incomputable! Tithes for Christ! Oh, meager pittance, shameful recompense for that which cost so much! From the cross of Calvary, Christ calls for an unconditional surrender.

He promised the young ruler that if he sold all that he had and gave it to the poor, and lifted his cross and followed him, he should have treasure in Heaven. All we have should be consecrated to God. The Majesty of Heaven came to the world to die a sacrifice for the sins of man. How cold and selfish is the human heart that can turn away from that incomparable love, and set itself upon the vain things of this world!

My brother, my sister, when selfishness is striving for the victory over you, bear in mind One who left the glorious courts of Heaven, and laid aside the robes of royalty for your sakes, becoming poor that through his poverty you might be made rich. Will you, then, disregard this great love and boundless mercy, by refusing to be inconvenienced, and to deny yourselves for his dear sake? Will you cling to the treasures of this life, and neglect to aid in carrying forward the great work of truth? I adjure you to arouse from your lethargy, leave the vain idolatry of worldly things, and be in earnest to secure a title to the immortal inheritance. Work while it is day. Do not imperil your souls by forfeiting present opportunities. Do not make your eternal interests of secondary importance. Do not put the world before religion, and toil day after day to acquire its riches, while the peril of eternal bankruptcy threatens you. Every day is bringing you nearer to the final reckoning. Be ready to yield up the talents lent you, with the increase gained by their wise use.

You cannot afford to sacrifice Heaven, or jeopardize your safety. Do not let the deceitfulness of riches lead you to neglect the immortal treasure. Satan is a wily foe, and he is ever on your track, striving to ensnare you, and compass your ruin. We are in the waiting time; let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, waiting for the Lord when he returneth from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh you may open to him immediately.

Watch the first dimming of your light, the first neglect of prayer, the first symptom of spiritual slumber. He that endureth unto the end shall be saved. It is by the constant exercise of faith and love that believers are made to shine as lights in the world. You are making but poor preparation for the Master's coming, if, when he

appears, you must present to him talents that you have buried in the earth,--talents neglected, abused, misused, a divided love, serving mammon while professedly serving God.

You profess to be servants of Christ. How necessary that you obey your Master's directions, and be faithful to your duties. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." This love is without a parallel, giving to men the relationship of sons to God. Therefore the Father expects obedience from his children, therefore he requires a right disposition of the property he has placed in their hands. It is not their own to use for their personal gratification, but it is the capital of the Lord, for which they are responsible to him.

Children of the Lord, how precious is the promise! How full the atonement of the Saviour for our guilt! The Redeemer, with a heart of unalterable love, still sheds his sacred blood in the sinner's behalf. The wounded hands, the pierced side, the marred feet, plead eloquently for fallen man, whose redemption is purchased at so great a cost. Oh, matchless condescension! Time nor events can lessen the efficacy of the atoning sacrifice. As the fragrant cloud of incense rose acceptably to Heaven, and Aaron sprinkled the blood upon the mercy-seat of ancient Israel, and cleansed the people from guilt, so the merits of the slain Lamb are accepted by God today as a purifier from the defilement of sin.

"Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." There are stern battles for you to fight. You should put on the whole armor of righteousness, and prove yourselves strong and true in your Redeemer's service. God wants no idlers in his field, but co-laborers with Christ, sentinels vigilant at their posts, valiant soldiers of the cross, ready to do and dare all things for the cause in which they are enlisted.

It is not wealth or intellect that gives happiness; it is true moral worth, and a sense of duty performed. You may have the overcomer's reward, and stand before the throne of Christ to sing his praises in the day when he assembles his saints; but your robes must be cleansed in the blood of the Lamb, charity must cover you as a garment, and you be found spotless and without blemish.

Says John the Revelator: "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before

the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

April 24, 1883

## **Christian Work**

"Do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." Every Christian is a light bearer. "Ye are," says Christ to his followers, "the light of the world." While the work of preaching the gospel is committed to the minister, all the members of the church are to demonstrate its power by representing Christ in their lives. Says the apostle, "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men." The piety of the Christian constitutes the standard by which worldlings judge the gospel.

God will have co-laborers in the earth. He gives every Christian a work to do. Every one has his special post of duty, and each should have a close connection with God, that he may be enabled to do his work wisely and well. The apostle exhorts his brethren to "do all things without murmurings or disputings." We are not only to refrain from murmurings and disputings, but to do "all things" which God and duty require.

The Lord has appointed to every person talents, great or small, according to his ability. Each individual has a mission to fulfill which involves weal or woe to some other soul. If faithful to his trust, he is a light that shines to God's glory; by his Christian example, his constancy and fidelity, he represents Christ to the world. If he is unfaithful, he becomes a false light, an agent of Satan to allure souls to ruin. As the sentinel who sleeps at his post endangers the liberty and life of his comrades, so does the professed Christian who is untrue to his high calling endanger the eternal welfare of his fellow-men.

The salvation of sinners requires earnest, personal labor. We are to bear to them the word of life, not to wait for them to come to us. With personal piety and a consistent course of life our earnest heart-felt appeals will be, through God, as sharp arrows of the Almighty to pierce the sin-hardened heart, as sharp sickles to reap a precious harvest for the heavenly garner. If we are co-laborers with Christ, we shall all have sheaves to bring to the Master,--souls saved through our instrumentality.

The injunction to be blameless and harmless does not teach that we may remain in a passive state. If Christians aspire no higher than a mere negative virtue, we may well anxiously inquire, what is to become of those who know not Christ nor the truth? Who will reach out their hands to save them? "Blameless" here means unadulterated, sincere; it expresses an active piety. We are to let our light shine upon others, that its bright beams may reflect glory to the great Source of light. Our Heavenly Father is not a hard master; he requires of no man more or less than he gives him ability to do. "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." Every one has earnest work to do for God. Every one upon whom God has bestowed the gift of reason has some influence over others. By the blessing of God, that influence can be used to save souls. We shall individually be held responsible for doing an iota less than God has given us ability to do. He measures our strength; he gives us work which we can do, and which we must do if we ever hear from his lips the heavenly benediction, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

Some persons array before their imagination a large number of Christian duties which they should perform, and then they tremble and shrink at the task, and in many cases leave it altogether undone. There are faults in themselves to be corrected, wrong habits to be reformed, temptations to be resisted. As followers of Christ, there must go forth from them a steady, certain light, whose bright beams shall so represent Jesus that the unbelieving world shall be led to respect Christianity and to glorify God. The preparation essential for the Christian's work requires an effort. There must be a daily searching of heart, in obedience to the injunction of the apostle, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith." Secret prayer must be maintained; to neglect this duty would be to throw aside one's weapons before going into battle. The prayer-meeting must be attended, and a cheerful testimony borne; souls may be discouraged, perhaps led in the wrong direction, if the testimonies do not breathe the right spirit. There are persons who need the help of kindly words and deeds, and who need prayer offered for them and with them. Here is indeed earnest work for every follower of Christ. But we should not be disheartened by the magnitude of the work. All is not to be done at once. God requires today only the work of the day. We should take things in their order, one thing at a time. The willing mind, the earnest purpose, will go forward. God has promised grace according to our need.

Have you put off the work until this eleventh hour? I entreat you to begin now. Do you feel incompetent to do some great thing, and therefore neglect to do anything?

Do what you can, be it ever so little. Go about your work calmly, relying upon God for that strength which he alone can give. Look not anxiously into the morrow. Today employ your time to the very best account, let your light shine for Christ, even in the performance of little duties. Tomorrow again present yourself to Jesus as one ready to do any work, be it ever so humble. The faithful performance of today's duties will prepare you to take hold of tomorrow's work with new courage and new zeal, saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped me." Ever stand as minute men before God; let the prayer of your heart be, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do now? Imbue me with thy Spirit; strengthen me for thy work." Then may you grow up to the full stature of men in Christ.

We permit ourselves to feel altogether too much care and trouble and perplexity in the Lord's work. We need to trust him, believe on him, and go forward. We should not shadow the lives of others with our sorrows or disappointments, or discourage them by leaving our work for them to do. All have Satan and his host to meet, and need to put forth their utmost efforts to resist the powers of darkness. All have trials, griefs hard to bear, temptations hard to resist. Do not tell your troubles to your fellow-mortals, but carry everything to God in prayer. Make it a rule never to utter one word of doubt or discouragement. You can do much to brighten the lives of others and strengthen their efforts, by words of hope and holy cheer, even when your own heart is weighed down with unspoken sorrow.

There is many a brave soul sorely pressed by temptation, fainting in the conflict with self and with the powers of darkness, yet at the same time seeking to do good to others. Do not censure or discourage such a one in his hard struggle. Cheer him with brave, hopeful words that shall urge him on his way. Thus the light of Christ may shine from you. Thus you confess Jesus and his transforming grace to the world. "No man liveth to himself." By our unconscious influence others may be encouraged and strengthened, or they may be discouraged and repelled from Christ and the truth.

Professed follower of Christ, when you are devoting time and means to the indulgence of pride, ask yourself whose gifts you are thus squandering. When you spend precious hours in fashioning what is merely to please the fancy, but will benefit no one, inquire how that day's record will stand in the books above. Your works will be brought into Judgment, whether they be good or evil. Suppose you were to keep an account of the manner in which each day is spent, how often would you have to make



such records as these? "Spent one or two hours in bed after daylight, because I was disinclined to rise and begin the day's duties. Spent several hours in crocheting. Devoted the day to making ruffles to ornament my children's dresses. They must look like other people, or I shall have no influence. Passed this afternoon in entertaining visitors. The name of Jesus was not mentioned. We talked of the wrong course of our brethren and sisters, of our worldly affairs, and our perplexities and trials." Are such persons honoring God in their lives? Is their light shining? Are souls saved through their instrumentality?

Many do not know how to win souls to Christ, because they have never tried to learn. If they would enter upon the work cheerfully and heartily, endeavoring to exert a right influence in the position where God has placed them, they would gain strength and experience with every effort. They would learn how to adapt themselves to the wants of others, and might thus become successful in winning souls to Christ and the truth. A large share of the Christian world are endeavoring to serve God by proxy. Men educate themselves for trades, for business, but not for Christian work, which is more important than everything besides. There is an appropriate division of labor in the same manufactory. Men are set apart for special branches of the business. While one can do his own work successfully, he may not be qualified to do that of his neighbor. The carpenter would blunder at the anvil, and the blacksmith with the plane. In the professions, greater difficulties would exist. The lawyer could not take charge of critical cases of sickness, and the physician would make poor work at pleading a case in court. In the same manner the followers of Christ have different positions and duties, and each should seek to qualify himself for the place which the Master has assigned him. "To every man his work."

Those who excuse themselves from labor to save other souls, will not be saved themselves. There is work to be done for Christ in our families, in our neighborhoods, everywhere. By kindness to the poor, the sick, or the bereaved, we may obtain an influence over them, so that divine truth may find access to their hearts. Opportunities for usefulness are on every hand. All who are imbued with the Spirit of Christ will show themselves to be fruit-bearing branches of the living Vine.

It is a sad fact, that many professors of religion gauge their piety by the lowest standard which they deem safe for themselves. They mean to escape the wrath of God, but are not seeking to do all the good that the Lord has given them ability to do. They

fall into the observance of certain forms, which they term religion, and argument and entreaty are alike powerless to move them from their stereotyped position. They are well satisfied with themselves. They will not be aroused to pray more or to give more. Many pass on month after month, year after year, without a genuine experience in the love of God, or a burden for the salvation of souls. By their lack of religious fervor, by their worldliness and selfishness, they lead others to skepticism or contempt for the truth.

Could the ledger of Heaven be opened before us, we would be greatly astonished at the large proportion of professing Christians who really contribute nothing toward the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom, who put forth no efforts for the salvation of souls. Such are slothful servants. Many who are satisfied not to do much good, flatter themselves that they are doing no harm so long as they do not oppose the earnest, active workers. But this class are doing much harm by their example. For the influence thus exerted, they must render an account to God. Sinners, misled by these false lights, are going down to ruin. Every person will be held accountable for the good which he might have done, but failed to perform because he was too careless and indolent to gain a knowledge of the will of God.

The slothful servant was not condemned for what he had done, but for what he had not done. There is no more dangerous enemy to the cause of God than an indolent Christian. An open profaner does less harm; for he deceives no one, he appears what he is, a brier, a thorn. The do-nothings are the greatest hindrance. Those who will not bear burdens, who shun all disagreeable responsibilities, are the first to be taken in Satan's snare, the first to lend their influence to a wrong course.

Watch, pray, work--these are the Christian's watch-words. Let none excuse themselves from labor for the salvation of souls. Let none deceive themselves into the belief that nothing is required of them. No less is required of any than was expected of the man with one talent. That unfaithful servant hid his talent in the earth, and then sought to justify his course by murmuring against his lord. In like manner, those who do the least in the cause of Christ are most ready to doubt and murmur. If they would connect with the living Vine, and bear fruit to the glory of God, they would find so much to do, and feel so great joy in the work, that they would have no time or disposition to complain.

It is ours to make the record which we desire to meet hereafter. Would we have its pages filled with the history of earnest work for God and humanity? Let us follow in the footsteps of Him who declared, "I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work.

### Practical Thoughts for the Camp-Meetings

Our yearly convocations are held for a special purpose. We desire to obtain spiritual strength by feeding upon the bread of life. We have separated from God by yielding to the maxims, customs, and practices of the world. We have allowed temporal things to absorb our attention, and have regarded the service of God as of secondary importance. As a consequence, we find ourselves in a state of great spiritual weakness. The season we spend here together should be a time of humiliation, brokenness of heart, and confession of sin. We want here to seek the Lord, and find him to the joy of our souls. To do this, we must cleanse the soul temple from its defilement; we must banish therefrom selfish thoughts and interests. Jesus is among us, to hear our penitential confessions and pardon our sins.

We should not devote this precious time to needless labor merely to gratify the appetite. We have not come here to indulge in feasting. Those who have taken charge of our restaurant at previous camp-meetings, have had the privilege of attending but few of the meetings. Much care and thought were given to the preparation of the food,--the cooking of meat, pies, cake, and a variety of other dishes to please the appetite. Was this really necessary? I think not. A few simple articles of food, prepared with care and skill, would supply all our real wants, and at the same time would do no injury to stomach or brain. The food should be abundant in quantity, and of good quality. We should not be compelled to live on a meat diet because nothing else is provided to supply its place. The money that is expended in buying meat, would purchase a good variety of fruits, vegetables, and grains. Meat is not essential for health or strength, else the Lord made a mistake when he provided food for Adam and Eve before their fall. All the elements of nutrition are contained in the fruits, vegetables, and grains.

If we are careful in our diet, at the same time clothing ourselves in a healthful manner during the changes that are liable to occur, we may avoid the unpleasant consequences of neglect of these important matters. Parents should give special attention to the diet of their children. Let them have good, wholesome food, prepared in

a simple, palatable manner. But many housewives do not know how to cook. Light is shining upon them, but they do not care to receive it. Turning with contempt from a method of cooking which requires skill and inventive power, they depend on injurious substances to supply the lack. We profess to be reformers, and as such should be constantly seeking to bring all our customs and habits to a correct standard, instead of conforming to the hurtful practices of the world.

Hot biscuit raised with soda or baking powder should never appear upon our tables. Such compounds are unfit to enter the stomach. Hot raised bread of any kind is difficult of digestion. Graham gems which are both wholesome and palatable may be made from the unbolted flour, mixed with pure cold water and milk. But it is difficult to teach our people simplicity. When we recommend graham gems, our friends say, "Oh, yes, we know how to make them." We are much disappointed when they appear, raised with baking powder or with sour milk and soda. These give no evidence of reform. The unbolted flour, mixed with pure soft water and milk, makes the best gems we ever tasted. If the water is hard, use more sweet milk, or add an egg to the batter. Gems should be thoroughly baked in a well-heated oven, with a steady fire.

To make rolls, use soft water and milk, or a little cream; make a stiff dough, and knead it as for crackers. Bake on the grate of the oven. These are sweet and delicious. They require thorough mastication, which is a benefit both to the teeth and the stomach. They make good blood, and impart strength. With such bread, and the abundant fruits, vegetables, and grains with which our country abounds, no greater luxuries should be desired.

We should avoid errors, not only in the quality, but in the quantity of our food. Eating too largely of even a simple diet will injure physical, mental, and moral health. Some persons have formed the habit of eating at any time between their regular meals. If this practice is continued, it becomes second nature. The stomach may be so educated as to desire food eight times a day, and feel faint if it is not supplied. But this is no argument in favor of so frequent eating. Three meals a day, and nothing between meals--not even an apple--should be the utmost limit of indulgence. Those who go further violate nature's laws, and will suffer the penalty. Two meals a day are better than three.

Our brethren and sisters often bring upon the camp-ground food that is wholly

unsuitable for such occasions,--rich cake, pies, and a variety of dishes prepared in a manner to make a healthy man sick. Of course, the best food is considered none too good for the minister. They invite him to their tables, and send these articles to his table. Many ministers are dyspeptics; they have injured their health by taking food in too great quantity and of an injurious quality. They suffer from hot head and cold feet and limbs; the blood is called to the stomach to assist in disposing of the burden imposed upon it. Those men cannot become spiritual workmen until they observe strict temperance in their dietetic habits. God cannot let his Holy Spirit rest upon those who are enfeebling themselves by gluttony.

Precious talent has been lost to God's cause through intemperance in eating. Many, while they do live, are thus deprived of half the vigor and strength of their faculties. The brain is oppressed because the stomach is burdened. Ministers, above all others, should economize the strength of brain and nerve. They should avoid all food or drink that has a tendency to irritate or excite the nerves. Excitement will be followed by depression. Over-indulgence will becloud the mind, and render thought difficult and confused. Our people err when they tempt their ministers with unhealthful food.

And let us not come to the camp-meeting to break the Sabbath by cooking on that day. The instructions which God gave to Israel should not be disregarded: "Bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that ye will seethe;" for "tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord." God meant what he said; and shall we who are presenting to the people the claims of the divine law, break that law ourselves, merely to please the appetite? God forbid! I know that frequently the Lord has withheld his blessing because we have failed to honor him by keeping the Sabbath according to the commandment. There has sometimes been nearly as much cooking done on the Sabbath as on other days. I would prefer to eat bread and water only, rather than to run any risk of breaking the fourth commandment. All needful preparation for the Sabbath should be made on Friday. On Sabbath morning, if the weather is cool, let hot gruel be provided. Further than this, all cooking should be avoided as a violation of the Sabbath.

If right habits are ever observed, let it be at our holy convocations. Here, if anywhere, we want our minds clear and active. We should honor God at all times, and in all places, but it seems doubly important at such meetings, where we assemble for the purpose of drawing near to God, and gaining a better knowledge of his will. One reason why we do not enjoy more of the blessing of the Lord is, we do not heed the light which

has been pleased to give us in regard to the laws of life and health. If we would all live more simply, and let the time usually given to the indulgence of appetite and the gratification of pride in dress, be spent in searching the Scriptures and in humble prayer for the bread of life, we would receive greater spiritual strength. We need to give less attention to our mere temporal wants, and more to our eternal interests.

Will those who have charge of our camp-meetings see that God is not dishonored or his instructions disregarded? Will they heed the light which has been given them upon health reform, and thus aid the people in securing both physical and moral health? Let us in our yearly gatherings seek to return unto the Lord, gather up the rays of light we have neglected, comply with the conditions laid down in God's word, and then by faith claim his blessing.

July 10, 1883

## **The True Missionary Spirit**

The true missionary spirit is the spirit of Christ. The world's Redeemer was the great model missionary. Many of his followers have labored earnestly and unselfishly in the cause of human salvation; but no man's labor can bear comparison with the self-denial, the sacrifice, the benevolence of our Exemplar.

The love which Christ has evinced for us is without a parallel. How earnestly he labored! How often was he alone in fervent prayer, on the mountain side or in the retirement of the garden, pouring out his supplications with strong crying and tears. How perseveringly he urged his petitions in behalf of sinners! Even on the cross, he forgot his own sufferings in his deep love for those whom he came to save. How cold our love, how feeble our interest, when compared with the love and interest manifested by our Saviour! Jesus gave himself to redeem our race; and yet how ready are we to excuse ourselves from giving all that we have for Jesus. Our Saviour submitted to wearing labor, ignominy and suffering. He was repulsed, mocked, derided, while engaged in the great work which he came to earth to do.

Do you, my brethren and sisters, inquire, What model shall we copy? I do not point you to great and good men, but to the world's Redeemer. If we would have the true missionary spirit, we must be imbued with the love of Christ; we must look to the Author and Finisher of our faith, study his character, cultivate his spirit of meekness and humility, and walk in his footsteps.

Many suppose that the missionary spirit, and qualification for missionary work, are a special gift or endowment bestowed upon the ministers and a few members of the church, and that all others are to be mere spectators. Never was there a greater mistake. Every true Christian will possess a missionary spirit; for to be a Christian is to be Christlike. "No man liveth to himself," and "if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Every one who has tasted of the powers of the world to come, whether he be young or old, learned or unlearned, will be stirred with the spirit which actuated Christ. The very first impulse of the renewed heart is to bring others also to the Saviour. Those who do not possess this desire, give evidence that they have lost their first love;

they should closely examine their own hearts in the light of God's word, and earnestly seek a fresh baptism of the spirit of Christ; they should pray for a deeper comprehension of that wondrous love which Jesus manifested for us in leaving the realms of glory, and coming to a fallen world to save the perishing.

There is work for every one of us in the vineyard of the Lord. We are not to seek that position which will yield us the most enjoyment or the greatest gain. True religion is free from selfishness. The missionary spirit is a spirit of personal sacrifice. We are to work anywhere and everywhere, to the utmost of our ability, for the cause of our Master.

Just as soon as a person is really converted to the truth, there springs up in his heart an earnest desire to go and tell some friend or neighbor of the precious light shining forth from the sacred pages. In his unselfish labor to save others, he is a living epistle, known and read of all men. His life shows that he has been converted to Christ, and has become a co-laborer with him.

As a class, Seventh-day Adventists are a generous and warm-hearted people. In the proclamation of the truth for this time, we can rely upon their strong and ready sympathy. When a proper object for their liberality is presented, appealing to their judgment and conscience, it calls forth a hearty response. Their gifts in support of the cause testify that they believe it to be the cause of truth. There are, indeed, exceptions among us. Not all who profess to accept the faith are earnest and true-hearted believers. But the same was true in the days of Christ. Even among the apostles there was a Judas; but that did not prove all to be of the same character. We have no reason for discouragement while we know that there are so many who are devoted to the cause of truth, and are ready to make noble sacrifices to advance it. But there is still a great lack, a great need among us. There is too little of the true missionary spirit. All missionary workers should possess that deep interest for the souls of their fellow-men that will lead heart to heart, in sympathy, and in the love of Jesus. They should plead earnestly for divine aid, and should work wisely to win souls to Christ. A cold, spiritless effort will accomplish nothing. There is need that the spirit of Christ fall upon the sons of the prophets. Then will they manifest such love for the souls of men as Jesus exemplified in his life.

The reason why there is no deeper religious fervor, and no more earnest love for



one another in the church is, the missionary spirit has been dying out. Little is now said concerning Christ's coming, which was once the theme of thought and of conversation. There is an unaccountable reluctance, a growing disrelish, for religious conversation; and in its stead, idle, frivolous chitchat is indulged in, even by the professed followers of Christ.

My brethren and sisters, do you desire to break the spell that holds you? Would you arouse from this sluggishness that resembles the torpor of death? Go to work, whether you feel like it or not. Engage in personal effort to bring souls to Jesus and the knowledge of the truth. In such labor you will find both a stimulant and a tonic; it will both arouse and strengthen. By exercise, your spiritual powers will become more vigorous, so that you can, with better success, work out your own salvation. The stupor of death is upon many who profess Christ. Make every effort to arouse them. Warn, entreat, expostulate. Pray that the melting love of God may warm and soften their icebound natures. Though they may refuse to hear, your efforts will not be lost. In the effort to bless others, your own souls will be blessed.

The ministers of the word are God's chosen agency to spread the knowledge of his will; but there is too little of a missionary spirit, even among our ministers. After preaching the word, some confine themselves almost wholly to reading and study, to the neglect of other and vitally important duties. While it is right to devote some time to study, every minister should feel a deep interest to do all that it is possible for him to do for the salvation of souls for whom Christ died. He should visit the people, and with care and wisdom seek to interest them in spiritual things.

Ministers of Christ should be united,--of one heart and one mind. They should counsel with one another. None should require their brethren to labor exactly after their plan, but each should preserve his individuality, and all labor for the good of others, esteeming their brethren better than themselves. It is Satan's work to excite envy and jealousy, to alienate affection, weaken confidence, and engender distrust and suspicion. All this hinders unity of faith in intercession with God for the weak and the desponding, for the grace of Christ, for the conversion of sinners, and thus shuts away the blessing which might be ours.

We have the theory of the truth, and now we need to seek most earnestly for its sanctifying power. I dare not hold my peace in this time of peril. It is a time of

temptation, of despondency. Every one is beset by the wiles of Satan, and we should press together to resist his power. We should be of one mind, speaking the same things, and with one mouth glorifying God. Then may we successfully enlarge our plans, and by vigilant missionary effort, take advantage of every talent we can use in the various departments of the work. When the people see the unity, the wisdom, and the grace of Christ exemplified in their teachers, they will have increased confidence in the work.

The light of truth is shedding its bright beams upon the world through missionary effort. The press is an instrumentality by which many are reached whom it would be impossible to reach by ministerial effort. A great work can be done by presenting to the people the Bible just as it reads. Carry the word of God to every man's door, urge its plain statements upon every man's conscience, repeat to all the Saviour's command, "Search the Scriptures." Admonish them to take the Bible as it is, to implore the divine enlightenment, and then, when the light shines, to gladly accept each precious ray, and fearlessly abide the consequences.

The down-trodden law of God is to be exalted before the people; as soon as they turn with earnestness and reverence to the holy Scriptures, light from Heaven will reveal to them wondrous things out of God's law. Great truths that have long been obscured by superstition and false doctrine, will blaze forth from the illuminated pages of the sacred word. The living oracles pour forth their treasures new and old, bringing light and joy to all who will receive them. Many are roused from their slumber. They rise as it were from the dead, and receive the light and life which Christ alone can give. Truths which have proved an overmatch for giant intellects are understood by babes in Christ. To these is plainly revealed that which has clouded the spiritual perception of the most learned expositors of the word, because, like the Sadducees of old, they were ignorant of the Scriptures and of the power of God.

Those who study the Bible with a sincere desire to know and do the will of God, will become wise unto salvation. The Sabbath-school is an important branch of missionary work, not only to give to young and old a knowledge of God's word, but to awaken in them a love for its sacred truths, and a desire to study it for themselves; above all, to teach them to regulate their lives by its holy teachings.

All who take the word of God as their rule of life are brought into close relationship with one another. The Bible is their bond of union. But their companionship

will not be sought or desired by those who do not bow to the sacred word as the one unerring guide. They will be at variance, both in faith and practice. There can be no harmony between them; they are unreconcilable. As Seventh-day Adventists we appeal from custom and tradition to the plain "Thus saith the Lord," and for this reason we are not, and we cannot be, in harmony with the multitudes who teach and follow the doctrines and commandments of men.

All who are born of God will become co-workers with Christ. Such are the salt of the earth. "But if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted?" If the religion we profess fails to renew our hearts and sanctify our lives, how shall it exert a saving power upon unbelievers? "It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." That religion which will not exert a regenerating power upon the world, is of no value. We cannot trust it for our own salvation. The sooner we cast it away the better; for it is powerless and spurious.

We are to serve under our great Leader, to press against every opposing influence, to be laborers together with God. The work appointed us is to sow the gospel seed beside all waters. In this work every one must act a part. The manifold grace of Christ imparted to us constitutes us stewards of talents which we must increase by putting them out to the exchangers, that when the Master calls for them, he may receive his own with usury.

July 17, 1883

## **Young Men As Missionary Workers**

Young men who desire to enter the field as ministers, colporteurs, or canvassers, should first receive a suitable degree of mental training, as well as special preparation for their calling. Those who are uneducated, untrained, and unrefined are not prepared to enter a field in which the powerful influences of talent and education combat the truths of God's word. Neither can they successfully meet the strange forms of error, religious and philosophical combined, to expose which requires a knowledge of scientific as well as Scriptural truth.

Those especially who have the ministry in view, should feel the importance of the Scriptural method of ministerial training. They should enter heartily into the work, and while they study in the schools, they should learn of the Great Teacher the meekness and humility of Christ. A covenant-keeping God has promised that in answer to prayer his Spirit shall be poured out upon these learners in the school of Christ, that they may become ministers of righteousness.

There is hard work to be done in dislodging error and false doctrine from the head, that Bible truth and Bible religion may find a place in the heart. It was as a means ordained of God to educate young men and women for the various departments of missionary labor that colleges were established among us. It was God's will that they send forth not merely a few, but many laborers. But Satan, determined to overthrow this purpose, has often secured the very ones whom God would qualify for places of usefulness in his work. There are many who would work if urged into service, and who would save their souls by thus working. The church should feel her great responsibility in shutting up the light of truth and restraining the grace of God within her own narrow limits, when money and influence should be freely employed in bringing competent persons into the missionary field.

Hundreds of young men should have been preparing to act a part in the work of scattering the seeds of truth beside all waters. We want men who will push the triumphs of the cross; men who will persevere under discouragements and privations; who will have the zeal and resolution and faith that are indispensable in the missionary field.

The church is called upon to take hold of this work with far greater earnestness than has yet been manifested. Every church should make special provision for the training of its missionaries, thus aiding the fulfillment of the great command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." My brethren, we have erred and sinned in attempting too little. There should be more laborers in the missionary work in foreign countries. There are among us those who, without the toil and delay of learning a foreign language, might qualify themselves to proclaim the truth to other nations. In the primitive church, missionaries were miraculously endowed with a knowledge of the languages in which they were called to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. And if God was willing thus to help his servants then, can we doubt that his blessing will rest upon our efforts to qualify those who naturally possess a knowledge of foreign tongues, and who with proper encouragement would bear to their own countrymen the message of truth? We might have had more laborers in foreign missionary fields, had those who entered these fields availed themselves of every talent within their reach. But some have had a disposition to refuse help if it did not come just according to their ideas and plans. And what has been the result? If our missionaries were to be removed, by sickness or death, from their fields of labor, where are the men whom they have educated to fill their places?

Not one of our missionaries has secured the co-operation of every available talent. Much time has thus been lost. We rejoice in the good work which has been done in foreign lands; but had different plans of labor been adopted, ten-fold, yes, twenty-fold more might have been accomplished; an acceptable offering would have been presented to Jesus, in many souls rescued from the bondage of error.

Every one who receives the light of truth should be taught to bear the light to others. Our missionaries in foreign lands should gratefully accept every help, every facility, offered them. They must be willing to run some risk, to venture something. It is not pleasing to God that we defer present opportunities for doing good, in hope of accomplishing a greater work in the future. Each should follow the leadings of Providence, not consulting self-interest, and not trusting wholly to his own judgment. Some may be so constituted as to see failure where God intends success; they may see only giants and walled cities, where others, with clearer vision, see also God and angels, ready to give victory to his truth.

It may in some cases be necessary that young men learn foreign languages. This they can do with most success by associating with the people, at the same time devoting a portion of each day to study of the language. This should be done, however, only as a necessary step preparatory to educating such as are found in the missionary fields themselves, and who with proper training can become workers. It is essential that those be urged into the service who can speak in their mother tongue to the people of different nations. It is a great undertaking for a man of middle age to learn a foreign language; and with all his efforts it will be next to impossible for him to speak it so readily and correctly as to render him an efficient laborer.

We cannot afford to deprive our home mission of the influence of middle-aged and aged ministers to send them into distant fields, to engage in a work for which they are not qualified, and to which no amount of training will enable them to adapt themselves. The men thus sent out leave vacancies which inexperienced laborers cannot supply.

But the church may inquire whether young men can be trusted with the grave responsibilities involved in establishing and superintending a foreign mission. I answer, God designed that they should receive training in our colleges and by association in labor with men of experience, so that they would be prepared for departments of usefulness in this cause. We must manifest confidence in our young men. They should be pioneers in every enterprise involving toil and sacrifice, while the overtaxed servants of Christ should be cherished as counselors, to encourage and bless those who strike the heaviest blows for God. Providence thrust these experienced fathers into trying, responsible positions at an early age, when neither physical nor intellectual powers were fully developed. The magnitude of the trust committed to them aroused their energies, and their active labor in the work aided both mental and physical development.

Young men are wanted. God calls them to missionary fields. Being comparatively free from care and responsibilities, they are more favorably situated to engage in the work than are those who must provide for the training and support of a large family. Furthermore, young men can more readily adapt themselves to new climates and new society, and can better endure inconveniences and hardships. By tact and perseverance, they can reach the people where they are.

Strength comes by exercise. All who put to use the ability which God has given

them, will have increased ability to devote to his service. Those who do nothing in the cause of God, will fail to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. A man who would lie down and refuse to exercise his limbs, would soon lose all power to use them. Thus the Christian who will not exercise his God-given powers, not only fails to grow up into Christ, but he loses the strength which he already had; he becomes a spiritual paralytic. It is those who, with love for God and their fellow-men, are striving to help others, that become established, strengthened, settled, in the truth. The true Christian works for God, not by impulse, but from principle; not for a day or a month, but during the entire period of life.

How is our light to shine forth to the world unless it be by our consistent Christian life? How is the world to know that we belong to Christ, if we do nothing for him? Said our Saviour, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." And again: "He that is not with me, is against me." There is no neutral ground between those who work to the utmost of their ability for Christ, and those who work for the adversary of souls. Every one who stands as an idler in the vineyard of the Lord is not merely doing nothing himself, but he is a hindrance to those who are trying to work. Satan finds employment for all who are not earnestly striving to secure their own salvation and the salvation of others.

The church of Christ may be fitly compared to an army. The life of every soldier is one of toil, hardship, and danger. On every hand are vigilant foes, led on by the prince of the powers of darkness, who never slumbers and never deserts his post. Whenever a Christian is off his guard, this powerful adversary makes a sudden and violent attack. Unless the members of the church are active and vigilant, they will be overcome by his devices.

What if half the soldiers in an army were idling or asleep when ordered to be on duty; the result would be defeat, captivity, or death. Should any escape from the hands of the enemy, would they be thought worthy of a reward? No; they would speedily receive the sentence of death. And is the church of Christ careless or unfaithful, far more important consequences are involved. A sleeping army of Christian soldiers--what could be more terrible! What advance could be made against the world, who are under the control of the prince of darkness? Those who stand back indifferently in the day of battle, as though they had no interest and felt no responsibility as to the issue of the contest, might better change their course or leave the ranks at once.

The Master calls for gospel workers. Who will respond? All who enter the army are not to be generals, captains, sergeants, or even corporals. All have not the care and responsibility of leaders. There is hard work of other kinds to be done. Some must dig trenches and build fortifications; some are to stand as sentinels, some to carry messages. While there are but few officers, it requires many soldiers to form the rank and file of the army; yet its success depends upon the fidelity of every soldier. One man's cowardice or treachery may bring disaster upon the entire army.

There is earnest work to be done by us individually if we would fight the good fight of faith. Eternal interests are at stake. We must put on the whole armor of righteousness, we must resist the devil, and we have the sure promise that he will be put to flight. The church is to conduct an aggressive warfare, to make conquests for Christ, to rescue souls from the power of the enemy. God and holy angels are engaged in this warfare. Let us please Him who has called us to be soldiers.

All can do something in the work. None will be pronounced guiltless before God, unless they have worked earnestly and unselfishly for the salvation of souls. The church should teach the youth, both by precept and example, to be workers for Christ. There are many who complain of their doubts, who lament that they have no assurance of their connection with God. This is often attributable to the fact that they are doing nothing in God's cause. Let them seek earnestly to help and bless others, and their doubts and despondency will disappear.

Many who profess to be followers of Christ, speak and act as though their names were a great honor to the cause of God, while they bear no burdens and win no souls to the truth. Such persons live as though God had no claims upon them. If they continue in this course, they will find at last that they have no claims upon God.

He who has appointed "to every man his work," according to his ability, will never let the faithful performance of duty go unrewarded. Every act of loyalty and faith will be crowned with special tokens of God's favor and approbation. To every worker is committed the promise, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."



July 24, 1883

### **Co-operation with Ministers**

To accomplish the great work of giving the last warning to the world, there is need of earnest, well-directed effort. As a people, we have not always moved with the wisdom and foresight demanded by the importance of our mission. Our leading ministers labor too hard, and, as the result, are almost constantly exhausted. Some of our leading men die prematurely, literally worn out, while there are among us men of ability who are really doing nothing in the cause. Our ministers weary themselves in doing that which should be left to others, while those who might help them, and who, if rightly instructed, would be willing to help them, are rusting from inaction.

God's cause has not advanced as it should have done, for the very reason that ministers and leading men have felt that they must do everything themselves. They have tugged and toiled to keep the wheel rolling, and are weighed down with responsibilities and burdens in the various departments of church-work, in the Sabbath-school, and in every other branch of the cause. They think they must do all this or it will not be done; and truly it would not be done, because they have failed to take others into their counsel and to train them to work.

While writing upon this subject, my attention was called to the following paragraphs touching the same point:

"Some pastors seem to think that they must take the lead, manage and manipulate every department of church work. They must arrange the details for every enterprise. Now, there may be churches in which the pastor must do all this or it will not be attended to at all; but in very many churches there is plenty of lay talent for all these purposes, and if the pastor would interest himself in pushing that element to the front, he would save himself much annoyance and hard work, and at the same time be rendering a service to those he thus interests in the general work of the church.

"In some respects the pastor occupies a position similar to that of the foreman of a gang of laboring men or the captain of a ship's crew. They are expected to see that men over whom they are set, do the work assigned to them correctly and promptly, and

if occasion shall require it, only in case of emergency are they to execute in detail.

"The owner of a large mill once found his superintendent in a wheel-pit, making some simple repairs, while a half-dozen workmen in that line were standing by, idly looking on. The proprietor, after learning the facts so as to be sure that no injustice be done, called the foreman to his office, and handed him his discharge and full pay. In surprise the foreman asked for an explanation. It was given in these words: 'I employed you to keep six men at work. I found the six idle and you doing the work of but one, and your work could have been done just as well by any one of the six. I cannot afford to pay the wages of seven for you to teach the six how to be idle.'

"This incident may be applicable in some cases, in others not. But many pastors fail in not knowing how, or in not trying to get the full membership of the church actively engaged in the various departments of church work. If pastors would give more attention to getting and keeping their flock actively at work, they would accomplish more good, have more time for study and religious visitation, and also avoid many causes of friction."

For our leading ministers, our camp-meetings have been seasons of severe and wearing labor, unfitting them for important work which required their attention at the close of the meeting. As they meet and counsel together, they lay their plans for labor; to execute these plans successfully, they need a clear brain, calm nerves, and a heart filled with courage; but they lack all three of these essential qualification. They have made a serious mistake in regard to the work resting upon them, and have done much that others should have done, and that would have been a blessing to them, giving them a precious experience in laboring for Jesus. While all cannot be ministers, all can and should act a part in the work.

There has been a failure to call into exercise talent which might be employed in the work, but which needs development and cultivation. We have had but few ministers and but few men to bear responsibilities, because we have had so few educators. We have lost much because we have not had those who were apt to teach, and who could conduct a training school for the inexperienced, and press them into the service.

The real workers in this cause are few, yet the work covers much ground; and it is often impossible for the laborers to look after the interest awakened, and they fail to

discern that they must enlist the lay members of the church, and teach them to work, that they may hold all that has been gained, and continue to advance. The plan of labor has been such as to lead the people to feel that they could do very little themselves; if anything was to be accomplished, they must have a minister.

At our camp-meetings, ten-fold more might be done than is usually accomplished. At the very outset the ministers should organize a corps of laborers upon whom they can depend to perform various duties essential to the success of the meeting. There may be several present who have been laboring in the smaller places, testing their own ability, and learning to teach the truth. If these men really desire to learn in the school of Christ that they may teach others the way of salvation, the camp-meeting is the very place where they can learn most, not by looking on while others do all the work, but by sharing in the labor themselves. Every one should have something to do, some burden to bear. If there is ever a place to work, it is at these large gatherings. They should first take heed to themselves, see that their own hearts are softened and subdued by the grace of Christ, and then they are prepared to help others. In meekness and love they should labor for the discouraged and backslidden, inviting them to some place of retirement, and praying with and for them. There should be many little groups thus earnestly pleading with God in the intervals between preaching services. Such was the course pursued in 1844. At our general meetings, little companies would scatter in every direction to draw near to God and seek his blessing. They did not seek in vain. The rich blessing of the Lord came upon them in answer to their prayers. The same course now pursued would lead to the same results.

Some of our ministers have had so little to do at these general meetings that they have themselves backslidden from God. How different would have been their experience, had they been earnestly laboring for others! There is work to do in the family tents. Suitable persons should be appointed to engage, modestly and wisely, in religious conversation with the inmates of the various tents. Cases that need special help could be brought before the ministers, who might better understand how to advise. There is work enough to engage every one who can work. Many have been converted through personal effort, and a blessed revival may be expected to follow such labor.

The older ministers should be careful that they do not, by precept or example, give young men to understand that the work of laborers in the field consists in preaching. The education of which young ministers are in greatest need, is that which

will enable them to work in the various departments of the cause, and relieve those who are wearing out from overwork. There are also laymen in the church who have ability that can be brought into service, and who should be made responsible for some part of the work. Let them feel that there are to be no idlers in the vineyard of the Lord.

And let those who love the Lord and his truth unite by twos and threes to seek places of retirement and pray for God's blessing upon the minister who can hardly find time to pray because he is constantly engaged attending to so many requests, sitting in councils, answering inquiries, giving advice, writing important letters. Let the fervent, effectual prayer of the righteous ascend to God, that the word spoken may be a message of truth to reach the hearts of the hearers, and that souls may thereby be won to Christ.

Another matter which should receive attention, both at our camp-meetings and elsewhere, is that of singing. A minister should not give out hymns to be sung, until it has first been ascertained that they are familiar to those who sing. A proper person should be appointed to take charge of this exercise, and it should be his duty to see that such hymns are selected as can be sung with the spirit and with the understanding also. Singing is a part of the worship of God, but in the bungling manner in which it is often conducted, it is no credit to the truth, and no honor to God. There should be system and order in this as well as every other part of the Lord's work. Organize a company of the best singers, whose voices can lead the congregation, and then let all who will, unite with them. Those who sing should make an effort to sing in harmony; they should devote some time to practice, that they may employ this talent to the glory of God.

But singing should not be allowed to divert the mind from the hours of devotion. If one must be neglected, let it be the singing. It is one of the great temptations of the present age to carry the practice of music to extremes, to make a great deal more of music than of prayer. Many souls have been ruined here. When the Spirit of God is arousing the conscience and convicting of sin, Satan suggests a singing exercise or a singing-school, which, being conducted in a light and trifling manner, results in banishing seriousness, and quenching all desire for the Spirit of God. Thus the door of the heart, which was about to be opened to Jesus, is closed and barricaded with pride and stubbornness, in many cases never again to be opened.

By the temptations attending these singing exercises, many who were once really converted to the truth have been led to separate themselves from God. They have

chosen singing before prayer, attended singing-schools in preference to religious meetings, until the truth no longer exerts its sanctifying power upon their souls. Such singing is an offense to God.

The grace of Christ we cannot do without. We must have help from above if we resist the manifold temptations of Satan, and escape his devices. Amid the prevailing darkness, we must have light from God to reveal the traps and gins of error, or we shall be ensnared. We should improve the opportunity for prayer, both in secret and around the family altar. Many need to learn how to pray as well as how to sing. When we in humility tell the Lord our wants, the Spirit itself makes intercession for us; as our sense of need causes us to lay bare our souls before the all-searching eye of Omnipotence, our earnest, fervent prayers enter within the veil, our faith claims the promises of God, and help comes to us in answer to prayer.

Prayer is both a duty and a privilege. We must have help which God alone can give, and that help will not come unasked. If we are too self-righteous to feel our need of help from God, we shall not have his help when we need it most. If we are too independent and self-sufficient to throw ourselves daily by earnest prayer upon the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, we shall be left subject to Satan's temptations.

We have lost much in our meetings by our own indifference. There is much unprofitable talk, but little earnest, sincere prayer. Such prayers would bring strength and grace to resist the powers of darkness. God wants to bless. He is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him than are parents to give good gifts to their children. But many do not feel their need. They do not realize that they can do nothing without the help of Jesus. Therefore they labor hard, but see little accomplished. Satan is working with all his power to block up the way, and without special help from God, the cause of truth will not go forward.

I have been shown angels of God all ready to impart grace and power to those who feel their need of divine strength. But these heavenly messengers will not bestow blessings unless solicited. They have waited for the cry from souls hungering and thirsting for the blessing of God; often have they waited in vain. There were, indeed, casual prayers, but not the earnest supplication from humble, contrite hearts. Meeting after meeting has closed with but little manifestation of the Spirit and power of God. The people seemed to be satisfied to reach no higher; they seemed to expect no revival

of the work of God; but with grief and disappointment angels turned from the scene of confusion where tents were being removed, and the people preparing to return to their homes without the blessing which Heaven was more than willing to give them.

Those who would receive the blessing of the Lord, must themselves prepare the way, by confession of sin, by humiliation before God, with true penitence and with faith in the merits of the blood of Christ. The camp-meeting should be a place for all Christians to be brought into working order. If they have never labored to bring souls to Jesus and the truth, it is time for them to begin now. God requires it of them, and if they would not be finally denounced as unfaithful servants, they must engage heartily in this work.

August 28, 1883

## **Our Present Position**

"Watchman, what of the night?" is the inquiry that should now arise from all hearts. And the true watchman will be able to give the answer, "The morning cometh, and also the night." This is a day of peril, a day of clouds and thick darkness. Men are blinded, infatuated by the god of this world. They close their eyes to the fearful events that are casting their shadows before. Intoxicated with self-indulgence and luxury, they know not that the tempest is about to burst upon them.

Satan and his hosts set themselves to overthrow the work of God. To fainting, unbelieving souls it may seem that the powers of darkness are about to prevail. Philosophy sets up reason as an antagonist of revelation. Science, falsely so called, directs the minds of men to the book of nature as a contradiction of the word of God. Critics search the Scriptures to find some pretext for treating with contempt the words of Holy Writ. The base spirit of worldliness leads men to seek to throw off the claims of their Maker. And many who profess to reverence God's word make war upon all who proclaim its plain and cutting truths.

At times the clamor of error and heresy seem almost to drown the voice of truth; yet the cry of the true watchman is still heard sounding from the watch-tower, "The morning cometh, and also the night." We have no thought of discouragement, no thought of fainting or failing. Our only anxiety is to discharge our duty in the fear of God. We know that "God is, and he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him;" he lives and reigns, and all he asks of us is humble faith and willing obedience. Those who occupy themselves in opposing his work and his servants, we leave to serve their own master, while we press forward to spread the triumphs of the cross.

There are many who consider it a mark of intelligence to doubt, and they pride themselves upon their ability to devise objections to God's word, to his truth, or to those who proclaim it. One class will bring together disconnected or obscure passages of Scripture, interpret to suit themselves, and then, after perverting or wholly concealing the true meaning they hold them up to ridicule as examples of the absurdities to be found in the Bible. Others attack in a similar manner the words and acts of those whom

God calls to lead out in his cause. But are infidels and skeptics the men who devote their lives to noble efforts to reform and elevate mankind? And those who busy themselves in finding fault with the servants of God--are they laboring with zeal and energy to build up his kingdom? In this work they have little interest. Their mission is to weaken and tear down. This is the work of Satan, and he employs the ability of every man whom he can control.

There will ever be some who take delight in dwelling upon the real or supposed faults and failures of others, and who employ their time in seeing, hearing, or reporting something that will destroy confidence in the person criticised. Few are without visible faults; in most persons careful scrutiny will reveal some defect of character; and upon these defects in others, some professed Christians delight to dwell. The habit strengthens with indulgence, and a love for gossip becomes their ruling passion. They gather together the tid-bits of reports,--all of them, it may be, utterly devoid of truth,--and feast upon the scandal, and share it with others as a rare delicacy.

A writer asks, Who ever heard of a dove rending the heart of a robin, or of a lamb sucking the blood of a kid? This is the work of hawks and tigers. The true followers of Christ will not be found biting and devouring one another. "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work."

Envy and jealousy loose the blood-hounds of suspicion, and minds that love the sport join in hunting down the fair fame of Christ's ambassadors. An unjust insinuation is started, a conjecture is set afloat; and it gathers strength as it passes from one to another of those who desire it to be true. These evil reports are received with great satisfaction by some who have been reprov'd for heinous sins or grave defects of character. They smarted under the reproof, and yet did not reform. Now their consciences are eased; they learn that the reprover cannot be trusted; somebody has circulated a damaging report; somebody has brought an accusation. They leave the distasteful work of caring for their own souls and repenting of their own sins, and climb upon the judgment seat to condemn another.

Brethren and sisters, let not your souls be disturbed by the efforts of those who so earnestly seek to arouse distrust and suspicion of Sister White. These attacks have been repeated hundreds of times during the past forty years; but my labors have not ceased;



the voice of warning, reproof, and encouragement has not been silenced. The evil reports framed concerning me have injured those who circulated them; but they have not destroyed my work. Before some of these opposers had an existence, I was shown what would come, and from what source. In the day of God, those who have been seeking to prove me a deceiver must answer for their course. I appeal to those who love the truth: Guard well the avenues of the soul. Place sentinels at the eyes, the ears, the lips. When prevarications and conjectures are brought before you, and your minds are disturbed, go to Jesus, and pray for help that you may not be ensnared by the wiles of Satan.

Many ask, Why do you not contradict these reports? Why allow them to be circulated? The same question has been asked again and again for the last forty years. My answer is, in the language of one of old, I am doing a great work, and I cannot come down. God has called me to reveal to others by pen and voice, what he has revealed to me. In his strength I must go forward in this solemn and important work, knowing that it is soon to bear the test of the Judgment. While false accusers are doing what pleases themselves, I will seek only to please Him who has given me my work. Christ is our leader, and if we follow him, we shall see his triumph and share his joy.

To those who have long been acquainted with my labors, I leave the burden of stating the truth in these matters. If any who have had an experience in this message and who understand the relation which I have sustained to it, are inclined to believe the false statements of my enemies, nothing that I might say would influence them. Those who make the slanders and those who circulate them are actuated by the same spirit. I do not expect the manufacture and circulation of false reports to cease. As long as I am faithful in reproofing sin, and in presenting before the people the perfection of Christian character, Satan's enmity will be stirred against me. If I were to leave my work to correct every false statement made concerning me, I would have time to do little else. Satan's purpose would be accomplished, could he thus put an end to my labors.

I have not changed in character or in my manner of labor since you first listened to the messages of comfort, encouragement, and warning which God has given me for his people. I am the same in plainness and severe simplicity of dress; the same in bearing an earnest, decided testimony for God; the same in deep interest in the truth. I cherish the same faith, the same hope, the same love for souls for whom Christ died.

Brethren and sisters, have no fears that I shall become disheartened by the cruel attacks of my enemies. I expect them in greater measure, and only wonder that they have not been more frequent. Think of Jesus. How much was said against him. How he was despised and hated. See him laboring for a short time in one place, and then forced to hasten to another to save his life, that he might finish his work, and give to the world the light of a pure and noble example. We may strengthen our faith and quicken our love by going often to the foot of the cross, and there contemplating our Saviour's humiliation. Behold the Majesty of Heaven suffering as a transgressor! Spotless purity, untarnished righteousness, did not shield him from falsehood and reproach. He meekly bore the contradiction of sinners against himself, and yielded up his life, that we might be forgiven and live forevermore. Are we willing to follow in his steps? The only reason why we do not now suffer greater persecution is, we do not in our lives more faithfully exemplify the life of Christ. I assure you, brethren and sisters, if you walk as he walked, you will know what it is to be persecuted and reproached for his sake.

If we hope to wear the crown, we must expect to bear the cross. Our greatest trials will come from those who profess godliness. It was so with the world's Redeemer; it will be so with his followers. I should doubt whether I were a child of God, if the world, or even all professed Christians, spoke well of me. Those who are in earnest to win the crown of eternal life need not be surprised or disheartened because at every step toward the heavenly Canaan they meet with obstacles and encounter trials. The opposition which Christ received came from his own nation, who would have been greatly blessed had they accepted him. In like manner the remnant church receive opposition from those who profess to be their brethren.

But "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." It is good for me to tread a hard and humble path, to encounter difficulties, to experience disappointments, to suffer afflictions and bereavements. The Saviour knows what is best. Faith grows by conflict with doubt and difficulty and trial. Virtue gathers strength by resistance to temptation. The life of the faithful soldier is a battle and a march. No rest, fellow-pilgrim, this side the heavenly Canaan.

When our enemies try to place upon us the black robes of unrighteousness, let us not become exasperated at their injustice. When your efforts are falsified, when your motives and your works are painted in colors black as ink, remember those who were

treated the same before you. How have the saints of God in ages past been maligned, traduced, and persecuted! For centuries their names were covered with infamy. All that the hosts of hell could do was done to heap reproach upon them as the vilest of men. But John in holy vision beholds the faithful souls that come up out of great tribulation, surrounding the throne of God, clad in white robes, and crowned with immortal glory. What though they have been counted the offscouring of the earth? In the investigative Judgment their lives and characters are brought in review before God, and that solemn tribunal reverses the decision of their enemies. Their faithfulness to God and to his word stands revealed, and Heaven's high honors are awarded them as conquerors in the strife with sin and Satan.

Brethren, we can afford to wait. Let our enemies exult because they have represented us in a character to suit their malicious fancy. But Christ will judge righteously, and will reward every man according to his deeds. To the faithful, who have been clothed by their enemies in the black robes of falsehood, he will give the spotless garments of truth and purity.

It will do our proud hearts good to suffer reproach for Christ's sake. "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in Heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you."

Take courage, then, when the burden is heavy, when the work moves slowly, and temptations, strong and fierce, surge in upon you. Cease not your effort so long as there is one soul to be warned by your words, one soul to be benefited by your example.

I entreat you to depend less upon your own efforts, and trust more to the power of Christ. Cultivate fortitude, firmness, patience, humility, and self-control. The God whom we serve will arm us with courage in every emergency; but we must abase self, and let God be all in all. It was true faith that gave Caleb courage to bear his decided testimony for God, even when fellow-workers stood ready to take his life. God wants brave men in his cause today,--men who in his strength are not afraid to do and dare.

The time is short. How will our cases appear in the Judgment? What is now our standing before God? Are we closely examining our own hearts? Are we by repentance

and confession sending our sins beforehand to Judgment, that they may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come? This is an individual work,--a work which we cannot safely delay. We should take hold of it earnestly; our salvation depends upon our sincerity and zeal. Let the cry be awakened in every heart, "What must I do to be saved?"

The adversary of souls is constantly seeking to divert our minds by bringing in side-issues. Let us not be deceived. Let enemies handle your name and mine as they please. Let them distort, misrepresent our words and deeds. Let them fabricate falsehoods as best pleases them. We cannot afford to allow our minds to be diverted from Jesus and the preparation of soul which we must have in order to meet him in peace.

Leave Sister White in the hands of God. If the work in which she is engaged be of God, it will prosper; otherwise it will come to naught. But remember that your own eternal interests are now at stake. The fatal lethargy upon you must now be broken, or it will result in endless death. "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." In Christ's stead, I beseech you to pray as you never prayed before, to seek earnestly for faith and love, that seem to be almost banished from the earth. Live each day as in the sight of God.

Your case will soon come in review before God; how is it with you, my brother? Are you unprepared for that solemn investigation? Christ alone hath the words of eternal life. Helpless, discouraged, sin-smitten soul, look to Jesus; he will pity, bless, and save you. Let not false teachers confuse your minds and unsettle your faith by casting reproach upon those whom God has sent you with messages of warning and instruction. Remember that it is not mere men whom you have to meet, but "principalities and powers, and wicked spirits in high places." Now is the very time when Satan is working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.

Many are in reality fighting his battles while they profess to serve under the banner of Christ. These traitors in the camp may not be suspected, but they are doing their work to create unbelief, discord, and strife. Such are the most dangerous of foes. While they insinuate themselves into our favor, and gain our confidence and sympathy, they are busy suggesting doubts and creating suspicion. They work in the same manner as did Satan in Heaven when he deceived the angels by his artful representations,

placing darkness for light, and making the forbearance and mercy of God to appear as harshness and severity. As he worked at the beginning, so he works in the end, only concealing himself more perfectly from view.

By every conceivable device, the foe is seeking to throw us off our guard. He may first attempt to deceive with smooth words and crafty insinuations; and if these fail, he proceeds to open violence. He has many a deep laid snare for unwary feet, and those who once become entangled find it almost impossible to extricate themselves. While he praises, flatters, and exalts some, he hurls his fiery darts at others. We must be on guard every moment. Days of peculiar trial, difficulty, and danger are before us.

It is not enough that we have the theory of the truth; its principles must be inwrought in the soul, and exemplified in the life, or we shall fall a prey to the delusions prepared for the last days.

We must make up our minds that instead of matters taking a more favorable turn, wicked men, seducing teachers, will grow worse and worse, deceiving themselves and deceiving others. We may expect greater opposition than has yet been experienced. We have heard but the growling of the dragon. This will swell to a roar. We have yet to learn the significance of those words of John: "Then the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." We must now make Christ our refuge, or in the days before us our souls will be overwhelmed with darkness and despair. There is a point beyond which human help cannot avail. Every one must live by faith as he is forced into close and apparently deadly conflict with the powers of darkness. Each must stand or fall for himself. The arrows of the destroyer are about to be hurled against the faithful ones, and no earthly power can turn aside the shaft. But could our eyes be opened we could see angels of God encircling the righteous, that no harm may come upon them. We have only to trust in God, and go forward in the way of obedience, and we shall be victorious.

"Now the just shall live by faith." We must look to Jesus, study his words, pray for his Spirit. We should be more frequently alone with God in meditation and prayer. Let us pray more and talk less. We cannot trust to our own wisdom, our own experience, our own knowledge of the truth; we must be daily learners, looking to our heavenly Teacher for instruction, and then, without regard to ease, pleasure, or

convenience, we must go forward, knowing that He is faithful who has called.

We should cultivate a spirit of prayer, not merely praying in our closets, at the family altar, or in public, but having our minds constantly centered on God, taking hold upon his strength, pleading for his grace, confiding in his promises. Let us put on the whole armor of righteousness, which the Captain of our salvation has prepared for us. While we realize our weakness, let us rely upon His strength, and overcome by the grace which he imparts.

There is help in God for every seeker. Great promises are left on record for us. We should keep faith in constant exercise, and it will increase and strengthen. Our hope is in Christ, "whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

September 4, 1883

## **"Be Zealous and Repent"**

"Be zealous and repent," is the admonition of Jesus to the Laodicean church. There is something to repent of. Worldly-mindedness, selfishness, and covetousness have been eating out their spiritual life. While they flatter themselves that they are rich, and increased with goods, and in need of nothing, Christ declares them to be "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

Among the greatest dangers that threaten the church is the love of the world. Out of this spring the sins of selfishness and covetousness. With many, the more they get of earthly treasure, the more they set their affections on it, and still they reach out for more. Says Christ, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." And many who profess to believe that we are now giving the last warning to the world, are striving with all their energies to place themselves in such a position that it would be easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for them to enter the kingdom.

Satan employs every means which he can devise to overthrow the followers of Christ. With marvelous skill and cunning he adapts his temptations to the peculiar temperament of each. Those who are naturally selfish and covetous he often tempts by throwing prosperity in their way. He knows that if they do not overcome their natural temperament, the love of mammon will cause them to stumble and fall. His object is often accomplished. When the riches of the world are offered them, many eagerly grasp the treasure, and think they are wonderfully prospered. The strong love of the world soon swallows up the love of the truth; the approval of God is sacrificed to secure the favor of his enemies.

If those who are thus prospered would lay all their possessions upon the altar of God, they might overcome their selfish, covetous spirit, and so thwart the design of Satan. Worldly wealth may be made a blessing, if rightly used. All who possess it should realize that it is lent them of God, to be employed in his service. By giving freely to advance the cause of truth, and to relieve the wants of the needy, they may be the means of saving others, and thus bring a blessing to their own souls here, and lay up in

Heaven a treasure that shall be theirs hereafter.

The True Witness counsels, "Buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed," "and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." The gold of faith and love, the white raiment of a spotless character, and the eye-salve, or the power of clear discernment between good and evil,--all these we must obtain before we can hope to enter the kingdom of God. But these precious treasures will not drop upon us without some exertion on our part. We must buy,--we must "be zealous and repent" of our lukewarm state. We must be awake to see our wrongs, to search for our sins, and to put them away from us.

Those who have set their affections upon earthly treasures, have a work to do to overcome their love of the world. Many are not giving heed to the admonition of the True Witness. They desire the blessings which he offers, but do not seek them with earnestness proportionate to their value. While striving for the possessions of earth, what zeal and energy they manifest! What cool calculations they make! They plan and toil early and late, and sacrifice their ease and comfort to obtain a treasure that must soon pass away. A corresponding zeal on their part to obtain the gold, the white raiment, and the eye-salve, would place them in possession of these heavenly treasures, and of everlasting life in the kingdom of God.

Jesus is saying, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." But many have so much rubbish piled up at the door of the heart that they cannot admit Jesus. Some have difficulties between themselves and their brethren to remove; others have evil tempers, pride, covetousness; with others, love of the world bars the entrance. All this must be taken away, before they can open the door and welcome the Saviour in.

How precious is the promise, "I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Oh, the love, the wondrous love of God! After all our lukewarmness and sins he says, Return unto me, and I will return unto thee, and will heal all thy backslidings.

"To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." We can overcome. Yes; fully, entirely. Jesus died to make a way of escape for us, that we might overcome every



fault, resist every temptation, and sit down at last with him in his throne.

It is our privilege to have faith and salvation. The power of God has not decreased. It would be just as freely bestowed now as formerly; but the church have lost their faith to claim, their energy to wrestle, as did Jacob, crying, "I will not let Thee go, except thou bless me." Enduring faith has been dying away. It must be revived in the hearts of God's people. They must claim the blessing. Faith, living faith, always leads upward to God and glory; unbelief, downward to darkness and death.

Many are so absorbed in their worldly cares and perplexities that they have little time to pray, and feel but little interest in prayer. They may observe the form of worship, but the spirit of true supplication is lacking. Such have departed widely from the pattern. Jesus our example was much in prayer; and oh, how earnest, how fervent were his petitions! If he, the beloved Son of God, was moved to such earnestness, such agony, in our behalf, how much more need that we, who are dependent upon Heaven for all our strength, have our whole souls stirred to wrestle with God.

We should not be satisfied until every known sin is confessed, then it is our privilege and duty to believe that God accepts us. We must not wait for others to press through the darkness and obtain the victory for us to enjoy. Such enjoyment will not be lasting. God must be served from principle instead of from feeling. Morning and evening we should obtain the victory for ourselves, in our own families. Our daily labor should not keep us from this. We must take time to pray, and as we pray, believe that God hears us. We may not at all times feel the immediate answer, but then it is that faith is tried. We are proved to see whether we will trust in God, whether we have living, abiding faith.

"Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." We must trust the promises of the Lord, trust God in darkness; that is the time to have faith. But many let feeling govern them. They look for worthiness in themselves when they do not feel comforted by the Spirit of God; and they despair because they cannot find it. They do not trust enough in Jesus, precious Jesus. They do not make his worthiness to be their all. The very best that we can do, we shall not merit his favor. It is the worthiness of Christ that must save us, his blood that must cleanse us. But we have efforts to make. We must do what we can, be zealous and repent, then believe that God accepts us.

Many measure themselves among themselves, and compare their lives with the lives of others. This should not be. No one but Christ is given us as an example. He is our true pattern, and each should strive to excel in imitating him. We are co-workers with Christ or co-workers with the enemy. We either gather with Christ or scatter abroad. We are decided, whole-hearted Christians, or none at all. Says Christ, "I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth."

To be a Christian is not merely to take the name of Christ, but to have the mind of Christ, to submit to the will of God in all things. Many who profess to be Christians have yet to learn this great lesson. Many know little of what it is to deny self for Christ's sake. They do not study how they can best glorify God and advance his cause. But it is self, self, how can it be gratified? Such religion is worthless. In the day of God, those who possess it will be weighed in the balance and found wanting.

The true Christian will wait to learn the will of God, and watch for the leadings of his Spirit. But with many, religion is a mere form; vital godliness is lacking. They flatter themselves that they will be saved at last; but God has no pleasure in them. They are offensive in his sight. Christ now bids them, "Be zealous and repent." He kindly and faithfully admonishes them to seek for love, and faith, and purity. They can choose either to heed the warning, repent, and secure the blessing of the Lord, or remain in their lukewarm condition, and be rejected of God as abhorrent to him. God will not always bear with the backslidings of his professed people. He is long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy; yet his Spirit, long resisted, will at last be withdrawn forever. The time will come when mercy's sweet voice will no more be heard. Its last notes will have died away, and those who have slighted its pleadings will be left to their own ways.

All Heaven is interested in our salvation; and shall we be indifferent? Shall we be careless, as though it was a small matter whether we are saved or lost? Shall we slight the sacrifice that has been made for us? The infinite price paid for our redemption, shows us its value; and just in proportion to the magnitude of the gift offered, is the guilt and folly of its rejection. All that God could do has been done to save man. Those who reject the mercy so freely proffered, will yet be made to know the worth of that which they have despised. They will feel the agony which Christ endured upon the cross to purchase redemption for all who would receive it. And they will then realize what they have lost,--eternal life and the immortal inheritance.

In the time of peril before us, the professed followers of Christ will be tested. None will be able to stand but those who have had a deep and living experience in the things of God. The work of all will then be tried; if it is gold, silver, and precious stones, they will be safely shielded, as in the secret of the Lord's pavilion; but if their life-work proves to be wood, hay, and stubble, nothing can hide them from the fierceness of Jehovah's wrath.

Many hardly know, as yet, what self-denial is, or what it is to sacrifice for the truth's sake. But none will enter Heaven but by the same path of humiliation, self-sacrifice, and cross-bearing, that the Saviour trod. Only those who are willing to sacrifice all for eternal life will have it; but it will be worth suffering for, worth crucifying self and sacrificing every idol for. The far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory will outweigh every earthly treasure and eclipse every earthly attraction.

September 11, 1883

## The Living Vine

During our first visit to California, in early spring, we noticed the husbandmen on every hillside busily engaged about some important plant. Going nearer to see the object of their care, we found it merely a small stub, unsightly, and apparently lifeless. With surprise we learned that the field before us was a vineyard, and that these insignificant plants were the grape-vines. One can hardly conceive a more unpromising appearance than was there presented.

In September we again visited a vineyard; and what a change! The wintry stub had shot forth branches, beautiful in their fresh verdure, and laden with rich clusters of purple fruit. As we compared the former barren and lifeless appearance with the verdure and fruitfulness before us, we could but think of those words of the prophet concerning Christ: "He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from him. He was despised, and we esteemed him not." It was thus that the Jewish nation looked upon Jesus.

The Divine Husbandman planted a goodly vine upon the hills of Palestine. But the men of Israel despised this root of heavenly origin. In a rage they cast it over their vineyard wall; they bruised it, and trampled it under their indignant feet, and hoped that they had destroyed it forever. The Husbandman removed the broken vine, and concealed it from their sight. Again he planted it, but in such a manner that the stock was no longer visible. The branches hung over the wall, and grafts might be joined to it, but the stem itself was placed beyond the power of men to reach or harm.

To this world, dark with the shadows of sin, sorrow, and death, came the Son of God with the light of pardon, peace, and immortal life. "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." But the world hated Christ because his perfect purity was in such contrast to their own vileness. They rejected and crucified the Lord of life. God raised him from the dead, and hid him from mortal view; but he is still the Saviour of mankind. He is still the vine-stock, the source and sustainer

of spiritual life. Still may grace, strength, and salvation be derived from his fullness. Though the Vine itself is unseen, its branches are visible. While Christ is removed from human sight, his life and power are manifested in his followers.

Grafts may still be united with the Vine. As the severed branch, leafless, and apparently lifeless, is ingrafted into the living stock, and, fiber by fiber, and vein by vein, drinks in the life and strength of the vine until it buds and blossoms and bears fruit, even so may the sinner, by repentance and faith, connect himself with Christ, become a partaker of the divine nature, and bring forth in words and deeds the fruit of a holy life.

Jesus "has life in himself," and this life he offers to impart freely to souls that are dead in trespasses and sins. Yea, he shares with them his purity, his honor, and exaltation. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." The sapless branch, ingrafted into the living vine, becomes a part of the vine. It lives while united to the vine. So the Christian lives by virtue of his union with Christ. The sinful and human is linked to the holy and divine.

The believing soul abides in Christ, and becomes one with him. When persons are closely united in the relations of this life, their tastes become similar, they come to love the same things. So those who abide in Christ will love the things which he loves. They will sacredly cherish and obey his commandments for he himself has made this a condition of sharing his love: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love."

The union of the soul with Christ is a relation of dependence. The inferior relies upon the wisdom and strength of the superior. "Without me," says Jesus, "ye can do nothing." Christ is our wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me."

"He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." The vine-branch, nourished from the parent stock, becomes flourishing and fruitful. Its rich and fragrant clusters attest its union with the living vine. So the Christian, abiding in Jesus, will bring forth fruit. In character and life will be manifested, like the teeming cluster of the vine, the precious graces of the Spirit,--love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Not one of these fruits will be

missing in the life of one in whose soul the Spirit of Christ abides.

Wherever there is union with Christ, there is love. Whatever other fruits we may bear, if love be missing, they profit nothing. Love to God and our neighbor is the very essence of religion. No one can love Christ and not love his children. When we are united to Christ, his mind is transferred to us. Purity and love shine forth in the character; meekness and truth control the life. The very expression of the countenance is changed. Christ abiding in the soul exerts a transforming power, and the outward aspect bears witness to the peace and joy that reign within.

Every fruitful branch is pruned. "Every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." There is a constant tendency to be more profuse in foliage than in fruit. The strength and nourishment which goes to support the excessive foliage, is taken from the grapes. Therefore the husbandman prunes away the useless growth, that the fruit may be richer and more abundant. Thus it is that the Heavenly Husbandman deals with his vineyard. In prosperity the followers of Jesus often turn their thoughts and energies to gratifying themselves, to securing earthly treasure, to enjoying the ease and pleasure and luxury of the world, while they bring forth little fruit to the glory of God. Then the Husbandman, to promote the fruitfulness of the branches, comes with the pruning-knife of disappointment, loss, or bereavement, and cuts away the hindering growth.

A gentleman who was much depressed in spirits by some afflictive providence, was one evening walking in a garden, when he observed a pomegranate tree nearly cut through the stem. Greatly wondering, he asked the gardener the reason, and received an answer that explained to his satisfaction the wounds of his own bleeding heart,--"Sir, this tree used to shoot so strong that it bore nothing but leaves. I was therefore obliged to cut it in this manner, and when it was almost cut through, then it began to bear plenty of fruit."

Our sorrows do not spring out of the ground. In every affliction, God has a purpose for our good. Every blow that destroys an idol, every providence that weakens our hold upon the things of earth, and fixes our affections more firmly upon God, is a blessing. The pruning may be painful for a time, but afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness. We should receive with gratitude whatever will quicken the conscience, elevate the thoughts, and ennoble the life. There are branches that are cut

off for the fire; let us thank God if we may, through painful pruning, retain a connection with the living Vine; for if we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with him.

Precious are the privileges accorded him who abides in Christ. Said our Saviour, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." The mind of Christ dwells in his faithful followers; their desires are in accordance with his will; their petitions are indited by his Spirit. They obtain answers to their prayers; for they ask for such blessings as he delights to bestow.

But there are thousands of prayers daily offered that God does not answer. There are faithless prayers. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." There are selfish prayers, proceeding from a heart that is cherishing idols. "If any man regard iniquity in his heart, the Lord will not hear him." There are petulant, fretful prayers, murmuring because of the burdens and cares of life, instead of humbly seeking grace to lighten them. Those who offer such petitions are not abiding in Christ. They have not submitted their will to the will of God. They do not comply with the condition of the promise, and it is not fulfilled to them.

They that are abiding in Jesus have the assurance that God will hear them, because they love to do his will. They offer no formal, wordy prayer, but come to God in earnest, humble confidence, as a child to a tender father, and pour out the story of their grief and fears and sins, and in the name of Jesus present their wants; they depart from his presence rejoicing in the assurance of pardoning love and sustaining grace.

The graft that unites with the vine-stock and partakes of its life, becomes flourishing and fruitful; but what if it forms no such union? It is a withered branch; though outwardly joined to the vine, it does not share its life; it cannot bring forth fruit. That lifeless scion is all too true a figure of a large class of professed Christians. Though outwardly joined to Christ, they have no vital connection with him; they do not share his life or bring forth fruit to his glory. They are withered branches, tenderly nurtured for a time, but, remaining unchanged, they will be taken away at last.

My brethren and sisters, I entreat you to heed the solemn lesson of the vine and its branches. Resolve that you will be fruit-bearing members of the living Vine. The scion can flourish only as it receives life and strength from the parent stock. Improve, then, every opportunity to connect yourselves more closely with Christ. It is by

believing him, loving him, copying him, and depending wholly upon him, that you are to become one with him; and through you his life and character will be revealed to the world.

It is by opening your heart to the words of Christ that you are to become a partaker of the divine nature. When you cast your helpless soul upon him, believing his word, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out", then the union is begun. Your faith may be feeble, but cling to the Saviour's promise. In him is light and hope and life. His words, received into the soul, will give vital power to work the works of Christ; and every effort put forth in love will bind you more firmly to your source of strength. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

Let the words of Christ abide in you, and you will at last be able to say, with him who declared himself the chief of sinners. "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."



September 25, 1883

## **The Bible a Means of Both Mental and Moral Culture**

"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." The word of God presents the most potent means of education, as well as the most valuable source of knowledge, within the reach of man. The understanding adapts itself to the dimensions of the subjects with which it is required to deal. If occupied with trivial, common-place matters only, never summoned to earnest effort to comprehend great and eternal truths, it becomes dwarfed and enfeebled. Hence the value of the Scriptures, as a means of intellectual culture. Their perusal, in a reverent and teachable spirit, will expand and strengthen the mind as no other study can. They lead directly to the contemplation of the most exalted, the most ennobling, and the most stupendous truths that are presented to the mind of man. They direct our thoughts to the infinite Author of all things. We see revealed the character of the Eternal, and listen to his voice as he communes with patriarchs and prophets. We see explained the mysteries of his providence, the great problems which have engaged the attention of every thoughtful mind, but which, without the aid of revelation, human intellect seeks in vain to solve. They open to our understanding a simple yet sublime system of theology, presenting truths which a child may grasp, but which are yet so far-reaching as to baffle the powers of the strongest mind.

The more closely God's word is searched, and the better understood, the more vividly will the student realize that there is, beyond, infinite wisdom, knowledge; and power. Those who seek to find out God as he is revealed in the pages of inspiration, will learn the hard but useful lesson, that human intellect is not omnipotent; that without divine help, human strength and wisdom are but weakness and folly.

But when controlled by the love and fear of God, and devoted to his service, intellectual culture is a blessing. It is true that the world's men of learning are not easily reached by the practical truths of God's word. The reason is, they trust to human wisdom, and pride themselves upon their intellectual superiority, and are unwilling to become humble learners in the school of Christ. Our Saviour did not ignore learning or despise education; yet he chose unlearned fishermen for the work of the gospel, because they had not been schooled in the false customs and traditions of the world. They were

men of good natural ability and of a humble, teachable spirit; men whom he could educate for his great work. In the ordinary walks of life there is many a man patiently treading the round of daily toil, all unconscious that he possesses powers which, if called into action, would raise him to an equality with the world's most honored men. The touch of a skillful hand is needed to arouse and develop those dormant faculties. It was such men whom Jesus connected with himself; and he gave them the advantages of three years training under his own care. No course of study in the schools of the rabbis or the halls of philosophy could have equaled this in value. The Son of God was the greatest educator the world ever knew.

The learned lawyers, priests, and scribes scorned to be taught by Christ. They desired to teach him, and frequently made the attempt, only to be defeated by the wisdom that laid bare their ignorance, and rebuked their folly. In their pride and bigotry, they would not accept the words of Christ, yet they were surprised at the wisdom with which he spake. They knew that he had not learned in the schools of the prophets, and they could not discern the divine excellence of his character beneath the lowly disguise of the Man of Nazareth. But the words and deeds of the humble Teacher, recorded by the unlettered companions of his daily life, have exerted a living power upon the minds of men from that day to the present. Not merely the ignorant and humble, but men of education, intellect, and genius, reverently exclaim, with the wondering and delighted listeners of old, "Never man spake like this man."

The light and understanding which God's word imparts is not designed merely, or chiefly, to promote intellectual culture. For an object higher than any earthly or temporal good were the holy oracles committed unto men. We see therein revealed the great plan of human redemption, the means devised to free mankind from the power of Satan. We see Christ, the Captain of our salvation, meeting the prince of darkness in open battle, and, single-handed, obtaining the victory in our behalf. We learn, too, that by this victory, was opened to us a door of hope, a source of strength, and that we may, as faithful soldiers, fight our own battles with the wily foe, and conquer in the name of Jesus. The powers of darkness must be met by every soul. The young, as well as the old, will be assailed, and all should understand the nature of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, and should realize that it concerns themselves. All are actors in the scene, sharers in the conflict. To be armed for the battle, all need "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

In the Scriptures are presented truths that relate especially to our own time. To the period just prior to the appearing of the Son of man, the prophecies of Scripture point, and here their warnings and threatenings pre-eminently apply. The prophetic periods of Daniel, extending to the very eve of the great consummation, throw a flood of light upon events then to transpire. The book of Revelation is also replete with warning and instruction for the last generation. The beloved John, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, portrays the fearful and thrilling scenes connected with the close of earth's history, and presents the duties and dangers of God's people. None need remain in ignorance, none need be unprepared for the coming of the day of God.

It is not enough to have an intellectual knowledge of the truth. This alone cannot give the light and understanding essential to salvation. There must be an entrance of the word into the heart. It must be set home by the power of the Holy Spirit. The will must be brought into harmony with its requirements. Not only the intellect but the heart and conscience must concur in the acceptance of the truth.

The entrance of God's word gives understanding to the simple,--those who are untaught in the wisdom of the world. The Holy Spirit brings the saving truths of the Scriptures within the comprehension of all who desire to know and do the will of God. Uneducated minds are enabled to grasp the most sublime and soul-stirring themes that can engage the attention of men,--themes that will be the study and the song of the redeemed through all eternity.

It is the knowledge which God's word supplies, and which can be found nowhere else, that we need above every other. We want to know what to do in this our day, to escape the snares of Satan and to win the crown of glory. If at any time we do not clearly understand the testimony of the Scriptures concerning any duty, we are bidden to go to the great Teacher. Whenever we lack wisdom, it is our privilege and our duty to ask of God. If we come in humility and faith, we shall not be sent empty away.

But when one sees clearly the claims of duty, let him not presume to go to God with the prayer that he may be excused from obedience because it involves a cross. Let him go, rather, with a humble, submissive spirit, asking for divine strength and wisdom, to accept and to practice the truth. "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and he shall direct thy paths." Thus the "simple" may, by making God's word their rule of life, discharge its duties with true wisdom, being a living exemplification of the psalmist's

words, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."

If the youth will but learn of the heavenly Teacher, as did Daniel, they will know that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Having thus laid a sure foundation, they may, like Daniel, turn every privilege and opportunity, to the very best account. They may rise to any height in intellectual attainments. Those who consecrate themselves to God, and who have the protection of his grace and the quickening influence of his Spirit, will manifest keener intellectual power than the mere worldling. They will be able to reach the highest, noblest exercise of every faculty.

The study of the Scriptures would give to the world men of stronger and more active intellect than will the closest application to all the subjects which human philosophy embraces. Those especially who have the ministry in view should give diligent study to the word of God. In so doing, they may secure mental discipline, and at the same time gain such a knowledge of its rich stores that they can draw from the treasure-house things new and old.

There is a wide difference between what God has given men capacity to become, and the degree of excellence to which they actually attain. If it were considered a duty to cultivate all our powers to the fullest extent, they would be continually increasing. The Bible teaches men to act from principle, and whenever we successfully resist evil influence, we are strengthening that principle which has been assailed. The mere possession of talent is no guarantee of usefulness or happiness in life. Right principles are the only basis of true success.

It is necessary to think rightly, in order to act with wisdom. To form a well-balanced character, we must give attention to physical, mental, and moral culture; and for each of these, the Bible contains the most valuable instruction.

October 9, 1883

## **Search the Scriptures**

It is the duty of every Christian to seek a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. The importance of this can hardly be overestimated. "Given by inspiration of God," "able to make us wise unto salvation," rendering "the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works," the Book of books has the highest claim to our reverent attention. We must not be satisfied with superficial knowledge, but must seek to learn the full meaning of the words of truth, and to drink deep of the spirit of the holy oracles.

To read a certain number of chapters daily, or commit to memory a stipulated amount without careful thought as to the meaning of the sacred text, is a work of little profit. We cannot obtain wisdom without earnest attention and prayerful study. Some portions of Scripture are, indeed, too plain to be misunderstood; but there are others whose meaning does not lie upon the surface, to be seen at a glance. Scripture must be compared with scripture; there must be careful research and patient reflection. And such study will be richly repaid. As the miner discovers veins of precious metal concealed beneath the surface of the earth, so will he who perseveringly searches the word of God as for hid treasure, find truths of greatest value, which are concealed from the view of the careless seeker.

No effort should be spared to establish a right habit of study. If the mind wanders, bring it back. If the intellectual and moral taste has been perverted by the over-wrought and exciting tales of fiction, so that you are disinclined to apply yourself to the diligent study of God's word, then you have a battle to fight with yourself to overcome this depraved habit. A love for fictitious reading should be broken up at once. Rigid rules should be enforced to hold the mind in a proper channel. The pernicious practice of story-reading is one of the means employed by Satan to destroy souls. The mind that is occupied with exciting stories, loses all relish for solid reading that would improve the memory and strengthen the intellect.

I am acquainted with many sad examples of the evil effects of this baneful practice. In youth, the persons of whom I speak had well-balanced minds. God had endowed them with mental powers of no ordinary character. But they took up the

reading of romance, and the more they indulged the appetite for this food, the greater was the demand. The imagination constantly craved its accustomed stimulus, as the inebriate longs for his wine or tobacco. Their mental and moral powers were weakened and perverted. They lost their interest in the Scriptures and their relish for prayer; and they were as truly ruined, mentally and spiritually, as is the liquor-drinker or the tobacco devotee. Novel-readers are mental inebriates; and they need to sign a pledge of total abstinence as verily as does the victim of any other form of intemperance.

Another source of danger, against which we should be constantly on our guard, is the reading of infidel authors. Such works are inspired by Satan, and no one can read them without loss to the soul. It is true that some who are affected by them may finally recover; but all who tamper in the least with their foul influence, place themselves on Satan's ground, and he makes the most of his advantage. As they invite his temptations, they have not wisdom to discern or strength to resist them. With a fascinating, bewitching power, unbelief and infidelity fasten themselves upon the mind. To harbor their suggestions is like recklessly taking to your bosom a serpent whose sting is always poisonous and often fatal.

We are surrounded by unbelief. The very atmosphere seems charged with it. Only by constant effort can we resist its power. Those who value their soul's salvation, should shun infidel writings as they would shun the leprosy.

Dear youth, be careful what you read. While the mind is directed into hurtful channels by an improper course of reading, it is impossible for you to make the truth of God the subject of constant meditation. If there was ever a time when a knowledge of the Scriptures was more important than at any other period, that time is the present. I appeal to young and old: Make the word of God your text-book. Here you will find the true standard of character. Here you may learn what it is to be a Christian in the true acceptance of the term.

The Sabbath-school affords to parents and children a precious opportunity for the study of God's word. But in order to gain that benefit which they should gain in the Sabbath-school, both parents and children should devote time to the study of the lessons, seeking to obtain a thorough knowledge of the facts presented, and also of the spiritual truths which these facts are designed to teach. We should especially impress upon the minds of the young the importance of seeking the full significance of the

scripture under consideration.

In some schools, I am sorry to say, the custom prevails of reading the lesson from the lesson-sheet. This should not be. It need not be, if the time that is often needlessly and even sinfully employed, were given to the study of the Scriptures. There is no reason why Sabbath-school lessons should be less perfectly learned by teachers or pupils than are the lessons of the day-school. They should be better learned, as they treat of subjects infinitely more important. A neglect here is displeasing to God.

Parents, set apart a little time each day for the study of the Sabbath-school lesson with your children. Give up the social visit if need be, rather than sacrifice the hour devoted to the precious lessons of sacred history. Parents as well as children will receive benefit from this study. Let the more important passages of Scripture connected with the lesson be committed to memory, not as a task, but as a privilege. Though at first memory may be defective, it will gain strength by exercise, so that after a time you will delight thus to treasure up the precious words of truth. And the habit will prove a most valuable aid to religious growth.

If the time that is worse than wasted in gossip, in ministering to pride, or for the gratification of appetite, were devoted with equal interest to the study of the Bible, what encouragement would be given to our Sabbath-schools! But when parents are more anxious to have their children fashionably dressed than to have their minds stored with the truths of God's word, the children themselves will soon learn to regard dress and display as of more consequence than the things which concern their salvation.

Parents, yours is an important and solemn responsibility. Make it your life-work to form the characters of your children according to the divine Pattern. If they ever possess the inward adorning, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, it will be because you perseveringly trained them to love the teachings of God's word, and to seek the approval of Jesus above the approbation of the world.

Observe system in the study of the Scriptures in your families. Neglect anything of a temporal nature, dispense with all unnecessary sewing, and with needless provision for the table, but be sure that the soul is fed with the bread of life. It is impossible to estimate the good results of one hour or even half an hour each day devoted in a cheerful, social manner to the word of God. Make the Bible its own expositor, bringing

together all that is said concerning a given subject at different times and under varied circumstances. Do not break up your home class for callers or visitors. If they come in during the exercise, invite them to take part in it. Let it be seen that you consider it more important to obtain a knowledge of God's word than to secure the gains or pleasures of the world.

All over the field of revelation are scattered the glad springs of heavenly truth, and peace, and joy. They are within the reach of every seeker. The words of inspiration, pondered in the heart, will be as streams flowing from the river of the water of life. Our Saviour prayed that the minds of the disciples might be opened to understand the Scriptures. And whenever we study the Bible with a prayerful heart, the Holy Spirit is near to open to us the meaning of the words we read.

Let the youth be taught to love the study of the Bible. Let the first place in our thoughts and affections be given to the Book of books; for it contains knowledge which we need above all other. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Let us seek to be thoroughly furnished unto every good work. Let us put forth earnest efforts to draw near to God, that his angels may be near to protect and bless us. Thus may we gain the victory over the power of Satan, and finally receive the crown of glory, honor, and immortality.



October 16, 1883

### **At the Sanitarium and the Office**

Sunday evening, August 19, I spoke by invitation at the Sanitarium. It was estimated that about four hundred persons were assembled in the ample parlor and adjoining rooms, in the broad hall, and upon the verandas. Around me were gathered the Sanitarium patients, the most feeble reclining upon sofas and rolling chairs. It was a touching scene.

Father Stone opened the meeting by prayer. With a heart deeply stirred, I addressed the crowded congregation from the words, "He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips that they speak no guile; let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."

Many persons complain of Providence because of the discomfort and inconvenience which they suffer, when this is the sure result of their own course. They seem to feel that they are ill-treated of God, when they themselves are alone responsible for the ills which they endure. Our kind and merciful heavenly Father has established laws, which, obeyed, would promote physical, mental, and moral health. A violation of these laws is a violation of the immutable law of God, and the penalty will surely follow.

God requires us to yield our own will to his; but he does not ask us to give up anything that it would be for our good to retain. No one can be happy while he devotes his life to selfish gratification. A course of obedience to God is the wisest course for us to pursue; for it brings peace, content, and happiness as the sure result.

If the lips were constantly guarded so that no guile could corrupt them, what an amount of suffering, degradation, and misery might be prevented. If we would say nothing to wound or grieve, except in necessary reproof of sin, that God might not be dishonored, how much misunderstanding, bitterness, and anguish would be prevented. If we would speak words of good cheer, words of hope and faith in God, how much

light we might shed upon the pathway of others, to be reflected in still brighter beams upon our own souls. The path of obedience to God is the path of virtue, of health, and happiness. The plan of salvation, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, opens up a way whereby man may secure happiness and prolong his days upon the earth, as well as enjoy the favor of Heaven and secure that future life which measures with the life of God. The words of inspiration will never fail. Whenever we comply with the conditions, the Lord will surely fulfill his promises.

We cannot but wonder that beings endowed with reasoning powers will by their willful disregard of the word of God render their case so much worse than need be. If men would place themselves in right relation to God by heeding the counsel of his word, they would escape innumerable dangers, and experience a peace and content that would render life a joy rather than a burden. If they would resist the allurements of forbidden pleasure, and the temptations to excess in eating, dressing, and speaking, they might in many cases greatly prolong their life here, as well as secure eternal life hereafter.

The assurance of God's approval will promote physical health. It fortifies the soul against doubt, perplexity, and excessive grief, that so often sap the vital forces and induce nervous diseases of a most debilitating and distressing character. The Lord has pledged his unfailing word that his eye shall be over the righteous, and his ear open to their prayer, while he is against all them that do evil. We make very hard work for ourselves in this world when we take such a course that the Lord is against us.

Many fall into a sad error in the belief that they may violate the laws of nature to gratify pride in dress, to indulge depraved appetite, or to find enjoyment in sensual pleasure, in the days of their youth and prosperity, and then stop when they please. They will not find it an easy matter to change the current of their thoughts to divorce themselves from their frivolous pursuits, and become sensible, candid, and thoughtful. They have squandered precious time, and lost a valuable experience. Their character has been warped and deformed by years of crooked growth. In their own strength it is impossible for them to change this result.

It is just here that all should feel their need of the mighty Healer. When they have done all in their power to place themselves in right relation to life and health, then they may come in penitence and faith to the all-tender, compassionate, loving Saviour, and

ask of him physical, mental, and moral strength to act their part in blessing their fellow-men. But the Lord will not hear and answer the prayers of those who are knowingly doing evil by unhealthful practices of any kind. God, in his wisdom, has established natural laws for the proper control of our dress, our appetites, and our passions, and he requires of us obedience in every particular. It is by disregard of these laws that so many render their lives burdensome.

If we make God our trust, and carry our troubles to the great burden-bearer, we shall find rest to our souls. When the poor paralytic was brought to the house where Jesus was teaching, a dense crowd surrounded the door, barring every way of access to the Saviour. But faith and hope had been kindled in the heart of the poor sufferer, and he proposed that his friends take him to the rear of the house, break up the roof, and let him down into the presence of Christ. The suggestion was acted upon; as the afflicted one lay at the feet of the mighty Healer, all that man could do for his restoration had been done. Jesus knew that the sufferer had been tortured with a sense of his sins, and that he must first find relief from this burden. With a look of tenderest compassion, the Saviour addressed him, not as a stranger, or even a friend, but as one who had even then been received into the family of God: "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee."

This was the assurance which he most desired. His weak soul had yielded to temptation. He had indulged sinful inclination at the expense of sacred responsibilities and holy trust, until he was tortured with the thought that he was indeed the devil's own, betrayed into his hands, and under his control. But one who could break the strong hands of Satan had spoken, and the sinner was pardoned, the captive set free; and as hope and peace sprang up in his soul, there came the earnest, anxious desire to tell every one the story of his deliverance. Oh for health that he might point others also to the Friend of sinners! The Pharisees standing by were filled with greater bitterness by the Saviour's words, and said within themselves, "Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?" Jesus then gave them most striking evidence of his divine character by showing that he read the thoughts of their hearts as an open book. "Wherefore," said he, "think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house." The sufferer arose and departed to his house. "But when the multitude saw it, they marveled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men."

The same compassionate, loving Saviour is ready to listen to our prayers and to pity our weakness. The same mighty Helper will impart strength unto us. He is still pleading in behalf of every convicted, repentant, sin-stricken soul. Our hearts should be filled with joy and gratitude and praise because of his loving-kindness and manifold mercy to the children of men.

Everything beautiful and useful in our world we owe to the mercy of Christ. What, then, is the position of those who accept every favor from their beneficent Saviour, but are too proud, too ungrateful, too heartless, to acknowledge their obligation, and render praise to the Giver. Such conduct toward their fellow-men would be pronounced not merely uncourteous but heathenish; yet when manifested toward God, it calls forth no rebuke; it is not condemned by the world's standard, and with this many are satisfied. Ungrateful souls, in their insensibility, resemble the beasts of the field, that eat and drink and return no thanks to the Giver of all blessings.

Look upon the beauty that still adorns the earth, its lofty trees, its carpet of living green, its endless variety of flowers of every tint and hue, colored by the skill of the great Master Artist. Is it rational, is it manly, is it honorable to accept the gifts, and not recognize and thank the Giver? The beauty that gladdens our earthly path should speak to our hearts of the love of God for his creatures. It is but a dim reflection of the brightness of the better land, yet unrevealed. By beholding this our minds are enabled to grasp the glories within, which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man," but which "God hath prepared for them that love him."

Monday evening, August 20, I spoke again to those employed at the Review Office. I deeply felt the need of a reformation, a transformation of character, with all connected with the publishing house. Unless they would fight the battles of the Lord, and gain the victory over self and sin, they could not win the crown of life. They should act from principle, be firm and decided, and wholly on the side of right. Should they fail to do this, their defense would be removed, and they would be found on the enemy's side, scattering from Christ. Unbelief grows as naturally as thistle-seed, which, blown here and there, takes root, vegetates, and produces yearly an increased harvest.

I entreated all, for Christ's sake, to become established for themselves upon the sure word of prophecy. All should be able to give the reason of the hope that is within

them. A vigilant foe is at work earnestly and untiringly, to weaken their confidence in God and the truth. The most extravagant, inconsistent reports in regard to my position, my work, and my writings, will be put in circulation. But those who have had an experience in this message, and have become acquainted with the character of my work, will not be affected by those things, unless they themselves backslide from God, and become corrupted by the spirit of the world. Some will be deceived because of their own unfaithfulness. They want to believe a lie. Some have betrayed sacred, important trusts, and this is why they wander in the mazes of doubt. Like partially blind men, they see men as trees walking. It is unsafe to trust to the judgment of men, even though they may occupy responsible positions. Every person must have a close connection with God for himself. Our only safety is to watch and pray, and depart from all iniquity. If we would stand in the day of the Lord, we must search carefully our own hearts, and know whether we are in the love of God. Says the apostle: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" This close self-examination must go forward day by day and hour by hour.

Influences have been at work to unsettle the faith, and weaken the confidence of the naturally doubting and skeptical. There are some, even connected with our institutions, who are in great danger of making shipwreck of faith. Satan will work in disguise, in his most deceptive manner, in these branches of God's work. He makes these important instrumentalities his special points of attack, and he will leave no means untried to cripple their usefulness. The same enemy that is ever on my track, will be on yours also. He will suggest, conjecture, fabricate all sorts of reports, and those who wish them true will believe them. But be assured that the attacks of Satan will not turn me from the path of duty. The work committed to me forty years ago I must carry forward as long as life shall last. I will not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. Unpleasant as it may be, I must warn, reprove, rebuke, as God bids me, whether the carnal heart will accept or reject the words of warning. For forty years, Satan has made the most determined efforts to cut off this testimony from the church; but it has continued from year to year to warn the erring, to unmask the deceiver, to encourage the desponding. My trust is in God. I have learned not to be surprised at opposition in any form or from almost any source. I expect to be betrayed, as was my Master, by professed friends.

It is my prayer that I may have strength and grace to pursue a straightforward course, and to do my work with fidelity. Every soul will be tried and tested. Let all be

careful how they treat the warnings, reproofs, and entreaties of the Spirit of God. Those who reject light because it does not harmonize with their inclinations, will be left in darkness, to choose the things they love,--the things that separate them from the favor of God.

In these days of peril we should be exceedingly careful not to reject the rays of light which Heaven in mercy sends us; for it is by these that we are to discern the devices of the enemy. We need light from Heaven every hour, that we may distinguish between the sacred and the common, the eternal and the temporal. If left to ourselves, we shall blunder at every step; we shall incline to the world, we shall shun self-denial, and see no necessity for constant watchfulness and prayer, and we shall be taken captive by Satan at his will. Some are today in this position. Having refused the light which God has sent them, they know not at what they stumble.

All whose names shall at last be found written in the Lamb's book of life, will fight manfully the battles of the Lord. They will labor most earnestly to discern and put away temptations and every evil thing. They will feel that the eye of God is upon them, and that the strictest fidelity is required. As faithful sentinels they will keep the passage barred that Satan may not pass them disguised as an angel of light to work his work of death in their midst. God wants every one of his servants to have clear, sharp, spiritual eyesight. Instead of admitting to their confidence those who have not been proved, it is their duty to challenge them, to test their fidelity, that doubt and unbelief of the present truth may not work like leaven in the midst of us.

It is far easier to allow matters in our important institutions to go in a lax, loose way, than to weed out that which is offensive, which will corrupt and destroy confidence and faith. But it would be far better to have a smaller number of workers, to accomplish less, and as far as possible, to have these who are engaged in the work true-hearted, firm as rock in principle, loving the whole truth, obedient to all the commandments of God. The white-robed ones who surround the throne of God, are not composed of that company who were lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, and who choose to drift with the current rather than to breast the waves of opposition. All who remain pure and uncorrupted from the spirit and influence prevailing at this time, will have stern conflicts. They will come through great tribulation; they will wash their robes of character, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. These will sing the song of triumph in the kingdom of glory. Those who suffer with Christ will be partakers

of his glory.

November 6, 1883

### **Notes of Travel**

Sunday, August 12, in company with Sr. Sarah McEnterfer, I left the Pacific Coast, on my way to the East. Although we suffered considerably from heat and dust, we had a pleasant journey across the plains. We found conductor and porters ready to do all in their power for our comfort and convenience.

From the time that we stepped on board the train, I felt perfectly satisfied that I was in the way of duty. I have had sweet communion with my Saviour, and have felt that he is my refuge and my fortress, and that no harm can come to me while engaged in the work which he has given me to do. I have an abiding trust in the promises of God, and enjoy that peace which comes only from Jesus.

In the seat next us in the car was an actress, evidently a woman of ability, and possessed of many good qualities, which, if devoted to the service of God, might win for her the Saviour's commendation, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." This woman and myself are both actors on the stage of life, but oh, how vastly different is our work! I felt not the slightest temptation to desire her honors. I thirst not for the applause of the idle and pleasure-loving multitudes that seek the unnatural excitement of the drama.

The theater is a poor place of resort for the strengthening of virtuous principles. Rather, its influence is highly injurious to both health and morals. The lady's attendant remarked that it was somewhat trying to be deprived of sleep night after night until two and sometimes three o'clock in the morning, and then spend a large portion of the day in bed. The divinely-appointed order of day and night is disregarded, health is sacrificed, for the amusement of those who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. The effect is demoralizing to all concerned. Two or three evenings a week spent in attending balls, or theatric or operatic entertainments, will enervate both mind and body, and prevent the development of that strength of character which is essential to usefulness in society. The only safe amusements are such as will not banish serious and religious thoughts; the only safe places of resort are those to which we can take Jesus with us.



We reached Battle Creek on Friday, August 17. The following night I found it impossible to sleep. I had not visited this place since I left it in great feebleness after my husband's funeral. Now the great loss which the cause had sustained in his death, the great loss which I had sustained in being deprived of his society and assistance in my work, came up vividly before me, and I could not compose myself to sleep. I recalled the covenant which I had made with God at my husband's death-bed,--that I would not become discouraged under the burden, but would labor more earnestly and devotedly than ever before to present the truth both by pen and voice; that I would set before the people the excellence of the statutes and precepts of Jehovah, and would point them to the cleansing fountain where we may wash away every stain of sin.

All night I wrestled with God in prayer that he would give me strength for my work, and imbue me with his Spirit, that I might keep my solemn covenant. I desired nothing so much as to spend my time and strength in urging those who profess the truth to come into closer relationship with God, that they may enjoy more perfect communion with him than did ancient Israel in their most prosperous days.

Sabbath morning I spoke to the large congregation assembled in the Tabernacle. The Lord gave me strength and freedom as I presented the words found in Revelation 7:9-17.

The last time that I had spoken there was on the Sabbath following my husband's funeral. At that time many considered it almost presumptuous for me, in my feeble condition, to make the effort; but my great desire to speak words of entreaty and warning to the church, led me to venture. Had those words been heeded, the difficulties which have since occurred would not have been. The burden of my message was an admonition to the church to be pitiful, courteous, kind, and compassionate, to love one another as Christ had loved them. I urged them to put away their unkind thoughts toward their brethren, to cease talking of the faults and errors of others, and to search carefully their own hearts, correct their own defects of character, and purify their own souls by obedience to the truth. I entreated all to cherish a forgiving, Christlike tenderness for one another, and to guard the reputation of their brethren, remembering that the tongue is an unruly member, which, if not sanctified, if not restrained, may do great injury to those whom God loves and whom he is using to do his work.

Whatever may have been our course toward the dead, they are beyond the

knowledge of our sorrow or repentance. Our regret for wrongs done to them can be evinced only by a reformation in our spirit and action toward the living. Let none repeat the errors of the past. The spirit of Christ will lead us to think kindly of our brethren. It is the work of Satan to seek some stain upon the character of Christ's followers, to talk of their faults, and magnify their errors. Satan is an accuser of the brethren, and all who engage in this work show that they are actuated by the same spirit. All our prayers will be in vain while we cherish feelings of envy, jealousy, suspicion, and enmity. We shall be forgiven only as we forgive. It is no better than mocking God to engage in religious worship with hearts thinking evil, and full of bitterness toward our brethren or our fellow-men.

Jesus, our exemplar, looks with abhorrence upon all who are cherishing unkindness. Says the beloved John, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." How is it possible that the prayers of such shall be anything but an abomination in the sight of God?

Were our own hearts and lives free from defects, it would still be our duty to pity and help the erring. Much more then, since we ourselves are subject to error and infirmity, does it behoove us to manifest great modesty and carefulness in judging and condemning our fellow-sinners. All should give diligent heed to the words of the apostle, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." Inquire into the nature of your thoughts, purposes, tempers, words and deeds. Compare them with the character revealed in the life of Christ. See whether you have his spirit, whether the visible fruits of righteousness testify that you are in the faith.

These and many thoughts of like character were presented before the people. I assured them that all unkindness to the dead or to the living, I had buried in the grave of my husband. All was freely forgiven. My last testimony before leaving the church was that of warning and entreaty to seek for unity and love.

Now, after an absence of two years, I again stood before them. I was very weary, and nearly sick after the journey of five days and five nights; but the love of Christ and my interest for their souls constrained me to address them.

On Sunday morning I spoke to about seventy-five of the workers connected with the Office of the Review and Herald. One week before, August 12, I stood before a

similar company at the Pacific Press, and urged upon them the importance of acting from principle. Now I presented the same subject, admonishing all to allow nothing to sway them from the right. I warned them that they would have opposing influences to meet, and would be pressed by temptations, and every one who was not rooted and grounded in the truth would be moved from the sure foundation.

Every wind of doctrine will be blowing. Everything that can be shaken will be shaken and only those things that cannot be shaken will remain. Satan is making the most desperate efforts to induce souls to range under his banner, and all who yield to his deceptions will wage war against the servants of Prince Immanuel. Watchfulness and prayer must be our safeguards in these days of peril.

All who are unfaithful in their work in the Office are meeting with a great loss. Those who are not wholly on the Lord's side will not see the importance of discipline and order. Hence the necessity that all who do have the fear of God before them, unite in maintaining a standard which he can approve. If those who stand in positions of responsibility excuse one in a wrong course, they encourage not only that one but others in wrong-doing. This renders very difficult the work of those who would maintain such rules and pursue such a course as God requires.

There are always some who, though they have enjoyed great advantages for spiritual progress, are not firmly established upon Bible truth. They seem to be without an anchor, beaten about by the waves of doubt and unbelief. They are without the joy and consolation which comes from a firm, decided faith, and they seem to be without protection from the shafts of Satan. I feel deeply anxious for these; for I know how strong is the power of Satan upon them.

Our Saviour declared upon one occasion, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." There was in Christ absolutely nothing of which Satan could take advantage. Jesus had not defiled his soul by one wrong action, one doubt, or even one murmuring thought. We may open the door of the mind and invite Satan's suggestions, or by pressing close to the side of Jesus, we may obtain strength to resist every evil influence. Satan has his agents, even in our offices of publication, and he works through them to unsettle the faith and confuse the minds of all who give them an opportunity. Our only safe course is to watch unto prayer. Questions which the half-hearted and unbelieving will suggest can be safely answered by unprejudiced judgment and earnest

prayer. We should beware of allowing our minds to be influenced by suggestions, statements, or reports; for all these may be the result of envy, revenge, passion, prejudice, or of spiritual blindness. God wants, in the Office and in the church, faithful men who have eyes to discern the evil from the good, who will not call sin righteousness or righteousness sin,--men who will call things by their right names, whether it brings them censure or approbation.

The greatest calamity that can come upon any people is to be blindfolded by Satan so that they cannot discern his devices. He frequently works in disguise, clothing himself in the garments of righteousness, so that those who have not spiritual discernment know not that it is he; and often before those in responsible positions awake, Satan obtains a foothold, and doubt, unbelief, and infidelity are leavening the camp. None need to cultivate unbelief, or fear that they shall have too great faith. Unbelief, like an obtrusive, poisonous weed, grows without cultivation, while faith needs to be carefully cherished, or it will die out of the soul.

I prized this opportunity to speak words of warning and caution, knowing that those whom I addressed must be aroused to guard their souls from the devices of Satan.

At the urgent request of Mrs. Robinson, an active member of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, I had consented to speak in a temperance meeting held in the public park on Sunday afternoon. About five hundred persons gathered at 4 P. M. Eld. Mather, who first addressed the assembly, presented thoughts of the greatest value. His words found a response in our hearts. He did not relate amusing anecdotes, or endeavor to create a sensation, but presented sound and forcible arguments, which the people could remember and consider after returning to their homes. Many, he said, flatter themselves that evil is diminishing, that the cause of reform is advancing, that temperance is soon to prevail, righteousness to predominate over sin, and the millennium to be ushered in. The speaker did not share in these flattering hopes. Intemperance still continues its ravages. Iniquity in every form stands like a mighty barrier to prevent the progress of truth and righteousness. Social wrongs, born of ignorance and vice, are still causing untold misery, and casting their baleful shadow upon both the church and the world. Depravity among the youth is increasing instead of decreasing. Nothing but earnest, continual effort will avail to remove this desolating curse. The conflict with interest and appetite, with evil habits and unholy passions, will be fierce and deadly; only those who shall move from principle can gain the victory in

this warfare.

The speaker then clearly set forth the evil of granting license to sell liquors; but lack of space forbids me to present his words more fully.

Following Eld. Mather, I spoke about thirty minutes in regard to the great work of reform, and the necessity of educating the youth to act from principle, that they may have moral power to withstand temptation. Daniel, the Hebrew captive, was exposed in his youth to the allurements of the king's court; yet he remained true to the principles taught him by his fathers. He purposed in his heart that he would not eat of the luxuries of the king's table, or drink of his wines. This purpose was not formed without due reflection and earnest prayer, and when once his position was taken, he was not to be moved from it. Though surrounded by temptations to self-indulgence and dissipation, he would not consent to violate his conscience. He made God his strength, his mind was not enervated by habits of indulgence which crush out true, god-like manhood, and he was prepared to attain both moral and intellectual greatness.

Daniel's companions, also, resolutely denied selfish desires, and put away hurtful gratifications. As a result, their minds became strong and vigorous. They chose the real, the true, and the useful, rather than the momentary indulgence of appetite and pride. They did all in their power to place themselves in right relation to God, and the Lord was not unmindful of their firm, persevering, earnest effort. The Scriptures declare of Daniel and his fellows: "As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams." These youth had placed themselves in connection with the Source of all wisdom. They learned of Christ, the world's greatest teacher. While improving their opportunities to obtain a knowledge of the sciences, they were obtaining, also, the highest education which it is possible for mortals to receive. They received light directly from the throne of Heaven, and read the mysteries of God for future ages.

"And in all matters of wisdom and understanding that the king inquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm." These youth determined that the talents intrusted to them of God should not be perverted and enfeebled by selfish indulgence. They revered their own manhood. They kept their eyes fixed steadfastly on the good which they wished to accomplish. They honored God, and God honored them.

The history of Daniel and his companions contains a lesson for us. Inspiration declares that the "fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Religious principle lies at the foundation of the highest education. If our youth are but balanced by principle, they may with safety improve the mental powers to the very highest extent, and may take all their attainments with them into the future life. But temptations assail the young on every hand. Fathers and mothers should give thought and study and persevering effort to the training of their children, that they may stand unsullied by the prevailing evil, as did those Hebrew youth in the court of Babylon. To shield your children from the allurements of worldly pleasure, and the temptations to indulge appetite, to teach them steadfastness to the great principles of reform, will require effort and involve sacrifice. It will expose you to the reproaches of those who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Your motives will be misconstrued, your efforts falsified, your labors and purposes disparaged. But, notwithstanding every opposing influence, we must, in the fear of God, press forward, seeking not to meet the world's standard, but that which is presented in the Scriptures of truth. We must act from principle, doing right because it is right, whether friends or foes approve or condemn.

Children should be educated to habits of temperance, even while in their mother's arms. Our tables should bear only the most wholesome food, free from every irritating substance. The appetite for liquor is encouraged by the preparation of food with condiments and spices. These cause a feverish state of the system, and drink is demanded to allay the irritation. On my frequent journeys across the continent, I do not patronize restaurants, dining-cars, or hotels, for the simple reason that I cannot eat the food there provided. The dishes are highly seasoned with salt and pepper, creating an almost intolerable thirst. During my last trip, the conductor of the sleeping-car kindly brought me a plate of rich vegetable soup. I tasted the apparently inviting dish, but found it so highly seasoned that I dared not eat it. The salt and pepper made my mouth smart, and I well knew that they would irritate and inflame the delicate coating of the stomach. I passed the tempting dish to another; for I dared not place such an abuse upon my digestive organs.

Such is the food that is commonly served up on fashionable tables, and given to the children. Its effect is to cause nervousness, and to create thirst which water does not quench. There is a craving for something stronger, and thus very many are led to the use of beer and wine. In this way is formed the appetite for strong drink. Every mother

should carefully guard her table, and allow nothing to come upon it which will have the slightest tendency to lay the foundation of intemperate habits. Food should be prepared in as simple a manner as possible, free from condiments and spices, and even from an undue amount of salt.

You who have at heart the good of your children, and who would see them come up with unperverted tastes and appetites, must perseveringly urge your way against popular sentiments and practices. If you would have them prepared to be useful on earth and to obtain the eternal reward in the kingdom of glory, you must teach them to obey the laws of God, both in nature and revelation, instead of following the customs of the world.

Painstaking effort, prayer and faith, when united with a correct example, will not be fruitless. Bring your children to God in faith, and seek to impress their susceptible minds with a sense of their obligations to their heavenly Father. It will require lesson upon lesson, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little. But Jesus, in our behalf, engaged in the most fearful conflict with the powers of darkness. Self-denial, fasting, humiliation, he willingly endured, that he might elevate, ennoble, and purify the human race; and thus prepare them for a seat at his right hand. In view of all that Christ has endured in our behalf, shall we shrink from any effort or sacrifice for the salvation of souls for whom he died?

Parents should educate their children to have moral independence, not to follow impulse and inclination, but to exercise their reasoning powers, and to act from principle. Let mothers inquire, not for the latest fashion, but for the path of duty and usefulness, and direct the steps of their children therein. Simple habits, pure morals, and a noble independence in the right course, will be of more value to the youth than the gifts of genius, the endowments of learning, or the external polish which the world can give them. Teach your children to walk in the ways of righteousness, and they, in turn, will lead others into the same path. Thus may you see at last that your life has not been in vain, for you have been instrumental in bringing precious fruit to garner of God.

November 13, 1883

### **At the Massachusetts Camp-Meeting**

The camp-meeting at Worcester, Mass., August 22-28, was one of great interest to all our people who were present. It was an occasion of special interest to me. I there met a large number of believers, some of whom have been connected with the work from the very rise of the third angel's message. Since our last camp-meeting, Bro. Hastings, one of the faithful standard-bearers, has fallen at his post. I felt sad as I saw others weighed down by the infirmities of age, yet I was glad to see them eagerly listening to the words of life. The love of God and his truth seemed to glow in their hearts and to light up their countenances. Their eyes were often filled with tears, not of sorrow but of joy, as they heard the message from God by the mouth of his servants. These aged pilgrims were present at nearly all the meetings; as if they feared that, like Thomas, they might be absent when Jesus should come in, and say, "Peace be unto you."

Like ripening grain these precious tried and faithful ones are fitting for the harvest. Their work is nearly done. They may be permitted to remain till Christ shall be revealed in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. They may drop out of the ranks at any time, and sleep in Jesus. But while darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people, these children of the light can lift up their heads and rejoice, knowing that their redemption draweth nigh.

We were glad to see many of the citizens of Worcester attending our meetings through the week, not only in the evening, but during the day. The Lord gave great freedom to his servants while they proclaimed the truth. The meeting broke up when the interest was deepest. We did wish that all could have remained a few days longer.

As I looked over the congregation of believers, and marked the serious, earnest, expression upon their countenances, I asked myself, How will it be with these dear souls when they return to their homes and to their little churches? Will they bear with them the sweet, heavenly atmosphere that has pervaded our camp-meeting? Will the doubting ones put away their skepticism, and cultivate faith and love? Will the worldly ambition, the pride and lukewarmness, that have been gaining ground among our people



be put away? Will all feel an individual responsibility to let their light shine? to live and work through Christ for the prosperity of the churches to which they belong? Will their works correspond with their faith?

A good work has been begun, and we hope that it will not end with the meeting, but that there will be a reformation in every church. Parents and children should seek a new conversion, that the light from them may extend to their neighbors. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

I repeat, Will our brethren reap from this meeting all the good which they can and should obtain? For all these privileges they are accountable. The words spoken will be to the hearers a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. The Lord is coming; the alarm must be sounded. The people who profess the truth are unready. Should their probation close now, they would be weighed in the balance, and found wanting. Some have not made earnest efforts to overcome; they have not realized the danger of continuing in sin, and have become almost content where they are. As I felt their peril, I longed to see them coming up out of the dark cellar of unbelief, into the upper room where there is light and happiness. I greatly regretted that we must close the meeting without seeing a deeper and more thorough work wrought in their hearts.

Many who nominally assent to the truth will fail to enter the kingdom of God, because they do not in their daily life practice that which they profess. As I looked over the congregation, my eyes rested upon not a few who had a knowledge of the truth, and who, if this knowledge were but sanctified, might accomplish a work for God. I thought, If all these realized their accountability to God and their duty to their fellow-men, and would work as the Lord has given them ability, what a light would shine forth from them in Massachusetts, and even extend to other States! If every one who has professed faith in the third angel's message would make the word of God his rule of action, and with strict fidelity perform his work as a servant of Christ, this people would be a power in the world.

It is not alone those who labor in word and doctrine who are responsible for souls. Every man and every woman who has a knowledge of the truth should be a co-worker with Christ. We have but one minister laboring in Massachusetts. If it is God's

will that the State have no more ministerial help, then he requires the lay-members to act as missionaries. Brethren, go out with your Bibles, visit the people at their firesides, read the word of God to the family, and as many more as will come in. Go with a contrite heart and an abiding trust in God's grace and mercy, and do what you can.

Things are not as they should be in Massachusetts. There are men who never gave a discourse in their lives, who ought to be laboring to save souls. Neither great talents nor high position is required. But there is urgent need of men and women who are acquainted with Jesus, and familiar with the story of his life and death.

Talent is too much idolized, and station too much coveted, even among Seventh-day Adventists. There is too eager a desire to ride upon the high places of the earth, and too little willingness to follow the Saviour in the path of cross-bearing and humility. There are too many who will do nothing unless they can be leaders; too many who must be praised and petted, or they have no interest to labor. To work in a humble way for Jesus, and though unnoticed to still work on, sowing the seeds of truth, appears to them an unattractive and unwelcome task. All this springs from mistaken conceptions of usefulness and honor. The wide, deep rivers are admired and valued, while the hundreds of little rills that help to form these broad and noble streams, are all unnoticed. Yet the humble brook that makes its noiseless way through grove and meadow, bringing health, and fertility, and beauty, is as useful in its way as the broad river.

We do not need eminent men so much as good, true, and humble men. God calls for those of all classes and all trades to work in his cause. Those are wanted who will begin at the lower rounds of the ladder, who will, if need be, eat their own bread and quietly perform their duty; men who will not shrink from diligent labor to acquire means, or from rigid economy in its expenditure, and who will devote both time and means to work for the Master in their own families and their own neighborhoods. If the work of reformation be begun and carried forward in each family, there will be a living and prosperous church. Things must first be set in order at home. The cause needs those who can work at home, who will study the Bible, and practice its teachings, and who will train up their children in the fear of God. Then let diligent, persevering effort be put forth for others, with earnest prayer for the aid of divine grace and power, and great results will follow missionary labor.

No matter who you are, it is the mind, the heart, the sincere purpose, and the daily

life, that mark the value of the man. Restless, talkative, dictatorial men are not needed in this work. There are too many of them springing up everywhere. Many youth who have but little experience, push themselves forward, manifest no reverence for age or office, and take offense if counseled or reproved. We have already more of these self-important ones than we want. God calls for modest, quiet, sober-minded youth, and men of mature age, who are well-balanced with principle, who can pray as well as talk, who will rise up before the aged, and treat gray hairs with respect.

The cause of God is suffering for want of laborers of understanding and mental power. My brethren and sisters, the Lord has blessed you with intellectual faculties capable of vast improvement. Cultivate your talents with persevering earnestness. Train and discipline the mind by study, by observation, by reflection. You cannot meet the mind of God unless you put to use every power. The mental faculties will strengthen and develop if you will go to work in the fear of God, in humility and with earnest prayer. A resolute purpose will accomplish wonders. Be open, firm, decided Christians. Exalt Jesus, talk of his love, tell of his power, and thus let your light shine forth to the world.