

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

BOOK 2

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Nehemiah Rebukes Extortion

The wall of Jerusalem had not been completed, when Nehemiah's attention was called to the unhappy condition of the poorer classes of the people. In the unsettled state of the country, tillage had been, to some extent, neglected. Furthermore, because of their separation from God, his blessing had not rested upon their lands. A scarcity of grain resulted. To obtain food for their families, the poor were obliged to buy on credit, and at an exorbitant price. They were also compelled to raise money by borrowing on interest, to pay the tribute to the king of Persia. The people of Israel were not now enjoying prosperity as when the Lord blessed them for their obedience. Because of their sins their defense had been removed, and the Lord had allowed other nations to overcome them. Under the rule of idolatrous kings, heavy taxes were imposed upon them; property, liberty, and life seemed at the mercy of these godless powers.

While they had no thought of revolting against the king of Persia, they had hoped, by repenting and reformation, to regain the favor of God, and to be restored to their former liberty. As yet their hopes were not realized. The tribute money for the king must be forthcoming in its season. To add to the distress of the poor, the more wealthy took advantage of their necessity, obtaining mortgages of their lands, and adding them to their own large possessions. They also required usury for all money loaned. This course soon reduced the unfortunate debtors to the deepest poverty, and many were forced to sell their sons and daughters to servitude. There appeared no hope of improving their condition, no way to regain either their lands or their children, no prospect before them but that of perpetual slavery. And yet they were of the same nation, children of the covenant equally with their more favored brethren. They had the same affection for their children as had the others. Their distress had not been caused by indolence or prodigality. They had been compelled to contract debts because of the failure of crops, and to pay heavy taxes.

As a last resort, they presented their case before Nehemiah. The soul of this man of God was filled with indignation as he heard of the cruel oppression that existed among his own people. He resolved to see that justice was done; yet he did not move rashly in the matter. He felt that God had laid upon him grave responsibilities, and he must be faithful to his trust. "I was very angry," he says, "when I heard their cry and

these words. Then I consulted with myself." He took time to weigh the whole matter, and to form his plans. Then with characteristic energy and determination he exerted his influence and authority for the relief of his oppressed brethren.

The fact that the oppressors were men of wealth, whose support was greatly needed in the work of restoring the city and its defenses, did not for a moment turn him from his purpose. Having first sharply rebuked the nobles and rulers, he presented the matter in an assembly of the people, clearly showing what were the requirements of God touching the case, and urging them upon the attention of his hearers.

He cited the people to events that occurred in the reign of the apostate Ahaz, and to the message which God then sent to Israel rebuking their cruelty and oppression. The children of Judah, because of their idolatry, had been delivered into the hands of their more idolatrous brethren, the people of Israel. The latter had indulged their cruel enmity by slaying in battle many thousands of the men of Judah, and seizing all the women and children, intending to keep them as slaves, or sell them into bondage to the heathen. Because of the sins of Judah, the Lord had not interposed to prevent the battle; but by the mouth of the prophet Oded he rebuked the cruel design of the victorious army: "Ye purpose to keep under the children of Judah and Jerusalem for bondmen and bondwomen unto you; but are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord your God?" And the prophet assured them that the fierce anger of the Lord was upon them, and that their course of injustice and oppression would call down his judgments. Upon hearing these words, the armed men left the captives and the spoil before the princes and all the congregation. Then certain leading men of the tribe of Ephraim "took the captives, and with the spoil clothed all that were naked among them, and arrayed them, and shod them, and gave them to eat and to drink, and anointed them, and carried all the feeble of them upon asses, and brought them to Jericho, the city of palm trees, to their brethren."

After relating these facts of history, Nehemiah proceeded to the case under consideration. He wished to bring the offenders to see the real character of their oppressive work, and to be ashamed of it. Said he, "We, after our ability, have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us?" Nehemiah and others had ransomed certain of the Jews who had been sold to the heathen, and he now placed this course in contrast with the conduct of those who for worldly gain were enslaving their brethren. The fear

of God should restrain them from such injustice. Nehemiah declared to the Jewish rulers--some of whom had been guilty of these practices--that instead of judging and punishing other criminals, they should investigate their own work, and cease at once their iniquitous extortion, lest they should become a reproach, even among the heathen.

He showed them that he himself, being invested with authority from the Persian king, might have demanded large contributions for his personal benefit. Instead of this, he had not taken that which justly belonged to him, but had liberally contributed to relieve the people in their great necessity. Those extortioners had no more reason than he had to pursue the course they did. He urged them to cease at once their oppression, to restore the lands of the poor, and also the increase of money and provisions which they had exacted from them, and to lend them without security or usury.

"Then said they, We will restore them, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest." "Then," says Nehemiah, "I called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise."

These portions of sacred history teach an important lesson. Those who profess to love and fear God should cherish sympathy and love for one another, and should guard the interests of others as their own. Christians should not regulate their conduct by the world's standard. In all ages the people of God are as distinct from worldlings as their profession is higher than that of the ungodly. From the beginning to the end of time, God's people are one body.

The love of money is the root of all evil. In this generation the desire for gain is the absorbing passion. If wealth cannot be secured by honest industry, men seek to obtain it by fraud. Widows and orphans are robbed of their scanty pittance, and poor men are made to suffer for the necessaries of life. And all this that the rich may support their extravagance, or indulge their desire to hoard. The terrible record of crime daily committed for the sake of gain, is enough to chill the blood and fill the soul with horror. The fact that even among those who profess godliness the same sins exist to a greater or less extent, calls for deep humiliation of soul and earnest action on the part of the followers of Christ. Love of display and love of money have made this world a den of thieves and robbers. But Christians are professedly not dwellers upon the earth; they are in a strange country, stopping, as it were, only for a night. They should not be actuated by the same motives and desires as are those who have their home and treasure here.

God designed that our lives should represent the life of our great Pattern; that, like Jesus, we should live to do others good.

The customs of the world are no criterion for the Christian. He is not to imitate their sharp practice, over-reaching, and extortion, even in small matters. Every unjust act toward a fellow-mortal, though he be the veriest sinner, is a violation of the golden rule. Every wrong done to the children of God, is done to Christ himself in the person of his saints. Every attempt to advantage one's self by the ignorance, weakness, or misfortune of another, is registered as fraud in the Ledger of Heaven.

He who truly fears God, would rather toil day and night, and eat the bread of poverty, than to indulge a passion for gain which would oppress the widow and the fatherless, or turn the stranger from his right. Our Saviour sought to impress upon his hearers that a man who would venture to defraud his neighbor in the smallest item, would, if the opportunity were favorable, over-reach in larger matters. The slightest departure from rectitude breaks down the barriers, and prepares the heart to do greater injustice. By precept and example, Christ taught that the strictest integrity should govern our conduct toward our fellow-men. Said the divine Teacher, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

Just to the extent that man would advantage himself at the disadvantage of another, will his soul become insensible to the influence of the Spirit of God. Gain obtained at such a cost, is a fearful loss. It is better to want than to lie; better to hunger than to defraud; better to die than to sin. Extravagance, over-reaching, extortion, indulged by those professing godliness, are corrupting their faith, and destroying their spirituality. The church is in a great degree responsible for the sins of her members. She gives countenance to the evil, if she fails to lift her voice against it. The influence from which she has most to fear is not that of open opposers, infidels, and blasphemers, but of inconsistent professors of Christ. These are the ones who keep back the blessing of the God of Israel.

All who would form characters for Heaven must be Bible Christians. They must be diligent in the study of the Chart of life, and must carefully and prayerfully examine the motives that prompt them to action. The business world does not lie outside the limits of God's government. True religion is not to be merely paraded on the Sabbath, and displayed in the sanctuary; it is for every day and for every place. Its claims must be

recognized and obeyed in every act of life. Men who possess the genuine article will in all their business affairs show as clear a perception of right, as when offering their supplications at the throne of grace.

God cannot be excluded from any transaction in which the rights of his children are concerned. Over every one that is serving him in sincerity, his hand is spread as a buckler. None can wound the humblest disciple of Jesus without smiting that hand which holds the sword of justice.

The apostle James, looking down to the last days, addresses a solemn and fearful warning to those who have heaped up riches by fraud and oppression: "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 Sabbaoth."

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Heathen Plots Against Nehemiah

Sanballat, Tobiah, and their confederates, dared not openly make war upon the Jews; but with increasing malice they continued their secret efforts to perplex, injure, and discourage them. The wall about Jerusalem was rapidly approaching completion. When it should be finished, and its gates set up, these enemies of Israel could not hope to force an entrance into the city. Therefore they were the more eager and determined in their efforts to stop the work without delay. At last they devised a plan to draw Nehemiah from his station, and kill or imprison him while they had him in their power.

Pretending to desire a compromise of the opposing parties, they proposed a conference with Nehemiah, and invited him to meet them in a village on the plain of Ono. But the Spirit of God, enlightening the mind of his servant, enabled him to discern their real purpose. Says Nehemiah, "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?" But these emissaries of Satan were persistent. Four times they sent messages of like import, but received the same answer.

Finding this plan unsuccessful, they then had resort to a more dangerous stratagem. Sanballat sent to Nehemiah a messenger bearing an open letter wherein was written: "It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith it, that thou and the Jews think to rebel; for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to these words. And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, There is a king in Judah: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together." Had the reports mentioned been actually circulated, there would have been cause for apprehension; for they would soon have been carried to the ears of the king, whom a slight suspicion might provoke to the severest measures. But Nehemiah was convinced that the letter was wholly false, written to arouse his fears, and draw him into some snare prepared by his enemies. This conclusion was strengthened by the fact that the letter was sent open, evidently that the contents might be read by the people, and thus intimidate them also.

He therefore promptly returned the answer "There are no such things done as thou sayest; but thou feignest them out of thine own heart." He is not ignorant of Satan's devices, and he feels assured that all these attempts are made for the purpose of weakening the hands of the builders, that their work may not be accomplished. He turns to the Source of strength, with the prayer, "Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands."

Satan had been defeated again and again; and now with deeper malice and greater cunning, he proceeded to devise a still more subtle and dangerous snare for the servant of God. Sanballat and his companions were moved to hire men, professing to be friends of Nehemiah, to give him evil counsel as the word of the Lord. The principal person engaged in this nefarious work was one Shemaiah, who had previously been held in good repute by Nehemiah. This man shut himself up in a chamber near the sanctuary, as if fearing that his life was in danger, and thither Nehemiah went to consult with him as one who was especially favored of God. The temple was at this time protected by walls and gates, while the gates of the city were not yet set up. This deceiver therefore professed great concern for Nehemiah's safety, and counseled him to seek shelter in the temple: "Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple; for they will come to slay thee; yea, in the night will they come to slay thee." The hero's fearless answer was, "Should such a man as I flee? and who is there, that being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in."

Had Nehemiah followed that treacherous counsel, he would have sacrificed his reputation for courage, and faith in God, and would have appeared cowardly and contemptible. The alarm would have spread among the people, each would have sought his own safety, and the city would have been left unprotected, to fall a prey to their enemies. That one unwise move would have been a virtual surrender of all that had been gained.

Nehemiah was not long in penetrating the true character and object of his counselor; "And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him; but that he pronounced this prophecy against me; for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him. Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach me."

In view of the important work that Nehemiah had undertaken, together with the

integrity of his character, and the confidence in God which he professed to feel, it would be highly inconsistent for him to hide himself as though in fear. The preservation of life itself would not be a sufficient excuse for such a course. The infamous counsel given him was seconded by more than one man of high reputation, who, while professing to be his friend, was secretly in league with his enemies. Women also, while pretending to have received great light from God, basely sold themselves to serve the cause of the heathen. Nehemiah prays that God will mark their evil designs, and reward them according to their deeds.

Despite all the plots of enemies, open and secret, the work of building went steadily forward, the wall rose to the proper height, and in about two months after Nehemiah's arrival at Jerusalem, the holy city was girded round with its defenses, and the builders could walk upon its walls, and look forth upon their astonished adversaries. Says Nehemiah, "When all our enemies heard thereof, and all the heathen that were about us saw these things, they were much cast down in their own eyes; for they perceived that this work was wrought of our God."

Yet the striking evidence that the hand of the Lord was with Nehemiah was not sufficient to restrain discontent, rebellion, and treachery. "In those days the nobles of Judah sent many letters unto Tobiah, and the letters of Tobiah came unto them. For there were many in Judah sworn unto him because he was the son-in-law of Shechaniah." Here are seen the evil results of intermarriage with idolaters. In this union, Satan had gained the victory. A family of Judah had connected themselves with the enemies of God, and the relation had proved a snare to the people. Many others also united in marriage with the heathen. These, like the mixed multitude that came up with Israel from Egypt, were a source of constant trouble. They were not whole-hearted in the service of God. When his work demanded a sacrifice, they were ready to violate their own solemn oaths of co-operation and support. All this had tended to weaken and discourage those who sought to build up the cause of God.

Some who had been foremost in plotting mischief against the Jews, and endeavoring by every possible means to cause their ruin, now professed great desire to be on friendly terms with them. Some of the nobles of Judah who had become entangled in idolatrous marriages, had held traitorous correspondence with Tobiah, and had taken oath to serve him. They now presumed to represent this agent of Satan as a man of ability, wisdom, and foresight, and urged that an alliance with him would be highly

advantageous to the Jews. At the same time they betrayed to him Nehemiah's plans and movements. Thus the work of God was laid open to his enemies, and opportunity was given them not only to misconstrue Nehemiah's words and acts, and circulate false reports concerning him, but to lay plans to counteract his efforts and hinder his work. Yet this man, who had so boldly stood in defense of the oppressed, did not exercise the authority with which he was invested, and bring to punishment those traitors in the camp. Calmly and unselfishly he went forward in the service of his people, never dreaming of slackening his efforts though they should be repaid only with ingratitude and treachery.

The whole power and policy of Satan have always been aimed at those who are zealously seeking to advance the cause and work of God. Though often baffled, he as often renews his assaults. But it is when he works in secret that he is most to be feared. The advocates of unpopular truth must expect opposition from its open enemies; this is often fierce and cruel, but it is far less dangerous than the secret enmity of those who profess to be serving God while at heart they are servants of Satan. While apparently uniting in the work of God, many are connected with his foe; and if in any way crossed in their plans, or reprov'd for their sins, they court the favor of the enemies of truth, and open to them all the plans of God's servants and the workings of this cause. Thus they place every advantage in the hands of those who use all their knowledge to hinder the work of God and injure his people. Thus these men of two minds and two purposes pretend to serve God, and then go over to the enemy and serve him, as best suits their inclination.

Every device which the prince of darkness can suggest, will be employed to induce God's servants to form a compromise with the agents of Satan. Repeated solicitations will come in, to call us from duty; but, like Nehemiah, we should steadfastly reply, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down." We have no time to seek the favor of the world, or even to defend ourselves from their misrepresentation and calumny. We have no time to lose in self-vindication. We should keep steadily at our work, and let that refute the falsehoods which malice may coin to our injury. Slanders will be multiplied if we stop to answer them. Should we allow our enemies to gain our friendship and sympathy, and thereby allure us from our post of duty; should we by any unguarded act, expose the cause of God to reproach, and thus weaken the hands of the workers, we should bring upon our characters a stain not easily removed, and place a serious obstacle in the way of our own future usefulness.

Those temptations are most dangerous which come from the professed servants of God, and from our friends. When persons who are uniting with the world, yet claiming great piety and love, counsel the faithful workers for God to be less zealous and more conservative, our answer must be an appeal to the word of God. When they plead for union with those who have been our determined opposers, we should fear and shun them as decidedly as did Nehemiah. Those who would lead away from the old landmarks to form a connection with the ungodly, cannot be sent of Heaven. Whatever may have been their former position, their present course tends to unsettle the faith of God's people.

Such counselors are prompted by Satan. They are time-servers. The testimonies, reproofs, and warnings of God's servants are unpalatable to them, being a reproof to their worldly, pleasure-loving propensities. We should shun this class as resolutely as did Nehemiah.

When plied with the arguments and suggestions of such advisers, it would be well for us each to inquire, "Should I, who am a Christian, a child of God; one called to be the light of the world, a preacher of righteousness; who have so often expressed my confidence in the truth and the way in which the Lord has led us,--should I unite my influence with those who bitterly oppose the work of God? Should I, a steward of the mysteries of God, open to his worst enemies the counsels of his people? Would not such a course embolden the wicked in their opposition to the truth of God and to his covenant-keeping people? Would not such concession prevent me from opening my lips in exhortation, warning, or entreaty, in my own family or in the church of God? If Paul or Peter were placed in similar circumstances, would he thus betray a sacred trust? Would not even men of the world despise me? Would they not scorn to be diverted from their life-work by difficulties or perils?"

Satan will work by any and every means which he can employ to discourage the active servants of God. If the shepherd can be beguiled from his duty, then the way is clear for wolves to scatter and devour the sheep.

Every success of the truth discourages the enemies of God; and they are sometimes forced to acknowledge that it is his work, while they hate it the more on that very account. False brethren will continue to increase. Those to whom God has sent

warnings and reproofs, but who, rejecting the Heaven-sent message, give heed to the counsel of his enemies, are the severest trial to his faithful servants. "They that forsake the law, praise the wicked."

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Nehemiah Causes the People to Be Instructed in the Law of God

While Nehemiah labored diligently to restore the material defenses of Jerusalem, he did not forget that the God of Israel was their only sure defense, and that only in obedience to his commandments would they be secure. He therefore gave diligent attention to the instruction of the people in the law of God.

At the time of the feast of trumpets, when many were gathered at the holy city, the people assembled in the street that was before the water gate; "and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel. And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday." "And the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law." "And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands; and they bowed their heads, and worshiped the Lord with their faces to the ground." Certain of the priests and Levites united with Ezra in explaining to the people the principles of the divine law. "So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."

The scene was one of mournful interest. The wall of Jerusalem had been rebuilt, and the gates set up; thus far a great victory had been achieved; but a large part of the city was still in ruins. On a pulpit of wood, erected in one of the broadest streets, and surrounded on every hand by the sad reminders of Judah's departed glory, stood Ezra, now an aged man. At his right and left were gathered his brother Levites, who were consecrated to the service of God, and whose presence lent dignity and solemnity to the occasion. With heavy hearts they thought upon the days of their fathers, when the royal psalmist had sung: "Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces." "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King."

Looking down from the elevated platform, the eye swept over a sea of heads.

From all the surrounding country the children of the covenant had assembled; and as one man they were listening, intent and reverent, to hear once more the words of the Most High. But even here the evidence of their sin was apparent. In their mingling with other nations, the Hebrew language had become corrupted, and therefore great care was necessary on the part of the speakers to explain the law in the language of the people, and so present it that it might be understood by all.

As the law of God was read and explained, the people were convinced of their guilt and danger, and with tender consciences and penitential tears they mourned because of their transgressions. But as this day was a festival, a day of holy convocation, a day which the Lord had commanded to be kept with joy and gladness, they were bidden by their teachers to restrain their grief, and to rejoice in view of the great mercy of God toward them. "For," said Nehemiah, "this day is holy unto our Lord; neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

Accordingly, after the earlier part of the day had been devoted to religious exercises, the people spent the remainder in gratefully recounting the blessings of God, and enjoying the bounties which he had granted them, remembering also to send portions to the poor who had nothing to prepare. And there was great rejoicing, because they understood the words of the law which had been declared to them.

The work of reading and expounding the law to the people was continued upon the following day. The solemn services of the day of atonement were performed at the time appointed,--on the tenth day of the seventh month,--according to the command of God. And from the fifteenth to the twenty-second of the same month the people and their rulers kept once more the feast of tabernacles.

It was published "in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written. So the people went forth, and brought them, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God." "And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths; for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness. Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he [Ezra] read in the book of the law of God."

When this festival was past, one day only having intervened, the children of Israel kept a solemn fast. This was held not merely at the command of the rulers, but by the desire of the people. As they had from day to day listened to the words of the law, they had been deeply convicted of their own transgressions, and also of the sins of their nation in past generations. They saw that it was because of their departure from God that his protecting care had been withdrawn from them, and they had been scattered in foreign lands. And they now determined to seek God's mercy, and to pledge themselves to walk hereafter in his commandments.

Before entering upon the services of the day, they carefully separated themselves from the heathen who were intermingled with them. This being done, "they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God one-fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed, and worshiped the Lord their God."

The people prostrated themselves before the Lord, humbly confessing their sins and pleading for mercy and pardon, each for himself individually and for the entire congregation. Then their leaders encouraged them to believe that God, according to his promise, had heard their prayers. They showed them that they were not only to mourn and weep and repent of their transgressions, but to trust that God had pardoned them, and to evince their faith by recounting his mercies and praising him for his goodness. Said these teachers, "Stand up and bless the Lord your God forever and ever."

Then from the gathered throng, as they stood with hands outstretched toward heaven, arose the song of praise and adoration: "Blessed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise. Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all, and the host of Heaven worshipeth thee."

In this portion of sacred history is a precious lesson of faith for all who are convicted of sin, and weighed down with a sense of their unworthiness. When they compare their characters with God's great standard of right, they see themselves condemned as transgressors. There is no power in law to free them from their guilt. But as they confess their sins, they can find pardon through Christ. From him flows the cleansing stream that can wash away the stains of sin. When the sinner has come to

Christ with contrition of soul, confessing his transgressions, it is then his duty to appropriate to himself the Saviour's promise of pardon to the repentant and believing. He who seeks to find goodness and cause for rejoicing in himself, will always be in despair; but he who looks to Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith, can say with confidence, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

Following the song of praise, the leaders of the congregation presented the history of Israel, showing God's great benefits and their ingratitude. Tracing the record from the days of Abraham, they called attention to God's design to preserve his name upon the earth by preserving for himself a people pure amid the general corruption; they recounted the mighty manifestations of his power in their deliverance from bondage in Egypt, and showed also how backsliding and apostasy had caused the blessing of the Lord to be withdrawn from Israel.

Then the whole congregation entered into a covenant to keep all the commandments of God; and that the transaction might be as effectual as possible, this covenant was written out, and those who were thoroughly in earnest in the work of reformation, affixed their names and seals. They wished to preserve for future reference a memorial of the obligation they had just taken upon themselves, as a reminder of duty and a barrier against temptation. Thus it was that the people took a solemn oath to "walk in God's law, which was given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes." The oath taken also included a promise not to intermarry with "the people of the land." This had often been done by the people; and sometimes the rulers, as Solomon and Ahab, had formed such unions; and these marriages, by introducing idolatry, had resulted in the ruin of thousands.

The Lord had strictly forbidden the intermarrying of his people with other nations. This would prevent the Hebrews from marrying idolaters, and thus forming connections with heathen families. The reason which God assigned for prohibiting those marriages was, "They will turn away thy son from following me." But the heathen were less guilty than are the impenitent in this age, who, having the light of the gospel, persistently refuse to accept it. Those among ancient Israel who ventured to disregard the divine prohibition, did it at the sacrifice of religious principle. When those who now profess to be God's people join themselves in marriage with the ungodly, they form a tie uniting them to the world, and they will probably soon be one with them,

notwithstanding their present profession.

Before the day of fasting ended, the people still further manifested their determination to return unto the Lord. With one accord, all pledged themselves to cease the desecration of the Sabbath. Nehemiah did not at this time, as at a later date, exercise his authority to prevent heathen traders from coming into Jerusalem on the Sabbath, for the sale of provisions and other articles; but to save the people from yielding to temptation, he engaged them, by a solemn covenant, not to transgress the Sabbath law by purchasing of those venders, hoping that this would discourage them, and put an end to their traffic.

Provision was also made to support the public worship of God. A pledge was given by the congregation to contribute yearly a stated sum for the service of the sanctuary, as well as to bring the tithes and the "firstfruits of our ground, and the firstfruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, unto the house of the Lord, also the firstborn of our sons, and of our cattle, as it is written in the law, and the firstlings of our herds and of our flocks, to bring to the house of our God."

The liberality of the Jews in their offerings for religious purposes might well be imitated by Christians. If tithes and offerings were required thousands of years ago, they are much more essential now. The labors of God's servants were then confined almost wholly to the land of Palestine; but the apostles and their successors were commissioned to preach the gospel throughout the world. The people of this dispensation are favored with greater light and blessing than were the Jews; therefore they are placed under even greater obligation to honor God and to advance his cause.

The efforts of Nehemiah to restore the worship of the true God had been crowned with success. If Israel would be true to the oath they had taken, a bright future was before them; for the Lord has always magnified his law before his people, pouring rich blessings upon them so long as they have been obedient. The history of God's ancient people is full of instruction for the church of today. While the Bible faithfully presents the result of their apostasy as a warning to all future generations, it portrays, as a worthy example, the deep humiliation and repentance, the earnest devotion and generous sacrifice, that marked their seasons of returning to the Lord. There is encouragement, too, in the record of God's willingness to receive his backsliding but repentant people. It would be a scene well-pleasing to God and angels, would his professed followers in this

generation unite, as did Israel of old, in a solemn covenant to "observe and do all the commandments of the Lord our Lord, and his judgments and his statutes."

January 17, 1884

The Sabbath Reformation Under Nehemiah

Under the labors of Ezra and Nehemiah, the people of Judah had in the most solemn and public manner, pledged themselves to render obedience to the law of God. But when the influence of these teachers was for a time withdrawn, there were many who departed from the Lord. During the absence of Nehemiah from Jerusalem, idolaters not only gained a foot-hold in the city, but contaminated by their presence the very precincts of the temple. Certain families of Israel, having intermarried with the family of Tobiah the Ammonite, had brought about a friendship between this man, one of Judah's most bitter and determined enemies, and Eliashib the high priest. As a result of this unhallowed alliance, Tobiah had been permitted to occupy a commodious apartment connected with the temple, which had been devoted to the storing of various offerings brought for the service of God.

Thus not only was the temple of the Lord profaned, but his people were constantly exposed to the corrupting influence of this agent of Satan. Because of their cruelty and treachery toward Israel, the Ammonites and Moabites had by the word of the Lord been forever excluded from the congregation. And yet, in defiance of this solemn interdict, the high priest himself casts out the consecrated oblations from the chamber of God's house, to make a place for the most violent and treacherous of a proscribed people. Greater contempt for God could not have been manifested than was expressed in this favor conferred on this enemy of God and his truth.

When Nehemiah learned of this bold profanation, he promptly exercised his authority to expel the intruder. "It grieved me sore; therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber. Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chambers; and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat-offering and the frankincense."

Not only had the temple been profaned, but the offerings had been misapplied. This tended to discourage the liberality of the people. They lost their zeal and fervor in the cause of God, and were reluctant to pay their tithes. The treasuries of the Lord's house were but poorly supplied; and the singers and others employed in the temple

service not receiving a sufficient support, many left the work of God to labor elsewhere for the maintenance of their families. Nehemiah promptly corrected these abuses. He gathered together those who had forsaken the service of the house of God, and caused the tithes and offerings to be restored. Faithful men were appointed to take charge of the means raised, confidence was restored, and all Judah brought their tithes to the treasuries of the Lord.

Another result of intercourse with idolaters was disregard of the Sabbath. Heathen merchants and traders from the surrounding country had been intent upon leading the children of Israel to engage in traffic upon the Sabbath. While there were some who would not be induced to sacrifice principle, and transgress the commandment of God, others were more easily influenced, and joined with the heathen in their endeavor to overcome the scruples of their more conscientious countrymen; and the idolaters boasted of the success that had attended their efforts. Many dared openly to violate the Sabbath. While some engaged in traffic with the heathen, others were treading in wine-presses, and others bringing in sheaves upon the Sabbath day.

Had the rulers exerted their influence and exercised their authority, this state of things might have been prevented; but their desire to advance their own secular interest led them to favor the ungodly. It is mingling our interest with the interest of unbelievers that leads to apostasy and the ruin of the soul.

Nehemiah rebuked them for their shameful neglect of duty, which was largely responsible for the fast-spreading apostasy. "What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day?" he sternly demanded. "Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the Sabbath." He gave command that "when it began to be dark before the Sabbath," the city gates should be shut, and that they should not be opened till the Sabbath was past; and, having more confidence in his own servants than in those the magistrates of Jerusalem might appoint, he stationed them at the gate to see that his orders were enforced.

The merchants were not disposed to abandon their purpose; and several times they lodged without the gates of the city, hoping to find opportunity for traffic, either with citizens or country people. Upon being informed of this, Nehemiah warned them that they would be punished if they continued this practice. He also directed the Levites

to guard the gates, knowing that on account of their higher position they would command greater respect than the common people; while from their close connection with the service of God, it was reasonable to expect that they would be more zealous in enforcing obedience to his law.

By the observance of the Sabbath the Israelites were to be distinguished from all other nations as the worshipers of the true God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. The Sabbath was the divinely-appointed memorial of the creative work, and the day upon which it was to be celebrated was not left indefinite. It was not any day which men might choose and no day in particular, but the very day in which the Creator rested, that was sanctified and hallowed. On this day God would come very near to his obedient, commandment-loving people.

God places a very high estimate upon his law. Moses and Joshua commanded that it be read publicly at stated periods, that all the people might be familiar with its precepts, and reduce them to practice. If they did this, they had the exalted privilege of being counted as sons and daughters of the Most High, and might confide in him as dear children. In Nehemiah's day, the adversary of souls, working through the children of disobedience, and taking advantage of the unfaithfulness of men in holy office, was fast lulling the nation to forgetfulness of God's law, the very sin which had provoked his wrath against their fathers; and for a time it seemed that all the care, labor, and expense involved in rebuilding the defenses of Jerusalem would be lost.

David prayed, "It is time for thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void thy law." This prayer is no less pertinent at the present time. The world has gone astray from God, and its lawless state should strike terror to the heart, and lead all who are loyal to the great King to work for a reformation. The papal power has thought to change the law of God by substituting a spurious Sabbath for that of Jehovah; and all through the religious world the false Sabbath is revered, while the true one is trampled beneath unholy feet. But will the Lord degrade his law to meet the standard of finite man? Will he accept a day possessing no sanctity, in the place of his own Sabbath, which he has hallowed and blessed? No; it is on the law of God that the last great struggle of the controversy between Christ and his angels and Satan and his angels will come, and it will be decisive for all the world. This is the hour of temptation to God's people; but Daniel saw them delivered out of it, every one whose name is written in the Lamb's book of life.

Men in responsible positions will not only ignore and despise the Sabbath themselves, but from the sacred desk, will urge upon the people the observance of the first day of the week, pleading tradition and custom in behalf of this man-made institution. They will point to calamities on land and sea--to the storms of wind, the floods, the earthquakes, the destruction by fire--as judgments indicating God's displeasure because Sunday is not sacredly observed. These calamities will increase more and more, one disaster will follow close upon the heels of another; and those who make void the law of God will point to the few who are keeping the Sabbath of the fourth commandment as the ones who are bringing wrath upon the world. This falsehood is Satan's device that he may ensnare the unwary.

We need Nehemiahs in 1884, who shall arouse the people to see how far from God they are because of the transgression of his law. Nehemiah was a reformer, a great man raised up for an important time. As he came in contact with evil and every kind of opposition, fresh courage and zeal were aroused. His energy and determination inspired the people of Jerusalem; and strength and courage took the place of feebleness and discouragement. His holy purpose, his high hope, his cheerful consecration to the work, were contagious. The people caught the enthusiasm of their leader, and in his sphere each man became a Nehemiah, and helped to make stronger the hand and heart of his neighbor. Here is a lesson for ministers of the present day. If they are listless, inactive, destitute of godly zeal, what can be expected of the people to whom they minister?

Man's personal accountability to God should command careful attention. The law can never pardon. Its province is not to save the transgressor, but to convict him. It is far-reaching, and all we do bears the stamp of its approval or condemnation. Men professing godliness often regard the secret sins of the soul very lightly; but it is the secret motives of the heart that determine the true character, and God will bring them into judgment. The dangers resulting from disobeying God and seeking the friendship of the world have not lessened with the lapse of time. There is earnest work to be done; and the faithful watchman, who is actuated by love to God and a desire to save sinners, will reap the reward of his labors; but the unfaithful watchman, whose influence tends to union with the world, will cause the ruin of many souls.

January 24, 1884

Nehemiah Separates Israel From Idolaters

Results of Marrying with the Ungodly

Another subject to which Nehemiah's attention was called on his return to Jerusalem, was the danger that threatened Israel from intermarriage and association with idolaters. "In those days," says Nehemiah, "saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab; and their children spake half in the speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jews' language, but according to the language of each people." This assimilation to the language of the heathen was an indication of the inroads made by heathenism. In many families, children, trained by heathen mothers, were prattling around them in the tongue of the several idolatrous nations with whom the Israelites had intermarried. These children, as they grew up in the habits and customs of heathenism, became idolaters of the most dangerous class, because they were connected with the people of God.

These unlawful alliances caused great confusion; for some who entered into them were persons in high position, rulers of the people and men connected with service of God, to whom, in the absence of Nehemiah, the people had a right to look for counsel and correct example. God had carefully excluded the heathen from uniting with his faithful worshipers; but the divinely erected barriers had been broken down, and as a consequence of mingling and intermarrying with other nations, the Israel of God were fast losing their peculiar, holy character. Nehemiah knew that ruin was before the nation if this evil were not put away, and he reasoned with these men on the subject. He firmly and fearlessly declared, "Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves." He presented the case of Solomon, and reminded them that among many nations there had arisen no king like this man, whom God had favored, and to whom he had given great wisdom. But the idolatrous women whom he connected with his house by marriage, led his heart astray from God, and his example had a corrupting influence on all Israel. The commands and threatenings of the Lord, and the fearful judgments visited upon Israel in past generations, aroused the consciences of the people. The strongest and most endearing ties that bound them to idolaters were broken. Not only were future marriages with the heathen forbidden, but

marriages already formed were dissolved.

Some men in sacred office pleaded for their heathen wives, declaring that they could not bring themselves to separate from them. Nehemiah replied, with solemn sternness, "Shall we then hearken unto you, to do all this great evil to transgress against our God in marrying strange wives?"

A grandson of the high priest, having married a daughter of the notorious Sanballat, was not only removed from office; but promptly banished from Israel. "Remember them, O my God," exclaimed Nehemiah, "because they have defiled the priesthood, and the covenant of the priesthood, and of the Levites." He adds: "Thus cleansed I them from all strangers, and appointed the wards of the priests and the Levites, every one in his business." No respect was shown for rank or position. No distinction was made. Whoever among the priests and rulers refused to sever his connection with idolaters, was immediately separated from the service of the Lord.

How much anguish of soul this needed severity cost the faithful workers for God, the Judgment alone will reveal. Every advance step was gained only by fasting, humiliation, and prayer. There was a constant struggle with opposing elements.

Many who had married idolaters chose to go with them into exile; and, with those who had been expelled from the congregation, they joined the Samaritans, a heathen people who had combined with their idolatrous worship many of the customs of the Jews. Hither some who had occupied high positions in the work of God now found their way, and after a time they cast in their lot fully with them. Desiring to strengthen this alliance, the Samaritans promised to adopt more fully the Jewish faith and customs; and the apostates, determined to outdo their former brethren, erected a temple on Mount Gerizim, in opposition to the house of God at Jerusalem. This spurious religion continued to be a mixture of Judaism and heathenism; and their claims to be the people of God were the source of schism, emulation, and enmity between the two nations from generation to generation.

The servants of God today encounter difficulties very similar to those against which Nehemiah contended. Human nature is still the same. And Satan is as active, earnest, and persevering now as at any period in the past. Nay, rather, the word of God declares that his power and enmity increase as we near the close of time. The greatest

danger of God's ancient people arose from their inclination to disregard his direct requirements and to follow, instead, their own desires. Such is the sin and danger of his people at the present time. The indolence, backsliding, and degeneracy in our churches may be traced, in a great degree, to the lax sentiments which have been coming in as a result of conformity to the world. The Sabbath is not as sacredly regarded as it should be. Improper marriages, with their train of evils, have dragged down some of the most useful men to apostasy and ruin.

Before contracting marriage, every wise person will consider the matter in all its bearings: "Will the relation I am about to form lead Heavenward, or toward perdition? Will it bring in sacred and devotional influences, or the corrupting influence of the world.?"

In the existing state of religious declension, there is crying need of earnest, faithful Nehemiahs and Ezras,--men who will not shun to call sin by its right name, and who will not shrink from vindicating the honor of God. Those upon whom God has laid the burden of his work are not to hold their peace, and cover prevailing evils with a cloak of false charity. Men of courage and energy are needed to expose fashionable sins. Iniquity must not be palliated and excused. Those who lead the church of God to follow the customs and practices of the world, are not to be lauded and exalted. No regard for family or position will hinder the faithful servants of Christ from guarding the interests of his people. God is no respecter of persons. Great light and special privileges bring increased responsibility. When those who have been favored or honored of God, commit sin, their influence goes very far to encourage others in transgression. And if, by their example, the faith of another is weakened, and moral and religious principle is broken down, the wrath of God will surely come upon those betrayers of their sacred trust.

Severity to a few will often prove mercy to many. Yet we must be careful to manifest the spirit of Christ, and not our own hasty, impetuous disposition. We must rebuke sin, because we love God, and love the souls for whom Christ died.

Ezra and Nehemiah repeatedly humbled themselves before God, confessing the sins of their people, and entreating pardon as if they themselves were the offenders. Patiently they toiled and prayed and suffered, because of the disaffection of those who should have joined with them, but whose sympathies were more frequently with their

adversaries. That which rendered their work most difficult and trying was not the open hostility of the heathen without, but the secret opposition of traitors in the camp, and even among the priests and rulers. By lending their talents and influence to the service of evil-workers, these men of divided hearts increased tenfold the burden of God's faithful servants. They furnished the Lord's enemies with material to use in their warfare upon his people. Evil passions and rebellious wills were ever at war with the plain and direct requirements of God.

The spirit of true reform will be met in our day as in ancient times. Those who are zealous for the honor of God, and who will not countenance sin either in ministers or people, need not expect rest or pleasure in this life. Untiring vigilance must be the watchword of all who guard the interests of Christ's church. During Nehemiah's absence from Jerusalem, evils were introduced which threatened to pervert the nation. The same dangers exist in our time. If those who have the oversight of the church leave their charge, unconsecrated ones, claiming to believe the truth but having no connection with God, will take advantage of their absence to do much harm. The restraint being removed from these self-seeking and turbulent spirits, their peculiar traits of character are made prominent, and by their hints, insinuations, and deceptive charges, they create doubt, unbelief, and dissension among the Lord's people. Such forget that spiritual things are spiritually discerned. They judge of the character and motives of God's servants according to their own ignorance of truth and the ways of righteousness. Their example, words, and influence weaken the force of God's requirements, and divide and scatter the church of Christ.

The word of God abounds in sharp and striking contrasts. Sin and holiness are placed side by side, that, beholding, we may hate and shun the one, and love and embrace the other. The pages that describe the hatred, falsehood, and treachery of a Sanballat or a Tobiah, describe also the nobility, devotion, and self-sacrifice of a Nehemiah or an Ezra. We are left free to copy either, as we choose. The fearful results of transgressing God's commandments are placed over against the blessings resulting from obedience thereto. We ourselves are to decide whether we will suffer the one or enjoy the other. The law of God remains unchanged. Like himself, it is pure, perfect, and eternal. It is not enough to profess to be keepers of that law. The question is, Are we carrying out its principles in our daily life? "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people." Saith the voice of Wisdom: "Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold. For wisdom is better than rubies; and all

the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it."

January 31, 1884

Parental Responsibility

Parents are in a great degree responsible for the mold given to the characters of their children. They should aim at symmetry and proportion. There are few well-balanced minds, because parents are wickedly negligent of their duty to stimulate weak traits and repress strong ones. They do not remember that they are under the most solemn obligation to watch the tendencies of each child; that it is their duty to train their children to right habits and right ways of thinking.

Sometimes parents wait for the Lord to do the very work that he has given them to do. Instead of restraining and controlling their children as they should, they pet and indulge them, and gratify their whims and desires. When these children go out from their early homes, it is with characters deformed by selfishness, with ungoverned appetites, with strong self-will; they are destitute of courtesy or respect for their parents, and do not love religious truth or the worship of God. They have grown up with traits that are a life-long curse to themselves, and are liable to be reproduced in others. Home is made anything but happy, if the evil weeds of dissension, selfishness, envy, passion, and sullen stubbornness are left to flourish in the neglected garden of the soul.

Children imitate their parents; hence great care should be taken to give them correct models. Parents should show no partiality, but should treat all their children with tenderness, remembering that they are the purchase of Christ's blood. Parents who are kind and polite at home, while at the same time they are firm and decided, will see the same traits manifested in their children. If they are upright, honest, and honorable, their children will be quite likely to resemble them in these particulars. If they reverence and worship God, their children trained in the same way, will not forget to serve him also.

It is often the case that parents are not careful to surround their children with right influences. In choosing a home, they think more of their worldly interests than of the moral and social atmosphere; and the children form associations that are unfavorable to the development of piety and the formation of right character. Then parents allow the world to engross their time, strength, and thought; and when the Sabbath comes, it finds them so utterly exhausted that they have naught to render to God on his holy day, no

sweet piety to grace the home, and make the Sabbath a delight to their children. They are seldom visited by a minister; for they have placed themselves out of the reach of religious privileges. An apathy steals over the soul. The children are contaminated by evil communications, and the tenderness of soul they once felt dies away and is forgotten.

Parents who denounce the Canaanites for offering their children to Moloch, what are you doing? You are making a most costly offering to your mammon god; and then, when your children grow up unloved and unlovely in character, when they show decided impiety and tendency to infidelity, you blame the faith you profess because it was unable to save them. You are reaping that which you have sown,--the result of your selfish love of the world and neglect of the means of grace. You moved your families into places of temptation, and the ark of God, your glory and defense, you did not consider essential; and the Lord has not worked a miracle to deliver your children from temptation.

You who profess to love God, take Jesus with you wherever you go; and, like the patriarchs of old, erect an altar to the Lord wherever you pitch your tent. A reformation in this respect is needed,--a reformation that shall be deep and broad. Parents need to reform; ministers need to reform. They need God in their households. They need to build the waste places of Zion; to set up her gates, and make strong her walls for a defense of the people.

There is earnest work to be done in this age, and parents should educate their children to share in it. The words of Mordecai to Esther may apply to the men and youth of today: "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" Young men should be gaining solidity of character, that they may be fitted for usefulness. Daniel and Joseph were youth of firm principle, whom God could use to carry out his purposes. Mark their history, and see how God wrought for them. Joseph met with a variety of experiences,--experiences that tested his courage and uprightness to the fullest extent. After being sold into Egypt, he was at first favored, and intrusted with great responsibilities; but suddenly, without any fault on his part, he was unjustly accused and cast into prison. But he is not discouraged. He trusts in God; and the purpose of his heart, the purity of his motive, is made manifest. The eye of God is upon him, a divine hand leads him, and soon we see him come forth from prison to share the throne of Egypt.

Joseph's checkered life is not an accident; it is ordered of Providence. But how was he enabled to make such a record of firmness of character, uprightness, and wisdom? It was the result of careful training in his early years. He had consulted duty rather than inclination; and the purity and simple trust of the boy bore fruit in the deeds of the man. The most brilliant talents are of no value unless they are improved; industrious habits and force of character must be gained by cultivation. A high tone of moral character and fine mental qualities are not the result of accident. God gives opportunities; success depends upon the use made of them. The openings of Providence must be quickly discerned and eagerly seized upon.

Young men, if you would be strong, if you would have the integrity and wisdom of a Joseph or a Daniel, study the Scriptures. Parents, if you would educate your children to serve God and do good in the world, make the Bible your text-book. It exposes the wiles of Satan. It is the great elevator of the race, the reprovener and corrector of moral evils, the detector which enables us to distinguish between the true and the false. Whatever else is taught in the home or at school, the Bible, as the great educator, should stand first. If it is given this place, God is honored, and he will work for you in the conversion of your children. There is a rich mine of truth and beauty in this holy book, and parents have themselves to blame if they do not make it intensely interesting to their children.

To many, education means a knowledge of books; but "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." The true object of education is to restore the image of God in the soul. The first and most precious knowledge is the knowledge of Christ; and wise parents will keep this fact ever before the minds of their children. Should a limb be broken or fractured, parents will try every means that love or wisdom can suggest to restore the affected member to comeliness and soundness. This is right, it is their duty; but the Lord requires that still greater tact, patience, and persevering effort be employed to remedy blemishes of the soul. That father is unworthy of the name who is not to his children a Christian teacher, ruler, and friend, binding them to his heart by the strong ties of sanctified love,--a love which has its foundation in duty faithfully performed.

Parents have a great and responsible work to do, and they may well inquire, "Who is sufficient for these things?" But God has promised to give wisdom to those that ask in faith, and he will do just as he said he would. He is pleased with the faith that

takes him at his word. The mother of Augustine prayed for her son's conversion. She saw no evidence that the Spirit of God was impressing his heart, but she was not discouraged. She laid her finger upon the texts, presenting before God his own words, and pleaded as only a mother can. Her deep humiliation, her earnest importunities, her unwavering faith, prevailed, and the Lord gave her the desire of her heart. Today he is just as ready to listen to the petitions of his people. "His hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear;" and if Christian parents seek him earnestly, he will fill their mouths with arguments, and, for his name's sake, will work mightily in their behalf in the conversion of their children.

February 7, 1884

The Christian Rule in Deal

"Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.... He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved."

The psalmist here describes some of the characteristics of those whom God accepts, and who will be permitted to join in his worship in the heavenly courts.

The first is, "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness." The very first step in the path to life is to keep the mind stayed on God, to have his fear continually before the eyes. A single departure from moral integrity blunts the conscience, and opens the door to the next temptation. "He that walketh uprightly walketh surely; but he that perverteth his way shall be known." We are commanded to love God supremely, and our neighbor as ourselves; but the daily experience of life shows that this law is disregarded. Uprightness in deal and moral integrity will secure the favor of God, and make a man a blessing to himself and to society; but amid the varied temptations that assail one whichever way he may turn, it is impossible to keep a clear conscience and the approval of Heaven without divine aid and a principle to love honesty for the sake of the right.

A character that is approved of God and man is to be preferred to wealth. The foundation should be laid broad and deep, resting on the rock Christ Jesus. There are too many who profess to work from the true foundation, whose loose dealing shows them to be building on sliding sand; but the great tempest will sweep away their foundation, and they will have no refuge.

Many plead that unless they are sharp, and watch to advantage themselves, they will meet with loss. Their unscrupulous neighbors, who take selfish advantages, are prospered; while they, although trying to deal strictly in accordance with Bible principles, are not so highly favored. Do these persons see the future? Or are their eyes too dim to see, through the miasma-laden fogs of worldliness, that honor and integrity

are not rewarded in the coin of this world? Will God reward virtue with mere worldly success? He has their names graven on the palms of his hands, as heirs to enduring honors, riches that are imperishable. What did that dishonest man gain by his worldly policy? How high a price did he pay for his success? He has sacrificed his noble manhood, and has started on the road that leads to perdition. He may be converted; he may see the wickedness of his injustice to his fellow-men, and, as far as possible, make restitution; but the scars of a wounded conscience will ever remain.

What a lesson we have in the course pursued by Abraham! The tidings come that Lot and his family are prisoners. Abraham's affection for his nephew is awakened; and he determines that he shall be rescued. He gathers an army in haste, and soon overtakes the enemy. The Lord aids, and a victory is gained. The scene is one to inflame the worst passions of the heart. The field is strewn with dead bodies, and the groans of the dying mingle with the voice of triumph. The rich spoils of the enemy lie scattered in profusion, and, according to the usage of war, a large share falls to Abraham. The king of Sodom begs for his subjects, but freely yields the goods. How many would have taken advantage of this opportunity to secure a rich booty, regardless of the claims of justice or the rights of others! But what a noble, unselfish disposition does Abraham manifest on this occasion! What a rebuke to such mercenary spirits is his example!

Abraham regards the claims of justice and humanity. He obeys the rule, "As ye would that others should do unto you, do ye even so unto them." He says to the king of Sodom: "I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of Heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldst say, I have made Abram rich." This is an example worthy of imitation; it illustrates the Christian maxim, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

He that "speaketh the truth in his heart." Some, when their feet once diverge from the right path, go on and on in moral degradation. The fact may be concealed from every one else, but the man himself knows that he is no longer walking uprightly. His advertisements are deceptive; he is exacting in his deal with his workmen. He clutches his coin with a miserly grasp; for has he not sacrificed everything that was worth living for to obtain it? Others, in their eager desire for gain, practice secret fraud, act a lie; and they do not see that their course is sinful if they are not detected. But God reads men's hearts as an open book, and the record of their deeds will be made manifest before all

men. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Some success may seem to attend this dishonest policy for a time; but will it pay? Will you part with rectitude and a clear conscience for a little worldly wealth?

"He that putteth not out his money to usury." Exacting usury is directly opposed to God's rule as given in Exodus 22:21-26: "Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in anywise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry; And my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless. If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as a usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury. If thou at all take thy neighbor's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down." Deuteronomy 23:19, 20: "Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury. Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it."

Thus God commanded his people not to take advantage of the necessities of the poor, to enrich themselves by impoverishing their poorer brethren. Of Gentiles they might take usury; but they were not permitted to be exorbitant or oppressive. God is the rightful king of the universe. And he inquires of Israel, "What nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" Today he might make the same challenge. The laws he gave to his ancient people were wiser, better, and more humane than those of the most civilized nations of the earth. The laws of the nations bear marks of the infirmities and passions of the unrenewed heart; but God's laws bear the stamp of the divine, and if they are obeyed, they will lead to a tender regard for the rights and privileges of others. The Lord appeals to man's compassion for his fellow-man. His watchful care is over all the interests of his children, and he declares he will undertake the cause of the afflicted and the oppressed. If they cry unto him, he says, "I will hear, for I am gracious."

A man of means, if he possesses strict integrity, and loves and fears God, may be a benefactor to the poor. He can help them, and take no more interest than can be mercifully exacted. He thus meets with no loss himself, and his unfortunate neighbor is greatly benefited, for he is saved from the hands of the dishonest schemer. The

principles of the Golden Rule are not to be lost sight of for a moment in any business transaction. Every man who lends money at ten or twelve per cent. interest is a robber in the sight of God. Although the laws of man may justify him, the law of God condemns him. He is dealing unjustly; and God will reward him according to his deeds. God never designed that one man should prey upon another. He jealously guards the rights of his children, and in the books of Heaven great loss is set down on the side of the unjust dealer.

In the Holy Scriptures fearful denunciations are pronounced against the sin of covetousness. "No covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." The psalmist says, "The wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth." Paul ranks covetous men with idolaters, adulterers, thieves, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners, none of whom shall inherit the kingdom of God. These are the fruits of a corrupt tree, and God is dishonored by them. We are not to make the customs and maxims of the world our criterion. Reforms must take place; all injustice must be put away.

We are commanded to "search the Scriptures." The whole word of God is our rule of action. We are to carry out its principles in our daily lives; there is no surer mark of Christianity than this. We must carry out the great principles of justice and mercy in our intercourse with one another. We must be daily cultivating those qualities that will fit us for the society of Heaven. If we do these things, God becomes our surety, and promises to bless all that we undertake; and we "shall never be moved."

February 28, 1884

The Creation Sabbath

When God created the earth and placed man upon it, he divided time into seven periods. Six he gave to man for his own use, to employ in secular business; one he reserved for himself. Having rested on the seventh day, he blessed and sanctified it. Henceforth, the seventh day was to be regarded as the Lord's rest-day, and to be sacredly observed as the memorial of his creative work. It was not the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, or sixth day that was sanctified, or set apart to a holy use, neither was it a seventh part of time and no day in particular; but it was the seventh day, the day upon which God had rested. We are every day to think of God and live as in his sight; but when the six day's work is done, we are to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,"--to cease from labor and devote the day exclusively to meditation and worship.

When the law was given at Sinai, the Sabbath was placed in the midst of moral precepts, in the very bosom of the decalogue. But the Sabbath institution was not then made known for the first time. The fourth commandment places its origin at creation. The Creator's rest-day was hallowed by Adam in holy Eden, and by men of God throughout the patriarchal ages. During Israel's long bondage in Egypt, under taskmasters that knew not God, they could not keep the Sabbath; therefore the Lord brought them out where they could remember his holy day.

Before they came to Sinai, they understood the Sabbath to be obligatory upon them. After the giving of the manna, the people, of their own accord, gathered a double quantity on the sixth day in preparation for the Sabbath. And Moses, upon being consulted by the rulers, declared, "This is that which the Lord hath said, Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord." On the seventh day he bade them eat that which they had provided. "For," said he, "today is a Sabbath unto the Lord; today ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none." When some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather, they found no manna. Then the Lord said unto Moses, "How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day."

A threefold miracle was wrought in honor of the Sabbath, even before the law was given on Sinai. A double quantity of manna fell on the sixth day, none upon the Sabbath, and the portion needed for the Sabbath was preserved sweet and pure, when if any were kept over at any other time, it became unfit for food. Here is conclusive evidence that the Sabbath was instituted at creation, when the foundations of the earth were laid, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. And its sacredness remains unchanged, and will so remain even to the close of time. From the creation, every precept of the divine law has been obligatory on man, and has been observed by those who fear the Lord. The doctrine that God's law has been abolished is one of Satan's devices to compass the ruin of the race.

The prophet Isaiah, looking forward to the gospel dispensation, sets forth in the most impressive manner the obligation of the Sabbath, and the blessings attending its observance: "Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice; for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people; neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. For thus saith the Lord unto the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, and take hold of my covenant, even unto them will I give in mine house and within my walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters. I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off."

Under the Mosaic law, strangers and eunuchs were excluded from the full enjoyment of the privileges granted to Israel. But the prophet declares that a time is coming when these restrictions will cease. The holy oracles were especially committed to the Jews; not to be an Israelite was not to belong to the favored people of God. The Jews had come more and more to regard themselves as superior by divine right to every other people upon the earth; yet they had not been careful to maintain their separate and holy character by rendering obedience to all the commandments of God. Now the prophet declares that the stranger who will love and obey God shall enjoy the privileges that have belonged exclusively to the chosen people. Hitherto, circumcision and a strict observance of the ceremonial law had been the conditions upon which Gentiles could be admitted to the congregation of Israel; but these distinctions were to be abolished by the

gospel. "Every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant, even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people. The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, besides those that are gathered unto him."

Again, after rebuking the selfishness, violence, and oppression of Israel, and exhorting them to works of righteousness and mercy, he declares: "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."

The first part of the chapter brings to view a people who apparently delight in the service of God; they seek him daily, "as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God." Yet their lives are not right before the Lord; for he commands his prophet, "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." He declares that if they will return unto the Lord with all the heart, they shall be called repairers of the breach, the restorers of paths to dwell in. Then he distinctly shows them what this breach is. "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath,"--for they had been trampling it under their feet as a thing despised,--"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 prophecy reaches down the centuries to the time when the man of sin attempted to make void one of the precepts of God's law, to trample under foot the original Sabbath of Jehovah, and in its stead exalt one of his own creation. And when the Christian world set aside God's holy Sabbath, and in its place accept a common working day, unsanctioned by a single "Thus saith the Lord," they are encouraging infidelity, and virtually acknowledging the supremacy of that power by whose authority

alone the change has been effected. The rejection of the Sabbath has led to the rejection of the whole law, and thousands of professed Christians now boldly declare it void.

The law of ten commandments, which has been so lightly disregarded, is the foundation of many generations; and no man or body of men has been authorized to set aside, or vary in the slightest particular, one of the ten precepts of Jehovah. God spoke this law from Sinai in awful grandeur, in the hearing of all Israel, and he wrote it with his own fingers upon tables of stone, not for his chosen people only, but for all men, to the close of time. Christ himself declares that while the heavens and the earth remain, not one jot or tittle shall pass from this holy law.

There were two institutions founded in Eden that were not lost in the fall,--the Sabbath and the marriage relation. These were carried by man beyond the gates of paradise. He who loves and observes the Sabbath, and maintains the purity of the marriage institution, thereby proves himself the friend of man and the friend of God. He who by precept or example lessens the obligation of these sacred institutions is the enemy of both God and man, and is using his influence and his God-given talents to bring in a state of confusion and moral corruption.

March 6, 1884

The Christian Pathway

Christ promises, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." The way is plain; the will of God is manifest. We are not to live in doubt and uncertainty, and to rest satisfied while groping our way without a guide. Jesus does not, after giving us general directions, leave us to guess the way amid by-paths and dangerous passes. He leads us in a straight path; and while we follow him, our footsteps will not slide. It was Jesus that led ancient Israel, though the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night concealed him from their view; and in this important period of the world's history, he will as manifestly lead his people. The path is no uncertain one. The way is marked out, and every step is ordered of the Lord.

God has ample light and grace to bestow upon all them that fear him. Especially will he help his people in these last days, when Satan's devices are so abundant, so deceptive, and so corrupting. To those who will walk in the truth, the God of truth will give grace according to their needs. He will fill their hearts with peace, and courage, and confidence. But mercy and truth are promised only to the contrite and obedient. God has said that justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne; and those who are disobedient and rebellious will not escape the visitation of his just anger.

We cannot afford to separate ourselves from Jesus for a single hour. Without him we are in danger of being overcome of Satan, who is ever watching to suggest doubt, unbelief, and error. The world is flooded with error; it meets us on every hand. It is taught from the sacred desk, and lurks in theology, in literature, in philosophy, in science. Error perverts the judgment and opens the door to temptation, and through its influence Satan seeks to turn hearts from the truth; but an intelligent love for the truth sanctifies the receiver, and keeps him from the enemy's deceptive snares.

Satan uses some professed Christians to lead souls from the simplicity of the gospel of Christ. Worldly associates and amusements sow the seeds of doubt and skepticism. The sentiment of many worldly professors is, "Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us." "Speak unto us smooth things; prophesy deceits." Many are daily cheating their souls with a form of godliness without the power; but the Lord has

removed his smile and the inspiration of his Spirit from them. His displeasure is against them, because their deeds are evil. He demands decided changes in the life and character. Good intentions, good resolutions, good acts, cannot be accepted as substitutes for repentance, faith, and willing obedience.

The people are too willing to believe their teachers without careful thought and prayerful investigation of God's word. They love to have their consciences quieted,-- love to be rocked to sleep in the cradle of carnal security. In their blind selfishness, they deceive themselves in those things wherein they are willing to be deceived. Our Saviour declared to the Pharisees, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." And in his conversation with Nicodemus he said, "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." So in this age; the church will neither search the Scriptures nor listen to the truth, lest her works be reproved. She is more willing to depart from the commandments of God than from the customs and friendship of the world. And because great men and worldly wise men are in her favor, because numbers and temporal prosperity are hers, she believes herself favored of God,--"rich, and increased with goods, and in need of nothing."

But earthly prosperity is no evidence of the favor of God. Christ and his apostles teach us, both by precept and example, that the true child of God cannot enjoy the friendship of the world. If he seeks it, it will become a snare to him; he will adopt the customs, precepts, and standards of the world, and will finally become like them in spirit. But there can be no fellowship between the Prince of light and the prince of darkness. Says the apostle John, "The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God." They are unknown, unacknowledged by the world; but their names, cast out as evil by the lovers of sin, are written in the book of life. They are the adopted heirs of Christ, the nobility of Heaven. "These are they that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Many are not growing strong, because they do not take God at his word. They are conforming to the world. Every day they pitch their tents nearer to Egypt, when they should encamp a day's march nearer the heavenly Canaan. We need individually to ask strength and grace from Heaven, that we may resist the temptation to assimilate to the world. We cannot afford to be divided in heart and purpose, first serving God, and then yielding to temptations and paying homage to the world. Many of us have grown gray

in the service of Christ, in pushing the triumphs of his cross. We have fought the battles of the Lord too long, and endured too much, to permit Satan to gain the victory over us. The voice of our Leader is commanding "Go forward," and we should obey, saying, as did Caleb, "If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land."

If we commit the keeping of our souls to God in the exercise of living faith, his promises will not fail us; for they have no limit but our faith. "All things are possible to him that believeth." We may make or mar our own happiness. Many pet and excuse the defects in their characters; but these must all be remedied. Every deviation from the right is sin, and sin must be put away. We cannot afford to walk carelessly before our brethren or before the world.

Many confess their sins again and again, but do not put them away by genuine repentance. Unless we have a firm purpose and the aid of the grace of God, strong resolutions and vigilant watchfulness will be vain and powerless when temptations assail the soul; and under such circumstances some give up in despair, fearing that they must ever remain the slaves of sin. These have not a living faith in Jesus. We cannot trust in ourselves; if we do, we shall fail. Jesus has spoiled the powers of darkness; and it is through faith in his might that we shall be made strong. He will lift up a standard against Satan in behalf of every trusting, believing soul. We have the assurance that his grace is sufficient for us, and that we shall not be tempted above that we are able to bear. This is our only hope.

The apostle says, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." When the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Christian church at Pentecost, great wisdom and grace rested upon the whole body of believers. This blessing was given in answer to earnest, persevering prayer; and today God is just as willing to listen to the petitions of his people. "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it."

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." When these fruits appear in the life, a telling influence will be exerted upon the world. The truly converted man will cease aspiring to be thought great. He will not seek for worldly honor, nor for luxury, ease, or wealth; neither will he be sensitive to reproach or neglect. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new

creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Self is no longer the supreme object of love; family and friends are no longer the boundary. His heart is enlarged. Jesus has the first place in his affections; he loves Christians, because he sees in them the image of his Master, and all mankind with a love that prompts him to do them good. This is the fruit growing on the true Vine, more precious in the sight of God than all the wealth and learning of earth's great men.

The unparalleled exhibition of love that was made on Calvary shows how God estimates souls. If we have this love in our hearts, we shall seek to win sinners to Jesus, that for them this great sacrifice may not have been made in vain. The language of the heart will be, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." We shall say with the psalmist, "I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation; I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation." We shall rejoice to speak of the wisdom and goodness of God as shown in the way he has led his people; for we shall have proved that "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

March 13, 1884

Science and Revelation

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." The mightiest intellects of earth cannot comprehend God. If he reveals himself at all to men, it is by veiling himself in mystery. His ways are past finding out. Men must be ever searching, ever learning; and yet there is an infinity beyond. Could they fully understand the purposes, wisdom, love, and character of God, they would not believe in him as an infinite being, and trust him with the interests of their souls. If they could fathom him, he would no longer stand supreme.

There are men who think they have made wonderful discoveries in science. They quote the opinions of learned men as though they considered them infallible, and teach the deductions of science as truths that cannot be controverted. And the word of God, which is given as a lamp to the feet of the world-weary traveler, is judged by this standard, and pronounced wanting. The scientific research in which these men have indulged has proved a snare to them. It has clouded their minds, and they have drifted into skepticism. They have a consciousness of power; and instead of looking to the Source of all wisdom, they triumph in the smattering of knowledge they may have gained. They have exalted their human wisdom in opposition to the wisdom of the great and mighty God, and have dared to enter into controversy with him. The word of inspiration pronounces these men "fools."

God has permitted a flood of light to be poured upon the world in discoveries in science and art; but when professedly scientific men lecture and write upon these subjects from a merely human stand-point, they will assuredly come to wrong conclusions. The greatest minds, if not guided by the word of God in their research, become bewildered in their attempts to investigate the relations of science and revelation. The Creator and his works are beyond their comprehension; and because they cannot explain these by natural laws, Bible history is considered unreliable. Those who doubt the reliability of the records of the Old and New Testaments, will be led to go a step farther, and doubt the existence of God; and then, having let go their anchor, they are left to beat about upon the rocks of infidelity. Moses wrote under the guidance of the Spirit of God, and a correct theory of geology will never claim discoveries that

cannot be reconciled with his statements. The idea that many stumble over, that God did not create matter when he brought the world into existence, limits the power of the Holy One of Israel.

Many, when they find themselves incapable of measuring the Creator and his works by their own imperfect knowledge of science, doubt the existence of God and attribute infinite power to nature. These persons have lost the simplicity of faith, and are removed far from God in mind and spirit. There should be a settled faith in the divinity of God's holy word. The Bible is not to be tested by men's ideas of science, but science is to be brought to the test of this unerring standard. When the Bible makes statements of facts in nature, science may be compared with the written word, and a correct understanding of both will always prove them to be in harmony. One does not contradict the other. All truth, whether in nature or revelation, agrees. Scientific research will open to the minds of the really wise vast fields of thought and information. They will see God in his works, and will praise him. He will be to them first and best, and the mind will be centered upon him. Skeptics, who read the Bible for the sake of caviling, through ignorance claim to find decided contradictions between science and revelation. But man's measurement of God will never be correct. The mind unenlightened by God's Spirit will ever be in darkness in regard to his power.

Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. Those who have no vital union with God are swayed one way and another; they put men's opinions in the front, and God's word in the background. They grasp human assertions, that judgment against sin is contrary to God's benevolent character, and, while dwelling upon infinite benevolence, try to forget that there is such a thing as infinite justice.

When we have right views of the power, greatness, and majesty of God, and of the weakness of man, we shall despise the assumptions of wisdom made by earth's so-called great men, who have none of Heaven's nobility in their characters. There is nothing for which men should be praised or exalted. There is no reason why the opinions of the learned should be trusted, when they are disposed to measure divine things by their own perverted conceptions. Those who serve God are the only ones whose opinion and example it is safe to follow. A sanctified heart quickens and intensifies the mental powers. A living faith in God imparts energy; it gives calmness and repose of spirit, and strength and nobility of character.

Men of science think that with their enlarged conceptions they can comprehend the wisdom of God, that which he has done or can do. The idea largely prevails that he is bounded and restricted by his own laws. Men either deny and ignore his existence, or think to explain everything, even the operations of his Spirit upon the human heart, by natural laws; and they no longer reverence his name or fear his power. While they think they are gaining everything, they are chasing bubbles, and losing precious opportunities to become acquainted with God. They do not believe in the supernatural, not realizing that the Author of nature's laws can work above those laws. They deny the claims of God, and neglect the interests of their own souls; but his existence, his character, his laws, are facts that the reasoning of men of the highest attainments cannot overthrow.

The pen of inspiration thus describes the power and majesty of God: "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? ... Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity.... It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in."

Nature is a power, but the God of nature is unlimited in power. His works interpret his character. Those who judge him from his handiworks, and not from the suppositions of great men, will see his presence in everything. They behold his smile in the glad sunshine, and his love and care for man in the rich fields of autumn. Even the adornments of the earth, as seen in the grass of living green, the lovely flowers of every hue, and the lofty and varied trees of the forest, testify to the tender, fatherly care of our God, and to his desire to make his children happy.

The power of the great God will be exerted in behalf of those that fear him. Listen to the words of the prophet: "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the Lord shall

renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

In the word of God many queries are raised that the most profound scholars can never answer. Attention is called to these subjects to show us how many things there are, even among the common things of every-day life, that finite minds, with all their boasted wisdom, can never fully comprehend.

All the systems of philosophy devised by men have led to confusion and shame when God has not been recognized and honored. To lose faith in God is terrible. Prosperity cannot be a great blessing to nations or individuals, when once faith in his word is lost. Nothing is truly great but that which is eternal in its tendencies. Truth, justice, mercy, purity, and the love of God, are imperishable. When men possess these qualities, they are brought into close relationship to God, and are candidates for the highest exaltation to which the race can aspire. They will disregard human praise, and will be superior to disappointment, weariness, the strife of tongues, and contentions for supremacy.

He whose soul is imbued with the Spirit of God will learn the lesson of confiding trust. Taking the written word as his counselor and guide, he will find in science an aid to understand God, but he will not become exalted, till, in his blind self-conceit, he is a fool in his ideas of God.

March 20, 1884

Science and the Bible in Education

The foundation of all right education is a knowledge of God. Many parents who make great sacrifices to educate their children, seem to think that a well-trained intellect is more essential than a knowledge of God and his truth. They neglect to train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and act as though they supposed this important part of education would come naturally, as a matter of course. But the first and most important lesson to be impressed upon young minds is the duty of regulating the life by the principles of the word of God.

Parents and teachers should make God first. The influence of his Spirit purifies the heart and stimulates the intellect. If the fear of God is made the basis of education, the result will be a well-developed and symmetrical character, one that is neither dwarfed nor one-sided. Care should be taken to keep constantly before the mind the fact that we are dependent on God, and that we owe him willing obedience, a life-time of loving service. The true object of education is to fit us for this service by developing and bringing into active exercise every faculty that we possess. Satan desires to defeat this object. He is the great enemy of God, and it is his constant aim to lead souls away from their allegiance to the King of Heaven. He would have minds so trained that men and women will exert their influence on the side of error and moral corruption, instead of using their talents in the service of God, to save souls and bless society. His object is effectually gained, when, by perverting their ideas of education, he succeeds in enlisting parents and teachers on his side; for a wrong education often starts the mind on the road to infidelity.

The conclusions which learned men have reached as the result of their scientific investigations are carefully taught and fully explained; while the impression is distinctly given that if these learned men are correct, the Bible cannot be. These philosophers would make us believe that man, the crowning work of creation, came by slow degrees from the savage state, and that farther back, he was evolved from the race of brutes. They are so intent upon excluding God from the sovereignty of the universe, that they demean man, and defraud him of the dignity of his origin. Nature is exalted above the God of nature; she is idolized, while her Creator is buried up and concealed from sight

by science falsely so-called.

Cold philosophical speculations, and scientific research in which God is not acknowledged, are a positive injury. The thorns of skepticism are disguised; they are concealed and made attractive by the bloom and verdure of science and philosophy. Skepticism is attractive to the human mind. The young see an independence in it that captivates the imagination, and they are deceived. Satan triumphs; it is altogether as he meant it should be. He nourishes every seed of doubt that is sown in young hearts. He causes it to grow and bear fruit, and soon a plentiful harvest of infidelity is reaped. Teachers who sow these doubts do not lead the mind through the mist of unbelief to faith in the inspired word. But ignorance of God, of his might, his infinity, and his majesty, is the real reason that there is an infidel in the world.

Many teach that matter possesses vital power. They hold that certain properties are imparted to matter, and it is then left to act through its own inherent power; and that the operations of nature are carried on in harmony with fixed laws, that God himself cannot interfere with. This is false science, and is sustained by nothing in the word of God. Nature is not self-acting; she is the servant of her Creator. God does not annul his laws nor work contrary to them; but he is continually using them as his instruments. Nature testifies of an intelligence, a presence, an active agency, that works in, and through, and above her laws. There is in nature the continual working of the Father and the Son. Said Christ, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

God has finished his creative work, but his energy is still exerted in upholding the objects of his creation. It is not because the mechanism that has once been set in motion continues its work by its own inherent energy that the pulse beats and breath follows breath; but every breath, every pulsation of the heart, is an evidence of the all-pervading care of Him in whom we live and have our being. It is not because of inherent power that year by year the earth produces her bounties and continues her motion around the sun. The hand of God guides the planets, and keeps them in position in their orderly march through the heavens. It is through his power that vegetation flourishes, that the leaves appear and the flowers bloom. His word controls the elements, and by him the valleys are made fruitful. He covers the heavens with clouds, and prepares rain for the earth; he "maketh grass to grow upon the mountains." "He giveth snow like wool; he scattereth the hoar frost like ashes." "When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth; he

maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures."

Parents and teachers should aim to impress minds with the beauty of truth. They should realize that the safety of the young depends upon combining religious culture with general education, that they may escape the snare of unsanctified knowledge. Who and what are the men of learning, that the minds and characters of the young should be moulded by their ideas? They are not connected with the great Source of wisdom; and if they do not actually deny God, they at least lose sight of his direct agency in the operations of nature. But his care is over all the works of his hands. Nothing is too great to be directed by him; nothing is too small to escape his notice.

God is the foundation of everything. All true science is in harmony with his works; all true education leads to obedience to his government. Science opens new wonders to our view; she soars high and explores new depths; but she brings nothing from her research that conflicts with divine revelation. Ignorance may seek to support false views of God by appeals to science; but the book of nature and the written word do not disagree; each sheds light on the other. Rightly understood, they make us acquainted with God and his character by teaching us something of the wise and beneficent laws through which he works. We are thus led to adore his holy name, and to have an intelligent trust in his word.

The Bible should be read every day. It is the correct standard of right and wrong and of moral principle. A life of devotion to God is the best shield for the young against the temptations to which they are exposed while acquiring an education. The first consideration should be to honor God; the second to be faithful to humanity, performing the duties and meeting the trials that each day brings, and bearing its burdens with firmness and courage. Earnest and untiring effort, united with strong purpose and entire trust in God, will help in every emergency, and will qualify for a useful life. Such a life is a series of triumphs, not always seen and understood, but reaching far into the future, when we shall see as we are seen and know as we are known.

If we work in harmony with the Spirit of God, we shall see of his salvation. The education begun here will not be completed in this life; it will be going forward through all eternity,--progressing ever, never completed. Day by day the wonderful works of God, the evidences of his miraculous power in creating and sustaining the universe, will open before the mind in new beauty and grandeur. In the light that shines from the

throne, mysteries will disappear, and the soul will be filled with astonishment at the simplicity of the things that were never before comprehended.

March 27, 1884

Erroneous Doctrines Dangerous

Says the apostle Jude, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The apostles and their co-laborers in the early Christian church were constantly obliged to meet heresies, which were brought in by false teachers in the very bosom of the church. These teachers are represented not as coming openly, but creeping in unawares, with the gliding motion of a serpent. They followed their own pernicious ways, but were not satisfied without drawing away others with them. They had no connected chain of truth, but taught a disjointed medley of ideas, supported by a passage of Scripture here and another there. These disconnected scriptures were woven together into a tissue of falsehood that would strike the fancy, and would deceive those who had not, by searching the Scriptures for themselves, become established in the truth for that time.

Satan worked through these false teachers. Under a profession of regard for the truth, they concealed base purposes, for their hearts were corrupt. Had they come disclaiming faith in Christ, they would have been rejected at once; but professing to believe in him, they gained the confidence of some, and without shame or conscience perverted the truth to suit their own unsanctified hearts. And when once these deluded souls had departed from the old landmarks of faith, they had let go their anchor, and were tossed about like the waves of the sea. These lying prophets are described in the word of God; their deeds are recorded in the register of Heaven. Their hearts and their deceptive, wicked works were not understood by men; but the Lord saw them; he read their hearts as an open book, and knew that their very thoughts and purposes were corrupt.

False teachers are just as active in our day as they were in the days of the apostles. Satan has many agents, and they are ready to present any and every kind of theory to deceive souls,--heresies prepared to suit the varied tastes and capacities of those whom he would ruin. There are cheap fallacies for those who are easily led into error, and who desire something new, odd, or fanciful, which they cannot explain intelligently, or even understand themselves. A mysterious, disconnected set of ideas is

more in accordance with their minds than the plain truth, which has a "Thus saith the Lord" for its foundation. He has other heresies,--intellectual poisons,--which he has concocted for another class of minds in this age of skepticism and proud reasoning. These sophistries have a bewitching power over minds, and thousands are deceived by them.

One class have a theory that there is no personal devil, and that Christ had no existence before he came to this earth; and they try to maintain these absurd theories by wresting scriptures from their true meaning. The utter folly of human wisdom in matters of religious faith is thus made manifest. The heart that is not sanctified, and imbued with the spirit of Christ, is perverse in its interpretation of the inspired word, turning the truth of God into senseless falsehood; and some who have not searched the Scriptures with humble hearts allow these wild speculations to unsettle their faith; they accept them in place of the plainly revealed will of God.

Satan assails another class with arguments that present a greater show of plausibility. Science and nature are exalted. Men consider themselves wiser than the word of God, wiser even than God; and instead of planting their feet on the immovable foundation, and bringing everything to the test of God's word, they test that word by their own ideas of science and nature, and if it seems not to agree with their scientific ideas, it is discarded as unworthy of credence. Thus the great standard by which to test doctrines and character is set aside for human standards. This is as Satan designed it should be. Some say, "It is no matter what we believe, if we are only honest." But the law and the testimony remain valid, and we are to seek unto them.

The law of God is the great moral standard by which character is to be judged. It is the expression of his will, and must be obeyed from the heart. Its holy principles must underlie our course of action in all our business relations. Those who belittle their profession of faith by conformity to the world, show that they despise the riches of the grace of Christ. They cry. "The grace of Christ! we are not saved by works, but by Christ;" but they continue in sin,--continue to transgress the law of God. They act as though they considered it their privilege to live in sin that grace may abound. But every indulgence in sin weakens the soul; it welcomes Satan to come in and control the mind, making the individual his effectual servant.

In these days of delusion, every one who is established in the truth will have to

contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. Every variety of error will be brought out in the mysterious working of Satan, which would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect, and turn them from the truth. There will be human wisdom to meet,--the wisdom of learned men, who, as were the Pharisees, are teachers of the law of God, but do not obey the law themselves. There will be human ignorance and folly to meet in disconnected theories arrayed in new and fantastic dress,--theories that it will be all the more difficult to meet because there is no reason in them.

There will be false dreams and false visions, which have some truth, but lead away from the original faith. The Lord has given men a rule by which to detect them: "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." If they belittle the law of God, if they pay no heed to his will as revealed in the testimonies of his Spirit, they are deceivers. They are controlled by impulse and impressions, which they believe to be from the Holy Spirit, and consider more reliable than the inspired word. They claim that every thought and feeling is an impression of the Spirit; and when they are reasoned with out of the Scriptures, they declare that they have something more reliable. But while they think that they are led by the Spirit of God, they are in reality following an imagination wrought upon by Satan.

Their character was described and their doom denounced by the ancient prophets. It was ordained of old that those who unsettle faith in the word of God should bear the condemnation of God.

Jude says, "I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not." This will be the sure fate of all the characters described by Jude, who depart from God, and lead others away from the truth. Although the Lord gave Israel the greatest evidences of his favor, and upon condition of obedience, the rich promise that they should be to him a peculiar people, a royal nation, yet because of their unbelief and disobedience he could not fulfill the promise. Because of their transgressions, he removed his restraining power over their enemies, the ungodly nations around them, and did not protect them as he had done.

Some profess Christianity year after year, and in some things appear to serve God, and yet they are far from him. They give loose rein to appetite and passion, and follow their own unsanctified inclinations, loving pleasure and the applause of men

more than God or his truth. But God reads the secrets of the heart. Base thoughts lead to base actions. Self-righteousness, pride, and licentiousness are far-reaching, deep, and almost universal. These are the sins for which God destroyed the inhabitants of the old world by a flood of water, and they are corrupting the churches in these last days. They are the hidden rocks upon which are wrecked thousands and tens of thousands who profess godliness. Only those who are closely connected with God will escape the devices of Satan and the prevailing moral corruptions of this age.

The character is revealed by the works, not by occasional good deeds and occasional misdeeds, but by the tendency of the habitual words and acts. Those who would put God out of their knowledge will show a want of principle. Every man will show which master he is serving with the strength of his intellect, his skill, and his ability. The servant of Christ will watch unto prayer; he will be devoted, humble, meek and lowly in heart, seeking to know and do the will of God. Whereas he was once the servant of sin, he has, through the grace of God, become transformed in mind and character. He will love the day of Christ's appearing; for he will be able to say with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

April 3, 1884

Man's Obligation to God

To each of us God has committed sacred trusts, for which he holds us accountable. He designs that man shall be so educated as to develop his mental and moral powers, that he may have a well-balanced mind and a symmetrical character. But education alone will not prepare him to answer the object of his creation. He needs the grace of God, and divine aid awaits his demand. Divine power united with human effort will enable him to do good and glorify his Creator.

Few appreciate the value of man, and the glory that would redound to God were he to cultivate and preserve purity, nobility, and integrity of character. The value that God sets upon man is shown in the price that has been paid for his redemption; his love is expressed in that he withheld not his beloved Son, but gave him to die for a sinful race. Angels could not, by any sacrifice that they could make, accomplish the work of man's redemption. It was only through the suffering and death of Christ that he could be restored to the favor of God. For our sakes, He who knew no sin was made an offering for sin. He was afflicted, insulted, oppressed. Arraigned as a criminal, he suffered shame, insult, mockery, and pain.

Christ bore all this to rescue man from the hopeless state into which he had been brought by his disobedience of the law of God; for sin is the transgression of the law, and death is its penalty. He did not suffer to do away with the law, or to lessen its force, but that its claims might be met, and the sinner be spared. Through his perfect obedience, the law was exalted and made honorable.

Christ will elevate man, and give him rich and glorious possessions, if he will respect the claims of God's law; but if he chooses the service of Satan, and will ruin his hope of Heaven by his stubborn sinfulness, he must lose these blessings. He will have a place with associates similar in character to himself,--with those defiled by sin, who consider it a virtue, an evidence of smartness, to doubt God's word and be ranked among skeptics. To choose to be a sinner is to refuse to stand before the throne of God washed from the defilement of sin; it is to refuse the riches of eternal glory; it is to refuse to be a joint-heir with Christ to the immortal inheritance, and to be exalted to an

equality with the heavenly angels;--it is to reject all these, and to choose instead the sure consequence of sin, the sinner's fixed doom.

Those who might become co-laborers with Christ, and do good service in advancing the interests of his kingdom, but who use their talents and influence to tear down instead of to build up, are like noted rebels; their prominence, the value of the talent they use in the service of Satan, increases their guilt and makes their punishment sure. These will feel the wrath of God. They will experience what Christ suffered in saving men from the penalty of the broken law. The value of man and the measure of his accountability can be known only by the cross of Calvary. He who presents himself to the sinner as the One strong to deliver, will prove himself mighty to execute wrath and judgment upon every unrepenting son of Adam. He who holds the worlds in position, who weighs the hills in scales, and the mountains in a balance, who taketh up the isles as a very little thing, will show himself mighty to avenge his unrequited mercy and spurned love. Those who flatter themselves that God is too merciful to punish the sinner, have only to look to Calvary to make assurance doubly sure that vengeance will be visited upon every transgressor of his righteous law.

The penalty for breaking the law of God is proportionate to the price paid to redeem its transgressors. What unutterable bliss is prepared for those who will be saved through Christ, and what depths of woe for those who despise and reject his great salvation! Whatever of a worldly nature men esteem valuable sinks into insignificance when viewed in this light, and how great appears our obligation to use in the service of God all the talents that he has intrusted to our keeping.

Science is too limited to comprehend the atonement; the mysterious and wonderful plan of redemption is so far-reaching that philosophy cannot explain it; it will ever remain a mystery that the most profound reason cannot fathom. If it could be explained by finite wisdom, it would lose its sacredness and dignity. It is a mystery that One equal with the eternal Father should so abase himself as to suffer the cruel death of the cross to ransom man; and it is a mystery that God so loved the world as to permit his Son to make this great sacrifice. The Holy Spirit exalts and glorifies the Saviour. It is his office to present Christ, the great salvation that we have through him, and the sacred, elevated purity of his righteousness. Says Christ, "He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." The Spirit of truth is the only effectual teacher of divine truth; those who are taught of him have entered the school of Christ. How must God esteem the race, that

he gave his Son to die for them, and appoints his Spirit to be man's teacher and continual guide. Satan understands this, and he lays his plans to mar and wound man, the workmanship of God, and to prevent him from enjoying the happiness that this great rebel lost through his disobedience and malice.

Since his fall from Heaven, it has been Satan's only joy and constant employment to thwart the plan of God by preventing the salvation of perishing men. He has carried on this work with marked success, and will continue it until Christ shall bring his career to an end. He has tried to induce men to aid him in treading the honor of God into the dust, and many have become co-laborers with him, and have encouraged his rebellion. Those who do this, who glory in their skepticism, and lead others to despise the law of Jehovah, place themselves in the ranks of the enemies of Christ, and use their influence to destroy rather than to save souls. They second Satan in his efforts to undermine the law of God by assuring the sinner that he will be saved while transgressing that law. They serve Satan, and will share his terrible fate.

The short space of time allotted to men here is exceedingly valuable. Now, while probation lingers, God proposes to unite his strength with the weakness of finite man. We should so educate ourselves that we can serve him intelligently. Those who have cherished skepticism may, by proper discipline of the mind, learn to cherish faith. Those who truly love God will desire so to improve the talents that he has given them, that they may be a blessing to others. And by and by the gates of Heaven will be thrown wide open to admit them, and from the lips of the King of glory the benediction will fall upon their ear like richest music, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Thus the redeemed will be welcomed to the mansions that Jesus is preparing for them. There their companions will not be the vile of earth,--liars, idolaters, the impure, or the unbelieving; but they will associate with those who have overcome Satan and his devices, and through divine aid have formed perfect characters. Every sinful tendency, every imperfection that afflicts them here, has been removed by the blood of Christ; and the excellence and brightness of his glory, far exceeding the brightness of the sun in its meridian splendor, is imparted to them. And the moral beauty, the perfection of his character, shines through them, in worth far exceeding this outward splendor. They are without fault around the great white throne, sharing the dignity and privileges of the angels.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the

things which God has prepared for them that love him." In view of the glorious inheritance which may be his, "what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" He may be poor; yet he possesses in himself a wealth and dignity that the world could never bestow. The soul redeemed and cleansed from sin, with all its noble powers dedicated to the service of God, is of surpassing worth; and there is joy in Heaven, in the presence of God and holy angels, over one sinner that repents,--a joy that is expressed in songs of holy triumph.

April 10, 1884

The Training of Children

We are living in an unfortunate age for children. A heavy current is setting downward, and more than childhood's strength and experience is needed to press against this current, and not be borne down to moral ruin. But parents can do much; they should help their children. The mother's work commences with the infant. She should subdue the will and temper of her child, and bring it into subjection, teach it to obey. Every mother should take time to reason with her children, to correct their errors, and patiently teach them the right way.

As the child grows older, relax not the hand. Christian parents should so instruct their children that they may become children of God. The entire religious experience is influenced by the instructions received, and the character formed in childhood. If the will is not then subdued and made to yield to the will of the parents, it will be a difficult task to learn the lesson in after years. Parents who neglect this important work, commit a great error, and sin against their children and against God.

If parents would succeed in the government of their children, they must have perfect control of themselves. They must learn to control their words and the very expression of the countenance. They should not suffer the tone of the voice to be disturbed or agitated with excitement or passion. Then they can have a decided influence over their children. Impatience in the parents excites impatience in the children. Passion manifested by the parents creates passion in the children, and stirs up the evils of their nature. Some parents correct their children severely in a spirit of impatience, and often in passion. Such corrections produce no good results. In seeking to correct one evil they create two. Continual censuring and whipping hardens children, and weans their affections from their parents. First reason with your children, clearly point out their wrongs, and impress upon them that they have not only sinned against you, but against God. With your heart full of pity and sorrow for your erring children, pray with them before correcting them. Then they will see that you do not punish them because they have put you to inconvenience, or because you wish to vent your displeasure upon them, but from a sense of duty, for their good; and they will love and respect you.

Parents, every time you lose self-control, and speak and act impatiently, you sin against God. The recording angels writes every impatient, fretful word you utter to your children; every unguarded word spoken before them, carelessly or in jest, every word that is not chaste and elevated, he marks as a spot against your Christian character. Speak kindly to your children. Remember how sensitive you are, how little you can bear to be blamed, and do not lay upon them that which you cannot bear; for they are weaker than you, and cannot endure as much. The fruits of self-control, thoughtfulness, and pains-taking on your part will be a hundred-fold.

Let your pleasant, cheerful words ever be like sunbeams in your family. You have no fight to bring a gloomy cloud over the happiness of your children by fault-finding, or severe censure for trifling mistakes. Actual wrong should be made to appear just as sinful as it is, and a firm, decided course should be pursued to prevent its recurrence; yet children should not be left in a hopeless state of mind, but with a degree of courage that they can improve, and gain your confidence and approval. Children may wish to do right, they may purpose in their hearts to be obedient; but they need help and encouragement. Parents should better qualify themselves to discharge their duty to their children. Some do not understand their children; they are not really acquainted with them. If parents would enter more fully into the feelings of their children, and draw out what is in their hearts, it would have a beneficial influence upon them.

Children would be saved many evils if they would become more familiar with their parents. Parents should encourage their children to confide in them, to be open and frank, to come to them with their difficulties, their little daily annoyances, and when they are perplexed as to what course is right, to lay the matter before their parents, and ask their advice. Who are so well calculated to see and point out their dangers as godly parents? Who can understand the peculiar temperaments of their children as well as they? The mother who has watched every turn of mind from infancy, and is acquainted with the natural disposition, is best prepared to counsel her children.

Children should very early be taught to be useful, to help themselves and to help others. Let the tax upon their strength be very light at first, and increase it a little every day, until they can do a proper amount of work each day without becoming excessively weary. Children who are petted and waited upon, always expect it; and if their expectations are not met, they are disappointed. This same disposition will be seen

through their whole lives; they will be helpless, leaning upon others for aid, expecting others to favor them and yield to them. And if they are opposed, even after they have grown to manhood and womanhood, they think themselves abused; and thus they worry their way through the world, hardly able to bear their own weight, often murmuring and fretting because everything does not suit them.

The mistaken parents who are thus teaching their children lessons which will prove ruinous to them, are also planting thorns for their own feet. They think that by gratifying the wishes of their children, and letting them follow their own inclinations, they can gain their love. What an error! Children thus indulged grow up unrestrained in their desires, unyielding in their dispositions, selfish, exacting, and overbearing, a curse to themselves and to all around them. Many daughters can, without remorse of conscience, see their mothers toiling, cooking, washing, or ironing, while they sit in the parlor and read stories, knit edging, crochet, or embroider. Their hearts are as unfeeling as a stone. But where does this wrong originate? Who are the ones usually most to blame in this matter? The poor, deceived parents. They overlook the future good of their children, and in their mistaken fondness, let them sit in idleness, or do that which is of but little account, which requires no exercise of the mind or muscles, and then excuse their indolent daughters because they are weakly. What has made them weakly? In many cases it has been the wrong course of the parents. A proper amount of exercise about the house would improve both mind and body.

Mothers should take their daughters with them into the kitchen, and patiently educate them. Their constitution will be better for such labor; their muscles will gain tone and strength, and their meditations will be more healthy and elevated at the close of the day. They may be weary, but how sweet is rest after a proper amount of labor. Sleep, nature's sweet restorer, invigorates the tired body, and prepares it for the next day's duties. Do not intimate to your children that it is no matter whether they do anything or not. Teach them that their help is needed, that their time is of value, and that you depend on their labor. Much sin results from idleness. Active hands and minds do not find time to heed every temptation which the enemy suggests; but idle hands and brains are all ready for Satan to control. When not properly occupied, the mind dwells upon improper things.

To a great extent, parents hold in their own hands the future happiness of their children. They sow the seed which will spring up and bear fruit either for good or evil.

Upon them rests the important work of forming the character of these children. The instructions given in childhood, will follow them all through life. Parents can train their sons and daughters for happiness or for misery. They should deal faithfully with the souls committed to their trust. They should not encourage in their children pride, extravagance, or love of show. They should not teach them, or suffer them to learn, little pranks which appear cunning in small children, but which must be corrected when they are older. The habits first formed are not easily forgotten.

Parents, you should commence to discipline the minds of your children while very young, to the end that they may be Christians. Let all your efforts be for their salvation. Act as though they were placed in your care to be fitted as precious jewels to shine in the kingdom of God. Beware how you lull them to sleep over the pit of destruction, with the mistaken thought that they are not old enough to be accountable, not old enough to repent of their sins and serve God.

There are many precious promises on record for those who seek their Saviour early. Ecclesiastes 12:1: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Proverbs 8:17: "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me." The great Shepherd of Israel is still saying, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of Heaven." Teach your children that youth is the best time to seek the Lord. Then the burdens of life are not heavy upon them, and their young minds are not harassed with care, and while so free they should devote the best of their strength to God.

April 17, 1884

Important Duties in Home Life

The people of God are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. They should study the life of Christ, and his example and teaching should affect their life and character. They honor him by manifesting the fruits of the Spirit in their every-day life. If the doors of the house and heart are opened to Jesus, if he is welcomed as an honored guest, he will work for the family. The sweet influence of his presence will pervade the home, and check all impatience and selfishness. But many professed Christians drive Christ from their homes by an impatient, fretful spirit. Sometimes when fatigued by labor or oppressed with care, parents do not maintain a calm spirit, but manifest a lack of forbearance that displeases God, and brings a cloud over the family. 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 yourselves, and resolve that none but pleasant, cheerful words shall escape your lips. By thus exercising self-control, you will grow stronger. Your nervous system will not be so sensitive.

The mother can and should do much toward controlling her nerves and mind when depressed; even when she is sick, she can, if she only schools herself, be pleasant and cheerful, and can bear more noise than she would once have thought possible. She should not make her children feel her infirmities, and cloud their young, sensitive minds by her depression of spirits, making them feel that the mother's room is the most dismal place in the world. The mind and nerves gain tone and strength by the exercise of the will. The power of the will in many cases will prove a potent soother of the nerves. Jesus knows our infirmities, and has himself shared our experience in all things but in sin; therefore he has prepared for us a path suited to our strength and capacity.

Sometimes everything seems to go wrong in the family circle. There is fretfulness all around, and all seem very miserable and unhappy. The parents lay the blame upon their poor children, and think them very disobedient and unruly, the worst children in the world, when the cause of the disturbance is in themselves. God requires them to exercise self-control. They should realize that when they yield to impatience and fretfulness, 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.

Instead of pleasantly asking their children to do what they wish done, parents often order them in a scolding tone, and at the same time administer a censure or a reproach which the children have not merited. Parents, this course pursued toward your children destroys their cheerfulness and their ambition to please you. They do your bidding, not from love, but because they dare not do otherwise. Their heart is not in the matter. It is drudgery instead of a pleasure, and this 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 is arrayed before them in glowing colors, until they become discouraged, and 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 bad as the worst.

Upon whom rests this great sin? If home had been made attractive, if the parents had manifested affection for their children, if they had wisely sought innocent enjoyment for them, and taught them the lesson of cheerful obedience, they would have touched an answering chord in their young hearts, and willing feet and hands and hearts would have carried out their wishes. By speaking kindly to their children, and praising them when they try to do right, parents may encourage their efforts, make them very happy, and throw around the family circle a charm which will chase away every dark shadow, and bring cheerful sunlight in. Mutual kindness and forbearance will make home a paradise, and attract holy angels into the family circle; but they will flee from a house where there are unpleasant words, fretfulness, and strife. Unkindness, complaining, and anger shut Jesus from the dwelling.

Some parents fail to give their children a religious education, and also neglect their school education. Neither should be neglected. Children's minds will be active; and if they are not engaged in physical labor, or occupied with study, they will be exposed to evil influences. It is a sin for parents to allow their children to grow up in ignorance. They should supply them with useful and interesting books, and should teach them to have hours for labor and hours for study and reading. Parents should aim to elevate the minds of their children, and to improve their mental faculties. The mind left to itself, uncultivated, is generally low, sensual, and corrupt. Satan improves his opportunity, and educates idle minds.

Parents should faithfully instruct their children, not leaving them to gather up their education as best they can. They should not be suffered to learn good and evil indiscriminately, with the idea that at some future time the good will predominate, and the evil lose its influence. The evil will increase faster than the good. It is possible that the evil may be eradicated after many years; but who will venture this? Time is short. It is easier and much safer to sow clean and good seed in the hearts of your children, than to pluck up the weeds afterward. Parents should redouble their efforts for the salvation of their children. The reason why the youth of the present age are not more religiously inclined is that their education is defective. In the present state of things in society, it is no easy task for parents to restrain their children, and instruct them according to the Bible rule of right. When they would train their children in harmony with the precepts of the word of God, and, like Abraham of old, command their households after them, the children think their parents overcareful and unnecessarily exacting.

It is not the exercise of true love toward children that permits in them the indulgence of passion, or allows disobedience of parental authority to go unpunished. "Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined." Both parents should co-operate in the training, government, and education of their children. With firmness, not in a harsh manner, but with determined purpose, both should let their children know that they must obey. The father should not be like a child, moved merely by impulse. He is bound to his family by sacred, holy ties. He is the lawmaker, illustrating in his own manly bearing the sterner virtues,--energy, integrity, honesty, and industry. He is in one sense the priest of the household, laying upon the altar of God the morning and evening sacrifice, while the wife and children unite in prayer and praise. In such a household Jesus will love to tarry.

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 so doing we shall gain great victories. Unless we control our words and temper, we are slaves to Satan. All jangling, and unpleasant, impatient, fretful words are an offering presented to his Satanic majesty. And it is a costly offering, more costly than any sacrifice we can make for 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 which God's word imposes upon us is for our own interest. It increases the happiness of our families, and of 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 us every hour. Ministering angels will linger in our dwellings, and with joy carry Heavenward the tidings of our advance in the divine life, and the recording angel will make a cheerful, happy record.

May 1, 1884

Dangers and Duties of the Young

In these days, persecution and reproach for Christ's sake are scarcely known. Very little self-denial and sacrifice are necessary in order to put on a form of godliness, and have the name upon the church-book; but to live in such a manner that our ways will be pleasing to God, and our names registered in the book of life, will require watchfulness and prayer, sacrifice and self-denial. Very few of the youth know what experimental religion is. They have not a fixed principle to serve God. They sink under every cloud; they have no power of endurance. They appear to serve God; they make now and then a formal prayer, and are called Christians; but they do not grow in grace. They are not led to search their own hearts diligently, and to count the cost of becoming a Christian. As a result, they profess to be Christians without sufficiently trying their motives.

The young are often urged to speak or pray in meeting; they are urged to die to self. At every step of the Christian way, they are urged. Such religion is worth nothing. Let the heart be changed, and it will not be such drudgery to serve God. The love of dress and pride of appearance will be gone. The apostle John exhorts, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." Then he adds the warning, "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 the things that are in the world, and for this reason the love of God finds no room in their hearts. God is dishonored by the frivolity and fashion, and empty, vain talking and laughing that characterize the life of the youth generally. There will be no place for these things in the heart renewed by the grace of God; but there will be an earnest, anxious seeking for the Christian graces, the fruits of the Spirit of God.

Words and acts testify plainly what is in the heart. If vanity and pride, love of self and love of dress, fill the heart, the conversation will be upon the dress, the fashions, and the appearance, but not on Christ or the kingdom of Heaven. If envious feelings dwell in the heart, they will be manifested in words and acts. Those who measure themselves by others, and make no higher attainments, are feeding on husks, and will remain spiritual dwarfs.

Many have their hearts filled with the love of self. They are not aware that the great heavenly Artist is taking cognizance of every act, every word; that their deportment, and even the thoughts and intents of the heart, stand faithfully delineated; and that old and young 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 false words are written. Those deceptive acts, whose motives were concealed from human eyes, but discerned by the all-seeing eye of Jehovah, are all written in living characters. Every selfish act will be exposed.

Solemn responsibilities rest upon the young, which they lightly regard. They should heed the injunction of the inspired word, "Obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right." "Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise), that it may be well with thee, and thou mayst live long on the earth." They should honor their parents by cheerful, loving obedience, and by doing what they can to make home happy. Often they would like to do this in their own way, by introducing amusements that lead away from God. They urge that they need something to enliven and divert the mind; and sometimes music is introduced into the home as a means of supplying this need. Music, when not abused, is a great blessing. God is glorified by songs of praise from a pure heart filled with love and devotion to him. But when put to a wrong use, it is a terrible curse. It excites, but does not impart that strength and courage which can be found only at the throne of grace. Frivolous songs and the popular sheet music of the day, which often seem congenial to their tastes, lead the mind from God.

Many seek after pleasures that prove bitter in the end. They love worldly society, where they receive praise and flattery that gratifies vanity, and fosters pride and self-esteem. They are led to believe that with such advantages and attractions as they possess, it is really a great pity for them to come out from the world and be separate. But the pleasures of earth will have an end, and that which is sown must also be reaped. Young friends, are your personal attraction, abilities, or talents too valuable to be devoted to God and used in his service?

"Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Young friends, when you are restless and unhappy, it is because you have strayed from this path of peace. You are trying to find out of Christ that happiness that is found only in him. In him are no disappointed hopes. Prayer,--oh, how is this precious privilege

neglected! The reading of the word of God prepares the mind for prayer. One great reason that you have so little disposition to pray is that you have unfitted yourselves for this sacred duty by reading fascinating stories, which have excited the imagination and aroused unholy passions. The word of God becomes distasteful; the hour of prayer is forgotten. And yet to have the consciousness that the eyes of the Lord are upon us, and his ears open to 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 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. Those whose moral faculties are clouded 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. 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. Other objects to be attained should be secondary.

Perhaps some will inquire how they are to know that they are accepted of God. The answer is, Study his word prayerfully. Lay it not aside for any other book. This holy book convinces of sin. It plainly reveals the way of salvation. It brings to view a bright and glorious reward. It reveals to you a complete Saviour, and teaches you that through his boundless mercy alone can you expect salvation. The hope of eternal life is not to be received upon slight grounds. It is a subject to be settled between God and your own soul,--settled for eternity. A supposed hope, and nothing more, will prove your ruin. Since you are to stand or fall by the word of God, it is to that word you must look for the testimony in your case. There you can see what is required in order to become a Christian. Compare your life with that of your Master, who made so great a sacrifice that you might be saved. Do not neglect secret prayer. Plead as earnestly as you would if your mortal life were at stake. Remain before God until unutterable longings for salvation are begotten within you, and the sweet evidence is obtained of pardoned sin. Do not lay off your armor or leave the battle-field until you have obtained the victory, and can triumph in your Redeemer.

Young friends, if found in the way of righteousness, you can exert a mighty

influence. Ministers, or church-members advanced in years, cannot have one-half the influence on your young associates that you are capable of exerting; and you ought to feel that a responsibility rests upon you to do all you can for their salvation. Those who have themselves tasted the sweets of redeeming love will not, cannot rest, until all with whom they associate are made acquainted with the plan of salvation. You should inquire, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? How can I honor and glorify thy name upon the earth?" Souls are perishing all around us; what are you doing to win them to Christ? Oh, that you would use your powers of mind in seeking to so approach sinners that you may win even one soul to the path of righteousness! What a thought! One soul to praise God through eternity! One soul to enjoy happiness and everlasting life! One gem in your crown to shine forever and ever! But more than one may be won from sin to holiness, and the reward is rich in the kingdom of Heaven. Says the Lord by the prophet, "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever and ever."

May 8, 1884

Satan's Devices

The great controversy between Christ and Satan, that has been carried on for almost six thousand years, is soon to close. And yet how few have their attention called to this matter, how few realize that we are living amid the closing scenes of earth's history! Satan is working diligently, binding his sheaves preparatory to gathering in his harvest. He is uniting the elements of his kingdom for the final struggle. Since his fall, he has been the great adversary of God and man, and has shown a masterly activity in trying to defeat our Saviour's efforts in our behalf. He thinks that because so many readily yield to his temptations and believe his lies, he may yet gain some advantage over Christ, who left the royal courts of Heaven that he might defeat this wily foe on his own battle-field, and open a way whereby man might escape from his cruel power.

He is called in the Bible, Satan, Beelzebub, the serpent, the deceiver, a liar, the accuser of the brethren, the prince of the power of the air, the prince of darkness, and the god of this world. Frightful names, infernal agencies! This fallen spirit, so malignant and subtle, is walking about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. When there is no special effort made to resist his power, when profound indifference prevails in the church and in the world, he is not concerned; for he is in no danger of losing those whom he is leading captive at his will. But when the attention is called to eternal things, and souls are inquiring, "What shall I do to be saved?" he is on the ground, seeking to match his power against the power of Christ, and doubling his efforts to counteract the influences of the Holy Spirit. Angels of God, with Jesus at their head, are present to press back the powers of darkness; but no one is forced to accept Jesus, and no one can be compelled by Satan's power to reject him.

Satan is at your side when you least suspect it, watching to find a weak spot in your armor, where he can introduce his darts, and wound your soul by betraying you into sin. He has access to minds that are open to receive his suggestions, and by long experience he has learned how to apply his temptations to the best advantage. His first effort is to keep as many minds as possible in a state of careless indifference. He will invent every imaginable excuse to keep people away from meetings where they might receive benefit from hearing the truth. He will especially work to make of none effect

these morning meetings, where the Spirit of God is at work; and when he cannot keep persons away, his next effort will be to fill the mind with unimportant matters, thus preventing them from treasuring up the truths they hear.

This work Satan is engaged in at every meeting. He has different temptations prepared for different minds, and souls are continually yielding to his suggestions. He will adopt any means by which he may gain control of the thoughts and purposes of the heart. He will work to divert the mind from Heaven and heavenly things by the absorbing cares of this life. He will produce temporary indisposition to keep you away from meetings where testimonies from Heaven will be borne, and your hearts would be impressed with the deep movings of the Spirit of God. If you attend the meetings, and your heart is impressed, he will tempt you to engage in unprofitable conversation on trivial things, so that you will forget the words spoken.

Circumstances will arise to divert the mind. Visitors, relatives, or worldly friends, or some temporal matter, will engage the attention; and then "cometh the devil, and taketh the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." These friends will make demands upon your time and strength, and thus God is robbed of the service due him. Yet you flatter yourselves that you cannot do otherwise; for how can you displease your friends? God will not bring a curse upon you for thus robbing him, but your own course of action brings its sure result. But however alluring Satan's temptations, however natural and unavoidable they may seem to the mind that is not clear and sharp in spiritual discernment, you must not be lulled to carnal security. However dear your friends may be, if they lead you away from God they are emissaries of Satan, who works through the children of disobedience, speaks through human organs.

God will not work a miracle to change natural causes which you can control. If you place yourself and family in the current of the world, you and your children will be borne downward by it. Be wise and discriminating in regard to spiritual advantages, and gather about yourselves and your children correct influences. We may have a beautiful and fertile country; but surrounding influences may be weaving a spell upon our souls that will sink us to perdition, and our children may be lost to the cause of God because we did not place them where they would cultivate a love for divine things. We may save our own souls, as did Lot when he fled from Sodom; but the habits and customs with which we have become familiar may cling to us, and we may find that we have

assimilated to them more than we were aware. This is a risk that we cannot afford to run. We might better lose every worldly advantage than to lose Jesus, or dishonor him by our careless inattention to his requirements. It is best to obey God at any sacrifice.

Another way that Satan comes in between God and your soul is to lead you to criticise the defects of your brethren and sisters, to watch their mistakes and talk about them. You think it is right to grieve over their errors; but the enemy takes advantage here, and hurls his poisoned darts through the defective places in your armor. You let bitterness into your soul, then jealousy and evil-surmising, and you do not realize it. Your heart becomes hardened against your brethren, and you speak evil of them. You do not know that you are doing the work of Satan, but you are; and you are growing spiritually weaker and weaker, and darker and darker.

The right course for you to pursue is marked out in the Bible, and you should follow it strictly. Go to your brother, and with your heart filled with tender, pitying love,--just such love as inspired Jesus in his efforts to save a fallen race,--tell him his fault between you and him alone. If you fail, do not let this depress you. It will do you harm, and not good, to let your mind dwell upon the mistakes and errors of others. Learn from their weakness to be strong yourself. Avoid their failures. Because Jesus is grieved by their faults, try the harder to honor him yourself by a well-ordered life and godly conversation. If you think your neighbor or brother is defective in character, make him a special subject of prayer; but do not lift up your soul unto vanity by saying, "I am not like him. In contrast with him, I am righteous." This is not obeying the injunction of the apostle to esteem others better than yourself.

By beholding we become changed. If you allow your mind to dwell upon the imperfections and moral deformities of others, you will be changed into the same image. You will become deformed in character, and mentally one-sided and unbalanced. Let the mind dwell upon the perfect life of Christ. If the thoughts are centered upon him, and the conversation is on heavenly themes, you will be "changed into the same image from glory to glory." You will become "partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

The way to eternal life is a battle and a march. The great adversary of souls is continually seeking to insinuate himself between you and the Source of your strength. If you allow your mind to be taken up with worldly cares, he will manage to have these

cares so varied in character, and press so continually upon you, that you can find no time for the spiritual and the eternal. Worldly acquaintances introduce subjects that are of the greatest importance to them; you listen and are attracted, and these things of minor consequence absorb the mind and affections. You give time and attention, skill and inventive faculties, to outward ornamentation, to the neglect of the inward adorning of the soul. Time is worse than lost which should be devoted to the searching of the Scriptures and to earnest prayer for divine guidance; you rob your own souls of grace and power, and others of the light that should be reflected through you to the world.

But few know the real power of religion. They do not appreciate its refining and elevating influence on the character; they do not partake of its joys nor enter into its spirit. We need constant communion with Jesus just as much as we need daily food to nourish the body. If there is a moment when we are in no danger of being deceived by the enemy, then for that moment we may dispense with divine aid. If there is any moment when we are not dependent on God for our breath, then there is a time when we need not obey the injunctions of his word.

We should be sanctified by the truth. The conscience and the understanding, the words, the deeds, and the thoughts, should be controlled by truth, and not error. The principle of truth and righteousness implanted in the heart, will be revealed in the life, and especially in the family circle. God estimates a man by what he is in the bosom of his family. Fix the mind on things that are pure and holy. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think of these things." And the life will be clothed with the beauty of holiness even here; but who shall tell what it will be, when the great controversy between sin and righteousness is forever closed, and we appear in "the beauty of the Lord our God"?

May 15, 1884

Prevailing Prayer

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always," is the injunction of Christ to his disciples. Again we read in the inspired word, "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."

God has made it our duty to pray. The riches of the universe belong to him. He has all temporal and spiritual treasures at his command, and can supply every want from his abundant fullness. We receive our breath from him; every temporal blessing that we enjoy is his gift. We are dependent upon him not only for temporal blessings, but for grace and strength to keep us from falling under the power of temptation. We daily need the Bread of Life to give us spiritual strength and vigor, just as much as we need food to sustain our physical strength and give us firm muscles. We are compassed with weakness and infirmities, doubts and temptations; but we can come to Jesus in our need, and he will not turn us away empty. We must accustom ourselves to seek divine guidance through prayer; we must learn to trust in Him from whom our help cometh. Our desires should be unto God; our souls should go out after him, and their attitude should always be that of supplication.

The reason that we do not realize greater help is because there is lack of earnest, fervent devotion. Jesus reproved the Pharisees for drawing near to God with their mouth, and honoring him with their lips, while their hearts were far from him. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." We must have a deep, earnest sense of our needs. We must feel our weakness and our dependence upon God, and come to him with contrition of soul and brokenness of heart. Our petitions must be offered in perfect submission; every desire must be brought into harmony with the will of God, and his will must be done in us. We must not pray in a doubting, half-hearted manner, but with full assurance of faith. When we come to him in this manner, Jesus will listen to our prayers, and will answer them; but if we regard iniquity in our hearts, if we cherish any darling sin, we may be assured that no blessing will be given in response to our prayers.

One sister said this morning that she did not have the experience she desired. She

tried to do her duty as far as she could understand it, but she did not experience the joy and peace that others seemed to have. This sister does not believe the word of God. What has faith to do with feeling? Faith takes God at his word, with or without feeling. It "is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." We can believe our fellow-men, and can we not trust the word of God? When we go to him for wisdom or grace, we are not to look to ourselves to see if he has given us a special feeling as an assurance that he has fulfilled his word. Feeling is no criterion. Great evils have resulted when Christians have followed feeling. Satan can give feelings and impressions, and those who take these as their guides will surely be led astray. How do I know that Jesus hears my prayer? I know it by his promise. He says he will hear the needy when they cry unto him, and I believe his word. He has never said to the "seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain."

If we walk in the light as Christ is in the light, we may come to the throne of grace with holy boldness. We may present the promises of God in living faith, and urge our petitions. Although we are weak, and erring, and unworthy, "the Spirit helpeth our infirmities." But too often our prayers are molded by coldness and backsliding. Those who do not deny self and lift the cross of Christ, will have no courage to approach a heart-searching God. We must learn to watch unto prayer, and to be importunate. When we have offered our petition once, we must not then abandon it, but say, as did Jacob when he wrestled all night with the angel, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me," and like him we shall prevail. In the public assembly of God's people, prayers should not be offered that are suitable only to secret communion with him. We should pray understandingly and intelligently, and every day we should know better how to offer appropriate and prevailing prayers.

Jesus invites, "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 of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." This is no doubtful, uncertain promise, but a positive one. If we come to him, we shall not be disappointed. Yet how unwilling we seem to accept the gracious invitation. When in trouble, we too often go for help to our brethren, who are no wiser nor stronger than ourselves; but if we would go to Jesus, if we would take our troubles to him in prayer, we should find rest, and peace, and courage. The wisdom that God gives is unerring; his strength is sufficient for all our needs. Let us lay our burdens at the feet of Jesus, and, according to his promise, he will take the weary load, and encircle us in the arms of his love.

"I am meek and lowly in heart." There is a beautiful blending of tenderness and lowliness, majesty and humility, in the character of Christ. He who was the mightiest one that ever trod the earth, was also the most pure and sinless, and was the meekest of all. In the cluster of graces upon which he pronounces a blessing, meekness and poverty of spirit stand foremost; and among all his traits of character he selected this for the peculiar study and imitation of his disciples. "Learn of me," he says; "for I am meek and lowly in heart." And the inspired apostle Paul also, in exhorting his Corinthian brethren to manifest in their lives the fruits of the Spirit, beseeches them by the "meekness and gentleness of Christ." From the mountain summit, the tempter presented before our Saviour the kingdoms of the world in all their glory, making the sight as alluring and enchanting as possible; but none of these things moved the divine Son of God. Beneath all the glitter and pomp of earth, he saw misery, sorrow, and remorse,--suffering which earthly prosperity is powerless to alleviate; and he spurned the temptation and the tempter.

There are many who are surrounded with clouds of darkness. They try to do something themselves, some great and good work which will win the favor of God and make them happy, but they neglect the very work that they should do. But the path of happiness is the path of obedience. We should in no case blind our eyes to our true condition, and then pray in a loose, general manner. Prayers of this kind rise no higher than the petitioner's head, and bring no answer of mercy, because they are dictated by no sense of need. Says the apostle, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." Inquire into the character of your thoughts, purposes, temper, words, and deeds. Compare your experience with the declarations of Scripture, and see whether you are gathering with Christ or scattering abroad. See if your life testifies that you are in the faith.

As you discover your sinfulness, do not be discouraged; for Jesus has invited you to come to him. No humble suppliant was ever spurned from his presence. His patience is unwearied. The waves of mercy, beaten back by hearts hard as rocks, only return with a stronger tide of subduing, inexpressible love. Then shall we not closely examine our own hearts, and see if the soul-temple is not defiled by sins that are unrepented of? Shall we not cease to criticise the faults of others, while the deformity of our own characters is left uncorrected? "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." It will deceive you if you let it, and will lead you to think that you are spiritually much

better than you are.

We are here in a world of doubt and skepticism. The law of God is made void, unbelief seems to be in the very air we breathe; and to resist all these influences, and battle successfully against the powers of darkness, requires strong faith and earnest prayer. But amid all these opposing influences, we may repose in God with perfect confidence. I once read of an eagle that had left her home in the Alps, and clouds dark and heavy intervened between her and her home in the towering cliffs. She seemed bewildered, and with loud screams flew first one way and then another against the overhanging clouds. Suddenly, with a shrill scream of determination, she darted upward through the dense clouds into the clear sky above. The clouds were beneath her, and she was again in her mountain home. And so may we rise above the clouds of skepticism, and dwell in the clear sunshine of God's presence.

We should search the Scriptures daily; for the word of God is our unerring guide. We must not, for the sake of worldly advantage, place ourselves under wrong influences; for by so doing we are entering into temptation. Are we choosing to remain near some central point of evil? Then let us test our motives thoroughly, lest Satan obtain advantage over us. If this is our post of duty, and we are letting our light shine, we may be safe; for when temptation meets us in the path of duty, it is our privilege to lean more heavily upon God.

The Christian has duties to do in the world, and God holds him responsible for their faithful performance. He is not to confine himself in monastic walls, nor to avoid all association with worldlings. It is true that his principles will be put to the severest test, and he will be pained by what his eyes see and his ears hear. But he must not, by becoming familiar with these sights and sounds, learn to love them. By association with the world, we incline to catch the spirit of the world, and to adopt their customs, tastes, and preferences. But we are commanded, "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." Never let the world say that worldlings and Christ's followers are alike in their tastes and pursuits; for God has drawn a line between his people and the world. This line of demarkation is broad and deep and clear; it is not so blended with the world that it is not discernible. "The Lord knoweth them that are his." "By their fruits ye shall know them."

It is only by watching unto prayer, and the exercise of living faith, that the Christian can preserve his integrity in the midst of the temptations that Satan brings to bear upon him. But "whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Talk to your heart constantly the language of faith: "Jesus said he would receive me, and I believe his word. I will praise him; I will glorify his name." Satan will be close by your side to suggest that you do not feel any joy. Answer him, "'This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.' I have everything to be glad of; for I am a child of God. I am trusting in Jesus. The law of God is in my heart; none of my steps shall slide."

May 22, 1884

Faith the Christian's Victory

These are precious opportunities that we are enjoying. Jesus is present with us today; for he has promised, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." His presence insures a blessing; but blessings do not always consist in a happy flight of feeling. The greatest blessing we can have is a correct knowledge of ourselves, that we may see our defects of character, and by divine grace remedy them.

We can never graduate in the school of Christ, but we should make continual advancement. We should never be satisfied with our present position and attainments. Like the apostle, we should "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," and day by day grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. Are we doing this? Are we nearer to God today than we were a year ago? What a change there would be in our religious experience, what a transformation in our characters, if day by day we carried out the principle that we are not our own, but that our time and talents belong to God, and every faculty should be used to do his will and advance his glory. If we spent all our spare moments in work for the Redeemer, in searching the Scriptures, and in pleading with God to be imbued with his Spirit, what precious victories we should gain for Jesus!

We should study the Bible more that we may become familiar with the promises of God; then when Satan comes in, flooding the soul with his temptations, as he surely will, we may meet him with, "It is written." We may be shut in by the promises of God, which will be as a wall of fire about us. We want to know how to exercise faith. Faith "is the gift of God," but the power to exercise it is ours. If faith lies dormant, it is no advantage to us; but in exercise, it holds all blessings in its grasp. It is the hand by which the soul takes hold of the strength of the Infinite. It is the medium by which human hearts, renewed by the grace of Christ, are made to beat in harmony with the great Heart of love. Faith plants itself on the promises of God, and claims them as surety that he will do just as he said he would. Jesus comes to the sinful, helpless, needy soul, and says, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Believe; claim the promises, and praise God that you do

receive the things you have asked of him, and when your need is greatest, you will experience his blessing and receive special help.

Many know so little of faith that when they have asked God for his help and blessing, they look to themselves to see if their prayer is answered; and if they have a happy flight of feeling, they are satisfied. This is not faith, but unbelief. We should trust God, whether we experience any change of feeling or not. We cannot expect to be very joyful and hopeful while we look to ourselves; for we must think of self as sinful. A large class of the professed Christian world are watching their feelings; but feeling is an unsafe guide, and those who depend upon it are in danger of imbibing heresy. Satan can move upon our feelings, and he can so arrange surrounding circumstances as to make our feelings changeable. Victory in God is not feeling, but faith. It is the faith that will not yield although there are seeming impossibilities to be encountered.

If I were to promise one of you a book tomorrow morning, what kind of respect would you show me if you were to respond by saying, "I wish I could believe you; but I will not believe until I have the book in my hand. When I get the book, I will believe." Would that be trusting my word? Oh, no! When you have the book in your possession, it is sight, and not faith at all. But this is just the way we treat our heavenly Father. We insult and dishonor him by our distrust, and are kept at a distance from him, and deprived of the rich blessings within our reach, by our wicked unbelief and ingratitude. We may have daily victories; but we lose the most precious gifts that Heaven can bestow because we will not take God at his word. When I am sick and afflicted, and ask for help, I do not sit in my room and wait for this help to come to me. I go forward in the path of humble obedience, expecting the Lord to answer my prayers, and sustain and bless me in doing the work that duty requires. Although all may seem dark, I place myself in the channel of light. What have I to do with feelings of darkness and discouragement? What have I to be troubled about? Faith can penetrate the darkest cloud. God has promised, and he will not fail me. It is no difficult, mysterious problem to believe. We take Jesus at his word; we come to him with all our burdens and our soul needs, and, according to his promise, find in him a helper and a strong deliverer.

There is a deep, rich, and full experience for us individually to gain. We shall every one of us be tested and tried. We have a rough pathway before us; but Jesus has traveled this way, and he knows just how to help us. Faith lightens our burdens and relieves our weariness by the anticipation of Heaven at our journey's end. Faith rejoices

in hope, and is patient in affliction. Faith waxes strong and valiant in conflict, and conquers in the great fight of temptation. We must have a living faith,--a faith that will hold the soul in the hour of trial; for everything that can be shaken will be. In summer there is no noticeable difference between evergreens and other trees; but when the blasts of winter come, the evergreens are fresh and green, while other trees are stripped of their foliage. Just so it is with professed Christians. When no particular test is brought to bear upon them, we may not be able to distinguish between the true Christian and the hypocrite; but in times of trial and temptation the difference is easily discerned, for the source of the Christian's strength is made manifest. There are two classes of builders. One class are building on a foundation of sliding sand; the other, on the eternal Rock, and the winds blow and the tempests beat against this foundation in vain.

The inquiry in many hearts is, How shall I find happiness? We are not to make it our object to live for happiness, but we shall surely find it in the path of humble obedience. Paul was happy. He affirms repeatedly that notwithstanding the sufferings, conflicts, and trials that he was called to bear, he enjoyed great consolation. He says, "I am filled with comfort; I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation." All the energies of the chiefest of the apostles were bent to a preparation for the future, immortal life; and when the time of his departure was at hand, he could exclaim in holy triumph, "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 the shout of victory of this warrior of faith has come sounding down the ages to our time.

It is one thing to profess the truth, but it is a very different thing to live it out. Many who profess to be keeping the commandments of God are deceiving their own souls. They have no union with Christ, and do not make the truth practical. In their homes, selfishness is interwoven with their daily life. There is manifested a want of refinement, an uncourteous, unkind selfishness. The religion of Jesus should be carried into the home circle, the work-shop, and all the business transactions. The genuine Christian will show in his life the fruits of the Spirit. The love of Jesus will flow out naturally in words and deeds of kindness. Those who yield themselves to the heavenly power, which alone can quell tumultuous passion, will be as angels of peace and blessing in the home circle.

Has the truth sanctified the receiver? Is he purer, nobler, better, for believing it?

The words and deeds are the fruit which testifies whether the mind of God dwells in us, and we are guided by his law. We shall surely deceive ourselves if we think that because we hold certain Bible doctrines firmly, we actually possess the blessings which these doctrines were designed to bestow. The intellect may accept truth in its noblest form; but if this truth exerts no influence on the life and character, it is of no practical value. On the contrary, it proves a delusion if it quiets the conscience while it does not sanctify the soul. A theory of truth may be a beautiful covering to hide the deformity of a carnal heart. This was the sin of Chorazin and Bethsaida, which called forth the denunciation of Christ: "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes."

Jesus is coming. Great and important events are just before us. Are we ready, waiting and watching? Have we on the wedding garment, the robe of Christ's righteousness? Now is the time to secure this wedding garment. We must make no delay, but open the door of our hearts to the Saviour, who has long stood knocking for admittance. We must be in sympathy with Christ, and, as soldiers of the cross, make personal, interested efforts for the salvation of souls. What a privilege is ours that we may become co-laborers with Christ, and that our efforts may be accepted of God. We may join the conquering army if we will, and may share in its conflicts and its triumphs; but if we refuse, they will move on to final victory, and leave us behind. We each have an account to render at the bar of God, and it is essential for us to cultivate spiritually, to think often of Jesus, and to keep faith alive. Let us ever remember that God sees us. We may say with the psalmist, "I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." The whole life should be moulded after the divine Pattern, and then we shall see the King in his beauty, and live in his presence through the ceaseless ages of eternity.

May 29, 1884

The Christian's Hope

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

This world is a training-school, and the great object of life should be to obtain a fitness for those glorious mansions that Jesus has gone to prepare. Let us remember that this work of preparation is an individual work. We are not saved in groups. The purity and devotion of one will not offset the want of these qualities in another. Each case must bear individual inspection. Each of us must be tested, and found without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

We are living in the great antitypical day of atonement. Jesus is now in the heavenly sanctuary, making reconciliation for the sins of his people, and the judgment of the righteous dead has been going on almost forty years. How soon the cases of the living will come in review before this tribunal we know not; but we do know that we are living in the closing scenes of earth's history, standing, as it were, on the very borders of the eternal world. It is important that each of us inquire, How stands my case in the courts of Heaven? Will my sins be blotted out? Am I defective in character, and so blinded to these defects by the customs and opinions of the world, that sin does not appear to me to be as exceedingly offensive to God as it really is? It is no time now to allow our minds to be absorbed with the things of earth, while we give only occasional thoughts to God, and make but slight preparation for the country to which we are journeying.

In the typical day of atonement, every man was required to afflict his soul before God. He was not to afflict the souls of others, but the work was between God and his own soul. The same work of self-examination and humiliation is required of each of us now; and I entreat you to make thorough work for eternity. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near." Precious, golden moments which should be spent in seeking the inward adorning of a meek and quiet spirit, are frittered

away in adorning the dress, and in other trifling matters not at all essential to comfort.

We should choose the society most favorable to our spiritual advancement, and avail ourselves of every help within our reach; for Satan will oppose many hindrances to make our progress toward Heaven as difficult as possible. We may be placed in trying positions, for many cannot have their surroundings what they would; but we should not voluntarily expose ourselves to influences that are unfavorable to the formation of Christian character. When duty calls us to do this, we should be doubly watchful and prayerful, that, through the grace of Christ, we may stand uncorrupted. Lot chose Sodom as a place of residence, because he looked more to the temporal advantages he would gain than to the moral influences that would surround himself and his family. What did he gain so far as the things of this world are concerned? His possessions were destroyed, part of his children perished in the destruction of that wicked city, his wife was turned to a pillar of salt by the way, and he himself was saved so as by fire. Nor did the evil results of his selfish choice end here; but the moral corruption of the place was so interwoven with the character of his children that they could not distinguish between good and evil, sin and righteousness.

It will not answer to follow our own judgment and inclination in choosing our surroundings. We should seek counsel of God, and let him lead. We drive holy angels from our homes, and displease God, when we place ourselves and families in an atmosphere of unbelief. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate," is his command; and he will not alter his word to suit the convenience of any. Many fail to realize that their physical and mental powers are not their own, to be devoted exclusively to their selfish interest in the accumulation of property. They place themselves in positions favorable for worldly gain, and as a consequence amass wealth; but it is at the expense of their eternal interests. Had they exercised true wisdom, they would have gained less earthly substance, but made sure of a title to the immortal inheritance. Like Lot, they may be stripped of their earthly treasure, and barely save their own souls. Their life-work is lost; their lives are a miserable failure. They are not rich toward God. They have not laid up treasure in the bank of Heaven. Instead, they have laid up treasure on earth, just the thing that Jesus warned them not to do; and their heart is on their treasure, just as he told them it would be. Let us be willing to become pilgrims and strangers here, that we may gain a better country, even a heavenly.

The way of the cross is an onward, upward path. As you advance, seeking the

things that are above, you will necessarily leave in the distance the things that belong to the world. The conduct and disposition must be in harmony with God's requirements. We can reach this standard; for he would not enjoin upon us an impossible task. When tempted to speak harshly or impatiently, resist the suggestion of the adversary. Do not gratify him by speaking his words, or manifesting the spirit which pleases him. The truth that commends itself to your conscience will consume and destroy, or it will sanctify and transform the soul. The word of God is our guide and counselor. We must have it in our heart; for the heart is the mainspring of action. By becoming familiar with the words of life, we shall be able to use them skillfully in our warfare against Satan. While the hands are engaged in labor, the soul may receive rich comfort from the promises of God.

"Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price." Your physical and mental powers belong to God, and should be used in his service. There are souls to save; there is earnest work to be done for the Master; and half-hearted, indolent efforts will not be accepted. As faithful servants, we should inquire, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Send me any way, with any message of mercy thou shalt choose." No longer rob God of the service that belongs to him, but yield your powers to be controlled by his spirit. You need the transforming grace of Christ; you need his fashioning hand laid upon you, that your wills, and even your thoughts, may be brought into subjection to the will of God.

We must learn to pray without ceasing. Wherever we are, our thoughts may be a prayer to God. Nehemiah, standing before the idolatrous king, was of a sad countenance as he thought of the city of his fathers' sepulchers lying waste. And when the king, learning the cause of his sadness, asked him, "For what dost thou make request?" he did not venture to reply until he had first darted a petition to the living God, the God of wisdom and grace. Nehemiah felt that he had a sacred trust to fulfill which required help from the king, and everything depended upon addressing him in a right manner and striking the right chord. In that brief prayer, Nehemiah pressed into the presence of the King of kings, and enlisted on his side a power that can turn hearts as the rivers of water are turned. And he says, "The king granted me according to the good hand of my God upon me." The Lord moved upon the heart of the king, and Nehemiah received greater favors than he had dared to hope for.

Nehemiah could not thus readily have found access to God, had he not been accustomed to prayer, and to dependence upon divine strength. We have the same

source of help. In the affairs of daily life, in business transactions, and when brought into unexpected difficulties, we too may telegraph our silent petitions to the God of Heaven, and receive aid. All Heaven is interested in our welfare; every provision has been made for us to gain strength. We have everything to make us thankful and glad. Then let us not talk of our weakness and discouragements, but build one another up by our words of courage and faith.

We are living in an important and eventful age. We are almost home. Soon the many mansions that our Saviour has gone to prepare, will burst upon our sight. Let us shake off the stupor that oppresses us. Let us study the Bible more, that we may know for ourselves the great landmarks we are passing. We need deeper draughts from the well of Bethlehem, that we may refresh our own souls and refresh others. We should be more earnest and persevering to save those with whom we associate. This work rests not alone upon ministers; every one who has named the name of Christ should be a co-laborer with him. Why do we not show the unconverted that we love them? Why do not our tongues speak in words of affectionate entreaty to win them to Christ? Why do we not oftener speak words of praise and gratitude to God for the rich and abundant promises he has left on record in his word? We may now have in our hearts joy and peace that is unspeakable and full of glory; and soon, at the coming of Christ, the prize that lies at the end of the Christian race will be ours to enjoy throughout ceaseless ages.

June 5, 1884

Importance of Cherishing Light

Jesus said to his disciples: "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it."

In this text is shown the difference between the doers of Christ's word and those who are merely idle hearers. Jesus taught by symbols. He illustrated his lessons by familiar objects in nature, that whenever his hearers should see these objects, the lesson might be suggested to their minds. The lily of the valley, the grass of the field, the springing grain, the singing birds, and even the homely scenes in a fisherman's life, became silent but impressive preachers of the word of life. A high standard was kept before the disciples. They were taught that a pure faith would purify and ennoble them; and that unless their righteousness should exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, they should in no case enter the kingdom of Heaven.

Peter, John and Judas are representative men, types of two classes of hearers. They each had the privilege of associating with Christ and learning of him; but how different were the characters they developed! Peter and John were doers of the word, and their lives were molded by the instructions of the Master. Judas also heard his teachings on the very points where he was deficient. The leading traits in the character of Judas were covetousness and self-esteem. Jesus knew of his dishonest practices, and understood the danger to which he was exposed; yet notwithstanding his defects, he was chosen as one of the twelve who were to be intimately associated with the world's Redeemer. Jesus would give this erring one every opportunity to reform. The light should shine upon his heart; he should see the contrast between truth and error, and decide intelligently between them. Jesus did not openly rebuke him, but gave lessons that he might apply to his own case if he sincerely wished to reform. Selfishness, covetousness, and dishonesty were presented in their true character, so that he could see

how offensive these traits were in the sight of God.

When the teachings of Christ reproved Peter and John, they were careful to reform. The transforming grace of God was in their hearts. Their minds expanded, and day by day they grew more like the divine Teacher. Judas, on the contrary, was proud, self-sufficient, and independent. Although enjoying the exalted privilege of being closely connected with Christ, the words of life found no lodgment in his heart; and he went on from one degree of unbelief to another until his character was firmly fixed in the wrong direction. He might have had the wisdom that comes from above to guide him into all truth; but he rejected the counsel of God, and the evil he had cherished gained an overmastering influence, bringing soul and body into subjection to the cruel power of Satan.

Judas had excellent traits of character, and might have been a great blessing to the church had he been steadfast, and resisted temptation; but he was treasurer, and this position gave him an opportunity to practice dishonesty. Had he been humble and teachable, he would have set about the work of reform when his conscience was awakened, and he saw the sinfulness of his course. But he sinned against light and knowledge; and instead of being softened and subdued by the lessons of Christ, his heart became harder and more unimpressible.

We may learn an important lesson from the experience of Judas. We may be called disciples of Christ; we may hold our religious convictions firmly, and be able to present clear, connected arguments in their support; and yet, like Judas, we may hold the truth in unrighteousness. If we would be sanctified through the truth, we must hold it in the love and fear of God. It is a duty we owe to ourselves to cultivate self-reliance and independence of character; but these traits must be blended with meekness and humility. When we trust to our own wisdom and judgment, as a large number do, we are in the sure path to shame and confusion of face. It is only through divine grace that we can overcome the defects in our character; but unless we make continued efforts to subdue them, they will become stronger, as in the case of Judas. Every indulgence in sin prepares the way for renewed and excessive indulgence, until at last the tempter has full control of the mind.

After God has shown individuals their sins and given them grace to overcome, and his Spirit has been long striving with them, he will not work a miracle to prevent

the sure result of resisting that Spirit and persisting in a wrong course. There is a boundary to his grace and mercy; and when this boundary is passed, the aid of his Spirit, so wickedly refused and insulted, is withdrawn, and the soul is given over to the worst of tyrants,--the power of a perverted will. If we are closely connected with sacred things, and yet do not realize their importance, the heart will become so hard that the most earnest appeals will not move it to contrition. We must cherish every ray of light. We must work intelligently to form our characters after the divine model, continually striving, with all the powers God has given us, to reach the high standard set before us in his word.

Testimonies are borne in these meetings that the truth is precious, the truth is everything. So it is; but the truth is nothing to any of us unless we are sanctified through it. Has its influence made you better men and women? Has it improved your life and character? Unless the truth is accomplishing the object for which it is designed in transforming you into the image of Christ, it were better if you had never professed to believe it; for you will mislead others. The salvation of our own souls and the souls of those with whom we associate is of the first importance, while the things of this life are secondary; but Satan is ever scheming to reverse this order, and interpose the world between the soul and its eternal interests.

Many do not exalt the truth, but degrade it by their unchristian course. They neglect to improve the privilege given them to become acquainted with Christ and his love. This knowledge is a sure defense; but whatever tends to draw the mind from the love of Jesus, whether it be the deceitful heart within or an ensnaring world without, is of Satan, and will bring darkness and death.

Some who are present this morning must know that they have uncorrected faults which they are excusing and cherishing. Dear brethren and sisters, you cannot have a more favorable time to confess these faults one to another and pray one for another, than in this meeting. Jesus is present; but evil angels are here also to preoccupy the field. They will endeavor to gain an entrance to the heart by suggesting doubts, so that no permanent good impressions shall be made. Shall we allow them to have the victory? We see how it was with Judas. One neglect to heed the words of Christ prepared the way for another. The first neglect was a seed which produced its harvest in resistance to the Spirit of God; and with each admonition that he slighted, he became less inclined to appreciate and cherish the lessons that gave him a knowledge of himself.

God sends messages of instruction, of reproof, of warning. Do not flatter yourself that he does not denounce the particular sins that you love. Do not imagine that by some means you can enter into life without being free from moral pollution. If we would live with Jesus in the mansions that he has gone to prepare, we must be like him here in this world. We must be diligent to set our hearts in order. Let us greatly fear self-deception. Let us cover up nothing, but be true to our own souls. Let us study to have the meekness and humility of Christ. An opportunity is now afforded us to become pure in heart and spotless in character. Though the enemy presses in his temptations, coming in upon us like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him. We may find a present help in Jesus; but we must seek this help through earnest, persevering prayer. In the closet, in the family circle, as we walk the streets, and while our hands engage in labor, we may pray, and the Lord will hear us.

There is no excuse for continuing in sin. No man is obliged to do evil, and be lost. Every one who perishes destroys his own soul. The provisions of grace are ample. Jesus is pleading in our behalf, and there is mercy for even the most guilty and sinful. Let us take hold of the strength of Jesus. He loves us with a love that is inexpressible; let us respond to that love.

June 12, 1884

Value of Cheerful Service

"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end; that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

The Lord looks with approval upon the works of his faithful servants. He says of the church of Ephesus, "I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience;" for my name's sake thou "hast labored, and hast not fainted." But while he takes account of faithful service, he is no less exact to mark neglect of duty or its unwilling performance. It has always been the duty of God's chosen people to labor unselfishly; but some neglect the work they ought to do, and others are overburdened to make up for their deficiencies. If all would cheerfully do their part, they would be sustained; but those who complain and murmur at every step will receive neither help nor reward.

God was displeased with the children of Israel because they murmured against him, and against Moses, whom he had sent to be their deliverer. In a marvelous manner he brought them out from their bondage in the land of Egypt, that he might elevate and ennoble them, and make them a praise in the earth. But there were difficulties to be encountered, and weariness and privations to be endured. It was necessary for them to bear these hardships. God was bringing them from a state of degradation, and fitting them to occupy an honorable place among the nations, and to receive important and sacred trusts.

They did not consider that they were receiving everything that was of value. They forgot their bitter service in Egypt. They forgot the goodness and power of God displayed in their behalf in their deliverance from bondage. They forgot how their children were spared when the destroying angel passed over Egypt. They forgot the grand exhibition of divine power at the Red Sea, when Jehovah proclaimed, "Here shall thy proud waves be stayed," and the waters were rolled together, forming a solid wall. They forgot that while they had crossed safely in the path that had been opened for

them, the armies of their enemies, attempting to follow them, were overwhelmed by the waters of the sea. They only saw and felt their present inconveniences and trials; and instead of saying, "God has done great things for us; whereas we were slaves, he is making of us a great nation," they talked of the hardness of the way, and wondered when their weary pilgrimage would end.

We are exhorted not to murmur as they murmured. But many whom God has permitted to become co-laborers with him, perhaps has even exalted to high positions of trust, forget that he is specially honoring them. They are weary, and they make themselves miserable by letting their minds constantly dwell upon their weariness. They torment themselves with fears, forebodings, morbid fancies, and borrowed troubles; and, forgetting the goodness and mercy of God, they pass many sad hours complaining of the trials they have to bear. They become so gloomy that no circumstances, however favorable, can make them happy, for the spirit of happiness is not in them.

God does not bind upon any one burdens so heavy that at every step he must complain of the load he is obliged to bear. It is the friction, and not the constant motion that wears the machinery. It is the continual worry, and not the work they do, that is killing these persons. They covet some blessing, either real or imaginary, which is just beyond their reach; but if they were to gain this cherished object, it would only excite a desire for something else. The present is clouded because they under-value the good that they enjoy. They look away from the honors they possess that they have not earned, and the love that they have not merited, and want to stand a little higher. They cherish the disagreeable, and by their thoughts and conversation, excite a nervous irritability which lies at the foundation of a diseased imagination and real suffering. God does not propose to work a miracle for this class. He is not pleased or glorified when his sons and daughters, members of the royal family, take this course; for they neither enjoy rest and peace in his love themselves nor permit others to do so.

Let none of us think that our work is greater and more taxing than any others are doing. This same work has been done in the past, and can be done again. God is not dependent on any of us; and as soon as we flatter ourselves that his work will not move forward without us, that our labor is of such consequence that it cannot be dispensed with, then he will show us our mistake and folly. He can work by few or by many. He can take men in humble positions, and educate them to become light-bearers in the world. Let us who are honored of God by having a connection with his work, feel our

own littleness, and the great honor the Lord bestows upon us in accepting us as his co-laborers. "When one asked a noted philosopher what the great God was doing, he replied, 'His whole employment is to lift up the humble, and to cast down the proud.'"

Sometimes the spirit of fretting and complaining invades the domestic circle. The will may be crossed in little things which a person of a cheerful spirit would scarcely notice; but the fretter is annoyed and chafed as though he had suffered an aggravated grievance, and the passionate reproaches he utters against the person, who, he thinks, has committed some blunder, are scarcely less sinful than swearing. He does not consider that he makes more grievous mistakes every day. Men and women who fret and chafe will lose the affections of their friends, for they are forever stinging some one. Whatever their position, however exalted their profession, they can have no decided influence for good until they remedy this defect. They have complained long enough to test the matter, and prove that complaints do not make them any happier or their way any easier.

The complainer dwells in an atmosphere of gloom and doubt. Instead of healing difficulties, he irritates them; instead of repairing evils, he creates them. Those who have tact in governing their families or controlling the minds of men, are generally calm, prompt, resolute. They show no weak selfishness; but they have a strong, uncomplaining spirit, and are always ready to speak a kind, encouraging word.

Wherever in the providence of God we may be placed, whatever the work that is given us to do, God is honored by whole-hearted, cheerful service. He is pleased when we take up our work with gratitude, rejoicing that he has accounted us worthy to be co-laborers with him. None need be idlers; for all around us there is earnest work to be done. The Christian rule of service is, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." God will help those who are "not slothful in business," but "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;" and through faith and patience they will "inherit the promises."

There is peace and contentment in the service of Christ. As he was about to leave his disciples, he made them this parting promise,--a promise that has been fulfilled to his faithful ones through all the ages,--"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth give I unto you." He invites, "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." It is the

want of this meekness and lowliness of heart that causes so much unrest and uneasiness, so much perplexity and fear, so many imaginary ills.

Make it a rule to refrain from fretting, and offer praise to God. We are not obliged to carry our burdens in our own strength. If we have Jesus for our helper, we may say with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." Jesus has promised, "My grace is sufficient for you." There is a transforming power in love. When the love of God rules in the heart, it brings all our powers into obedience to his will, and enlists them in willing, active service.

June 19, 1884

Faith the Christian's Privilege

Many who are sincerely seeking for holiness of heart and purity of life are perplexed and discouraged. They are constantly looking to themselves, and lamenting their lack of faith; and because of this lack, they feel that they cannot claim the blessing of God. These persons mistake feeling for faith. They look away from the simplicity of true faith, and thus bring great darkness upon their souls. Instead of thinking of self, they should train their minds to dwell upon the mercy and goodness of God. They should recount his promises, believing that he will fulfill his word. 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.

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 him. We may not feel today the peace and joy which we felt yesterday; but by faith we should grasp the hand of Christ, and trust him as fully in the darkness as in the light. No effort should be made to rein the mind up to an intensity of emotion; but we should faithfully perform every duty, and then calmly rest in the promises of God.

Satan may whisper, "You are too great a sinner for Christ to save." But while you acknowledge that you are sinful and unworthy, meet the tempter with the cry, "By virtue of the atonement I claim Jesus as my Saviour. I trust not to my own merits, but to the precious blood of Christ, which cleanses me. This moment I hang my helpless soul on him."

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 grace to overcome your special faults, to put away every darling sin.

If we would permit our minds to dwell more upon Christ and the heavenly world, we should find a powerful stimulus and support in our warfare against sin. By faith we may look upon the crowns laid up for those who shall overcome; we may listen to the

exultant song of the redeemed: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power;" "for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Pride and love of the world will lose their power as we contemplate the infinite love of Christ, and the glories of that better land so soon to be our home.

An unyielding trust, a firm reliance upon Christ, will bring peace and joy to the soul. But let none imagine that without earnest effort on their part they can retain 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 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 character of Christ should be often the subject of our thoughts and our conversation; and each day some time should be especially devoted to prayerful meditation upon these sacred themes.

Let none deceive themselves with the belief that God will accept and bless them while they are trampling upon one of his requirements. The willful commission of a known sin silences the witnessing voice of the Spirit, and separates the soul from God. Jesus cannot abide in the heart that disregards the divine law. God will honor those only who honor him.

"To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are." 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; but he will keep up a constant warfare against it. 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."

The Christian life must be a life of constant progression. Peter sets before us the successive steps, in these words: "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 these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus." "Wherefore the rather,

brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; 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. Says Peter, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord."

Our Saviour claims all there is of us; he asks our first and holiest thoughts, our purest and most intense affection. His love is infinitely more tender and self-denying than a mother's love. The price paid for our ransom testifies to his estimation of the value of the human soul. Then what ingratitude do we manifest when we withhold from him our affections and our service. Is it too much to give ourselves, our time and talents, 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"?

The apostle Paul was highly honored of God; in holy vision he looked upon scenes whose glories he was not permitted to reveal. Yet this did not lead him to boastfulness or self-confidence. He realized the importance of constant watchfulness and self-denial. "I keep my body under," he says, "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 complaint from his lips. As he reviews his life of toil and care and sacrifice, he says, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which 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 field, and momentarily expecting to be condemned to death, 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: "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."

The glorious reward that awaits this hero of faith,--a crown of righteousness, and eternal life in the presence of God,--may be won by each of us. Jesus and holy angels are waiting to give us the help we need. Every prayer sent up in faith from an honest heart will be heard, and the petitioner will have his request when he needs the blessing most. Sometimes we ask for things that are not for our own good or the glory of God. When this is so, our wise and good Father hears our prayers, but gives us nothing hurtful. He will guide our feet. 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.

June 26, 1884

Palm-Tree Christians

"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree." "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

These texts describe the happy state of him whose soul is rooted and grounded in Christ. But there is always danger of being satisfied with a superficial work; there is always danger that souls will not anchor themselves in God, but be content to drift hither and thither, the sport of Satan's temptations. "Enter ye in at the strait gate," says Christ, "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, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." The work of the Spirit of God in the heart will develop true penitence, which will not end with confession, but will work a decided reformation in the daily life. There will be manifested an earnestness, a perseverance, and a determination that can be properly represented by agonizing. Many professed Christians greatly need just this experience.

Are you beginning to see the defects in your character? Do not feel helpless and discouraged. Look to Jesus, who knows your every weakness and pities your every infirmity. He came "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." It is no disgrace to confess our sins and forsake them. The disgrace rests upon those who know their sins, but continue in them, and grieve the dear Saviour by their crooked paths. A knowledge of our wrongs should be more highly prized than a happy flight of feeling; for it is evidence that the Spirit of God is striving with us and that angels are round about us. Let the heart-searching work go forward; let it be deep and earnest, until every barrier is removed, and your heart is opened to welcome the messenger of pardon and peace, that has long been waiting to bring light and joy and gladness. In true contrition for sin, come to the foot of the cross, and there leave your burdens; come exercising repentance toward God because you have broken his law, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ to pardon your transgressions and reconcile you to the Father. Believe what God says; take his promises to your heart.

It is Christian's privilege to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree." See the weary traveler toiling over the hot sands of the desert, with no shelter to protect him from the rays of a tropical sun. His water supply fails, and he has nothing to slake his burning thirst. His tongue becomes swollen; he staggers like a drunken man. Visions of home and friends pass before his mind, as he believes himself ready to perish in the terrible desert. Suddenly those in advance send forth a shout of joy. In the distance, looming up out of the dreary, sandy waste, is a palm tree, green and flourishing. Hope quickens his pulses. That which gives vigor and freshness to the palm tree, will cool the fevered pulses, and give life to those who are perishing with thirst.

As the palm tree, drawing nourishment from fountains of living water, is green and flourishing in the midst of the desert, so the Christian may draw rich supplies of grace from the fountain of God's love, and may guide weary souls, that are full of unrest and ready to perish in the desert of sin, to those waters of which they may drink, and live. The Christian is ever pointing his fellow-men to Jesus, who invites, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." This fountain never fails us; we may draw, and draw again.

We may individually have an experience of the greatest value. The fact that iniquity abounds, that we are surrounded by infidels and skeptics, or by professed Christians who have a name to live, and are dead, is no reason why one of us should be swept away by the current toward perdition. Because there is an almost universal forsaking of God, there is the greater need that we stand firm and loyal. Says Christ, "Ye are the light of the world." We must gather the divine rays from the Sun of Righteousness, and reflect them to the world. In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, we must show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Nothing but a deep personal experience will enable us to stand the test of the trials and temptations we shall meet in the Christian warfare. Too often we feel well when everything goes smoothly; but when doubts assail the soul, and Satan whispers his suggestions, our defense is gone, and we yield quickly to the arts of the tempter, with scarcely an effort to resist and repulse him. It is not enough to have good impulses. The soul must be barricaded by prayer and study of the Scriptures. Armed with these weapons, Jesus encountered our wily foe on the field of battle, and overcame him. We

may all conquer in his strength; but it will not answer for us to suppose that we can dispense with his help. He says, "Without me ye can do nothing." But no truly humble soul who walks in the light as Christ is in the light, will be ensnared by Satan's deceptive devices.

All self-confidence, all boasting, all pride of talent, must be yielded, and the soul must fall broken on the Rock Christ Jesus. Those who have a proud spirit, and feel that they are capable of doing a great work, will be left to their own weak strength, to fall into grievous sins. They do not realize what a pure, virtuous, and holy character they must possess if they would stand without fault before the throne of God. Self must be crucified. There must be a thorough transformation of character. The clear, sharp testimony of living truth will separate the wheat from the chaff, the half-hearted from the humble and devoted.

There never was a time of greater danger to the church than the present, and many will not be true to their own souls. They will not be sanctified through the truth. They have lamps, but no oil in their vessels to replenish them, and their light goes out in darkness. Eli and his sons trusted to the ark, the symbol of the divine presence, while they were transgressing the holy law enshrined in the ark, and their sins were separating them from God. As a consequence of their presumption, both the sons of Eli were slain, and God permitted the ark to pass into the hands of the enemies of his people. Some in our day are making a similar mistake in trusting to their profession while they are transgressing the holy requirements of God's law. Such are asleep to their true condition.

The apostle Paul exhorts careless and unconcerned professors: "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Christ, the True Witness, would break the slumbers of his ease-loving people. His voice is heard addressing them: "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." I will not take your names into my lips, for you are unworthy. I am ashamed to call you brethren. "Be zealous therefore, and repent." "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."

Our only safety is in Christ. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid,

which is Jesus Christ." Those who enter Heaven will not scale its walls by their own righteousness, nor will the gates be opened to them for costly offerings of gold and silver; but they will gain an entrance to the many mansions of the Father's house through the merits of the cross of Christ. Jesus is the ladder by which every soul must mount who would climb from earth to Heaven. But there is round after round of painful ascent; for our characters must be brought into harmony with the law of God, and every advance step in this direction requires self-denial.

The prize before us will amply repay every effort that we make to gain it. "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." "As the days of a tree," says the Lord through his prophet, shall be "the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." As by an eye of faith we view the glories of that better land, the saints' everlasting inheritance, we rejoice, clinging to the merits of our crucified Redeemer. Love kindles in our hearts toward Him "who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all," and faith grasps the promise, "How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Thus Jesus becomes the medium of communication between Heaven and our souls, and holy angels are sent to minister unto us. And while these divine messengers are striving to lead sinners to plant their feet on the ladder that extends from earth to Heaven, let us be co-laborer's with them, and urge all who will to climb the shining way.

July 3, 1884

Business and Religion

"Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," is the exhortation of Paul to his Roman brethren. The first part of this injunction is quoted by many as an excuse for continually overtaxing their mental and physical powers in the pursuit of gain, while they entirely overlook the requirement to be "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

No one has a right to load himself down with a multitude of cares. However lawful the business prosecuted may be of itself, however honorably it may be conducted, it must not be allowed to unduly absorb the mind and occupy the time. God will not accept a divided heart. His law requires supreme love to God, and unselfish love to our neighbor. If men and women allow mind and body to be so worn down by constant and excessive labor that this law is disregarded, they commit sin. They are serving other gods before the God of Heaven; for when some other object usurps the devotion that belongs to God, that object becomes an idol; and that to which is given the freshest hours of the day, the closest thought and study, the greatest skill, is that which is dearest and most valued.

There will be temptations to worldliness while society is in its present state,-- while gold is power, and a man is measured by his wealth and position. Many are fascinated by these alluring temptations. They see that the possession of wealth and honor gives power and influence, and they would rather be ranked among those who enjoy the luxury and position that money gives, than among those who possess true goodness and nobility of character.

There are many professed Christians who are selfish and grasping, and who love themselves better than they love God or their neighbor. Often they are even more grasping than those who make no pretensions to godliness. They appear before the world almost entirely in the character of business men, as speculators grasping for worldly gain. They are not known as humble, devoted, self-sacrificing Christians, true-hearted and kind in all the relations of life. The plainest and most positive injunctions of the word of God are deliberately set aside for worldly wisdom and maxims. They say,

"God does not expect us to carry strict religious principles into our business affairs. Business is business, and religion is religion, reserved for the church and the Sabbath."

The man who takes this selfish course denies the faith, and strengthens and confirms the ungodly in their impenitence by making them believe that religion is all a pretense. His soul is laid a manacled victim on the altar of mammon. He does not seek "first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." and he cannot claim the promise that all things needful shall be added unto him.

Gold is not the standard of judging with God. Jesus asks, "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?" Surely this is an exorbitant price to pay for the fleeting treasures of earth. Success here is terrible failure. He who judges correctly in the light of eternity, calls those who are rich in worldly possessions while they are not rich toward God, poor, wretched, blind, and miserable.

Sometimes the family is neglected. Parents do not deal faithfully with the souls committed to their trust. They do not take time to give their little ones the discipline they need to fit them to shine as jewels in the kingdom of God. Morning and evening, by earnest prayer and persevering faith, Christian parents should make a hedge about their children. They should patiently instruct them,--kindly and untiringly teach them how to live in order to please God.

Too often parents feel that they have no time for morning and evening prayer. In the morning the workmen must be hurried into the field, that the greatest amount of labor may be performed, and the service of God is not considered essential. They cannot spare a few minutes to be spent in thanksgiving to God for his abundant mercies,--for the blessed sunshine and the showers of rain, which cause vegetation to flourish, and for the guardianship of holy angels. They have no time to offer importunate prayer for divine help and guidance, and for the abiding presence of Jesus in the household. They go forth to labor as the ox or horse goes, without one thought of God or Heaven. They have souls so precious that rather than permit them to be hopelessly lost, the Son of God gave his life to ransom them from the power of the grave; but they have no more appreciation of his great goodness than have the beasts that perish.

Dear reader, will you not candidly and prayerfully consider how the moments are

passing in your busy life? Remember that God requires your undivided affections, and that it is your duty to love your neighbor as yourself, and to labor unselfishly for his salvation. Your ability, tact, and talent should be employed to induce your fellow-men to enlist in the service of the Redeemer. Reckon up the hours spent in selfish pursuits when they should have been given to better purposes, and see how your account stands in Heaven. Deal honestly and truly with your soul. Have you not long been guilty of robbery toward God,--that God who constantly employs all the agencies of nature to work in your behalf, and who poured out to you all the treasures of Heaven in one gift, that of his own beloved Son?

There is no virtue in indolence. The idle are encompassed by as great perils as beset those that are overtaxed with care. While excessive labor destroys physical and mental vigor, do-nothings rust from inaction. "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," says the apostle. Here we shall find the straight, safe path, which escapes alike the entanglements of worldliness and the evils resulting from want of occupation.

Why will not men and women pursue a sensible course? They need employment, but should not permit themselves to become surfeited or drunken with the cares of this life. To be surfeited is to be in a feverish state, constantly anxious, hurried, unduly excited. The alcoholic draught deprives a man of reason, so that his actions are wild, inconsistent, and unreasonable. The drunkard does not, with calm judgment, act with reference to his own best interest, neither does the man who, drunken with the spirit of the world, barter eternal interests for the things of time.

There are high and holy themes that should engage our attention. We are Christ's property, the purchase of his blood; and he has work for every one of us. All our skill and energy should not be devoted to worldly pursuits, so that we have no vigor, no clear, sharp intellect, to give to his service. The disobedient and ungrateful, who will not respond to his claims, will in no wise be excused because they did not enlist under his banner. It is the duty of all, by a well ordered life and a godly conversation, to present Christ to the world in his true character, as the self-denying, spotless Lamb of God.

Every one has a cherished object of pursuit. The lover of pleasure has an uneasy, restless, unsatisfied desire for enjoyment. He puts God out of his thoughts, and dismisses every duty that is not pleasant. He learns to depend on excitement, and is

uneasy without it. His mind is ever on the stretch to invent new amusements and diversions. He drinks in iniquity, and poisons his soul by his unlawful pursuits.

The covetous man engages with his whole soul in his chosen enterprise. He may make a success of life so far as this world is able to judge. While many fail, perhaps are even beggared, he may amass wealth; but he is more to be pitied than the victims of his avarice, for he has lost his soul in an effort to grasp shadows.

The ambitious man seeks for position, honor, and power. He gains his object, and sinks into the grave. The world applauds him, and calls him a successful man; but, weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, he is pronounced wanting, and it is too late to redeem his failure. He has gratified vanity and chased illusions, and in the books of Heaven eternal loss is put down opposite his name.

Thus all have some engrossing object to absorb the mind, and often this cherished object is allowed to separate the soul from God. Jesus is acquainted with the desires of the human heart, and the Bible is given us to direct them into the proper channel. This holy word does not forbid activity; it does not leave men to lead aimless lives; it presents before them objects worthy of their best efforts. The Bible shows the pleasure-seeker the path of peace and joy; it directs the aspirations of the ambitious. If wealth is the object of desire, it unfolds treasures that will never disappoint,--unsearchable riches, imperishable as the throne of the Eternal.

The psalmist observed the righteous and the wicked. He saw the difference in their course of conduct, and in the principles that governed them. Of the worldling he says, "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree. Yet he passed away, and lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found." But of the righteous he says, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

July 17, 1884

"Walk in the Light"

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Ignorance is no excuse for error or sin, when there is every opportunity to know the will of God. A man is traveling, and comes to a place where there are several roads, and a guide-board indicating where each one leads. If he disregards the guide-board, and takes whichever road seems to him to be right, he may be ever so sincere, but will in all probability find himself on the wrong road.

God's word is given us that we may become acquainted with its teachings. We there read that if we do his will, we shall know of the doctrine. Ignorance will not excuse young or old, or release them from the punishment due for the transgression of God's law, because there is in their hands a faithful presentation of that law and of its principles and its claims. It is not enough to have good intentions; it is not enough to do what a man thinks is right, or what the minister tells him is right. His soul's salvation is at stake, and he should search the Scriptures for himself. However strong may be his convictions, however confident he may be that the minister knows what is truth, this is not his foundation. He has a chart pointing out every waymark on the heavenward journey, and he ought not to guess at anything, but to know what is truth. He should search the Scriptures on bended knees; morning, noon, and night, prayer should ascend from secret places, and a continual prayer should arise from his heart that God will guide him into all truth.

The word of God gives men no liberty to set up a standard of righteousness of their own, as many do who claim to be without sin. They do not compare their characters with the great standard, the law of Jehovah. While they are holy, judged by their own imperfect standard, the Scriptures present them as sinful Pharisees, under the condemnation of the law of God, which they transgress daily. They walk after the imagination of their own heart, and follow their own devices. Yet many of these persons are sincere. They think they are right; for "there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Feeling is no criterion for any one; the assertions of men are no evidence of truth. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

Men present many theories and doctrines, and this is the reason that so many claim to be sinless while they are transgressors of the law. Should they look into God's great mirror, they would start back with horror. They would say with Paul, "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Oh, how many forsake the "Fountain of living waters," and hew them out "cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." This is a correct representation of the spurious holiness so prevalent in the world today. But God's way is the humble way of penitence, faith, and obedience, and no human substitute will be accepted. "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." But all this vain boasting of holiness is not of God.

The Lord declared to ancient Israel, "Ye shall not do every man what is right in his own eyes;" but ye shall "observe and hear all these words which I command thee." And he promised them, "if thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and will give ear to his commandments," he "shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he sware unto thy fathers," and "thou shalt be blessed above all people."

Will you, dear reader, examine critically the reasons of your faith by the law and the testimony? Satan has many by-paths strewn with tempting flowers, that lead directly to the broad way to death and hell. Our only safety is in the path of obedience. Men cannot follow their own desires, and be right. They not only involve their own souls in ruin, but by their example they imperil others also.

God is exact to mark iniquity. Sins of thoughtlessness, negligence, forgetfulness, and even ignorance, have been visited by some of the most wonderfully marked manifestations of his displeasure. Many who have suffered terrible punishment for their sins, might have pleaded as plausibly as do those of today who fall into similar errors, that they meant no harm, and some would even say that they thought they were doing God service; but the light shone on them, and they disregarded it.

Let us look at some of the examples found in sacred history. Assisted by his sons, Aaron had offered the sacrifices that God required; and he lifted up his hands and blessed the people. All had been done as God commanded, and he accepted the

sacrifice, and revealed his glory in a most remarkable manner; for fire came from the Lord, and consumed the offering upon the altar. The people looked upon this wonderful manifestation of divine power with awe and intense interest. They saw in it a token of his glory and his favor, and they raised a universal shout of praise and adoration, and fell on their faces, as if in the immediate presence of Jehovah.

As the prayers and praise of the people were ascending before God, two of the sons of Aaron took each his censer, and burned fragrant incense thereon, to arise as a sweet odor before God. But they had partaken too freely of wine, and used strange fire, contrary to the Lord's commandment. And the wrath of God was kindled against Nadab and Abihu for their disobedience, and a fire went out from the Lord, and devoured them in the sight of the people. By this judgment God designed to teach the people that they must approach him with reverence and awe, and in his own appointed manner. He is not pleased with partial obedience. It was not enough that in this solemn season of worship nearly everything was done as he commanded.

The Lord sent Samuel to King Saul with a special message. "Go," he said, "and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." Saul was faithful and zealous in performing a part of his commission. He smote the Amalekites with a great slaughter; but he took the proposition of the people before the command of God, and spared Agag, the king, and "the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good."

The Lord commanded Saul to "utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed." The Lord knew that this wicked nation would, if it were possible, blot out his people and his worship from the earth; and for this reason he had commanded that even the little children should be cut off. But Saul had spared the king, the most wicked and merciless of them all; one who had hated and destroyed the people of God, and whose influence had been strongest to promote idolatry.

Saul thought he had done all that was essential of that which the Lord commanded him to do. Perhaps he even flattered himself that he was more merciful than his Maker, as do some unbelievers in our day. He met Samuel with the salutation, "Blessed be thou of the Lord; I have performed the commandment of the Lord." But

when the prophet asked what meant the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the oxen which he heard, Saul was obliged to confess that the people had taken of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the Lord in Gilgal.

Did the Lord accept this justification of Saul's conduct? Was he pleased with this partial obedience, and willing to pass over the trifle that had been neglected out of so good a motive? Saul did what he thought was best, and would not the Lord commend such excellent judgment? No. Said Samuel, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king."

These instances show how God looks upon his professed people when they obey part of his commandments while in other respects they follow a course of their own choosing. Let no one flatter himself that a part of God's requirements are nonessential. He has placed no command in his word that men may obey or disobey at will, and not suffer the consequences. If men choose any other path than that of strict obedience, they will find that "the end thereof are the ways of death."

July 24, 1884

"Walk in the Light"

Says the psalmist, "The law of the Lord is perfect." It is also changeless, the standard of righteousness, or right-doing, through all the ages. It is "the perfect law of liberty;" hence the happiness of man as well as the glory of God demand that it be respected and obeyed.

God has highly honored his holy law. The ark of the testament, containing the law engraven on tables of stone, was the symbol of his presence with his people. This sacred ark was interwoven with the national history of the Israelites as well as with their religious faith. It was with them in their wanderings in the wilderness; and when the people passed over Jordan to take possession of the promised land, by the command of God the ark was borne by the priests into the midst of the river, and there remained until all Israel had passed over in the path that through the favor of God had been opened for them. It was often borne by the armies of Israel as a token that God was with his people, and made their cause his own. When this was the case, their enemies were terrified; for they knew that nothing could stand before the mighty God of Israel. But if they transgressed that law, they forfeited the divine protection, and were delivered into the hands of their enemies.

In consequence of the wickedness of the people, and because they rashly carried the emblem of his presence into the camp when the Lord was not with them, God gave the children of Israel into the hands of their enemies, the Philistines, and the ark was taken. But the heathen were not permitted to regard the sacred ark of God as a common thing. Dagon, their god, was humbled before it; and in every city where the ark was taken, the people were sorely afflicted. And the Philistines said, "The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us; for his hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god."

"The Philistines called for the priests and diviners, saying, What shall we do to the ark of the Lord? Tell us wherewith we shall send it to his place." These men counseled the people not to send the ark away empty, but to return a trespass offering with it. Said they: "Ye shall make images of your emerods, and images of your mice that mar the land; and ye shall give glory unto the God of Israel; peradventure he will

lighten his hand from off you, and from off your gods, and from off your land. Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? When he had wrought wonderfully among them, did they not let the people go, and they departed? Now therefore make a new cart, and take two milch kine, on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart." And the Philistines did so; and they put the ark in the new cart, with the jewels of gold for a trespass offering in a coffer beside it.

The kine came with a straight course to Bethshemesh on the borders of Israel, and the men of Bethshemesh offered them as an offering unto the Lord. But when the Israelites, from motives of idle curiosity, looked familiarly into the ark, fifty thousand of them were slain for their rashness. The ark was then taken to Kirjath-jearim, and remained many years in the house of Abinadab.

Then came King David, with thirty thousand chosen men of Israel, to bring it to his own city, with music and rejoicing, with great display and with signal honors. The ark was carried in a new cart; and when they came to a rough place in the road, Uzzah put forth his hand to steady it. God had commanded that no hand but that of a consecrated priest should touch the sacred repository of his law, and special ceremonies of purification and preparation were enjoined; but Uzzah touched it with sinful, unhallowed hand, and was slain before the Lord. "And David was afraid of the Lord that day, and said, How shall the ark of the Lord come to me?" And he left the ark in the house of Obed-edom; and the Lord blessed Obed-edom and all his household because of the ark.

Thus God guarded with jealous care the ark that contained his holy law, that all might be deeply impressed with the sacred character of that law. It is no wonder that as the people witnessed the judgments inflicted upon those who despised the law of God or treated it with disrespect, they exclaimed, "Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?" The law was ordained unto life, and is an expression of the love of God to man. To despise it is to despise its Author; for it partakes of the perfection of the divine character. To the transgressor it becomes, not a savor of life unto life, but of death unto death. Jesus magnified the law and made it honorable, by dying to satisfy its claims. He gave his life an offering for transgressions, that through his righteousness imputed to them, men might be reconciled to God, and escape the punishment due to disobedience.

And yet the law of God is almost universally despised and trampled upon, while human laws are exalted. There is a power that is called in the Scriptures the man of sin, that has thought to change this great standard of righteousness. He has torn the fourth commandment from the bosom of the decalogue, and in place of God's holy Sabbath has substituted one of his own invention. Those who accept this spurious Sabbath do great dishonor to the God of Heaven, and their offense is greatly exaggerated when they not only break the law themselves, but endeavor to lead others to disregard it also.

The Lord has specified that the seventh day is his Sabbath. "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." But a human institution has been made to take the place of the divine; another day has supplanted God's holy, sanctified rest-day. The Christian church accept this day in place of the one God has chosen, and present it to the world to be observed and revered. They thus show that they do not love the law of God, nor prize its righteous, restraining influence.

God has laid down the conditions of salvation. He requires that men keep his commandments as obedient children. The Holy Scriptures are full of lessons showing that God is satisfied with no partial obedience. He does not leave men to rely on their human judgment, and select that portion of his law which they choose to obey. They are required to have correct views of duty. They are not at liberty to accept what ignorant, sinful, feeble man may suggest, believe, or urge upon them; but they must take God's word, and walk in accordance with his revealed will.

God has given men reason, and the noblest use to which the intellectual faculties can be put is the study of his word. And when through diligent and prayerful application the will of God has been discerned, nothing should be allowed to come in between God and the soul to swerve it from the path of strict obedience. No suggestions of propriety, no motives of expediency, no selfish desire for gain, no fear of loss, dishonor, or reproach, should be considered for a moment. God commands, and that is enough. The light shines, and it is our duty to walk in it. If men substitute human customs and traditions for the precepts of God's law, and proclaim to the world that that law, or any part of that law, is no longer in force, however honest they may be, they are under the condemnation of the law, and will perish as transgressors.

If you accept unpopular truth, ministers may say, "You are too particular. In order

to have influence with the world, you must do as the world does." But such men are acting as mouth-piece for Satan. They are preaching a doctrine that pleases him well. No authority of church or State, no decrees of kings or emperors, no commands of bishops or priests, can absolve you from obedience to the law of God, or justify the least departure from his requirements. Finite reasoning must not take the place of simple trust; self-will must not lead us in a course of disobedience.

Do not let the words of men who profess to be wise in the Scriptures deter you from searching them for yourself, or keep you back from obeying the precepts of Jehovah. Do not harbor the thought that some of the things taught in the Bible are nonessential. "To the law and to the testimony" for proof. The problems of duty and destiny become clear only when studied in the light of God's revealed will. Amid the devices of Satan to which we are exposed, and the varied temptations that surround us, we have the sure promise of divine guidance. "Thy word," says David, "is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." "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."

July 31, 1884

The Vision at Bethel

"And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to Heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of Heaven." Genesis 28:10-17.

Jacob was not perfect in character. He sinned against his father, his brother, his own soul, and against God. Inspiration faithfully records the faults of good men, those who were distinguished by the favor of God; indeed, their faults are much more fully transcribed than their virtues. They were compassed with infirmities; they were assaulted by temptations, and were often overcome by them; but they were willing to learn in the school of Christ. Were these characters presented before us as faultless, it would tend to discourage us in our strivings after righteousness. We should not take pleasure in the faults of others; but it may give us courage to know that men of like passions with ourselves have fought the good fight of faith, and bruised Satan under their feet. The record of their lives may serve as a warning to us. It shows that God will by no means clear the guilty. He sees sin in his most favored ones, and he punishes them even more decidedly than those who have less light and responsibility. But in contrast with the sins and errors of humanity there is presented one perfect character,-- that of the Son of God, who clothed his divinity with humanity, and walked a man among the children of men. He is our Pattern, pure, sinless, and undefiled.

Jacob obtained by fraud the blessing designed for his brother. God had promised him the birthright, and the promise would have been fulfilled in good time had he been willing to wait. But like many who now profess to be the children of God, he lacked faith, and thought he must do something himself, instead of submissively leaving the matter in the hands of the Lord. As a result, he was a fugitive from his father's house, hurrying for fear of his life from the rage of his brother, Esau.

As he pursued his lonely way, he was greatly cast down and discouraged. He feared that through his own rash course he had lost the blessing God designed to give him, and that his opportunity was gone forever; and Satan was ready to take advantage of his depression and press in his temptations. Yet God did not utterly forsake Jacob. His mercy was still extended to his erring, distrustful servant, although he would permit afflictions to come upon him until he should learn the lesson of patient submission. The Lord graciously and compassionately revealed just what Jacob needed, a Saviour. He had sinned; but his heart was filled with gratitude as he saw revealed a way by which he could be restored to the favor of God.

Wearied with his journey, the wanderer lay down upon the ground, with a stone for his pillow. And while he slept, the Lord gave him a vision. He beheld a ladder, bright and shining, whose base rested upon earth while the top reached to Heaven. Upon this ladder angels were ascending and descending, and above it was the Lord of glory, who addressed Jacob in words of wonderful encouragement. He assured Jacob that he was under divine guardianship in his absence from home, and that the land whereon he lay as an exile and a fugitive should be given to him and his posterity. The promise given to Abraham was solemnly renewed, "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."

The Lord knew the evil influences that would surround Jacob, and the perils to which he would be exposed; and the future was opened before him, that, fully understanding the divine purpose with reference to himself, he might be prepared to resist the temptations that would surely come to him alone amid idolaters and scheming men. There would be ever before him the high standard at which he must aim, and the knowledge that through him the purpose of God was reaching its accomplishment would be a constant guard and shield.

Jacob awoke with a solemn sense of the presence of God. "The Lord is in this place," said he, "and I knew it not." Through the Spirit of God, the plan of redemption was revealed to him, not fully, but such parts as it was essential for him to know. The time of Christ's first advent was yet far in the future; but God would not let his servant remain in ignorance of the fact that sinful man had been provided an Advocate with the Father.

Up to the time of man's rebellion against the government of God, there had been free communion between God and man. Heaven and earth had been connected by a path that the Lord loved to traverse. But the sin of Adam and Eve separated earth from Heaven. The curse of sin was upon the human race, and was so offensive to God that man could have no communion with his Maker, however much he might desire it. He could not climb the battlements of Heaven and enter the city of God; for there entereth into it nothing that defileth. The ladder represents Jesus, the appointed medium of communication. Had he not with his own merits bridged the gulf that sin had made, the ministering angels, ascending and descending on that ladder, would have held no communication with fallen man.

All this was revealed to Jacob in his dream. Although his mind at once grasped a part of the revelation, its great and mysterious truths were the study of his life-time, and unfolded to his understanding more and more. In his conversation with Nathanael, Jesus referred to this mystic ladder on which Jacob gazed with pleased wonder. Said he, "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."

It is our life-work to commence at the lowest round of the ladder, and step by step to ascend toward Heaven. There is earnest work in this, but we can gain eternal life in no other way. We must take up our daily duties. There must be self-sacrifice, self-denial, and walking in the humble path of obedience. Earnest battles must be fought with self and with the powers of darkness. We shall meet with strong temptations to go with the crowd, which is pressing downward; for by this means we can avoid being singular. But we must have a firm hold on Christ, and keep on climbing. To look back is to become dizzy; to let go is to perish. The eye of faith must be continually directed upward to discern a mighty helper in our tender heavenly Father.

We ascend by successive steps. When we let go of one round, it is to grasp

another that is still higher. Thus the hand is constantly reaching upward for successive degrees of grace, and the feet are planted on one round after another, until finally an abundant entrance shall be administered to us into the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

There is necessity for striving, and yet it will be of no avail unless we strive lawfully. To profess to climb up by Christ, and claim his righteousness, while living in disobedience to the law of God, is to continue in sin that grace may abound. It is to cry, Christ, Christ, and trust in him, while in daily rebellion against God. We must have repentance toward God, whose law we have broken, as well as faith in Christ, through whom our offenses are pardoned. Man lost paradise through the transgression of God's holy law, and he can regain it only through obedience to that law.

We have reason to rejoice that the world has not been left in solitary hopelessness. Jesus left the royal throne and his high command in Heaven, and became poor that we through his poverty might be made rich. He took upon himself our nature, that he might teach us how to live. In the steps which the sinner must take in conversion,--repentance, faith, and baptism,--he led the way. He did not repent for himself, for he was sinless, but in behalf of man.

Jesus became "the repairer of the breach, the restorer of paths to dwell in." He became an exile to earth to bring back the one lost, straying sheep, the one world ruined by sin. In him were combined the earthly and the heavenly, the human and the divine; otherwise, he could not be a Mediator whom the sinful could approach, and through whom they could be reconciled to their Maker. But now he encircles the race in arms of sympathy and love while he grasps the throne of the Infinite, thus uniting man in his weakness and helplessness with the Source of strength and power.

As Jesus prayed after his baptism, the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove of burnished gold, hovered over him, and a voice was heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Through the gates ajar there streamed bright beams of glory from the throne of Jehovah, and this light shines even upon us. The assurance given to Christ is assurance to every repenting, believing, obedient child of God that he is accepted in the Beloved.

We are indebted to Jesus for all the blessings we enjoy. We should be deeply

grateful that we are the subjects of his intercession. But Satan deceives men and women by presenting the service of Christ before them in a false light, and making them think that it is a condescension on their part to accept Jesus as their Redeemer. If we viewed the Christian privilege in the right light, we should consider it the highest exaltation to be accounted a child of God, an heir of Heaven; and we should rejoice that we can walk with Jesus in his humiliation. But our Saviour assures us that there are some who would like to climb up some other way than the toilsome, self-denying way of the cross. They would avoid reproach and shun sacrifices. Christ calls such thieves and robbers. If we are not willing to breast the storm of opposition, if we choose to float with the current, we shall lose eternal life.

And now the question for each one to settle is, Will you leave the dark abodes of sin and woe, and seek the mansions Jesus has gone to prepare for his followers? In his name we beseech you to plant your feet firmly on the ladder, and climb upward. Forsake your sins, overcome your defects of character, and cling with all your powers to Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life. We may every one of us succeed. None who shall persevere will fail of everlasting life. Those who believe on Christ shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand. Evil angels will try to weaken their hold on Christ, and to attract their eyes to earth; but God will send holy, ministering angels to help them and to strengthen their hands.

The Lord showed Jacob the open heavens. He beheld earth linked with Heaven, and saw the bright array of angels and the majesty of Deity. A divine voice addressed the repenting, discouraged one in words of gracious assurance, and spoke to him of great things to come. And so, through the merits of our Redeemer, the Father looks upon us with tender compassion, and speaks to us hopefully the language of forgiveness and love.

"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him." The farther the Christian advances on the Heavenward way, the more clearly will he discern the nothingness of earthly things, while by an eye of faith he views the glories of the unseen, eternal world. We point you, dear fellow-traveler, to a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. But the hills to which we journey are not on earth, and we might well despair of ever reaching them, were it not for the glorious ladder whose base is on earth while its top reaches the highest Heaven.

August 7, 1884

Family Prayer

If ever there was a time when every house should be a house of prayer, it is now. Infidelity and skepticism are prevailing. Iniquity abounds, and in consequence, the love of many waxes cold. Corruption flows in the vital currents of the soul, and rebellion against our heavenly Father breaks out in the life. Depravity spreads its loathsome canker over the entire heart. The moral powers, enslaved by sin, are under the tyranny of unholy appetites and passions. The soul is made the sport of Satan's temptations; and unless some mighty arm is stretched out to rescue him, man goes where the arch-rebel leads the way.

It is Satan's regular employment to work for the destruction of the race. Says the apostle Peter, "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Here Satan is represented as prowling about, hoping to find some poor soul off his guard, separated from God, that he may make his prey. And man in his pride is utterly helpless. He may well tremble at the awful power, cunning, and deception exercised by Satan over all who are not by faith holding fast the hand of Christ.

And yet in this time of fearful peril some who profess to be Christians have no family altar. They do not honor God in the home, nor teach their children to love and fear him. There are persons who attempt to teach the Bible who open their meetings without prayer; and there are not wanting some who profess to be followers of Jesus, and yet argue that there is nothing in the word of God that teaches the duty of vocal prayer. These things grieve me; for I know that continual watchfulness and unceasing prayer are necessary for every soul that would successfully resist the wiles of the great deceiver. Those who maintain such positions are not sincere Christians. There are many, who, like unruly children, have separated themselves so far from God that they feel under condemnation in approaching him. They cannot "come boldly unto the throne of grace," "lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." They have not clean hands; they have not pure hearts; they have no living connection with God. Theirs is a form of godliness without the power.

The idea that prayer is not essential is one of Satan's most successful devices to

ruin souls. Prayer is addressing the mind to God, the Fountain of wisdom, the Source of strength and peace and happiness. Prayer includes acknowledgment of the divine perfections, gratitude for mercies received, penitential confession of sins, and earnest entreaty for the blessing of God, both for ourselves and for others. Jesus prayed to the Father with strong crying and tears. Paul exhorts believers to "pray without ceasing." "In everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." "Pray one for another," says James. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." God has a right to command our devotions; his authority is sacred and unquestionable. We are under obligation to pray because he requires it; and in obeying his requirements we shall receive a gracious and precious reward.

I know of nothing that causes me so great sadness as a prayerless home. I do not feel safe in such a house for a single night; and were it not for the hope of helping the parents to realize their necessity and their sad neglect, I would not remain. The children show the result of this neglect; for the fear of God is not before them. Parents should make a hedge about their children by prayer; they should pray with full faith that God will abide with them, and that holy angels will guard themselves and their children from Satan's cruel power.

In every family there should be order, and regular habits. There should be a fixed time to rise in the morning, a time for breakfast, and a time for prayer, either directly before or directly after the morning meal. How appropriate it is for parents to gather their children about them before their fast is broken, and direct their young minds to our heavenly Father, who bestows upon us the bounties of his providence. Let them thank God for protecting them during the night, and ask for help and grace and the watchcare of angels through the day. Man should not be as unmindful of God as the beasts of the field, that eat and drink, but render no tribute of prayer or grateful praise to their Maker. Beasts have no reason; but men should understand the great condescension of God to finite, sinful mortals.

Fathers and mothers, at least morning and evening lift up your hearts to God in humble supplication for yourselves and your children. Your dear ones are exposed to temptations and trials. There are frets and irritations that daily beset the path of old and young; and those who would live patient, loving, cheerful lives amid daily annoyances, must pray. This victory can be gained only by a resolute and unwavering purpose, constant watchfulness, and continual help from God.

The father, who is the priest of his household, should conduct the morning and evening worship. There is no reason why this should not be the most interesting and enjoyable exercise of the home-life, and God is dishonored when it is made dry and irksome. Let the seasons of family worship be short and spirited. Do not let your children or any member of your family dread them because of their tediousness or lack of interest. When a long chapter is read and explained and a long prayer offered, this precious service becomes wearisome, and it is a relief when it is over.

It should be the special object of the heads of the family to make the hour of worship intensely interesting. By a little thought, and careful preparation for this season, when we come into the presence of God, family worship can be made pleasant, and will be fraught with results that eternity alone will reveal. Let the father select a portion of Scripture that is interesting and easily understood; a few verses will be sufficient to furnish a lesson which may be studied and practiced through the day. Questions may be asked, a few earnest, interesting remarks made, or incident, short and to the point, may be brought in by way of illustration. At least a few verses of spirited song may be sung, and the prayer offered should be short and pointed. The one who leads in prayer should not pray about everything, but should express his needs in simple words, and praise God with thanksgiving.

Abraham, the friend of God, set us a worthy example. His was a life of prayer and humble obedience, and he was as a light in the world. Wherever he pitched his tent, close beside it was set up his altar, calling for the morning and evening sacrifice of each member of his family. When his tent was removed, the altar remained. The roving Canaanite, as he came across that altar, knew who had been there before him; and when he had pitched his tent, he repaired the altar, and worshiped the living God.

From Christian homes a similar light should shine forth. Love should be revealed in action. It should flow out in all home intercourse, showing itself in thoughtful kindness, in gentle, unselfish courtesy. There are homes where these principles are carried out,--homes where God is worshiped and truest love reigns. From these homes morning and evening prayer comes up before God as sweet incense, and his mercies and blessings descend upon the suplicants like the morning dew.

We must have more religion. We need the strength and grace that are born of

earnest prayer. This means of grace should be diligently used in order to gain spiritual muscle. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to him. It makes us realize more and more our great needs, and hence our obligation to God and our dependence upon him. It leads us to feel our own nothingness and the weakness of our judgment.

God has made earnest prayer the condition of the bestowal of his richest blessings. Prayer brings us nearer and nearer to Jesus. However fully we may have given ourselves to God at conversion, it is of no avail unless we renew our consecration in each separate duty as it presents itself. Dear reader, consecrate yourself to God in the morning; make this your very first business, even if you have to rise half an hour earlier in order to find time. Let your prayer be, "Take me, O Lord, as wholly thine. I lay all my plans at thy feet. Use me today in thy service. Whatever errand I may do, send me. Whatever I may say to honor thee, or lead souls to Christ, help me to say it."

This is a daily matter. Each morning consecrate yourself and your family to God for that day. Make no calculation for months or years; for they are not yours. One brief day is given you, and that one day work for yourself and your family as though it were your last. Surrender all your plans to God, to be carried out or given up, as his providence shall indicate. In this manner you may, day by day, be giving your life with its plans and purposes into the hands of God, accepting his plans instead of your own, no matter how much they may interfere with your arrangements nor how many pleasant projects may have to be abandoned. Thus the life will be moulded more and more after the divine Model; and "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

August 14, 1884

Striking Examples of Prayer

Prayer has been made the means of obtaining blessings that would not otherwise be received. The patriarchs were men of prayer, and God did great things for them. When Jacob left his father's house for a strange land, he prayed in humble contrition, and in the night season the Lord answered him through vision. He saw a ladder, bright and shining, its base resting on earth, and its topmost round reaching to the highest Heaven. At its top stood the God of Heaven in his glory, and angels were ascending and descending upon the mystic ladder. The Lord comforted the lonely wanderer with precious promises; and protecting angels were represented as stationed on each side of his path. Afterward, while on his return to his father's house, he wrestled with the Son of God all night, even till break of day, and prevailed. The assurance was given him, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men."

Joseph prayed, and he was preserved from sin amid influences that were calculated to lead him away from God. When tempted to leave the path of purity and uprightness, he said, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

Moses, who was much in prayer, was known as the meekest man on the face of the earth. For his meekness and humility he was honored of God, and he discharged with fidelity the high, noble, and sacred responsibilities intrusted to him. While leading the children of Israel through the wilderness, again and again it seemed that they must be exterminated on account of their murmuring and rebellion. But Moses went to the true Source of power; he laid the case before the Lord. He knew that Israel had provoked divine wrath, and were deserving of punishment; but he could not bear the thought of their being rejected of God.

Moses pleaded the words of God with an earnestness and sincerity which mortals have never equaled: "And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great according as thou hast spoken, saying, The Lord is long-suffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty.... Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and

as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now." And the Lord said, "I have pardoned according to thy word."

Here is an example of intelligent prayer,--an appeal to the reason and the sympathy of Jehovah; and Moses' prayer was answered, because God is reasonable and compassionate. The sorrows of his people touch his heart of love; and will he not hear our prevailing prayer? Will not our very urgency be regarded? His loving-kindness faileth not. As a kind Father, he does not mock the miseries of his children. And will he not avenge his own, who cry day and night unto him?

Daniel was a man of prayer; and God gave him wisdom and firmness to resist every influence that conspired to draw him into the snare of intemperance. Even in his youth he was a moral giant in the strength of the Mighty One. Afterward, when a decree was made that if for thirty days any one should ask a petition of any God or man, save of the king, he should be cast into a den of lions, Daniel, with firm, undaunted step, made his way to his chamber, and with his windows open prayed aloud three times a day, as he had done before. He was cast into the lions' den; but God sent holy angels to guard his servant.

In the prison at Philippi, while suffering from the cruel stripes they had received, their feet fast in the stocks, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praise to God; and angels were sent from Heaven to deliver them. The earth shook under the tread of these heavenly messengers, and the prison doors flew open, setting the prisoners free.

There are two kinds of prayer,--the prayer of form and the prayer of faith. The repetition of set, customary phrases when the heart feels no need of God, is formal prayer. "When ye pray," says Christ, "use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." We should be extremely careful in all our prayers to speak the wants of the heart, and to say only what we mean. All the flowery words at our command are not equivalent to one holy desire. The most eloquent prayers are but vain repetitions, if they do not express the true sentiments of the heart. But the prayer that comes from an earnest heart, when the simple wants of the soul are expressed just as we would ask an earthly friend for a favor, expecting that it would be granted--this is the prayer of faith. The publican who went up to the temple to pray is a good example of a sincere, devoted worshiper. He felt that he was a sinner, and his great need led to an outburst of passionate desire, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

In order to have spiritual life and energy, we must have actual intercourse with God. Our minds may be drawn out toward him; we may meditate upon his works, his mercies, his blessings; but this is not communing with him. To commune with God we must have something to say to him concerning our actual life. The long, black catalogue of our delinquencies is before the eye of the Infinite. The register is complete; none of our offenses are forgotten. But He who wrought wonderfully for his servants of old will listen to the prayer of faith and pardon our transgressions. He has promised, and he will fulfill his word. Then why should not the desires of our hearts go out after him, and the attitude of our souls ever be that of supplication?

"If ye abide in me," says Christ, "and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." There are some who do not abide in Jesus, and his words do not abide in them, and these make little of prayer. They talk of praying in secret, but not in public nor in the family; but such ones seldom pray at all. Our Saviour taught his disciples: "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." This was not said to forbid public prayer, but to warn the disciples against praying as the Pharisees did, in the corners of the streets and in the market places to be seen of men. Jesus prayed, sometimes alone, sometimes in the presence of his most intimate disciples, sometimes in the presence of the twelve, and sometimes in the presence of the Jews.

Jesus promised a special blessing on united prayer. After his death, the disciples often prayed together in the place where they assembled for worship; they also resorted to the temple at the hour of prayer. Paul exhorted the Ephesians to pray "always with all prayer." He who loves to pray alone, as did Daniel, may be assured that in public prayer his motive is not to be heard of men.

Oh that we could impress on the minds of all the great willingness of God to help and strengthen every one who looks to him in trusting prayer. The oil and wine of consolation will be given to those who seek for it; the importunate soul will know him as the One who hears and answers prayer, the One who "comforteth those that are cast down." He is a God over all the earth, exercising over the whole human family an unwearied and solicitous watchcare which nothing can escape. Every moment he grants audience to those who lay their wants and desires before him; and every moment he is

ministering to the necessities of thousands who live upon his bounties, yet yield him no tribute of grateful praise, give no token that they realize their dependence upon him.

After we have offered our petitions, we are to answer them ourselves as far as possible, and not wait for God to do for us what we can do for ourselves. The help of God is held in reserve for all who demand it. Divine help is to be combined with human effort, aspiration, and energy. But we cannot reach the battlements of Heaven without climbing for ourselves. We cannot be borne up by the prayers of others when we ourselves neglect to pray, for God has made no such provision for us. Not even divine power can lift one soul to Heaven that is unwilling to put forth efforts in his own behalf. The unlovely traits in our characters are not removed, and replaced by traits that are pure and lovely, without some effort on our part.

As thus step by step we ascend the shining ladder that leads to the city of God, oh how many times we shall be discouraged, and come to weep at the feet of Jesus over our failures and our defeats. In our efforts to follow the copy set us by our Lord, we shall make crooked lines, and leave many a page blotted and blistered by our tears of repentance. Yet let us not cease our efforts. Heaven can be attained by every one of us if we will strive lawfully, doing the will of Jesus and growing into his image. Temporary failure should make us lean more heavily on Christ, and we should press on with braveheart, determined will, and unfaltering purpose.

We should be continually loosening our hold upon earth, and fastening it upon Heaven. Soon we must render an account to God for all the deeds done in the body. This accountability extends to our minutest acts, words, and thoughts, and even reaches to the unconscious influence that breathes out from our life like the fragrance from a flower. We must give an account, not only for what we have done both of evil and of good, but for what we might have done, but have neglected. Viewed in this light, life is a sacred trust. It is not mere play. Every moment of it is intensely real, fraught with eternal interests. Let us, then, realize our great need of Christ and our dependence upon him; and let us thank God that help has been laid upon One who is mighty to save.

August 21, 1884

Conditions of Prevailing Prayer

When Jesus was upon earth, he taught his disciples how to pray. He directed them to present their daily needs before God, and to cast all their care upon him. And the assurance he gave them that their petitions should be heard, is assurance also to us.

One of the first things necessary in order to have our prayers answered, is to feel our need of help from God. We may come to him just as we are, helpless, destitute, needy, and he will not send us empty away. The riches of the universe belong to God; his are all temporal and spiritual treasures. He can supply all our needs out of his abundant fullness. We receive our breath from him; every blessing in nature that we enjoy is an expression of his love. We are likewise dependent upon him for spiritual blessings, for grace and wisdom and strength to do the will of God. And he is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him than parents are to give good gifts to their children.

Our great need is itself an argument, and pleads most eloquently in our behalf. But the Lord is to be sought unto to do for us those things that we desire. Oh how shamefully has Jesus been treated! He is inviting, urging us to come to him and receive the very help we need; yet too often his invitations are slighted, his proffered aid refused.

We are sinful by nature, and so are commanded to be zealous and repent. If we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us; but the prayer of the penitent, contrite soul is always accepted. When all known wrongs are righted, we may believe that God will answer our petitions. We must do what we can on our part; but our own merit will never commend us to the favor of God. It is the worthiness of Jesus that will save us, his blood that will cleanse us.

Another element of prevailing prayer is faith. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Jesus said to his disciples, "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and

ye shall have them." Jesus said to the man who brought to him his son that was grievously afflicted with an evil spirit, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." Christ commands and encourages the prayer of faith; do we take him at his word? If we ask doubting and distrusting, that prayer is not of faith; and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

"Ask, and ye shall receive." The assurance is broad and unlimited, and He is faithful who has promised. We sometimes fail in faith because Infinite Wisdom does not come to our terms. When for any reason we do not receive the very things we ask for at the time we ask, we are still to believe that the Lord hears, and that he will give us those things that are best for us. His own glory is a sufficient reason for sometimes withholding what we ask for, and answering our prayers in a manner that we did not expect. But we are to cling to the promise; for the time of answering will come, and we shall receive the blessings we need most.

We need to examine our hearts as a preparation for coming before God in prayer, that we may know what manner of spirit we are of. If we do not forgive those who have trespassed against us, our prayers for forgiveness will not be heard. "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." When as sinners we approach the mercy-seat, we cannot express the sentiment of this petition without forgiveness in our hearts for all who have done us an injury. Upon this petition Jesus makes a comment: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

On another occasion Jesus enforced the duty of forgiveness still more earnestly. Peter asked, "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?" In reply, Jesus related a parable of a certain king who forgave his servant a debt of ten thousand talents, but who revoked the pardon, and commanded this servant to be delivered to the tormentors, because in his dealings with his fellow-servants he did not carry out the same righteous principles that had been manifested in dealing with him. After he had received so great mercy, he would not, in his turn, forgive a small debt of a hundred pence, but, on the contrary, treated his debtor with great severity. Our Lord concludes 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."

"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." We must cherish a kind, forbearing

spirit. It is solemn mockery to engage in acts of religious worship with hearts full of envy, malice, and bitterness toward our fellow-men. The God who sees every action and understands every motive of the soul, a Being of infinite purity and exhaustless goodness, mercy, and truth, regards the prayers of such persons with abhorrence.

Persevering prayer has been made a condition of receiving. We must pray always if we would grow in faith and experience. We are to be instant in prayer,--"to continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." Peter exhorts believers to be "sober, and watch unto prayer." Paul directs: "In everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." "But ye, beloved," says Jude, "praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God." Unceasing prayer is the unbroken union of the soul with God, so that life from God flows into our life, and from our life purity and holiness flow back to God.

There is necessity of diligence in prayer; let nothing hinder you. You will obtain the blessing you desire if you faint not. Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden him; you cannot weary him. He who numbers the hairs of your head, who notices the fall of a sparrow, is not indifferent to the wants of his people. "The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." He is affected by our sorrows, and even by our utterance of them. Take everything to him that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for him to bear; for he holds up worlds; he rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing is too small for him to notice that in any way disturbs our peace. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for him to read; there is no perplexity too sore for him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of his people, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere, contrite prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which he takes no immediate interest. "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds."

There is an individual work for each one to do. The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon earth to share the watchful care of our heavenly Father, not another soul for whom he gave his beloved Son. "Thou understandest my thought afar off," says the psalmist. "Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." "Thou tellest my wanderings. Put thou my tears in thy bottle; are they not in thy book?" Here we have a representation of the unsearchable greatness of God, while we can but be impressed

with his intimate knowledge of all our ways, and with the great tenderness expressed for the objects of his creation.

Jesus has given us his name, above every name. "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name," says Christ, "that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep my commandments." "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." "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." "At that day ye shall ask in my name; and I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you; for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God." We have a string of precious pearls in the promises, if we will but comply with the conditions. But to pray in the name of Jesus is something more than a mere mention of that name at the beginning and ending of a prayer. It is to pray in the mind and Spirit of Jesus, while we work his works, believe his promises, and rely on his matchless grace.

God does not mean that any of us shall become hermits or monks, and retire from the world to devote ourselves to acts of worship. The life must be like Christ's life,-- between the mountain and the multitude. He who does nothing but pray will soon cease to pray, or his prayers will become a formal routine. When men take themselves out of social life, away from the sphere of Christian duty and cross-bearing; when they cease to work earnestly for the Master, who worked earnestly for them, they lose the subject matter of prayer, and have no incentive to devotion. Their prayers become personal and selfish. They cannot pray in regard to the wants of humanity or the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom, pleading for strength wherewith to work.

Let us maintain the habit of close intercourse with God. Let us lay all parts of our lives open before him in gratitude for his long forbearance, penitence for sin, and earnest faith in the promises. The prayer of Jesus just before his crucifixion should be intensely interesting to us; let us read it, and enter into its spirit.

September 4, 1884

Immutability 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 Christ, and the language of those who claim that he came to abrogate the law of God 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 so made this positive statement to meet the questioning doubts and the blind unbelief of all coming time.

But there is a law which was abolished, which Christ "took out of the way, nailing it to his cross." Paul calls it "the law of commandments contained in ordinances." This 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.

Christ himself declares that he came not to destroy the law of ten precepts, which was spoken from Sinai. He says, "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 he teaches not merely what the claims of God's law had been and were then, but that these claims should hold so long as the heavens and the earth remain. This testimony should forever settle the question. The law of God is as immutable as his throne. It will maintain its claims upon all mankind in all ages, unchanged by time or place or circumstances. The ritual system was of altogether a different character, and typified the death of Christ as a sacrifice for the broken precepts of the moral law.

"I am not come to destroy," Christ says, "but to fulfill,"--"to magnify the law and make it honorable," as Isaiah, hundreds of years before, had prophesied respecting the

Messiah's work.

"To fulfill the law." In his own life the Saviour gave the children of men an example of perfect obedience. In his teachings he made clear and distinct every precept of the divine law; he swept away the rubbish of erroneous tradition with which the Jews had encumbered it; he illustrated and enforced its principles, and showed 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 taught the spiritual nature of the law and made clear its far-reaching claims. Love to God and to men must live in the heart and control the life, as the spring of every thought and every action.

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 is the good news of grace, or favor, by which man may be released from the condemnation of sin, and enabled to render acceptable obedience to the law. 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 human happiness and the glory of God.

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," and "was made in fashion as a man." He was man's example, man's representative, and he declares, "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 in Christ 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, he 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, "The soul that sinneth [transgresseth the law] it shall die."

The words of Christ 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 teach others to break them. Some are not content with doing this by example; they defend sin, and pervert the word of God to justify the transgressor. Such persons will have no part with the people of God. But the greatest guilt rests upon the professed watchmen, who do not hesitate to speak evil of the law, and even to make those who are ignorant of the Bible believe that they are fallen from grace 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! 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 is taken, so long as we ignore the true one,--that faith in Christ must be accompanied by obedience to the law of God.

While we point the sinner to Jesus as the one who can take away sin, we must explain to him what sin is, and show him that he can be saved from his sins, but not in

them. He must be made to realize that "sin is the transgression of the law." Paul makes the inquiry, many years after the death of Christ, "Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Thus 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 shows sin to be exceeding sinful, revealing it in all its hideousness. Through obedience to its requirements, Christian character is perfected.

God's law is a copy of his mind and will. The sins forbidden there could never find a place in Heaven. It was love that prompted God to express his will in the ten precepts of the decalogue. Afterward he showed his love for man by sending prophets and teachers to explain and illustrate his holy law.

God has given man a complete rule of life in his law. Obeyed, man 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.

September 11, 1884

An Address to the Young

The spiritual welfare of the young is a subject in which all should feel a deep interest. Now, in the closing hours of probation, they should be obtaining an experience in the things of God. They need to be daily building up a firm, pure, symmetrical character, one that God can approve, or Satan will take advantage of their weakness to ruin them, and they will fall an easy prey to his temptations. For every young man who lacks faith and consecration, and is weak in moral power, Satan has temptations prepared. Perhaps there is a pleasing associate, who, like himself, thinks it manly to be entirely unconcerned in regard to his soul's salvation, and they strengthen each other in a wrong course.

Those who think they have no need of a Saviour, that they can do right and preserve a correct deportment without making Christ their strength, show the most deplorable weakness. Christ made provision for man's redemption; he laid out an expensive plan of salvation. Suppose that Adam, after his fall, had refused to comply with the conditions. Suppose he had said, "I am good; I do no harm to any one. I feel no need of a Saviour." Would he not then have remained in the disgrace of sin, a transgressor, a rebel against God? But every sinner who neglects the Saviour's mediation, by his own choice places himself in just this position. He is in the bondage of sin, subject to the most cruel tyrant that ever existed.

Cain tried this course of self-dependence. He felt, as many inexperienced youth now feel, that it would be an acknowledgment of weakness on his part to follow the plan marked out of God. He would come in his own merits. He would not bring the lamb, and mingle its blood with his offering; but he would be very generous, and would offer of his fruits, the products of his labor. He looked with scorn upon Abel, who felt that he could not approach God without a mediator. Abel followed the precise directions given by God. The result is well known. The Lord accepted the offering of Abel, presented in humility, and faith in the coming Lamb of God. His obedience was counted to him for righteousness. Cain, angry that his offering was rejected, killed his brother.

Cain and Abel represent two classes of men that have existed from generation to

generation, and will continue to exist to the close of time. One availed himself of the promised sacrifice for sin; the other ventured to depend upon his own merits. His was the sacrifice of a sinner without the virtue of divine mediation, which is alone able to bring him into favor with God. It is only through the merits of Jesus that our transgressions of the law can be pardoned. Those who feel that they can be moral without divine help, who feel no need of the blood of Christ, are betrayed into grievous sins. If they do not gladly, gratefully, accept the cleansing blood, they are under condemnation. There is no other provision made whereby they can be released from sin's terrible thralldom. There must be repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the only way to secure excellence of character, the only path to divine favor.

The Lord assured Cain that if he did well, he should be accepted. But instead of heeding the counsel of God, he chose to take his own course, to follow the promptings of his sinful heart, and the result is before us. Let the youth consider that none of their ways or purposes are hidden from the eye of Jehovah. He is not ignorant of their self-will and self-sufficiency. He marks their course in despising the blood of the covenant that has been provided for their sanctification and redemption.

Young friends, wherever you are and whatever you do, remember, "Thou God seest me." No part of your conduct escapes observation. You cannot hide your ways from the Most High. Human laws, though sometimes severe, are often transgressed without detection, and hence with impunity. But it is not so with the law of God. The deepest midnight is no cover to the guilty one. He may think himself alone; but the very motives of his heart are open to divine inspection. Every action, every word, every thought, is as distinctly marked as though there were only one individual in the entire universe, and the attention of Heaven were centered on his deportment.

Says the patriarch Job, "When I consider, I am afraid of Him." The more we reflect, the more awful God appears. Surely you are not acquainted with him as you ought to be. If you had an abiding sense of his presence, you would fear to offend a just and holy God, and there would be a restraint upon wickedness. Consider that the Judge of all the earth, who is to decide your destiny for eternity, has an accurate knowledge of your daily life. How can you violate his precepts? How can you make light of his authority?

Those who are quieting a guilty conscience with the thought that they can change a course of evil when they choose, that they can trifle with the invitations of mercy, and yet be again and again impressed, take this course at their peril. They think that after doing despite to the Spirit of grace, after casting all their influence on the side of the great rebel, in a moment of terrible extremity, when danger compasses them about, they will change captains. But this is not so easily done. The experience, the education, the discipline, of a lifetime of sinful indulgence, has so thoroughly moulded the character that they cannot then receive the image of Jesus. A long life has given in its testimony. Had no light shone upon their pathway, had they not been warned, entreated, and prayed for by God's messengers, the case would be different. Mercy would interpose, and give them another opportunity to accept her overtures; but after light has been rejected and despised, the other opportunity does not always come.

There is a power in impenitence and rebellion which can be accounted for only on the supposition that it is supernatural. Satan imbues his willing subjects with his own spirit. He works through deception; he promises them the desire of their heart; but they find no rest, no peace, no joy, in the path of transgression.

You who are slighting the offers of mercy, let consideration come in, and scatter the delusions which have gathered about your soul. Think of the long array of figures that is accumulating against you in the books of Heaven; for there is an unerring record kept of the impieties of nations, of families, of individuals. God may bear long while the account goes on, and calls to repentance and offers of pardon may be given; yet a time will come when the account will be full, and divine patience will be exercised no longer. Then the signal will be given for the wrath of offended justice to be poured out, for judgment to be executed.

The impenitent sometimes comfort themselves by saying of professed Christians, "I am as good as they are. They are no more self-denying, sober, or circumspect in their conduct than I am. They love pleasure and self-indulgence just as well as I do." These poor souls entrench themselves here, making the faults of Christians an excuse for their neglect of duty. But if they are so well acquainted with the life and character that Christians should develop, let them come over on the side of Christ, and give these stumbling-blocks a correct example. Come, you who accuse others, and show them how closely you can imitate the Pattern. Show them that you can walk firmly, making straight paths for your feet.

The sins and defects of others do not excuse any one; for the Lord has not given us an erring, human pattern. The spotless Son of God has been given as a model; and those who complain of bad examples in professed Christians, are the ones who should show better lives and purer examples. If they know so well what a Christian should be, they will be of those who knew their Master's will, and did it not; and they will be beaten with many stripes.

Martin Luther lived for years a life of severe exaction and penance, thinking he could thus purchase the favor of God. And when Christ was presented to him as the sinner's friend and advocate, a Saviour who so loved man that he gave his precious life to save him, the thought that this salvation was a free gift, not to be purchased by tedious journeys, long and rigorous fasts, or by scourging the body, seemed too great for him to comprehend. He need no longer invoke all the saints to plead with Christ in his behalf. How eagerly his thirsty soul drank in the precious draught! His hand tremblingly grasped the promises of God. He accepted Jesus as his Saviour, who would pardon and redeem his soul. He could exclaim:

"Thou art our wisdom, and we are never wise until thou art our teacher. Our ears are deaf to every voice but thine. The voice of the world and the voice of false teachers may fill the outward ear; but we must henceforth listen only to the voice that speaks within. Oh, come, thou precious Holy One, and with us ever stay. Let us become acquainted with thee, and hold thee ever in the strong embrace of perfect love. Thou art the only desire of my soul, the one altogether lovely. Without thee we could not enter Heaven."

We may have a similar experience, only richer and more abundant; for we have increased light. But many who ought to have gained a valuable Christian experience stand where they did years ago. Christ is not honored when his professed followers compare themselves among themselves, and excuse their defects because some one else has ventured to commit sin.

The young are apt to conclude that not much responsibility, care-taking, or burden-bearing is expected of them. But the obligation to reach the Bible standard rests upon every one. The light which shines in privileges and opportunities, in the ministry of the word, in counsels, warnings, and reproof, will perfect character or condemn the

careless. The light is to be cherished by the young as well as by those who are older. Who will now take a position for God in contrast to the ease-loving and self-indulgent ones? Who will be light-bearers for God? The youth can do good work in laboring to save souls. They can reach their young associates when those who are older cannot, and God holds them accountable for the use they make of the talents intrusted to them. Let those who claim to be sons and daughters of God aim at a higher standard. Let them use every faculty God has given them. Let them glorify him by correctly representing the religion of the Bible.

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Jesus wants the service of those who have the dew of youth upon them. He wants them to be heirs of immortality. They may grow up into a noble manhood and womanhood, notwithstanding the moral pollutions that abound, and that corrupt so many of the youth at an early age. There is no happiness or safety but in the fear of the Lord. Young friends, morning and evening let your prayers go up from unfeigned lips that the Holy Spirit may take possession of your hearts and keep you from the seductive influences of the world. Work for Jesus; stand up for Jesus; and he will stand up for you in the day of God's vengeance.

September 18, 1884

The True Object of Education

The true object of education should be constantly kept in view. God has intrusted to each one capacities and powers, that they may be returned to him enlarged and improved. His gifts are granted to us to be used to the utmost. He requires every one to attain the highest possible degree of usefulness. All the talents that we possess, whether of mental capacity, money, or influence, are of God, so that in dedicating them to his service we may say with David, "All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee."

Dear young friends, what is your aim in life? Are you ambitious for education that you may one day have a name and position in the world? Have you thoughts that you dare not express, that you may one day stand upon the summit of intellectual greatness; that you may sit in deliberative and legislative councils, and help to enact laws for the nation? There is nothing wrong in lofty aspirations. You may every one of you make your mark. You should be content with no mean attainments. Aim high, and spare no pains to reach the standard.

But remember that the "fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and lies at the foundation of all true greatness. Integrity, unswerving integrity, is the principle that you need to carry with you into all the relations of life. Balanced by religious principle, you may climb to any height you please. We would be glad to see you rising to a noble elevation. Jesus loves the precious youth, and he is not pleased to see them grow up with uncultivated, undeveloped talents. They may become men and women of firm principle, fitted to be intrusted with high responsibilities, and to this end they may lawfully strain every nerve.

Let none commit so great a crime as to pervert their God-given powers to do evil and destroy others. There are gifted men who use their ability to spread moral ruin and corruption; but all such are sowing seed which will produce a harvest that they will not care to reap. It is a fearful thing to scatter blight and woe instead of blessing in society. It is also a fearful thing to fold in a napkin the talent intrusted to us, and hide it away in the world; for this is casting away the crown of life. God claims our service. There are

responsibilities for every one to bear; and we can fulfill life's grand mission only when these responsibilities are fully accepted, and faithfully and conscientiously discharged.

Says the wise man, "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth." But do not for a moment suppose that religion will make you sad and gloomy. Never lose sight of the fact that Jesus is a well-spring of joy. He takes no pleasure in the misery of human beings, but loves to see them happy. Religion will not block up the way to success; it does not obliterate or even weaken a single faculty. It in no way incapacitates you for the enjoyment of any real happiness; it is not designed to lessen your interest in life, or to make you indifferent to the claims of friends and society.

"The entrance of thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple," is the testimony of the psalmist. As an educating power the Bible is without a rival. The study of the Scriptures will ennoble every thought, feeling, and aspiration, as the study of no other book can. Nothing else will so impart freshness and vigor to all the faculties. The mind gradually adapts itself to the subjects upon which it is trained to dwell. If occupied with commonplace matters only, it will become dwarfed and enfeebled. If never required to grapple with difficult problems, or tasked to comprehend important truths, it will, after a time, almost lose the power of growth.

The Bible is the most comprehensive and the most instructive history which 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 alone do we find an authentic account of the creation. Here we behold the power that laid the foundation of the earth, and that stretched out the heavens. Here only can we find a history of our race, unsullied by human prejudice or human pride.

In the word of God the mind finds subject for the deepest thought, the loftiest aspiration. 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 single-handed with the powers of darkness, and to gain the victory in our behalf. A reverent contemplation of the themes brought to view in the word of God, cannot fail to soften, purify, and ennoble the heart, and, at the same time, to inspire the mind with new strength and energy.

This sacred word is the will of God revealed to men. Here we learn what God expects of the beings formed in his image. Here we learn how to improve the present life, and how to secure the future life. No other book can satisfy the questionings of the mind and 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 ignorance and degradation, to become sons of God, associates of sinless angels.

A clear conception of what God is, and what he requires us to be, will give us humble views of self. He who studies aright the sacred word, will learn that human intellect is not omnipotent; that, without the help which none but God can give, human strength and wisdom are but weakness and ignorance.

This is the education so much needed at the present time. In an age like ours, in which iniquity abounds, and God's character and his law are alike regarded with contempt, special care must be taken to teach the youth to study, and to reverence and obey, the divine will as revealed to man. The fear of the Lord is fading from the minds of our youth because of their neglect of Bible study.

With Daniel, the fear of the Lord was the beginning of wisdom. He was placed in a position where temptation was strong. In kings' courts, dissipation was on every side; selfish indulgence, intemperance, and gluttony were the order of each day. Daniel could join in the debilitating, corrupting practices of the courtiers, or he could resist the influences that tended downward. He chose the latter course. He would not even defile himself with the king's meat, or with the wine that he drank. The Lord was pleased with the course that Daniel pursued. He was greatly beloved and honored of Heaven; to him the God of wisdom gave skill in the learning of the Chaldeans, and understanding in all visions and dreams.

If the youth who attend our various educational institutions would discard unprofitable amusements and indulgence of appetite, their minds would be clear for the pursuit of knowledge. If they would be firm for the right, and would not associate with those who walk in the paths of sin, like Daniel they would enjoy the favor of God. They would thus gain a moral power that would enable them to remain unmoved when assailed by temptation. It requires a continual struggle to be constantly on the alert to resist evil; but it pays to obtain one victory after another over self and the powers of

darkness.

A spotless character is as precious as the gold of Ophir. None can rise to an honorable eminence without pure, unsullied virtue. But noble aspirations and the love of righteousness are not inherited. Character cannot be bought; it must be formed by daily efforts to resist temptation. The formation of a right character is the work of a lifetime, and must be the result of individual effort. Friends may encourage you, dear youth; but they cannot do the work for you. Wishing, sighing, dreaming, will never make you great or good. You must climb. Gird up the loins of your mind, and go to work with all the strong powers of your will. It is the wise improvement of your opportunities, the cultivation of your God-given talents, that will make you men and women that can be approved of God and a blessing to society. Let your standard be high, and with indomitable energy press to the mark.

The fear of the Lord is the very foundation of all progress. Your intellectual and moral faculties are God's gifts, talents intrusted to you; and you are not at liberty to let them lie dormant for want of proper cultivation, or be crippled and dwarfed for lack of exercise. It is for you to determine whether or not the weighty responsibilities that rest upon you shall be faithfully met, whether or not your efforts shall be well-directed and your best.

October 2, 1884

Happy and Unhappy Homes

Many are unhappy in their home life because they are trying so hard to keep up appearances. They expend large sums of money, and labor unremittingly, that they may make a display, and gain the praise of their associates,--those who really care nothing for them or their prosperity. One article after another is considered indispensable to the household appointments, until many expensive additions are made, that, while they please the eye and gratify pride and ambition, do not in the least increase the comfort of the family. And yet these things have taxed the strength and patience, and consumed valuable time which should have been given to the service of the Lord.

The precious grace of God is made secondary to matters of no real importance; and many, while collecting material for enjoyment, lose the capacity for happiness. They find that their possessions fail to give the satisfaction they had hoped to derive from them. This endless round of labor, this unceasing anxiety to embellish the home for visitors and strangers to admire, never pays for the time and means thus expended. It is placing upon the neck a yoke of bondage grievous to be borne.

Four walls and costly furniture, velvet carpets, elegant mirrors, and fine pictures, do not make a "home" if sympathy and love are wanting. That sacred word does not belong to the glittering mansion where the joys of domestic life are unknown. There are spacious parlors closed from the sweet sunshine and life-giving air, for fear these choicest gifts of Heaven might tarnish the furniture and fade the carpets. These rooms are sunless and damp, unlighted and unheated save when visitors are to be entertained. Then the doors are thrown open, and the beautiful rooms, too fine for the use and comfort of the family, are devoted to unsympathizing acquaintances.

These rooms are altogether too precious for every-day use; above all, the children must be strictly excluded from their precincts, for fear of soiling the furniture or the curtains. In fact, the comfort and welfare of the children are the last things thought of in such a home. They are neglected by the mother, whose whole time is devoted to keeping up appearances and meeting the claims of fashionable society. Their minds are untrained, they acquire bad habits, and become restless and dissatisfied. Finding no

pleasure in their own homes, but only uncomfortable restrictions, they break away from the family circle as soon as possible. They launch out into the great world with little reluctance, unrestrained by home influence, and the tender counsel of the hearth-stone.

How different is it in the Christian home, where the mother is attentive to the wants of husband and children, and takes pleasure in the performance of her sweet home duties; where the father co-operates in all her efforts to make home happy, and to lay the foundation of a good Christian character by training the children in the way they should go. Such parents, while they win the affections of their children by their sympathy and tender care, will yet be firm and decided in their government, and will guard them with jealous care. They will exhort, reprove, and counsel their children when they rise up, and when they sit down; when they go out, and when they come in. It will be "line upon line, precept upon precept; here a little, and there a little." In such homes angels will love to linger; and who can tell what an influence for good shall go out from them?

It does not require costly surroundings and expensive furniture to make children contented and happy in their homes; but it is necessary that the parents give them tender love and careful attention. Parents should by their example encourage the formation of habits of simplicity, and draw their children away from an artificial to a natural life. Gentle manners, cheerful conversation, and loving acts will bind the hearts of children to their parents by the silken cords of affection, and will do more to make home attractive than the rarest ornaments that can be bought for gold.

There are but few true fathers and mothers in this age of the world, and this is owing more to the artificial lives that are so generally led than to any other cause. There should be less anxiety for external appearances, but more earnest effort to secure practical comfort in every room throughout the house. Less parade in the parlor, and more time devoted to the training of the children, to the preparation of simple, wholesome food, and to the general economy and comfort of the household, would make happy hearts and pleasant faces in the home. There are many who should live less for the outside world, and more for the members of their own family circle. There should be less display of superficial politeness and affection toward strangers and visitors, and more of the courtesy that springs from genuine love and sympathy toward the dear ones of our own firesides.

The very best part of the house, the sunniest and most inviting rooms, and the most comfortable furniture, should be in daily use by those who really live in the house. This will make home attractive to the inmates, and also to that class of friends who really care for us, whom we could benefit, and by whom we could be benefited. But those guests who are attracted to us by the prospect of sumptuous dinners and an extravagant luxury of style, are not the ones whose companionship will improve our minds and hearts. We have no moral right to spend our time and means in entertaining such visitors, while our precious, God-given children are suffering gross neglect.

But it is so flattering to the pride of some persons to exhibit a certain extravagant and fashionable style of living for the benefit of occasional guests, that they are willing to sacrifice the peace and comfort of the household for this empty gratification. The fine mansion, the costly furniture and ornaments, the toil in serving up dainty dishes to gratify the appetite, the expensive entertainments which swallow up money and time, and the dashing carriages designed more for show than comfort, bring no peaceful contentment. They have no connection with the real joys of life; they interfere with domestic quiet, and unfit the mind for the homely but pleasant duties of practical life.

As these extravagances fail to satisfy their possessors, they blindly seek to remedy the failure by adding new luxuries, and plunging deeper into the whirlpool of fashionable society. But the inevitable result is greater dissatisfaction, and an increase of care and anxiety. Decorations of dress and houses do not make people happy; but the lowliest dwelling may be beautified, and the poorest family be made rich, by the possession of meekness, kindness and love. Pleasant voices, gentle manners, and sincere affection that finds expression in all the actions, together with industry, neatness, and economy, make even a hovel the happiest of homes. The Creator regards such a home with approbation; and the inmates, though they have not "that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, and of putting on of apparel," have that which is far better.--"the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."

"Godliness with contentment is great gain." It is "profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." We should open our hearts and houses to the Lord. The restraint which his word imposes upon us is for our own interest. It increases the happiness of our families and of all about us. It refines the taste, sanctifies the judgment, and brings peace of mind, and in the end, everlasting

life.

October 9, 1884

The Benefits of Industry

Those who look upon work as a curse are cherishing a mistaken idea. God appointed labor as a blessing to man, to occupy his mind, to strengthen his body, and to develop his faculties. Adam toiled in the garden of Eden, and found it to be one of the pleasures of his holy existence to do so. And when, as the result of his disobedience, he was driven from his beautiful home, and was forced to struggle with a stubborn soil to gain his daily bread, that very labor, although far different from his pleasant occupation in the garden, was a protection against temptation, and a source of happiness.

For thirty years Jesus was an inhabitant of Nazareth, and his life was one of patient industry. He walked the streets clad in the simple garb of a common laborer. He toiled up and down the mountain steeps, going to and returning from his humble work. He did not employ his divine power to lessen his burdens or to lighten his toil. He lived in a peasant's home; he mingled with the lowly, and shared their daily toil. His example shows us that it is man's duty to be industrious, that labor is honorable.

The life of Jesus should encourage the poor and lowly to be contented with their lot. Honest labor has received the sanction of Heaven, and men and women may hold the closest communion with God, while occupying the humblest positions in life. Jesus was as faithfully fulfilling his mission when working at his humble trade as when he healed the sick or walked upon the storm-tossed waves of Galilee.

Those who divorce religion from their worldly business are reproved by the example of Jesus. Although he could command the entire angel host, he dwelt among the hills of Nazareth, a simple carpenter, working for wages, and living a godly life. He called no attention to himself as a marked personage; yet his life is a lesson that mankind should copy to the end of time. It was a mystery to angels that Christ should condescend, not only to take upon himself humanity, but to assume its heaviest burdens and most humble occupations. But this he did that he might become like one of us; that he might be acquainted with the toil, the sorrows, and the fatigue of the children of men, and thus be better able to understand their privations and sympathize with their trials.

The essential lesson of contented industry in the necessary duties of life, however humble, is yet to be learned by the greater portion of Christ's followers. Though there may be no human eye to examine our work, nor voice to praise or blame, it should be done just as well as though the Infinite One himself were personally to inspect it. We should be as faithful in the minor details of our business as we would in the larger affairs of life.

Our varied trusts are proportioned to our various abilities. Where much is given, much will be required. God expects corresponding returns for the talents he has intrusted to his servants. It is not the greatness of the talents possessed that determines the reward, but the manner in which they are used, the degree of faithfulness with which life's duties are performed, whether those duties are great or small. Whoever does his work conscientiously and well, whether in the shop, in the field, or in the pulpit, will be rewarded according to the spirit in which he has worked. It requires more grace and discipline of character to work for God in the capacity of mechanic, merchant, lawyer, or farmer, carrying the precepts of Christianity into the ordinary pursuits of life, than to labor as a minister of Christ, where one's position is understood, and half its difficulties obviated by that very fact. It requires strong spiritual nerve and muscle to carry religion into the work-shop and business office, sanctifying the details of every-day life, and ordering every worldly transaction according to the Bible standard; but this is what God requires of his people.

Judicious labor is a healthful tonic for the human race. It makes the feeble strong, the poor rich, and the wretched happy. Idleness is the greatest curse that can fall upon man, for vice and crime follow in its train. Satan lies in ambush, ready to destroy those who are unguarded, whose leisure gives him opportunity to insinuate himself into their favor under some attractive disguise. He is never more successful than when he comes to men in their idle hours.

Among the evils resulting from wealth, one of the greatest is the fashionable idea that work is degrading. Says the prophet Ezekiel, "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." Here are presented before us the terrible results of idleness, which enfeebles the mind, debases the soul, and perverts the understanding, making a curse of that which was given as a blessing.

The glory and joy of life are found only by the working man or woman. Labor brings its own reward, and the rest is sweet that is purchased by the fatigue of a well-spent day. But there is a self-imposed toil that is utterly unsatisfying and injurious. It is that which gratifies unsanctified ambition, which seeks display or notoriety. Pride of appearance or the love of possession leads many to carry to excess that which is in itself lawful,--to devote the entire strength of body and mind to those interests which should occupy but a small portion of their time. They bend every energy to the acquisition of wealth or honor; they make all other objects secondary to this; they toil unceasingly for years to accomplish their purpose; yet when the goal is reached, the coveted prize secured, it turns to ashes in their grasp; it is a shadow, a delusion. They have given their lives for that which profiteth not.

God is watching the character we develop in our daily lives, weighing our moral worth. Those who ignore the claims of God in their business life, as carpenters, lawyers, or merchants, are unfaithful in matters of eternal interest, since it is the life that indicates the spiritual advancement, and registers upon the books of Heaven the unchangeable figures of the future. Those who are unfaithful in little things, cannot be intrusted with the true riches of the kingdom. Yet all the lawful pursuits of life may be safely followed, if the spirit is kept free from selfish hopes and the contamination of deceit and envy. The business life of the Christian should be marked with the same purity that held sway in the work-shop of the holy Nazarene. It is the working man or woman who sees something great or good in life, and who is willing to bear its responsibilities with faith and hope.

God designed that all should be workers. The toiling beast of burden answers the purpose of its creation better than does the indolent man, who does not develop his physical and mental powers, but neglects the tasks which God has set for him to do. In the cause of reform the indolence of the many necessitates the overwork of the few earnest and devoted laborers. Because these are allowed to do the work of others in addition to their own, they often fail beneath the burden. But though the path of the Christian reformer may be hard and narrow, it is honored by the footprints of the Redeemer, and he is safe who follows in that sacred way.

The angels are workers; they are ministers of God to the children of men. Those slothful spirits who look forward to a Heaven of inaction will be disappointed; for the

economy of the Creator prepares no place for the gratification of sinful indolence. But to the weary and heavy-laden, rest is promised. It is the faithful servant who will be welcomed from his labors into the joy of his Lord. He will lay off his armor with rejoicing, and forget the noise of battle in the glorious rest prepared for those who conquer through the cross of Calvary.

October 23, 1884

Health and Religion

The wise man says that wisdom's "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." Many cherish the impression that devotion to God is detrimental to health and to cheerful happiness in the social relations of life. But those who walk in the path of wisdom and holiness find that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." They are alive to the enjoyment of life's real pleasures, while they are not troubled with vain regrets over misspent hours, nor with gloom or horror of mind, as the worldling too often is when not diverted by some exciting amusement.

It is true that there are many professing Christians who have diseased imaginations, and 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. This course is not in accordance with the words of the Saviour, "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 walk in the light, and to cultivate habitual cheerfulness of mind, that they may reflect light rather than gloom and darkness.

Godliness does not conflict with the laws of health, but is in harmony with them. Had men ever been obedient to the law of ten commandments, had they carried out in their lives the principles of these ten precepts, the curse of disease that now floods the world would not be. Men may teach that trifling amusements are necessary to keep the mind above despondency. The mind may indeed be thus diverted for the time being; but after the excitement is over, calm reflection comes. Conscience arouses, and makes her voice heard, saying, "This is not the way to obtain health or true happiness."

There are many amusements that excite the mind, but depression is sure to follow. Other modes of recreation are innocent and healthful; but useful labor that affords physical exercise will often have a more beneficial influence upon the mind, while at the same time it will strengthen the muscles, improve the circulation, and 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 to 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. One whose mind is quiet and satisfied in God is on the highway to health. To have the consciousness that the eye of the Lord is upon us, and that his ear is open to our prayers, is a satisfaction indeed. To know that we have a never-failing Friend to whom we can confide all the secrets of the soul, is a happiness which words can never express. Those whose moral faculties are clouded 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.

Those who do not feel that it is a religious duty to discipline the mind to dwell upon cheerful subjects, will usually be found at one of two extremes: they will be elated by a continual round of exciting amusements, indulging in frivolous conversation, laughing, and joking, 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.

Many have a self-complacent feeling. They flatter themselves that if they had an opportunity, or were more favorably situated, they could and would do some great work. These persons do not view things from a correct standpoint. Their imagination is diseased. Day-dreaming, castle-building, has unfitted them for usefulness. They have lived in an imaginary world, have been imaginary martyrs, and are imaginary Christians. There is nothing real and substantial in their character. Persons of this class sometimes think that they have an exquisite delicacy of organization, a refined 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 sickly fancies do not help themselves or others. Appropriate labor, the healthy exercise of all their powers, would withdraw their thoughts from themselves.

Some are naturally devotional; but much of their life has been wasted in dreaming of doing some great work in the future, while present duties, though they may be small, are neglected. They have been unfaithful. If they would train their minds to dwell upon themes which have nothing to do with self, they might yet be useful; but the Lord will not commit to their trust any greater work until the duty nearest them has been seen and performed with a ready, cheerful will. Unless the heart is put into the work, it will drag heavily. The Lord tests our ability and faithfulness by giving us small duties first. If we turn from these with dissatisfaction and murmuring, no more will be given us; but when we cheerfully take up the small duties that lie in our pathway, and do them well, higher and greater responsibilities will be intrusted to us.

God gives liberally, and he expects corresponding returns. The talents intrusted to our keeping are not to be squandered, but to be used to good purpose, that, at his coming, the Master may receive his own with usury. These talents are not distributed indiscriminately. God dispenses his sacred trusts according to the powers and capacities of his servants, and thus has given to "every man his work." When their fidelity has been proved, their wise stewardship is evidence that they can be intrusted with the true riches, even the gift of everlasting life.

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 those who are thus employed will benefit themselves also. Idleness gives time to brood over imaginary sorrows; and frequently those who do not have real hardships and trials, will borrow them from the future.

There is much deception carried on under the cover of religion. Passion controls the minds of many who have become depraved in thought and feeling in consequence of "pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness." These deceived souls flatter themselves that they are spiritually minded and especially consecrated, when their religious experience consists in a sickly sentimentalism rather than in purity, true goodness, and humiliation of self. The mind should be drawn away from self; its powers should be exercised in devising means to make others happier and better. "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 its possessor a partaker of the purity and the holiness of Heaven. It brings angels near, and separates us more and more from the spirit and influence of the world. It enters into all the acts and relations of life, and gives us the "spirit of a sound mind," and the result is happiness and peace.

Said the apostle Paul to his Philippian brethren, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Adopt this as the rule of life. "Be careful for nothing; but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

November 6, 1884

Science Falsely So Called

In these days when skepticism and infidelity so often appear in a scientific garb, we need to be guarded on every hand. Through this means our great adversary is deceiving thousands, and leading them captive according to his will. The advantage he takes of the sciences, sciences which pertain to the human mind, is tremendous. Here, serpent-like, he imperceptibly creeps in to corrupt the work of God.

This entering in of Satan through the sciences is well devised. Through the channel of phrenology, psychology, and mesmerism, he comes more directly to the people of this generation, and works with that power which is to characterize his efforts near the close of probation. The minds of thousands have thus been poisoned, and led into infidelity. While it is believed that one human mind so wonderfully affects another, Satan, who is ready to press every advantage, insinuates himself, and works on the right hand and on the left. And while those who are devoted to these sciences, laud them to the heavens because of the great and good works which they affirm are wrought by them, they little know what a power for evil they are cherishing; but it is a power which will yet work with all signs and lying wonders,--with all deceivableness of unrighteousness. Mark the influence of these sciences, dear reader; for the conflict between Christ and Satan is not yet ended.

If Satan were to make an open and bold attack upon Christianity, it would bring the Christian at once to the feet of his mighty Deliverer, who alone could put the adversary to flight. He does not generally do this. He is artful, and knows that the most effectual way for him to accomplish his designs is to come to poor, fallen man in the form of an angel of light. In this disguise he works upon the mind to allure from the safe and right path. He has ever been ambitious to counterfeit the work of Christ, and establish his own power and claims. He leads deceived mortals to account for the works and miracles of Christ upon scientific principles; he makes them appear as the result of human skill and power. In many minds he will thus eventually destroy all true faith in Christ as the Messiah, the Son of God.

Satan worked in a similar manner when through Moses the power of God was

manifested in Egypt. He well knew that Moses was chosen of God to break the yoke of bondage from off the children of Israel; and he also knew that in this work Moses was a type of Christ, who was to come to break the reign of sin over the human family, and to deliver those who were captives to its power. He was aware 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 resolved to accomplish a work which should answer a twofold purpose,--(1) To destroy the influence of Moses as the servant of God, by using his agents to counterfeit the true work of God; (2) To exert an influence by his work through the magicians which would reach down through all ages, and in many minds destroy true faith in the mighty miracles to be performed by Christ when he should come to this world.

It was the power of God, and no human influence or power possessed by Moses, that produced those miracles wrought before Pharaoh. Those signs and wonders were designed to convince Pharaoh that the great "I AM" had sent Moses, and that it was the duty of the king to let Israel go that they might serve the living God. Pharaoh called for the magicians to work with their enchantments. They also showed signs and wonders; for they wrought not by their own science alone, but by the power of their god, the devil, who through them ingeniously carried out his deceptive work. Yet even here the power of God was shown to be superior to that of Satan; for the magicians were unable to perform all the miracles which God wrought through Moses. Only a few of them could they do. The magicians' rods did become serpents, but Aaron's rod swallowed them up. And when they sought to produce lice, and could not, they were compelled to acknowledge even to Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God."

Satan was unwilling to have the children of Israel released from bondage that they might serve God. He wrought through the magicians in a manner to harden the heart of the tyrant against the miraculous manifestations of God's power. He also thought to stagger the faith of Moses and Aaron in the divine origin of their mission, and then his instruments would prevail. But after the magicians had failed to produce the plague of lice, they could no more imitate Moses and Aaron. God would not suffer Satanic deception to proceed further. His controlling power cut off the channel through which Satan worked, and even the instruments through whom Satan wrought so wonderfully could not save themselves from the plagues. We read: "The magicians could not stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boil was upon the magicians, and upon all the Egyptians."

When Christ came to earth, Satan renewed his attack. He came to the Saviour in the wilderness in the form of a beautiful young man,--more like a monarch than a fallen angel,--with Scripture in his mouth. Said he, "It is written." He spread the world before Christ in the most attractive light, and intimated to him that he need not endure so much suffering to gain its kingdoms; Satan would yield all his claims if Christ would but worship him.

Satan was dissatisfied in Heaven because he could not be first and highest in command, equal with the Father, exalted above Christ. In the wilderness he hoped to gain advantage through the weakness and suffering of Christ, and obtain from him that homage which he could not win in Heaven. Could he have succeeded, then the plan of salvation would have failed, and mankind would have been plunged in hopeless misery. But Jesus yielded not to the suggestion of the tempter for a moment; on the contrary, he asserted his superior power by bidding him, "Get thee hence." Satan was baffled. He then turned his attention to accomplishing his purpose in another way,--by winning from the human race that honor which was refused him in Heaven, and by Jesus on earth; and here he has been only too successful.

The plan of redemption was not defeated. The dear price has been paid for man's ransom. And now our great adversary seeks to tear away the foundation of the Christian's hope, by turning men's minds into such a channel that they may not be benefited through the great sacrifice offered. He leads them to believe that they can do very well without an atonement; that they need not depend upon a crucified and risen Saviour; that their own merits will entitle them to God's favor. And then he destroys confidence in the Bible, well knowing that if he succeeds here, and faith in the detector which places a mark upon himself is destroyed, there are no bounds to the victories he may gain.

If the tempter can so deceive the human mind as to lead mortals to think that they possess the inherent power to perform great and good works, they cease to rely upon God. They acknowledge not a superior power. They give not God the glory which he claims, and which is due to his great and excellent Majesty. Satan's object is thus accomplished; and he exults that fallen men presumptuously exalt themselves, as he exalted himself in Heaven, and was cast out. He knows that if they take this course, their ruin is just as certain as was his own.

Another means by which Satan seeks to separate the soul from God is to make man believe that prayer is but a useless form. He well knows how needful are meditation and prayer; and by his devices he would divert the mind from these important exercises, that the soul may not lean for help upon the mighty One, and obtain strength to resist his attacks. The prayer of faith is the great strength of the Christian, and will assuredly prevail. This is why Satan insinuates that we have no need of prayer.

Neglect of prayer leads men to rely on their own strength, and opens the door to temptation. In many cases the imagination is captivated by scientific research, and men are flattered through the consciousness of their own powers. The sciences which treat of the human mind are very much exalted. They are good in their place; but they are seized upon by Satan as his powerful agents to deceive and destroy souls. His arts are accepted as from Heaven, and he thus receives the worship which suits him well. The world, which is supposed to be benefited so much by phrenology and animal magnetism, never was so corrupt as now. Through these sciences, virtue is destroyed, and the foundations of Spiritualism are laid. And thousands are conversing with, and receiving instructions from, this demon-god, and are acting according to his teachings, all the while supposing that they are obeying the voice of God through their dead friends. (Concluded next week.)

November 13, 1884

Science Falsely So Called

Says Paul, "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." This scripture is especially applicable as a warning against modern Spiritualism. If the mind commences to run in the channel of phrenology and animal magnetism, it is almost sure to lose its balance. "Vain deceit" takes possession of the imagination. Many think there is such power in themselves that they do not realize their need of help from 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. He does not direct the minds of men to themselves, but to God, the Creator of the universe, as the source of strength and wisdom.

"Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind." In this verse a special warning is given. The teachers of Spiritualism come in a pleasing, bewitching manner. Their object is to deceive, and those who listen to their fables are beguiled by the enemy of righteousness. When one is overcome by this fascinating influence, the mind is poisoned, and faith in Christ as the Son of God is destroyed. The victim of this sophistry is beguiled of his reward; for he is led to rely upon his own merits for salvation. Many exercise voluntary humility, are even willing to make sacrifices, to debase themselves, and to yield their minds to the belief of supreme nonsense. They receive the most absurd and erroneous ideas from those whom they believe to be their dead friends, now angels in a higher sphere; and their eyes are so blinded and their judgment so perverted that they see not the evil.

Spiritualism is a most successful and fascinating delusion,--one that is calculated to take hold of the sympathies of those who have laid their loved ones in the grave. Evil angels come in the form of these loved ones; they relate incidents connected with their lives, and perform acts which they performed while living. In this way they lead persons to believe that their dead friends are angels, hovering about them and communing with them. These evil angels who assume to be dead friends, are regarded with a certain idolatry, and with many, what they may say has greater influence than the word of God.

This holy word they entirely reject, or they select the vital portions which testify of Christ and point out the way to Heaven, and change these plain statements to suit their own corrupt nature and ruin souls.

With due attention to the word of God, all may be convinced if they will of this soul-destroying delusion. That word 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." The word of God expressly declares that the dead have no more a portion in anything that is done under the sun. Spiritualists say that the dead know everything that is done; that they communicate to their friends on earth, give valuable information, and perform wonders. "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." Satan, transformed into an angel of light, works with all deceivableness of unrighteousness. He who could take up the Son of God, and place him upon a pinnacle of the temple, and again could take him up into an exceeding high mountain, and 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 Jesus, even after he had taken upon himself man's nature.

"Intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind," says the apostle. Some tamper with Spiritualism to gratify their curiosity. They have no real faith in it, and would start back with horror at the thought of being mediums; yet they place themselves in a position where Satan can exercise his power upon them. They do not mean to enter deep into this work; but they know not what they are doing. They are venturing upon forbidden ground; and the mighty destroyer considers them his lawful prey, and exercises his power upon them against their will. They have yielded their mind to his control, and he holds them captives. Nothing can deliver these ensnared souls but the power of God in answer to the earnest prayers of his faithful followers.

Satan cannot control minds unless they are yielded to him. But those who depart from the right are in serious danger. They separate themselves from God and from the watch-care of his angels; and the prince of darkness, who is ever upon the alert to destroy souls, begins to present to them his deceptions. Such are in the utmost peril. If

they see the snare, and try to free themselves from it, 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. Those who have tempted the devil to tempt them cannot free themselves from his power without making a desperate effort. But when they begin to work for themselves, angels of God, whom they have grieved, come to their rescue. Satan and his angels are unwilling to lose their prey, and the conflict is severe. But if those who have erred continue to plead, and in deep humility confess their wrongs, angels that excel in strength will prevail, and wrench them from the powers of darkness.

The only safety now is in searching for the truth as it is revealed in the word of God, as we would search for hid treasure. The great and important truths for this time will prove as an anchor to hold God's people amid the perils of the last days. But the mass of mankind despise God's word, and prefer fables. They receive 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."

The most licentious and corrupt are highly flattered by these spirits, which they believe to be the spirits of their dead friends, and the wicked and vile are vainly puffed up in their fleshly minds, "not holding fast the Head, from whom all the body, being supplied and knit together through the joints and bands, 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, and each man become perfect in Christ Jesus.

Vain philosophy! The members of the body are controlled by the head. Spiritualists lay aside the Head, and believe that all the members of the body must act out their nature, and that fixed laws will lead them on in a state of progression without a head. Said Jesus: "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 are the branches. We must receive nourishment from the Living Vine. Deprived of the strength and nourishment of that Vine, we are as members of the body without a head, just the condition that Satan wishes us to be in, that he may control us as he pleases. 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 delusion, that they should believe a lie." Spiritualism is a lie. It is founded on the great original lie, "Thou shalt not surely die."

Satan is Christ's personal enemy. He is the originator and leader of every species of rebellion in Heaven and on earth. His rage increases as the time to work grows shorter, and we do not realize his power. Evil angels are upon our track every moment. Are we prepared to resist them? Will not many souls be ensnared and taken? We should all now seek to arm ourselves for the contest in which we must soon engage; and the word of God is the only weapon which we can use successfully. That word, prayerfully studied and practically applied, will be our shield from Satan's delusive arts, and will bring us off conquerors through the blood of the Lamb.

November 20, 1884

The Right Use of Talents

A short time before Jesus entered Gethsemane to bear the sins of the world, he gave the memorable discourse recorded in the Matthew 24:1 and Matthew 25:1, including the parable of the talents, given in chap. 25: 14-30. He was a partaker of our human nature, and was wearied with the work of the day. The Pharisees had pressed him into speaking on various subjects, while they watched his words, hoping to seize upon something whereby they might condemn him and vindicate themselves in their cruel purpose toward him; and he had exhausted his strength by prolonging his words of prediction and warning. His own words were, "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work."

The parable of the talents has a relation to that of the ten virgins, which preceded it. In the parable of the virgins, Jesus had presented events connected with his second coming, showing the duty of being in readiness, and waiting and watching for that great event; and in the parable of the talents he brought before his disciples in the most impressive manner the solemn, sacred duty of unselfish, vigilant labor in the cause of God. Jesus would teach us that it is not by a life of quiet, prayerful meditation alone that Christian character is perfected; something more is needed to give us a fitness for his second appearing. Neither does religion consist altogether in work; it is not necessary to be always busy, loaded down with cares and responsibilities, so that the cultivation of personal piety is neglected. Paul's exhortation to Timothy was to the point: "Take heed to thyself," and then "to the doctrine." Keep thyself in the love and fear of God, and then preach the word with all diligence. We are to be, "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

There are many whose religion consists in activities. They want to be engaged in, and have the credit of doing, some great work while the little graces that go to make up a lovely Christian character are entirely overlooked. The busy, bustling service, which gives the impression that one is doing some wonderful work, is not acceptable to God. It is a Jehu spirit, which says, "Come, see my zeal for the Lord." It is gratifying to self; it feeds a self-complacent feeling; but all the while the soul may be defiled with the plague-spot of unsubdued, uncontrolled selfishness.

Jesus says, "I know thy works." It is indeed true that all our works are passing in review before God; then how careful should we be to have them such as will bear inspection,--honest, pure, and holy. We should be particular in self-examination, making sure that we have the oil of grace in our vessel with our lamps. We should maintain a living connection with God, that no Satanic spirit may be allowed to have a moulding influence upon our experience and mar our work. The Christian must represent Jesus by both being good and doing good. Then there will be a fragrance about the life, a loveliness of character, which will reveal the fact that he is a child of God, an heir of Heaven.

The soul must be surrendered to God, submitted to be purified and made fit for the indwelling of his Holy Spirit. Unless the fountain be cleansed, the stream which issues from it will be impure; but if the fountain be pure, it cannot send forth bitter water. It is by cultivating meekness and lowliness, by performing kindly, thoughtful acts for others when no human eye can see and no human praise stimulate, by hiding self in Jesus, and letting his gentleness appear in the home-life, by exercising patience when provoked, giving a soft answer when tempted to be harsh, overbearing, and vindictive, that we leave the unmistakable impression on the minds of our children that father and mother are Christians. To be a Christian is to be Christlike,--to learn of him daily, to work as he worked, to deny self as he denied himself. Jesus lived not to please himself, and his disciples must follow his example.

To every one Jesus has left a work to do, there is no one who can plead that he is excused. Every Christian is to be a worker with Christ; but those to whom he has intrusted large means and abilities have the greater responsibilities, and Satan will tempt these in various ways to neglect their sacred trust. In the parable, Jesus carries his hearers forward to the general Judgment, when every man's case will be decided according to his faithfulness in the work left for him to do. Men are justified by faith, but judged and rewarded according to their works.

The Master bestows his gifts according to the varied capacities of his servants. In the parable we read: "Unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey." To every one of us is committed some talent to be improved by use. The goods of Heaven are intrusted to our keeping, not to be hoarded or idolized, but to be wisely employed in

the service of Christ. We are to place the highest value upon the talents committed to our trust, and to trade even with pence and farthings. Our opportunities may seem small; but if we are diligent, the blessing of God will rest on our efforts. He admits no idlers in his vineyard. All will be held responsible, from those in the highest positions to those in the most lowly; and of all he expects returns corresponding to the gifts bestowed.

Every man is responsible for the use he makes of his time, his talents, and his possessions; for they are not his own. In the parable we are represented as trading on borrowed capital. Our relation to God is that of borrowers; to our fellow-men, that of owners. God is the giver of all our benefits. Not only has he the right of ownership in ourselves and all that we have, but he alone can give wisdom to so guide us that we shall make no mistake in using our powers according to his purposes. Yet how few there are who consider that they must render an account to God for the use they make of every faculty. How often men act as though their time and their possessions were their own, to be used as best pleased themselves.

No honest, faithful laborer will rest content while neglecting to use his tact, skill, and inventive powers to advance the interests of his employer. If to successfully carry on the various enterprises connected with worldly business, aptness, careful thought, education, and discipline are required, how much more essential that these qualities be used in the service of the Lord, in advancing his cause in the earth; and as the faculties are exercised in this direction, their power is increased, so that each succeeding day we shall be able to do better work for God and humanity.

The power of speech is one of God's good gifts to man. In the day of final accounts, we shall find that the tongue was a power for good or a power for evil. It is often used in making hard speeches, in speaking words that descend like a desolating hail upon tender plants. There is much dishonesty, much exaggeration, in the use of the tongue. All these things come under the head of idle words; and for every idle word that men utter, they must give an account at the bar of God.

There are many whose conversation is apt and appropriate where their own interests are concerned, who never think of their obligation to use precious talent in winning souls to Christ. But the power of speech is a sacred trust to be improved to exalt the plan of redemption and magnify its Author, to speak words of comfort to the discouraged and desponding, to speak kind and pleasant words that shall be as a

refreshing draught to those who are thirsting for sympathy and love. Our conversation should not be upon our own disappointments and trials, but upon the love of Jesus and the better home in Heaven. Dear reader, let your conversation be honest. Use sound speech which cannot be condemned, that it may minister grace and knowledge to the hearer.

The gift of writing is a talent from God; but in many cases this too has been perverted so that it has become an active agent in promoting evil. Many who profess to be children of God write to their friends in an extravagant, jesting strain, perhaps even turning serious subjects into sport and ridicule. Every communication is registered in Heaven; a copy is imprinted on the books above, with the result of these productions; and in the day of Judgment, what shame will cover those who have written or spoken idle, mischievous words. But if the love of Jesus is in the heart, the letters will breathe his spirit. Out of the treasure-house of such a heart will be brought forth good, precious things, edifying the one with whom you communicate.

The Master has given directions, "Occupy till I come." He is the great proprietor, and has a right to investigate every transaction, and approve or condemn; he has a right to rebuke, to encourage, to counsel, or to expel. The Lord's work requires careful thought and the highest intellect. He will not inquire how successful you have been in gathering means to hoard, or that you may excel your neighbors in property, and gather attention to yourself while excluding God from your hearts and homes. He will inquire, What have you done to advance my cause with the talents I lent you? What have you done for me in the person of the poor, the afflicted, the orphan, and the fatherless? I was sick, poor, hungry, and destitute of clothing; what did you do for me with my intrusted means? How was the time I lent you employed? How did you use your pen, your voice, your money, your influence? I made you the depository of a precious trust by opening before you the thrilling truths heralding my second coming. What have you done with the light and knowledge I gave you to make men wise unto salvation?

Our Lord has gone away to receive his kingdom; but he will prepare mansions for us, and then will come to take us to himself. In his absence he has given us the privilege of being co-laborers with him in the work of preparing souls to enter those mansions of light and glory. It was not that we might lead a life of worldly pleasure and extravagance that he left the royal courts of Heaven, clothing his divinity with humanity, and becoming poor that we through his poverty might be made rich. He did

this that we might follow his example of self-denial for others.

Each one of us is building upon the true foundation, wood, hay, and stubble, to be consumed in the last great conflagration, and our life-work be lost, or we are building upon that foundation, gold, silver, and precious stones, which will never perish, but shine the brighter amid the devouring elements that will try every man's work. Any unfaithfulness in spiritual and eternal things here will result in loss throughout endless ages. Those who lead a Christless life, who exclude Jesus from heart, home, and business, who leave him out of their counsels, and trust to their own heart, and rely on their own judgment, are unfaithful servants, and will receive the reward which their works have merited.

At his coming the Master will call his servants, and reckon with them. The parable certainly teaches that good works will be rewarded according to the motive that prompted them; that skill and intellect used in the service of God will prove a success, and will be rewarded according to the fidelity of the worker. Those who have had an eye single to the glory of God will have the richest reward. Selfishness, indolence, worldliness, pride, covetousness, and human ambition will appear in their true and hateful character, as the works of Satan; while every work done from love to Jesus, with a sincere desire to glorify him, will appear as the height of human excellence and wisdom.

With the consciousness that they have done only their duty, and merit no reward, the faithful stewards will present the talents they have gained through use. They bring sheaves. With their money and talents they have been instrumental in bringing honor to Jesus; through his blessing attending their efforts, they have been able to benefit others. They present to their Lord both principal and interest; but it is with a sense of humility. An eternal weight of glory is awarded them; but they receive it as a free gift.

But to those who hide their Lord's talents in the earth, Jesus will say, "Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant.... Wherefore gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds."

Take from him the opportunities for usefulness which he has failed to improve. I

have no confidence in him; he will not do faithful work for me. He has misused my gifts, perverted my talents. Had he traded in my interest upon the capital I intrusted to him, he would now reap eternal life; but he has lived selfishly; his life-work has been a failure. And now he comes unrolling a napkin, and telling me I have my own. He brings no interest. Take the talent from him, for he is no longer worthy of it, and give it to him that has ten talents; for to him that hath shall be given, and from him that has no returns to make, even that which I intrusted to him shall be taken away. And he shall suffer eternal loss. "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

I present these thoughts before the laymen in the church, that they may awaken to a sense of their responsibility. What are you doing, dear reader, with your intrusted talents? If you are burying them in the world, do so no longer. Work for Jesus; put your entire interest into his cause. Self-flattery and self-deception would make you believe that you are doing about right; but how does your life compare with that of Jesus when he was in this world? Jesus has done everything for you; he withheld not even himself. Now show zeal and earnestness in putting all your powers to work for him, and you will receive as your reward the gift of eternal life.

November 27, 1884

Noah's Time and Ours

In the days of Noah "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that 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. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." This is an accurate description of the generation that perished in the waters of the flood; for it was written by inspiration.

"God saw that the wickedness of man was great," and that the "earth was filled with violence." Lawlessness was rife. God had given men his commandments as a rule of life; but the fear of God had well-nigh died out of their hearts. His law was transgressed, and almost every conceivable sin was the result. The wickedness of men was open and daring, and the cries of the oppressed reached to Heaven. Justice was trampled in the dust. The strong not only disregarded the rights of the weak, but forced them to commit deeds of violence and crime.

The same characteristics prevail in our day. Crimes as grievous, as black and terrible, are perpetrated. How many men in high positions, who have been honored as men of talent and integrity, have proved themselves unworthy to be trusted. How many such persons have been detected in fraud, bribery, theft, and even murder. Take up the secular papers, and read the accounts of murder. Many of these crimes are so cold-blooded and causeless that it seems as though men kill one another merely from impulse or for amusement. And these atrocities have become of such common occurrence that they hardly elicit a comment or awaken surprise. They are looked upon as a matter of course, as evils that must be endured.

Before the flood the wickedness of man was great; but this was not all. "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." The purposes and desires of the heart were corrupt from day to day.

Men sometimes flatter themselves that in this enlightened age they are superior in knowledge and talents to those who lived before the flood; but those who think this do not rightly estimate the physical and mental strength of that long-lived race. Growth was slow and firm. Men did not, as at the present time, flash into maturity early, use up their vital forces, and only live out half their days. Their minds were of a high order, and were strong and clear. Had these men, with their rare powers to conceive and execute, devoted themselves to the service of God, they would have made their Creator's name a praise in the earth, and would have answered the purpose for which he gave them being. But they failed to do this. Man corrupted his way on the earth. There were many giants, men of great stature and strength, renowned for wisdom, skillful in devising the most cunning and wonderful work; but in proportion to their skill and mental ability was their great guilt because of unbridled iniquity. They were apostates from God, and were cruel and oppressive to those who were not able to resist them.

God bestowed upon these antediluvians many and rich gifts; but they used his bounties to glorify themselves, and turned them into a curse by fixing their thoughts and affections upon the gifts instead of the Giver. They had goodly trees of great variety and almost without limit; but of these they made temples, where they reveled in scenes of pleasure and wickedness. Gold, silver, and precious stones were in abundance, but they used these also to gratify the desires of their own proud hearts.

These sinful men could not deny the existence of God; but they would have been glad to know that there was no God to witness their deeds, and call them to an account. They delighted to put him out of their minds and hearts. The children were not taught to fear and reverence their Maker. They grew up unrestrained in their desires; and were without principle or conscience. Their minds were absorbed in devising means to rival one another in pleasure and vice. This world was all the Heaven these people wanted. They were slaves to appetite and passion, and the indulgence of every wish was their ambition. They were hasty and violent, and would bear no contradiction. Everything that interfered with their desires was bitterly hated, and quickly moved out of the way.

Yet the whole world was not corrupt. There were faithful witnesses for God. Methuselah, Enoch, Noah, and many others labored to keep alive on the earth the knowledge of the true God, and to stay the tide of moral evil. God declared that his Spirit should not always strive with guilty men, but that their probation should be a hundred and twenty years; if they did not then cease to pollute with their sins the world

and its rich treasures, he would blot them from his creation; and these faithful ministers of righteousness gave the warning message to the world. But the light was not heeded; and the preaching of Noah and his co-laborers impressed hearts less and less. Many, even of the worshipers of God, were beguiled into sin by the bewitching allurements which were constantly before them, and lost their peculiar, holy character. They had not sufficient moral power to stand against the corrupting influences of the age.

By their obstinate resistance to the reproofs of conscience and the warnings of God's prophets, that generation filled up the measure of their iniquity, and became ripe for destruction. The patience of God was exhausted, and he determined to manifest his justice in the utter extinction of the sinful race, who had given themselves up to the almost unrestrained control of Satan. Because mankind had perverted his gifts, he would deface and destroy the things with which he had delighted to bless them; he would sweep away the beasts of the field, and the rich vegetation which furnished such an abundant supply of food, and transform the fair earth into one vast scene of desolation and ruin.

Is not this picture of the antediluvian world reproduced in our time? Man has not grown more pure and holy since the days of Noah. His heart has not changed; it is still "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." The intense worldliness of that generation is exceeded by that of the generation now living. Money is lavishly spent for costly houses, fine horses and carriages, and other expensive articles for luxury and display, while the poor suffer for food and clothing. God intrusts means to his stewards that they may prevent heart-sickening poverty with its attendant ignorance and wretchedness; but they do not realize their duty to their fellow-men. The fear of God is banished from their hearts, and his law is treated with indifference and neglect.

Said Christ, "As in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." God did not condemn the antediluvians for eating and drinking; he had given them the fruits of the earth in great abundance to supply their physical wants. Their sin consisted in taking these gifts without gratitude to the Giver, and debasing themselves by indulging appetite without restraint.

It was lawful for them to marry. Marriage was in God's order; it was one of the

first institutions which he established. He gave special directions concerning this ordinance, clothing it with sanctity and beauty; but these directions were forgotten, and marriage was perverted and made to minister to passion. The pious mingled with the depraved, and became like them in spirit and in deeds. "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose."

A similar state of things exists now in relation to marriage. Marriages are formed between the godly and the ungodly because inclination governs in the selection of husband or wife. The parties do not ask counsel of God, nor have his glory in view. Christianity ought to have a controlling, sanctifying influence upon the marriage relation; but husband and wife are not united by Christian principle; uncontrolled passion lies at the foundation of many of the marriages that are contracted at the present time.

In Noah's day there were men who laughed to scorn his words of warning. They said that there were fixed laws in nature, which made a flood impossible; that Noah was crazy on this subject, and if there were any truth in what he said, the men of renown, the wise, the prudent, the great men, would understand the matter. There was total disbelief in Noah's testimony in regard to the coming judgments; but this unbelief did not prevent or hinder the coming storm. At the appointed time, "the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened," and the earth was washed of its corruption. Only those who found shelter in the ark were saved.

Reader, another storm is coming. The earth will again be swept by the desolating wrath of God; and again sin and sinners will be destroyed. Do you feel that it is an event of little importance? Read some of the utterances of the prophets in reference to the day of God: "Behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." "Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come." "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."

But though this is a day of trouble and distress to the wicked, the righteous will be able to say, "Lo, this is our God;" "we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." The truth will be their shield and buckler. God will be their refuge, and under his wings shall they trust. Says the psalmist: "Because thou hast made the Lord, who is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways."

December 4, 1884

Requisites to a Good Prayer-Meeting

Christians do not always make the public worship of God of sufficient importance. They do not realize their responsibility in the matter. The prayer-meeting, especially, is often dull, spiritless, and unattractive. But it need not be. Even where few love the hour of prayer, it may be made interesting and profitable. The presence of Jesus is not confined to large assemblies. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name," he says, "there am I in the midst of them." "If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven."

We may rest with assurance upon these promises; but if we would have them fulfilled to us, we must live so that God can consistently bless us. If we consciously cherish envy, malice, or any evil in our hearts, our worship is only mockery in the sight of God. We must confess and forsake our sins; we must search our hearts, and see that everything is put away that grieves the dear Saviour; we must be living examples of the transforming grace of God. But when we have done all on our part, we may come to Jesus in humble faith; and he will hear our prayers, for his word is pledged.

If the prayer-meeting is made what it ought to be, it must be preceded by holy living. "The kingdom of God, and his righteousness," must be made the first consideration. To meet the claims of God involves a cross. We are under obligation to honor him by a well-ordered life and godly conversation, and to do all in our power to win others to his service. And to do this requires self-denial. It leaves us no time to devote to selfish plans or pursuits. Frequently business matters receive careful attention, while the interests of the soul are made secondary. While this state of things exists, Christians can never have a convincing power with unbelievers, and the prayer-meeting will be destitute of the presence of the Spirit of God.

Let every one who professes to be a follower of Christ inquire, What am I doing for Jesus? "Ye are the light of the world," said Christ to his disciples. Can you, then, feel clear in inactivity and indolence in the cause of God? There is no such thing as selfishness in religion,--no such thing as a religion that can be enjoyed without

benefiting any one. The truth held in humility will commend itself to the minds and hearts of others. The faith which works by love, and purifies the heart, cannot be kept bottled up like some precious perfume. The light of the Christian is not to be put under a bushel, but on a candle-stick, that it may give light to all that are in the house.

Christian friends, will you consider how you can make the prayer-meeting interesting? You can do this if you will. Do not feel that God will care for the meeting, and you have nothing to do. He has given you ability, and he requires you to use it. In the plan of salvation, man must co-operate with God. He has duties to perform as well as hopes to entertain. In the first place, you are not to forsake the assembling of yourselves together. Be prompt and regular in your attendance. Do not let trifles keep you away from the house of prayer. Though there may be but two or three who meet together, be in your place at the time appointed.

Before leaving home, go to God in secret prayer. Plead with him for his blessing, and He who "seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." With your heart softened by the love of Jesus, go to the meeting, feeling that you are personally responsible for its success. If but few attend, you should feel under double responsibility. You are in the service of God, and should do what you can with your talent, tact, and skill to make his worship interesting. You bestow care and thought on business matters; you labor to make them a success. Would you do less for the worship of God? Are not eternal interests of far greater importance than those that are earthly? In this matter act like intelligent, rational beings. Do not so burden yourselves with temporal cares that you will have no life and energy for the prayer-meeting. God will work with your efforts; but he will not bless you in indolence and carelessness. He speaks to hearts that feel, to consciences that respond to his claims.

When you speak or pray, make an effort to speak in clear tones, loud enough to be heard by all. You do not address your family in a whisper, but in a cheerful, pleasant, audible voice; why not let the same distinct and agreeable tones be heard in the prayer-meeting? If you have never learned to talk aloud when speaking of Jesus, let this be one of your first lessons. If you have been in the habit of praying so that no one present could understand what you said, reserve all such whispered prayers for the closet. How can the prayer-meeting be made interesting, when the prayers offered and the testimonies borne are spoken in so low a tone that only an occasional word can be heard? Who can respond "Amen"? Who can be benefited by such testimonies, however

good and fitting they may be in themselves? Who can know how to speak words of comfort and encouragement, or to help those who need help?

Many prayers and testimonies are as destitute of the Spirit of God as a dry sponge is of moisture; for there is no Jesus abiding in the heart. This makes the prayer-meeting cold and lifeless, and it is no wonder that children dread such seasons. Bring no dull, complaining spirit into the prayer-meeting. Do not compare notes to see how sorrowful a story you can tell. There is enough to talk about without raising one doleful strain. When we are willing to come as little children, conscious of our own weakness, and willing to be instructed by the Divine Teachers, our hearts will be filled with the love of Jesus, and we shall long to speak of his matchless worth. We shall cease to talk of self. Our trials will look so small that we shall forget to mention them. We have many blessings. Let us cultivate gratitude, and talk of the goodness of God.

We should individually know Jesus as a sin-pardoning Saviour. We should be able to testify to his compassionate love, and the virtues of the cleansing stream that washes away the stains of sin. Why not speak often one to another of the blessed hope held out before us in the great plan of salvation? Why not talk of the heavenly inheritance and of the rich promises of God? Jesus lives to intercede for us; then let us be glad. Let us come before the Lord with gratitude and praise in our hearts and on our lips. Let us, with rejoicing, speak to one another "in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody" in our hearts to the Lord. "Whoso offereth praise," says the Creator, "glorifieth me." Let us not withhold the tribute that is his due.

Full to overflowing will be the heart that is transformed by grace. Divine love will be revealed in the manner, in the speech, in the life. The Christian will enjoy communion with his Maker; he will enjoy the precious privileges of his high calling in Christ Jesus. We want calm devotion; we want the courage and hope to be derived from worshiping God with his people; but we must also have activity and energy, for we have a work to do. "Ye are a chosen generation," says Peter, "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."

Let us who have experienced these rich blessings seek to draw others to the Saviour, that they may share the light that shines upon our pathway. Let us point them to Jesus, and say, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

The highest commendation we can receive as Christian workers is to say that we present Christ lifted up on the cross as the object of supreme desire; and how can we do this better than by making religion attractive? Let us show that to us the worship of God is not drudgery and dry form, but spirit and life.

December 18, 1884

God's Dealing with Apostasy

The Lord chose Israel as his peculiar people, and designed that they should be the depositaries of his law. They were to be a distinct and holy nation, separate from the heathen nations around them. They were to preserve the knowledge of the true God, and through them, light from Heaven was to shed its healing beams to all the world. They were to be a living illustration of the superiority of that religion which acknowledges God as the supreme ruler of the universe.

But in the days of Ahab, one of Israel's wicked kings, the people wandered far from God. The heathen Jezebel, whom Ahab married, introduced the worship of false gods,--Baal and the Zidonian goddess Ashtoreth. Through her influence the people were taught that these idol gods were deities, ruling the elements of earth, fire, and water by their mystic power. They forgot that the hills and valleys, the streams and fountains, were in the hand of the living God; that he controlled the sun, the clouds of heaven, and all the powers of nature. They forgot that in the wilderness, in the day of Israel's need, he had listened to the prayers of Moses, and that in obedience to his word living waters gushed from the smitten rock.

The Lord sent his prophet with words of warning and rebuke. He came to the king, through whose influence the people had been led into idolatry, and asserted Jehovah's right to be the only God in Israel. Repeated warnings were given only to be disregarded. The people were captivated by the gorgeous display, and the fascinating rites of idol worship; and they followed the example of their king, and gave themselves up to a degrading and sensual worship, and its intoxicating pleasures. Led by the king and his court, they rejected the moral government of Jehovah, and were unfaithful to their trust as the depositaries of divine truth. The clear light shone upon them; but they preferred to follow their own ways rather than God's ways. And the worship of God, and the good and wholesome laws he had given them, were disregarded.

At length the time came when God could bear with them no longer, and he sent his prophet with a message of denunciation. Elijah came in before the king unannounced, and, lifting his hand toward heaven, solemnly declared: "As the Lord God

of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." Having delivered his terrible message, he departed as suddenly as he came, and was gone, before the astonished king could frame a reply.

The word of the Lord went into immediate effect. Apostate Israel should test the power of the gods to whom they had rendered homage. They had forsaken him who brought them up out of Egypt, and had forgotten the wonderful displays of his power at the Red Sea and in the wilderness; and he withdrew his gracious blessings, which they had taken as a matter of course, without gratitude, without even acknowledging them as his gifts. He cut off the dew and rain of heaven, and what a scene of desolation the parched and barren earth became! Now the people could see that he who created nature could control her laws, and could make them the instruments of blessing or destruction.

The priests of Baal have worshiped nature, and have exalted the created above the Creator. All the blessings they enjoy have been ascribed to nature and to their gods. Now they have an opportunity to prove the power of their gods, and of showing that Elijah's words are false. They have altars and priests, and expensive sacrifices are provided to be offered to their idol gods. If nature, governed by her infallible laws, continues her course in defiance of Jehovah's threatenings, then let nature be exalted above the God of nature. If Baal can bring showers of rain; if he can clothe the fields with verdure, and cause vegetation to flourish; if he can bring forth the harvest in its season, and thus provide food for man and beast, then let the gods of wood and stone be worshiped. Who shall fear the God of Elijah, or tremble at the words of the prophet?

The famine came with all its horrors; but the people did not learn the lesson God would teach them. They did not humble their proud hearts, but began to search for some other cause for their sufferings than the true one. They finally decided that Elijah was the originator of all their misery. He had told them that they were breaking the law of God; that all, both teachers and people, were given to idolatry; and he had announced that the Lord would bear with them no longer. If they could only put Elijah out of the way, their troubles would be at an end. The king searched for him through all the land, and there was no nation or kingdom whither he did not send messengers to seek for the man whom he feared and hated.

But at last the word of the Lord came to Elijah, "Go, show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth." The king and the prophet meet; and the king haughtily

demands, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" The prophet casts back the imputation. "I have not troubled Israel," he replies; "but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim."

It was disregard of the law of God on the part of Ahab and his people that had brought all their calamities upon them; and Elijah hesitated not to declare the whole truth to the guilty king. The world is full of flatterers and dissemblers, both in palaces and in the ordinary walks of life; but how few there are who have the courage that Elijah manifested,—how few who will stand in defense of the broken law of God in opposition to the great men of earth.

The character of Baal, and that of the true God, were fully revealed. In the long famine the Lord had shown himself mightier than the gods of the heathen; and then came the great test on Carmel, when fire fell from heaven, and consumed the sacrifice of Elijah. The people were now ready to admit that the God of Elijah was above every god, and with one accord they exclaimed, "The Lord, he is the God! the Lord, he is the God!" But they must be protected from those who had taught them idolatry. That they might no longer allure souls to ruin, Elijah was directed to destroy the four hundred and fifty false teachers who had led the people to transgress. When Israel had acknowledged allegiance to the God of Heaven, and the priests of Baal were slain, the windows of heaven were opened, and the blessed showers were permitted to fall on the seared and blackened earth.

The character of God has not changed. He is still the mighty God of Israel. "Behold the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance; behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." And he is just as jealous for his law now as he was in the days of Ahab and Elijah.

And how that law is disregarded at the present day! It is made void by many, even among professed Christians. This is a truth-hating, Bible-neglecting, froward generation. By many it is considered as evidence of ability and learning to sneer at the word of God; and in many cases those who are simple enough to take that word just as it reads, and believe it, are subjects of ridicule. But the Lord will not suffer his law to be broken with impunity. There is a time coming "when the lofty looks of man shall be

humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day." Then they will learn the important lesson that the "fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" they will realize that "a good understanding have all they that do his commandments."

January 1, 1885

The Old Year and the New

The old year with its three hundred and sixty-six days of privilege and duty, has passed into eternity; and each day a record has been made in the books of Heaven. Our individual characters are as distinctly and faithfully represented there as are the features of the face on the polished plate of the artist. The Lord never mistakes in his estimate of our acts and motives. Our lives stand revealed before the angels in their true light. If the character is unlovely and debased, if the disposition is harsh, over-bearing, and passionate, these traits will exclude their possessor from Heaven. All our acts, with the motives that prompted them, are weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, and the decisions rendered are just and equal. The Lord does not excuse in one what he condemns in another.

Dear reader, examine your own heart and life in the light of God's word, and ask yourself, "What has my record been for the year that is just closing? What advancement have I made in the Christian life? what victories have I gained? and what have I done to help others, and lead them to Christ?"

God has not placed you in this world to lead an aimless life. He designs that you should be useful, and reach a high standard of moral excellence. To each one some work is given. During the old year have you performed your appointed task with cheerfulness and fidelity, having an eye single to the glory of God? Opportunities and privileges have been granted you; what use have you made of these good gifts intrusted to you by our loving heavenly Father? Have you made yourself a blessing to those around you? Have you done what you could to make them happy and win them to Christ?

All this is a part of your appointed work. God also requires each of us to subdue self, not giving the rein to self-indulgence or appetite, and to form characters that will stand the test of the Judgment and go with us into the future life. To guide us in this work he has given us his law, that great standard of right, which will prove a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Have you been conforming your life to this standard? Have you been forming right habits; a Christlike character, or have vicious habits been

left to grow and strengthen, until they hold mind and heart in bondage?

Let us remember that character is not the result of accident, but day by day it is forming for good or for evil. Great importance attaches to this work of character building; for it is far-reaching in its results. We are builders for time and for eternity. Few realize the power of habit. Inspiration asks, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" and adds, "Then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil." This is a solemn assertion, and may well make us thoughtful. But there is comfort and courage in the reflection that if evil habits acquire such force that it seems almost impossible to turn in the right direction, the power of good habits is equally strong. The results of each day's work, whether the tendency be to elevate us in the scale of moral worth or to push us downward toward perdition, are influenced by the days that have preceded it. Defeat today prepares the way for still greater defeat tomorrow; victory today insures an easier victory tomorrow. Then how careful we should be to see that the habits and characters we are forming are correct and virtuous, fashioned after the Divine Model.

Young friends, restrain your feet from all evil ways. Do not take the first step in that direction; for there is no peace or happiness in them. Temptations may come to you in many bewitching forms to entice you from the path of rectitude; but beware. Evil angels, like a dark cloud, are around the vicious and depraved. They are binding them, body and soul, in firm chains that nothing but the grace of God can unloose. Look at the pale, sickly faces of your young companions who have gone astray. Their vicious practices may be read in their haggard countenances, and in their trembling, staggering gait. Bad habits have fixed a brand upon them which they will carry to the grave. They may reform, and improve their condition physically and mentally, and God will pardon, but the traces of sin will remain.

Men may discipline themselves to do right. Like Daniel they may have a Heaven-born purpose in their hearts that they will not defile soul or body, notwithstanding the degeneracy and corruption of the age. God gave Daniel "knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom." His blessing attended the man who put forth human effort in accordance with the divine will. The same help will still be given to all who pursue a similar course, and with the glory of God in view practice abstinence and self-restraint. The same difference will be seen between them and the self-indulgent that there was between Daniel and his fellows and the other youth in the king's court. There will be the

clear eye and complexion, the firm tread, the strength and vigor of intellect, the keen perception of spiritual truth.

"Make straight paths for your feet," says the apostle, "lest that which is lame be turned out of the way." The path that leads away from God, away from his holy, perfect standard of right, is always crooked and dangerous. Yet during the past year many have been walking in this path of transgression. In many cases they did not start right in childhood and youth, and they have pursued crooked paths all the way along. Not only have they erred from the right way themselves, but through the influence of their example others have been turned aside from the straight, plain path, and have made fatal mistakes.

We do not always understand the sacred meaning attached to our life and our life-work. We do not always realize the power of example. We are brought in contact with others. We meet persons who are erring, who do wrong in various ways; they may be disagreeable, quick, passionate, dictatorial. While dealing with these we must be patient, forbearing, kind, and gentle. Satan works through them to provoke and harass, so that we shall not exhibit a pleasant and lovable disposition. There are trials and perplexities for us all to encounter; for we are in a world of cares, anxieties, and disappointments. But these continual annoyances must be met in the spirit of Christ. Through grace we may rise superior to our surroundings, and keep our spirits calm and unruffled amid the frets and worries of every-day life. We shall thus represent Christ to the world.

It is only through the help of the Spirit of God that we can gain so great a victory. The apostle exhorts his Ephesian brethren: "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.... Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance."

Consecration to God must be a living, practical matter; not a theory to be talked about, but a principle interwoven with all our experience. We should let our light so

shine before others that they, seeing our good works, shall glorify our Father who is in Heaven. We should show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. If the light of Heaven is in the soul, it will be reflected to all around us. I wish all could see this important subject in its true light. There would not then be such thoughtlessness of words and acts, such careless, indolent, irreligious living.

Dear reader, shall the close of the year 1885 find you farther advanced than you are today? Will you put away evil habits? Will you be considerate of others, faithful to do the work of a Christian? If you will carry the principles of right-doing into all the affairs of life, you will find that it will promote health of body, peace of mind, and prosperity of soul. You will have a strength, dignity, and sweetness of character that will have a transforming influence upon others.

We are now entering upon a new year, and may it prove a beginning of years to us. If in the old year we have made failures, let us commence the new by rectifying these errors as far as we can. If the old year has borne into eternity a spotted record of opportunities neglected and privileges slighted, let us see that that of the new year is free from these blemishes. Its days are all before us; let us begin now to make the history of each as it passes such as we shall not tremble to meet in the Judgment. Let us fill each one full of loving, helpful work for others. Let us develop all our powers, and make of ourselves all that God designed we should.

In the keeping of God's commandments there is great reward. A reward awaits the overcomer in the great day, when he shall hear from the lips of our Lord the gracious words, "Well done, good and faithful servant;" and there is also a present reward in the peace and happiness that flow from a conscience at rest, from the sweet assurance that we enjoy the favor of God. "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies." To all who walk in his ways the new year will be crowned with goodness and blessing.

January 8, 1885

The Calling and Character of John

John was one of the first to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah. He had listened to the preaching of John the Baptist, and knew that he was sent as the forerunner of Him who was the Hope of Israel. To John and Andrew the Baptist pointed out Jesus as "the Lamb of God." They immediately sought an interview with the new teacher. If the testimony which they had heard borne of him was indeed true, that it was he who should take away the sin of the world, they would become acquainted with him, and be instructed by his words of wisdom. Jesus saw them following him, and welcomed them to his humble abode. They remained with him that night, and when they left his presence, it was with their faith in his divine character and mission fully confirmed.

Andrew went in search of his own brother, Simon, and brought him to Jesus, with the welcome announcement, "We have found the Messiah." The next day Jesus called Philip to follow him. Philip sought out Nathanael, whom he knew to be a sincere and godly man, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and expressed his firm conviction that in Jesus of Nazareth he had found "Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write."

Andrew, Peter, James, and John were henceforth known as disciples of Jesus. They accompanied him to Jerusalem, and were with him while he preached in the cities and villages of Judea, and in Samaria on his return to Galilee. They heard his teachings, and witnessed the exhibitions of divine power in the miracles which he performed; and day by day their faith increased, that this unassuming Galilean peasant was indeed the promised Messiah, who should restore the kingdom to Israel.

Though they attended upon the preaching of Jesus, and were much in his society, they still pursued their humble calling; but the time came when they were to leave their nets and their fishing boats, and be more closely associated with Jesus. Crowds now attended upon his ministry; and as he taught by the lake of Gennesaret, they so "pressed upon him to hear the word of God," that he entered into Peter's boat, and from it taught the people on the shore. When he had ceased speaking, he said unto Peter, "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." Peter answered that they had toiled

all night, and had taken nothing. Their labors had been fruitless in the usual time for fishing, and there was no human probability of success now; "nevertheless," said Peter, "at thy word I will let down the net." It was done, and the draught of fishes was so great that the net could not contain them, and James and John, the partners of Andrew and Peter, were called to their assistance.

Astonished beyond measure at the unexpected result of his act of simple obedience, Peter impulsively exclaimed, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." But Jesus soothed his excited disciples, telling them that from henceforth they should be fishers of men. An important and solemn work was before them. They were to give up their only means of support, and spend their lives in unselfish efforts to save perishing sinners; but before he called them to this life of self-denial and dependence upon God, the loving Saviour showed them, that, as Lord of Heaven and earth, he was abundantly able to provide for all their wants.

"And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him." From this time they were constantly with Jesus. The Great Teacher passed by the wise men of earth, the talented and the educated, who were accustomed to receive praise and homage as leaders of the people. They were so proud and self-confident in their boasted superiority that they could not be moulded to sympathize with suffering humanity and become co-laborers with the humble Man of Nazareth. It was easier to train and educate these unlearned fishermen for the high and holy work to which he had called them; for they were teachable. They could be elevated to meet the divine standard. They could be taught to subdue self, and could be imbued with correct principles and pure doctrines.

Before they should go out to preach to all the world the good news of salvation through Christ, the disciples were to gain an experience; their fidelity was to be tested.

While teaching them, Jesus was instructing the world. He opened to them sacred truths. He taught them the worth of the soul, that they might feel the importance of laboring for its salvation with zeal and enthusiasm. They must be fitted for the great work which they were to carry forward when Jesus should leave them and return to the Father; and he kept them near him that they might see the character of his labor and be inspired with his spirit.

John was distinguished above the other disciples as the one whom Jesus loved; and he received many tokens of the confidence and love which he enjoyed in so pre-eminent a degree. While not in the least weak or vacillating in character, he had cultivated an amiable disposition and possessed a warm, loving heart. It was his delight to be ever at the side of his Master, listening to his gracious words of instruction, and his deep and genuine affection led him to be a doer as well as a hearer of the word. Day by day his heart was drawn out toward Christ, until he lost sight of self in love for his Master.

His love for Jesus was not a mere human friendship; it was the love of a repentant sinner, who felt his dependence on the pardoning love and transforming grace of his Redeemer. His deep and fervent affection was not the cause, but the effect of Christ's love for him. It did not spring from natural goodness of heart; for he had by nature serious defects of character. But self was hid in Christ. He was closely united to the Living Vine; and though naturally proud, ambitious, and quick to resent slight and injury, he became meek and lowly of heart, a partaker of the divine nature. Such will ever be the result of communion with Christ.

John was willing to be trained as to his manner of working and the spirit in which he should labor. He did not tenaciously cling to his own way, but yielded his will to that of Christ. He loved to contemplate the life of Jesus; and his strong love gave him a deeper, clearer insight into the character of his divine Lord than any of the other disciples possessed. Here he found the great lessons and perfect model of his own life, and he was ever trying to mould his character after the lovely one presented by the Saviour.

The confiding love and unselfish devotion of John present lessons of untold value to the Christian church. God is no respecter of persons. Heaven is a place prepared for those who have a fitness of character for the society of angels. Its lofty seats are not reserved for relatives and particular friends, but are given to those who love most. The beautiful mansions are opened to those who have practiced self-denial, who have brought their wills into subjection to the will of God, and in life and character have conformed to the divine standard. They may have by nature fierce tempers and grave faults, and these may have been fostered and increased by wrong methods of training; but if through the grace of Christ they subdue their unlovely traits, and fight the good fight of faith, they will receive the overcomer's rich reward.

The work before every one of us who have named the name of Christ is to copy the divine Pattern. We must rely in loving confidence upon the merits of Christ, and take hold upon his strength. Day by day we must subdue the evil traits that strive for the mastery. Earnest faith and loving obedience will bring us into as close relationship to Christ as was the loving and beloved John. Those who are faithful in this appointed work will be the acknowledged heroes of the heavenly courts. They reflect a bright light to the world now, for the power of divine grace is made manifest in them; and by and by they will shine forever as stars in the kingdom of Heaven.

January 15, 1885

Lessons in Humility and Love

On one occasion, as Jesus was journeying with his disciples, the twelve disputed among themselves as to which of their number should be greatest. They thought that Jesus, as the promised Messiah, would set up an earthly kingdom, and reign in Jerusalem on the throne of his father David; and John was no less anxious than his brethren to secure the highest place in that kingdom. The disciples did not intend their words to reach the ears of their Master; but he knew their hearts, and embraced this opportunity to give them a lesson in humility.

When they were come into the house, Jesus asked, "What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?" The presence of Jesus, and his question, put the matter in an entirely different light from that in which it had appeared to them while they were contending by the way, and they held their peace. They could now see that selfishness and pride of heart were at the foundation of their desire for the pre-eminence. It is no wonder that shame and self-condemnation kept them silent. But a little while before, Jesus had told them that he was to die for their sakes, and their selfish ambition was in painful contrast to his unselfish love.

When Jesus told them that he was to be put to death, and rise again the third day, he designed to awaken their interest, and draw them out to converse with him on this subject; but, wholly engrossed in their own selfish and ambitious hopes and plans, they failed to comprehend him, and they let this golden opportunity to obtain definite knowledge concerning the great test of faith which awaited them, pass unimproved. Had this important truth deeply impressed their minds, they would have been saved much anguish and despair. Jesus would have spoken to them words that would have afforded consolation and hope in their hour of bereavement and keen disappointment.

There was a radical defect in the characters of the chosen twelve, which must be pointed out and remedied. And Jesus "sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all. 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." Those who possess the spirit of Christ will have no desire to occupy a position above their brethren; and those who are small in their own eyes are the ones who will be accounted great in the sight of God.

This lesson was not lost upon John. He saw his character in a new light. An act was brought to his mind which he had supposed was right, but which he now began to question. "Master," said he, "we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us; and we forbade him." James and John had thought that in forbidding this man to work miracles in the name of Christ, they had had their Lord's honor in view; but they began to see that they had been influenced by wrong apprehensions and a jealous desire for self-preferment. They acknowledged their mistake, and meekly accepted the mild reproof of Jesus: "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."

But though so willing to make a personal application of the lessons of Jesus, James and John were by no means ready to abandon their ambitious designs. Soon after this, accompanied by their mother, they came to Jesus with the petition that they might be permitted to occupy the position of greatest honor in his kingdom. Jesus answered them, "Ye know not what ye ask." He knew the infinite sacrifice that awaited him; that before the kingly throne there was to be humiliation and shame, and the agonizing death of the cross. And yet he would willingly endure the terrible ordeal for the sake of seeing souls saved in his kingdom to enjoy untold bliss throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity.

This was the joy that was set before Christ, the glory that he was to receive, and that the two disciples had unwittingly requested to share. Jesus asked them, "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?" Little did they comprehend the bitter cup of which their Lord spoke, or realize the fiery baptism; but they fearlessly responded, "We are able." Jesus said unto them, "Ye shall indeed drink 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."

"And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two

brethren." They were not less anxious than James and John to secure the chief places in the kingdom of Christ; they were therefore angry with the two brothers for taking, as they thought, an undue advantage. Aware of their ambition and their resentment, Jesus reasoned with them. "Ye know," he said, "that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." There was to be a difference between his kingdom and the kingdoms of the world. "The princes of the Gentiles" were ambitious, and sought for place and power; but their course in this respect resulted from false ideas of greatness and the pride of the human heart. Among the disciples of Christ an entirely different state of things was to exist. One was not to aspire to dominion over his brethren, and to seek to be lord over God's heritage.

"Even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." He, their Master, had set them an example of unselfish care for others. He was Lord of Heaven, and angels obeyed his word; yet he condescended to take upon himself the weaknesses and infirmities of human nature, to live man's example and to die his sacrifice. He did not, while upon earth, choose for himself wealth and honor and pleasant associations; but his life was spent among humble peasants in ministering to the wants of the needy and the afflicted. He did not shrink from contact with the most degraded and sinful; he preached the good news of pardon and peace to all who would accept it on Heaven's gracious and liberal terms. And in their ministry the disciples were to follow his example.

The great lesson which Jesus taught on these occasions is thus expressed by the apostle Paul: "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another." The disciples were in a school in which Christ was teacher; and those who were willing to see their own defects, and were anxious to improve in character, had ample opportunity. They were constantly receiving line upon line, precept upon precept, showing them that meekness, humility, and love were essential to growth in grace, and to a fitness for the work upon which they were soon to enter.

The instruction that Christ gave was not designed merely for the little group that listened to his words, but was recorded for the benefit of all his followers to the close of time. The truths he unfolded are of universal application, and should deeply impress our hearts; for they were never more needed than at the present time. The desire for place

and power was never stronger; and there are many who think of others only to plan to advantage themselves at their neighbor's expense.

The people of God should be firmly united in love, strengthening one another against temptations and trials; but how often Satan diverts the mind to selfish objects. He knows our wrong traits of character, and he takes advantage of every opportunity to arouse them to activity. He excites contention, and leads professed Christians to seek for the supremacy, while through pride and self-esteem he blinds their eyes to their own defects of character. While the disciples were contending among themselves as to which of them should be greatest, they little thought that Jesus heard them; but he read their hearts, and understood their ambitious desires. Just so it is at the present time. Jesus is weighing the character of every individual. If our motives are not pure, if our desire to please self is stronger than our desire for righteousness or to glorify God, we may rest assured that nothing is hidden from his eye, and that the desires of our hearts, as well as the acts of our lives, will be considered in the Judgment.

"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. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

January 22, 1885

The Cripple Healed

After the death of Christ, John became a faithful, ardent laborer for his Master. For a time, judging from the world's standpoint, the Christian faith was well-nigh extinct. Its Author had died on the cross as a malefactor, and his handful of obscure disciples were covered with reproach. But John and his brethren were not disheartened. Obedient to the word of their Lord, they remained in Jerusalem until after the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Then, endued with power from on high, they preached a risen Saviour; and multitudes came out to listen, many of whom were healed of their diseases, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, that name so hated among the Jews.

Soon after the apostles commenced their public ministry, a notable miracle was performed by Peter and John. As they were one day going up to the temple, at the hour of prayer, they saw lying at the Beautiful gate, a poverty-stricken cripple, above forty years of age, whose whole life had been one of pain and infirmity. This poor man had long desired to go to Jesus and be healed; but he was far removed from the scene of the Great Physician's labors, and when at last he prevailed upon kind friends to carry him to the gate of the temple, it was only to find that He in whom his hopes were centered, had suffered a cruel death.

His disappointment excited pity, and he was daily laid at the gate of the temple, that those who went up to worship might be moved to give him a trifle to relieve his wants. As Peter and John were passing, he asked alms of them. The apostles regarded him with compassion. "And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us." The eyes of the beggar were raised to the pitying ones bent upon him. "Silver and gold have I none," continued the apostle, "but such as I have give I thee." The poor man's countenance, which had fallen when Peter declared his own poverty, grew bright with faith and hope as he heard the words that followed: "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."

As Peter took him by the right hand and lifted him up, he felt through his frame the thrilling influence of divine power. "Immediately his feet and ankle bones received

strength. And he, leaping up, stood and walked," and entered with Peter and John into the temple, "And all the people saw him walking and praising God; and they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him."

Seeing the miracle that had been performed, the people flocked together in the temple, and the apostles embraced this opportunity of preaching to them the gospel of Christ. While Peter addressed them in one part of the temple, John spoke to them in another part. The apostles disclaimed the merit of the good deed done, giving all the honor to Jesus of Nazareth, whose instruments they were. They spoke plainly of the great crime of the Jews in rejecting and putting to death the Prince of life; yet they were careful not to drive to despair those whose consciences were aroused. They declared that the Holy Spirit was calling upon them to repent of their sins, and be converted; and that through the mercy of Christ, their transgressions could all be canceled.

As the apostles preached that Christ had been raised from the dead, and that through his death and resurrection he would finally bring up all who sleep in the dust, the Sadducees were deeply stirred. They felt that their favorite doctrine was in danger, and their reputation at stake. The captain of the temple, and some of the other officials were Sadducees; and they arrested the two apostles, and put them in prison, as it was too late for their cases to be examined that night.

The Jews were astonished that the disciples could perform miracles similar to those they had seen wrought by Jesus. They had supposed that when he died, all such wonderful manifestations would cease. But here was this man who had been a helpless cripple for forty years, now free from pain, and rejoicing in the full use of his limbs.

The following day Annas and Caiaphas, with the remaining members of the council, came together, and Peter and John were brought before them. In that very room, and before those very men, Peter had shamefully denied his Lord. All this came distinctly before his mind as he now appeared for his own trial.

The members of the council remembered Peter's cowardice when his Master was before them, and they flattered themselves that he could be intimidated by threats of imprisonment and death. But the impulsive, self-confident Peter who denied Christ in the hour of his greatest need, was a very different man from the Peter who was then

before the Sanhedrim for examination. He was no longer a proud boaster; he had been converted, and had become distrustful of self. He was filled with the Holy Spirit; and through its power he had become firm as a rock, and was ready with modest courage to honor the name he had once disowned. He would embrace this opportunity of redeeming his former cowardice, and removing the stain of his apostasy.

Unable to deny that a miracle had been performed, and yet unwilling to admit that it had been done by divine power, the council demanded, "By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?" Peter replied: "Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel," "be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole."

Peter then referred to the prophetic words: "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner." He made the application of the psalmist's words unmistakably plain. The priests and scribes, who were in authority in the church, were themselves the builders; and, says Peter, He whom you have set at naught, whose divine character you have failed to see, is become the head of the corner. He is the desire of all nations; his is the only "name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

It is difficult for us to comprehend the degree of grace and courage required to enable the apostles to make such a confession of faith before the bigoted and prejudiced rulers of a bigoted and prejudiced people, who had done to the Lord what their wicked hearts had listed, and were ready to repeat their acts of cruelty on the persons of his followers. Peter's fearless avowal of the source whence his strength was obtained, and his bold accusation that in the person of Jesus of Nazareth they had crucified their promised Messiah, appalled these priests and rulers. They had supposed that these ignorant fishermen would be awed and embarrassed when confronted by the priests, the scribes, and the elders; but, amazed at the boldness of the apostles, they "took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."

In order to conceal their perplexity, the priests and rulers ordered the apostles to be taken from the room that they might counsel among themselves. They all agreed that it would be useless to deny that the impotent man had been healed through power derived from the Crucified One. They would gladly cover up this fact by falsehoods; but

the miracle had been performed before many witnesses, and was already widely known. Thousands had embraced the new doctrine, and both Pharisees and Sadducees were convinced that if these teachers were permitted to go unchecked, their own authority and influence would be in greater danger than when Jesus himself was upon earth. They felt that the work of the apostles must be immediately stopped, or so many would believe on Jesus that they would be held guilty of the murder of the Son of God.

The rulers would gladly have destroyed the apostles, but they feared the people, knowing that "all men glorified God for that which was done." So when Peter and John were again summoned before the council, they were dismissed with threats of severe punishment should they continue to teach, or work miracles, in the name of Jesus. Undaunted by the threats of their enemies, these noble men declared that their work had been given them of God; they were his witnesses, and could not forbear to speak those things which they had seen and heard.

As soon as they were released, they sought their brethren, who, knowing the malignity of the Jews, were filled with intense anxiety. The joy of the believers was great that the apostles had escaped uninjured, and all united in thanksgiving and prayer to God. Their petition was not that they might be delivered from the power of their enemies, nor that they might be released from duty because of the peril that threatened them, but that they might have greater strength in the work of the ministry.

"And now, Lord," they prayed, "behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus." They had no desire to glorify self, but sought to exalt Jesus, and to rescue souls from everlasting ruin.

Here is an example of noble, disinterested devotion to the work of God; and what was the result? As their prayers were ascending to Heaven, the answer came. The place where they were assembled was shaken, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. They went forth to their work with renewed zeal, speaking the word of God with convincing power, so that daily there were large additions to the church.

Such courage and firmness, in the path of duty, as was manifested by Peter and John and their co-laborers in the gospel ministry, is rare indeed; yet the church cannot

attain to any great degree of prosperity without it. Their example, with that of others who have been eminent for their good works, should kindle our ardor, and awaken generous emulation. There is a wide field in which to work. Sinners are perishing all around us; and every one who has named the name of Christ should feel under solemn obligation to do everything possible for their salvation. To bring a sinner to Christ, is to elevate, dignify, and ennoble the whole character of such an one, and make him a blessing in the home, in society, and in the church. Is not this a work that is worthy of our highest powers?

January 29, 1885

The Preaching of John

John was a faithful minister of Christ, bearing earnest testimony for his Lord on every suitable occasion. He had not enjoyed the training of the schools, his early life having been passed by the Sea of Galilee in the society of uncultivated fishermen; but, by association with the great Teacher, he had 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."

He had a clear understanding of the character and mission of Jesus. The evidence that the despised Nazarene was indeed the Messiah for whom Israel had so long waited, seemed to him so clear that none need walk in the darkness of error. But the Jews would not believe. The apostle's heart was grieved as he saw that the prejudice and hatred which they so obstinately cherished, were bringing ruin upon the nation, and destroying their hope of everlasting life; that their own blindness, pride, superstition, and ignorance of the Scriptures, were riveting upon their souls fetters that would never be broken. Yet, notwithstanding their stubborn resistance to the truth, John ceased not to warn them, and to present Jesus as their only hope of salvation.

In preaching the words of life, John spoke with great power and feeling. 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. He seemed ever to be imbued with the Holy Spirit. The wisdom with which he spoke caused his words to drop as the dew, softening and subduing the heart. It was his constant aim to bring the minds of the people up to grasp the unseen; yet even believers were unable to fully comprehend the sacred mysteries of divine truth unfolded in his discourses.

John believed in God as a child believes in a kind and tender father. His great love expressed in giving his Son to die for a lost race seemed to the apostle too great for language to express, a mystery which finite minds might not fathom. "Behold," he exclaims, "what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." He was lost in amazement that the plan of salvation, devised at such a cost to Heaven, should be refused by those for whom so great a sacrifice had

been made. His favorite theme was the infinite love of Christ. When speaking on this subject, he forgot self; and the love and trust that pervaded his own heart gave a thrilling power to his words.

He had a keen sense of the love that should exist among Christian brethren; and he urged this love upon his children in the faith as an essential characteristic of the followers of Christ. While the heart is destitute of Christian charity, all pretensions to the Christian name are vain. "He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?"

The apostle was a teacher of practical holiness, giving, in his sermons and writings, unerring rules for the conduct of Christians. He declared in unmistakable terms that to be a Christian is to be Christlike. It is to be pure in heart and correct in morals; in no case should one rest satisfied with an empty profession. His own life was an illustration of his teaching, both in practical holiness and in love to God and man. It was his one great aim to conform to the will of God. He followed his Saviour so closely, and had such a sense of his purity and exalted holiness, that in contrast, his own character appeared exceedingly defective, and his humility was deep and genuine.

Although exposed to persecution and peril, and meeting many hindrances in his work, John was spared to the church for many years. Evil men, instigated by Satan, plotted to cut short the useful life of this man of God; but holy angels protected him from their malice. The church needed his testimony, and he was permitted to stand as a witness for Christ.

The apostle lived to see the gospel he loved preached far and near, and thousands eagerly accepting its gracious offer of pardon. But the joy of seeing sinners brought to Christ was not unmixed with sadness as he saw many come into the church who were not thoroughly converted, and who brought with them pernicious errors. Some were deceivers. While professing to believe the gospel, they denied Christ, and taught false doctrines; and the times were full of peril for the infant church. Some claimed that faith in Christ released them from the necessity of obedience to the law. Others held that the law was binding, also the Jewish customs and ceremonies, and that the observance of these was sufficient to insure salvation without the blood of Christ. They held that Jesus was a good man, like the apostles, but denied his divinity.

John saw the danger to which the church was exposed, and he acted with promptness and decision. The emissaries of Satan sought through misrepresentation and falsehood to stir up opposition and hinder his work. But John had been intimately associated with Christ; he had listened to his teachings and witnessed his mighty miracles; and he bore a convincing testimony that made the falsehoods of his enemies of no effect. He wrote to the churches, exhorting them not to give the leaders in these heresies the least encouragement, and by his personal influence and his zeal for the truth he hedged up their way, and saved many souls from ruin.

To one of the helpers in the gospel, a lady of good repute and extensive influence, he wrote: "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 Godspeed; for he that biddeth him Godspeed, is partaker of his evil deeds."

He also taught, in the most unequivocal terms, the binding force of the law of ten commandments. "Whosoever committeth sin," he said, "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."

The apostle testifies that those who profess to know God, and to be living without sin, and yet break the divine law, give the lie to their profession. His epistles breathe a spirit of love; yet when he comes in contact with this class, he does not hesitate to reprove them sharply, and to warn them of their fearful deception. He says: "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." "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." "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. In this age of boasted liberality, such plainness would be branded as bigotry. "You must have charity," is the cry everywhere, especially from those who profess sanctification. But charity is too pure to cover an unconfessed sin. The apostle teaches that while we should manifest Christian courtesy, we are authorized to call sin and sinners by their right names, and that this is consistent with true charity. While we are to love souls for whom Christ died, and labor for their salvation, we should not make a compromise with sin. We are not to unite with those who are rebelling against divine authority, and call this charity.

The character of God 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 his holy law may say, "I am sanctified;" but to be indeed sanctified, and to claim sanctification, are two different things. John enjoyed the blessing of genuine sanctification; but he did not claim to be sinless. He sought perfection in the way that Christ indicated in his prayer for his disciples: "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth."

The errors that crept into the early church, and threatened its prosperity, have never been extinct. They are peculiarly active at the present time, constituting one of the perils of the last days. And God requires us to stand, as did John in his time, unflinchingly for the truth. With the love of the truth burning in our hearts, we shall "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints."

February 5, 1885

The Apostle John in Exile

The wonderful success which attended the preaching of the gospel by the apostles and their fellow-laborers, increased the hatred of the enemies of Christ. They made every effort to hinder its progress, and finally succeeded in enlisting the power of the Roman Government against the Christians. A terrible persecution arose, and many of the followers of Christ were put to death.

The apostle John was now an aged man, but his zeal and success in the cause of Christ were unabated. The bitterest hatred was kindled against him for his unwavering fidelity. He was the last survivor of those who were intimately associated with Jesus; and his enemies decided that his testimony must be silenced. If this could be accomplished, and the new sect were treated with severity, they thought the doctrine of Christ 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, who had publicly taught theories that 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 enemies were astonished at his wisdom and eloquence; but the more convincing his testimony, the more intense their hatred against him. They could not controvert his reasoning, nor match the power which attended the utterance of truth; and they determined to silence its faithful advocate. By the decree of the emperor, John was banished to the Isle of Patmos, condemned "for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Patmos, the place of John's exile, was a barren, rocky island in the Aegean Sea, which had been chosen by the Roman Government as a place of banishment for criminals. In former years his life had been spent among wood-covered hills, green valleys, and fruitful plains; now his lonely home was amid scenes of desolation that to many would have appeared gloomy and uninteresting. But to him it was otherwise. Although shut away from the busy scenes of life, and from active labor as an evangelist, he was not excluded from the presence of God. He could commune with the King of

kings, and study the manifestations of divine power as revealed in the book of nature, and on the page of inspiration. He had delighted to trace the wisdom and skill of the Creator in the beauties of his handiwork; and now he could see tokens of the same divine Architect in the rocky wilds of Patmos.

In the surroundings of his island home, the exiled prophet held communion with his God. The blue heavens that bent above him on lonely Patmos were as bright as the skies above his own loved Jerusalem. The words of the psalmist seemed appropriate: "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." In the glory of the heavens man sees an illustration of the greatness of the Creator, and is made to feel his own littleness. If he has cherished pride and self-importance because of wealth, talents, or personal attractions, let him here learn to humble his proud spirit as in the presence of the infinite One.

In the sound of many waters,--deep calling unto deep,--John heard the voice of the Creator. The sea, lashed to fury by the merciless winds, represented the wrath of an offended God. The mighty waves, in their most terrible commotion restrained within the limits appointed by an invisible hand, testified of an infinite power controlling the deep,--of One who speaks to the proud ocean, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further," and the waters are prompt to obey his word. In contrast with the power and majesty of Him who holds in his hands the great and wide sea, how feeble is puny man, who glories in his wisdom and strength, and sets his heart against the Ruler of the universe!

By the rocks John was reminded of Christ, the Rock of his strength, in whose shelter he could hide without a fear. They also called to his mind the rocky Horeb, where God spoke his law in the hearing of all the people. The divine Legislator proclaimed his law amid thunders and lightnings, and the thick cloud that hung over the mountain, with a voice as the voice of a trumpet, exceeding loud, that Israel might be impressed with his power and glory, and fear to transgress his commandments. John remembered that one of these ten precepts called upon him to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." And the Lord's day, the day on which Jehovah rested after the great work of creation, and which he blessed and sanctified, was as sacredly observed by him

upon the lonely isle as it had been when he was among the churches, worshipping with them on that holy day.

The rocky waste around him spoke eloquently of the unchangeable character of the divine law; for it testified of the flood which God brought upon the earth because of the transgression of its inhabitants. The rocks thrown up from the great deep, or rent from the solid earth, by the breaking forth of the waters, brought vividly to his mind the terrors of that awful outpouring of God's wrath, and reminded him that it is no light matter for man to sin, to set his perverse will in opposition to the will of his Maker.

Even in this world obedience is for man's highest good; and it is surely for his eternal interest to submit to God and be at peace with him. Of all the creatures that God has made on the earth, man alone is rebellious; yet he alone possesses 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.

As John became more intimately acquainted with the divine character through the works of creation, his reverence for God increased, and he was overwhelmed with the thought of his majesty and greatness. God is not dependent on man for honor. He could sweep every mortal from the face of the earth in a moment of time, and create a new race to people it and glorify his name. The apostle often asked himself, Why do not men, who are wholly dependent upon God, seek to be reconciled to him by willing obedience? He is infinite in wisdom, and there is no limit to his power. He preserves in perfect harmony the grandeur and beauty of the things which he has created. Had sin never entered the universe, there would have been no discord in Heaven or in earth. Disobedience to the law of God has brought all the misery that has existed among his creatures. Then why will not man submit to a Ruler who is so great and powerful,--a Being who is so wise and kind?

In his exile, John calls to remembrance the wonderful incidents that he has witnessed in the life of Christ. In imagination he again enjoys precious intercourse with his Lord; and his heart is comforted. Suddenly his meditations are broken in upon; he is addressed in tones distinct and clear. He turns to see whence the voice proceeds, and lo! he beholds Jesus, whom he loves, with whom he walked and talked, and whose sufferings on the cross he 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, representing the ministers of the churches. Out of his mouth issues a sharp, two-edged sword, an emblem of the power of his word.

John, who has so loved his Lord, and who has so steadfastly adhered to the truth in the face of imprisonment, stripes, and threatened death, cannot endure the excellent glory of Christ's presence, and he falls to the earth as one stricken dead. A divine hand is laid upon the prostrate form, and he hears the words, "Fear not, I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore."

John is strengthened; and there are presented before him in holy vision, the purposes of God for future ages. He is shown the history of the church down through the centuries; he sees her feeble and struggling, almost overborne by her enemies; he sees her wading through bloody persecutions, then emerging from the darkness of papal error, drawing nearer and nearer to the clear light of truth, until at length she looks forth "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

Nor is this all. The attractions of the heavenly home are made known to him. He beholds the beautiful city with its glittering battlements and many mansions. He is permitted to look upon the throne of God, and the white-robed throng of redeemed ones. He hears the music of angels, and the songs of triumph that rise from those who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. His heart is filled with longing for the uninterrupted presence of his Lord. To the cheering promise, "Surely I come quickly," he responds with a glad, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Thus highly favored was this hero of the Christian faith. On the desolate isle, and with the deep sea moaning about him, he was shut in with God; and his gloomy abode proved to him the very gate of Heaven. His enemies thought to silence a faithful witness for Christ; but from the place of exile came the most wonderful revelations, the most thrilling truths ever presented to man. And the promise of God was verified, "Them that honor me, I will honor."

February 12, 1885

A Cheerful Spirit Honors God

The Christian should live so near to God that he may approve things that are excellent, "being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." His heart should be attuned to gratitude and praise. He should be ever ready to acknowledge the blessings he is receiving, remembering who it is that has said, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me."

Many professed Christians dwell too much on the dark side of life, when they might rejoice in the sunshine; they repine when they should be glad; they talk of trials when they should offer praise for the rich blessings they enjoy. They look at the unpleasant things, hoard up the disappointments, and sigh over the griefs, and, as a consequence, grow heavy-hearted and sad, when, should they count up their blessings, they would find them so numerous that they would forget to mention their annoyances. If they would every day take note of the favors that are done them; if they would store their minds with the precious memory of kindnesses received, how much occasion they would find to render thanks and praise to the Giver of all good.

Some Christian wives who have unconverted husbands and children make this a cause of despondency and gloom. They manifest so much more anxiety for their friends than trust in God, that they forfeit the blessings of peace, and joy, and a thankful spirit, which might be theirs. I have heard some say that they did not even care to be saved unless their husbands and children were saved with them. They feel that Heaven would not be Heaven to them without the presence of these who are so dear. But have they an eye single to the glory of God when they cherish this feeling? Oh, no! Such expressions are not pleasing to God, for they place the creature before the Creator. But they are just what Satan delights in, for he can use the evident sadness and discouragement of spirit that grow out of this feeling to make the Christian religion appear unattractive.

Dear Christian sisters, the best thing you can do for your loved ones who are out of Christ is to live before them a life of peace and joy, to show them that in Jesus you find a helper who gives you strength according to your day. Make home happy. In the home circle exercise Christian courtesy, forbearance, and love; but the sadness, the

tears, the distress for your unconverted friends, should be reserved for the closet. Jesus will meet you there, and you may roll all your burdens upon him, the Burden-bearer. Our precious Saviour is the friend of man. He died for these souls; he is waiting to bless and save them. He has claims upon their service, for he has bought them with an infinite price; and he is grieved with their resistance of his claims, their rejection of his offers of mercy, more deeply grieved than you can possibly be.

God has given you, too, a work to do; and because your husband and children refuse to do their duty, will you relax your efforts in his cause? Should not the very fact that these who are so dear to you are ignoring his just claims upon them arouse you to greater diligence, that, so far as possible, you may supply their deficiency?

Wives, mothers, cultivate trust in God. He does not want you to carry a constant load of anxiety and care. Rise above your trials; look away from them to the blessings you are receiving. Fix the mind upon the mansions Jesus has gone to prepare for those that love him. Cultivate clear perceptions of truth, unselfish purposes, and a desire to do others good and make them happy.

"I am persuaded," says Paul, "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." Again he says: "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."

As you read these strong, brave words from one who suffered so much for his faith in Christ, and yet counted his severest trials as light afflictions, enduring but for a moment, will you not resolve to possess your soul in patience amid the petty annoyances of every-day life, that are often so irritating and so hard to bear? Will you not resolve that these things shall not interrupt your communion with God and separate you from his love?

Do not allow the perplexities and worries of every-day life to fret your mind and cloud your brow. If you do, you will always have something to vex and annoy. Life is what we make it, and we shall find what we look for. If we look for sadness and trouble,

if we are in a frame of mind to magnify little difficulties, we shall find plenty of them to engross our thoughts and our conversation. But if we look on the bright side of things, we shall find enough to make us cheerful and happy. If we give smiles, they will be returned to us; if we speak pleasant, cheerful words, they will be spoken to us again.

When Christians appear as gloomy and depressed as though they thought themselves friendless, they give a wrong impression of religion. In some cases the idea has been entertained that cheerfulness is inconsistent with the dignity of the Christian character; but this is a mistake. Heaven is all joy; and if we gather to our souls the joys of Heaven, and as far as possible express them in our words and deportment, we shall be more pleasing to our heavenly Father than if we were gloomy and sad.

It is the duty of every one to cultivate cheerfulness instead of brooding over sorrow and troubles. Many not only make themselves wretched in this way, but they sacrifice health and happiness to a morbid imagination. There are things in their surroundings that are not agreeable, and their countenances wear a continual frown that, more plainly than words, expresses discontent. These depressing emotions are a great injury to them healthwise; for by hindering the process of digestion, they interfere with nutrition. While grief and anxiety cannot remedy a single evil, they can do great harm; but cheerfulness and hope, while they brighten the pathway of others, "are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh."

Christ came to restore to its original loveliness, a world ruined by sin. The work of the fall will be undone. All that was lost in Adam's transgression will be regained through the sufferings and death of Christ. In the new earth there will be no sin nor disease. All blemishes and deformity will be left in the grave, and the body will be restored to its original perfection. We shall wear the spotless image of our Lord, for "he shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body."

The development of Christian character, tending toward this state of perfection, is a growth toward beauty. The character is expressed in the countenance. The evil that is in the heart hangs out its sign, and we read at a glance coarseness, unrest, selfishness, cunning, deceit, lust, falsehood, envy, pride, and malice. As the heart becomes transformed by the renewing of the mind, the graces of the Spirit leave their impress on the face, and it expresses the refinement, delicacy, peace, benevolence, and pure and tender love, that reign in the heart, and constitute the inward "adorning," which is in the

sight of God of "great price."

The apostle Paul exhorts: "Rejoice evermore; pray without ceasing." Give "thanks always for all things unto God," "singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

February 19, 1885

The Pharisee and the Publican

"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner."

In the story of the Pharisee and the publican, Christ teaches one of the most important lessons that we have to learn,--the danger of self-flattery. Two classes of worshipers are here brought to view. The class represented by the Pharisee is regarded as eminent for piety, possessing great excellence of character. The other class, represented by the publican, is much less respectable in the eyes of the world. But is this estimate a correct one? No; it is the exact opposite of truth,--the exact opposite of the estimation in which they are held in Heaven. Both the Pharisee and the publican are under the eye of the heart-searching God, who is no respecter of persons. Wealth and titles, talent and reputation, are no recommendation to his favor. "The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."

The relative estimate which the Pharisee and the publican place upon themselves is as false as that which others place upon them. Both resort to the temple at the hour of public prayer, professedly to worship God; but what a contrast there is in the motives that actuate them, and in their feelings, as expressed in their prayers!

The Pharisee went, not because he felt his great need of God, but because he wanted to be thought a very pious and excellent man. He was perfectly self-satisfied, and thought that others looked upon him with the same complacency with which he regarded himself. He did not present the offering of a broken and contrite heart. He did not come with confession of sins, and with love flowing out in words of gratitude for the great mercy of a covenant-keeping God. He came not to present his needs. He made

no supplication; he expressed no want. Standing in the temple of God, he dared to boast of his own goodness, and to measure himself with other men, and claim superiority. He began his self-worship: "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." He then proceeded to enumerate some of his own good deeds: "I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess"

The Pharisee went down to his house destitute of the divine blessing; but his self-love and vanity were fed. He was terribly self-deceived. He judged himself according to a human standard, exalted self, and covered his sins from his own sight. But God abhorred him. The publican thought himself a very wicked man, and others looked upon him in the same light; but there was nothing in his life so offensive to Heaven as the self-complacency expressed in the boastful, self-righteous prayer of the Pharisee.

The publican went up to the temple with other worshipers; but he soon separated himself from them, as unworthy to mingle with them in their devotions. Standing afar off, he "would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast" in bitter anguish and self-abhorrence. He thus expressed his sense of his distance from God, and of his unworthiness to come into his presence. He felt that he had offended God, that he was sinful and polluted before him. He could not expect help from those around him; for they looked upon him with undisguised contempt. Feeling that he had no claim on the mercy of God, he looked forward with terrible dread to the Judgment, when every case will be decided. In his great need, he finds voice to cry out earnestly, "God, be merciful to me a sinner."

The course taken by the publican is the only one that will secure pardon and peace with God. He did not compare his sins with those of others who were worse than himself. He came before God with his own burden of guilt and shame, as a transgressor of God's law, a sinner in thought, in word, and in act. He acknowledged that should he receive punishment for his sins, it would be just and right. Mercy, mercy, was his only plea. Oh, for the assurance of pardon, giving peace and rest to the sin-sick soul!

The self-abasement manifested by the publican is wholly acceptable to God. To know ourselves is to be humble. Self-knowledge will take away all disposition to entertain the Most High with a recital of our own excellent qualities. Realizing our sins and imperfections, we shall come to the feet of Jesus with earnest supplication, and our petitions will not be passed by unheard. Ezra had the true spirit of prayer. Presenting his

petition before God for Israel, when they had sinned grievously in the face of great light and privileges, he exclaimed, "I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God; for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens." Ezra remembered the goodness of God in again giving his people a foothold in their native land, and he was overwhelmed with indignation and grief at the thought of their ingratitude in return for the divine favor. His language is that of true humiliation of soul, the contrition that prevails with God in prayer. Only the prayer of the humble enters into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly; but the proud he knoweth afar off." "To this man will I look," saith the Lord, "even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word."

The Pharisee expressed his self-commendation in the form of thanksgiving. "God, I thank thee," he says, "that I am not as other men are." But there was no real gratitude in his heart. His self-love had excluded every such generous principle. He neither loved God supremely nor his neighbor as himself; yet before God and men he could boast loudly of his own goodness. Thus he insulted God, while he deceived men in regard to his true character.

There are many now who entertain the same feeling of self-congratulation that the Pharisee had. Does this feeling rise in your heart in any degree, dear reader? If so, you may be assured that while you commend yourself, the condemnation of God rests upon you. You may be thought excellent in character. Your name may be registered on the church-book; but it is not written in the Lamb's book of life. If a special work has been done for any of us, it is through the grace of God alone. Man is to take no credit to himself; for he has nothing which he has not received.

Let us examine ourselves, and see how many vain thoughts dwell within our hearts, how much we love praise, how selfishness is shown in our manners, how often we misjudge the character and motives of others, or feel contempt for them because their appearance is not prepossessing. Let us think how our words sound in the ears of God, how our selfish thoughts look in his sight, when we judge and condemn others, who may be better in heart and purpose than ourselves.

From the parable of the Pharisee and the publican we learn that to profess excellence which we do not possess, will exclude us from the grace which alone can

make us of value in the sight of God. The teachings of Christ give no countenance to a spirit of self-righteousness which would exalt self over others. Vanity is never the result of virtue and true piety. "Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

February 26, 1885

Sanctification--The True and the False

The parable of the Pharisee and the publican was given for the benefit of those who "trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." This spirit is the hidden rock upon which thousands are wrecking their hopes of Heaven; and the Savior here shows how offensive it is in the sight of God. Many are self-deceived, filled with spiritual pride and vanity. They do not see the enormity of sin, and go on parading their own virtues, those of poor, fallen humanity, before the Majesty of Heaven, whose eyes read the intents and purposes of the heart, and see disobedience and grave defects of character in these who extol self and claim superior goodness.

John defines sin to be the "transgression of the law." Paul says: "By the law is the knowledge of sin." "I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came [home to the conscience], sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me."

Jesus came into the world because the human race were under sentence of death for their transgressions. His work was to bring them back to allegiance to the law of God, which Paul declares is "holy, and just, and good." He kept his Father's commandments. Those who by repentance and obedience testify their appreciation of the salvation he came to bring, will show the work of the Spirit on their hearts. And the test is the life. "By their fruits ye shall know them." "He that saith, I know Him," says John, "and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

Yet, notwithstanding these inspired testimonies as to the nature of sin, many claim to be sanctified, and incapable of sin, while they are constantly transgressing the law of God. Through these the enemy is doing a work of deception. They could never boast so loudly of their own goodness, had they not rejected God's great standard of right and wrong, and set up in its place one of their own devising. Judging themselves by their own imperfect standard, they dare to say, "I am without sin."

The "holiness people" and the Salvation Army have a great deal of what Paul denominates "bodily exercise," that "profiteth little." They follow impressions and claim to be taught of the Spirit; and like the fanatics that troubled Luther, they place these impressions above the written word of God, while they trample upon the divine law because their hearts are not in harmony with its precepts. The Spirit and the word agree. The Spirit of Christ leads into all truth; but there is in these spirit-taught ones an enmity against the plainest statements of the Bible. The spirit that guides them leads to the believing of lies rather than the truth, showing that their teacher is the great master spirit that "worketh in the children of disobedience."

Those who have had the light on the law of God, and yet have refused to accept that light, are not under the influence of the Spirit of God, whatever professions they may make or whatever wonderful works may be done through them. They are deceived by the sophistry of Satan. But they love his deceptions; for he exalts self, and leads them to trust in their own goodness; and this is more pleasing than to see themselves as they appear before a just and holy God.

Said Christ: "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."

These may profess to be followers of Christ, but they have lost sight of their Leader. They may say, "Lord, Lord;" they may point to the sick who are healed through them, and to other marvelous works, and claim that they have more of the Spirit and power of God than is manifested by those who keep his law. But their works are done under the supervision of the enemy of righteousness, whose aim it is to deceive souls, and are designed to lead away from obedience, truth, and duty. In the near future there will be still more marked manifestations of this miracle-working power; for it is said of him, "and he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men."

We are surprised to see so many ready to accept these great pretensions as the genuine work of the Spirit of God; but those who look to wonderful works merely, and are guided by impulse and impressions, will be deceived. My brother, my sister, will

you weigh sin in your own balances, or in the balances of Heaven? Realizing its true nature, you will see your undone condition, and will lay hold of offered mercy. But those who feel that their offenses are very small, will never be able to comprehend the perfection of Christ, nor the great sacrifice he has made to rescue them from the thralldom and degradation of sin.

No one who claims holiness is really holy. Those who are registered as holy in the books of Heaven are not aware of the fact, and are the last ones to boast of their own goodness. None of the prophets and apostles ever professed holiness, not even Daniel, Paul, or John. The righteous never make such a claim. The more nearly they resemble Christ, the more they lament their unlikeness to him; for their consciences are sensitive, and they regard sin more as God regards it. They have exalted views of God and of the great plan of salvation; and their hearts, humbled under a sense of their own unworthiness, are alive to the honor of being accounted members of the royal family, sons and daughters of the King Eternal.

Those who love the law of God cannot harmonize in worship or in spirit with the determined transgressors of that law, who are filled with bitterness and malice when the plainly revealed truths of the Bible are taught. We have a detector which discriminates between the true and the false. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

The only safe position for any of us to take is to consider ourselves sinners, daily needing divine grace. Mercy through the atoning blood of Christ is our only plea. But let us shun Phariseeism. When it suits his purpose best, Satan can appear as an angel of light. But he presents before men, not the meekness and humility of the Christian religion, but their own good deeds and wonderful impressions. We can meet his specious temptations only with the word of God. Those who have the truth as it is revealed in that holy word, must stand fast on the platform of truth, relying on, "It is written." The question for us each to settle is, "Am I exalting self, or am I exalting God and his grace, seeking salvation through Christ alone?"

God has great blessings to bestow upon his people. They may have the "peace of God, which passeth all understanding." They "may be able to comprehend with all saints [not sinners, who are transgressors of God's law] what is the "breadth, and length, and depth, and height," of the love of Christ, being "filled with all the fullness of God."

But it is only to those who are meek and lowly of heart that Christ will thus manifest himself. The ones whom God justifies are represented by the publican rather than by the self-righteous Pharisee. Humility is Heaven-born; and none can enter the pearly gates without it. All unconsciously, it shines in the church and in the world, and it will shine in the courts of Heaven.

March 5, 1885

Christ Our Model

"Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are Gods." "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

If these rules were observed, there would not be that constant strain after the things of the world that makes life a burden in its intensity; but in its place would be the rest and peace that comes of seeking first the "kingdom of God, and his righteousness." Many professed Christians seem to think that no effort on their part is needed in order to insure growth in grace, and as a consequence they are indolent and listless in spiritual things. But they are entertaining a mistaken view. They are called upon to be a peculiar people, a holy nation, a royal priesthood. God has opened to them the treasures of his word. Christ is to be made unto them wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption; and he would have them communicate the rich treasures of his grace to the world.

It will require a constant effort on our part to overcome the temptations we must daily meet. The world is against us; nominal Christians are against us; and Satan is against us, determined to resist every effort we make to advance in the divine life. He is watching every opportunity to interpose himself between our souls and our Creator. He will crowd in numberless cares, that we may find no time for reading the Bible and prayer. But we are not left alone in our warfare against the powers of darkness, and we should not allow ourselves to be separated from the Source of our strength.

If we would grow up into Christ our living head, we must make prayer a daily necessity, not only in the closet, but in the family also. It is because we pray so little that our prayers are not more urgent and intelligent. In prayer we commune with God, and become acquainted with him. What a privilege it is that we may draw near to him by faith, presenting the promises given in his word. Let us encourage and refresh our souls with these sure promises, pleading our great need as the reason why they should be fulfilled. Let us learn the simple art of faith, every day understanding better how to approach our heavenly Father. Let us observe his commandments as obedient children,

and then rest upon his word, trusting that he will surely do as he said he would. Jesus loves us; and if we commit the keeping of our souls to him, he will not disappoint our hopes. He is waiting to be gracious to those who feel that they are weak and unworthy. He loves to bless them; for they will appreciate his blessings. But he will not intrude his presence; he will not force the will nor compel obedience.

Jesus may seem far off, and Satan may urge that he does not care for one like you. He may point to your hesitating, stumbling walk, and tell you that the God of Heaven will not condescend to answer your broken prayers. It is then that you may present the mighty argument of the cross: "Jesus died for me. He is my Redeemer. I shall not be ashamed or confounded; for I will cling to him, and trust in his righteousness."

Become acquainted with the Scriptures, and learn to rely implicitly upon them, that when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord may lift up a standard against him. Few have the power of faith and true godliness, because, in a majority of cases, the God-given powers are devoted to worldly plans and enterprises, and the follies and fashions of social life, to the neglect of the things of God. The inventive powers are taxed for dress and the adornment of the home; but the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price, is made a matter of secondary importance.

We cannot afford to fritter away the golden moments in studying the fashions, or in following the customs of those whose god is this world. Precious probationary time should not be devoted to needless ornamentation; yet the Christian should not be careless and slovenly. It is our duty to be neat and tasty in person, dress, and habits; and to keep our houses and premises in order. Heaven is a place of perfect order, and as far as possible we should copy the heavenly model. We are representatives of Christ; then let us not dishonor him by our defective lives. Let us see that our tastes, our habits, our conversation, and our associations are in accordance with our high calling as sons and daughters of the King eternal.

Many take a superficial view of the character and mission of Christ. They imagine that he was devoid of warmth and sunniness; that he was gloomy, stern, unbending, severe, and joyless. This is the Jesus that was presented to Martin Luther. He was taught, as the Catholic Church has instructed so many of its votaries, that our

Lord is an austere being, who delights in the sufferings of his creatures; that he is pleased with long fasts, and penances of the most painful and revolting character. And in many cases the whole religious experience is colored by these gloomy views, and the whole life warped.

It is often said that Jesus wept, but that he was never known to smile. Our Saviour was indeed a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; for he opened his heart to all the woes of man. "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." But though his life was self-denying, and shadowed with pain and care, his spirits were not crushed. His countenance did not wear an expression of grief or repining, but ever one of peaceful serenity. His heart was a well-spring of life, and wherever he went he carried rest and peace, joy and gladness.

Our Saviour was deeply serious and intensely in earnest, but never gloomy or morose. The lives of those who imitate him will be full of earnest purpose; they will have a deep sense of personal responsibility. Levity will be repressed; there will be no boisterous merriment, no rude jesting or joking. But the religion of Jesus gives peace like a river. It does not quench the light of joy; it does not restrain cheerfulness, nor cloud the sunny, smiling face. Our lives should breathe the fragrance of Heaven, while we obey the injunction of the apostle,--"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

The soul is exalted and transformed by dwelling, not on self and on the sorrows and hardships that surround us, but on the glories of the eternal world. Unbroken communion with God gives increased knowledge of his truth and will, and of the soul's susceptibilities and powers; and the result will be unselfish motives and right traits of character. There will be no darkness or gloom to reflect to others. More of Heaven in men on earth would make religion attractive, and win souls to Christ.

Christ came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; and when his love reigns in the heart, we shall follow his example. If we keep uppermost in our minds the unkind and unjust acts of others, we shall find it impossible to love them as Christ has loved us; for there are few persons who do not on close acquaintance reveal unamiable traits of character. Even the best of us have these unlovely traits; and in selecting friends we should choose those who will not be driven away from us when they learn that we are

not perfect. Mutual forbearance is called for. We should love and respect one another notwithstanding the faults and imperfections that we cannot help seeing; for this is the Spirit of Christ. Humility and self-distrust should be cultivated, and a patient tenderness with the faults of others. This will kill out all narrowing selfishness and make us large-hearted and generous.

If you have perplexities and troubles--and these are the common lot of mankind--do not tell them to others, and thus shadow their path. Do not go for help to every source but the right one; but tell Jesus everything; take it to the Lord in prayer, and then believe that he accepts you and your burden. Faith is the gift of God, but the power to exercise it is yours. A single earnest expression of faith strengthens faith; but every expression of doubt confirms doubt, and helps to gather about your soul the dark shadows of unbelief. Then do not open your soul to Satan's temptations by cherishing and expressing the doubts that he insinuates. Talk faith and courage. Press to the light; and bright beams from the Sun of Righteousness will dispel clouds and darkness, and sweet peace will pervade the soul.

"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things," and make them your rule of life. And "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

August 6, 1885

The Power of the Truth

Text: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." John 17:17-19.

This prayer of the world's Redeemer comprehends much more than has been thought, and I wish that the truths here taught might be impressed upon all our hearts. "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." Every one of us who professes to believe in Christ is embraced in this prayer, and has a responsibility which it is impossible to throw off. We are required to be sanctified, not simply that we may be benefited personally, but that we may help others.

In these days it is difficult for the truth to find access to the human heart. You know that on one occasion when Jesus entered into the temple, he found there "those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting." Thus the sacred courts of the Lord's house were converted into a place of merchandise, where greed and avarice flourished. As the eye of Jesus swept over the scene of busy traffic, divinity flashed through his humanity. He "cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves." The traffic suddenly stopped, and the throng of buyers and sellers fled as though a company of armed men were pursuing them. With bated breath the priests and rulers looked upon him who was clothed with such majesty and power; and, as though a flash of light from Heaven had revealed the truth to their beclouded minds, the conviction forced itself upon them that this was no common man.

As Christ found it difficult to obtain access to the temple courts because they were lumbered with things that should never have been there, so is the human heart closed against the truth because it is lumbered with the cares and burdens of this world. It has received the worldly mould. The prince of the powers of darkness is playing the game of life for the soul. He is working with every device that he can invent, with all

deceivableness of unrighteousness, to separate man from God. The lust of the flesh, the pride of life, the vanities of the world, have taken possession of the soul-temple, and no room is left for Jesus. But when the heart is once brought under the power of the truth, even its secret recesses feel the renewing and transforming influence. To those who have lumbered the soul-temple with worldly cares, and desecrated it with buyers and sellers, we would say, Take these things hence, and let the truth have possession of the soul. Jesus stands knocking at your heart, pleading, "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." Will we let the Lord of glory enter? Will we make room for the truth of heavenly origin?

Jesus says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." If you will make room for Jesus, and cleanse the soul from the defilement of sin, you may enjoy perfect peace with God. But some will ask, How am I to do this? By an entire surrender of your will and your way to God. The peace of God will not rule in your hearts while you retain your worldly ambitions and indulgences. The passions that have held possession of the soul must be removed. When we profess the truth, it is our privilege and duty to show to the world that it has had a transforming power upon the life and character.

Why is it so hard for many to walk uprightly before God? It is because they are trying to serve two masters, a thing which the Saviour declares no man can do. If they would give themselves to Jesus, he would take possession of the soul, and every wrong desire, every false ambition, every evil purpose, would be brought into subjection to the will of God. This is the sanctification that Christ meant when he said, "I sanctify myself." This is the sanctification that he desired for his disciples when he prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth." We profess to be sons and daughters of the Lord; the chosen ones of Christ, of whom he says, "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, ever as I am not of the world." What right have we to let the things of the world take possession of the heart and engross our energies? What right have we to make the heart a highway for the world's travel, or to imitate its customs and practices? We cannot serve God and mammon. We must come out from the world, and be separate. Its fashions are not to control us; its principles are not to be our principles.

If the worldly element is allowed to take possession of the heart, things that are not approved of God will seem right, and the religious life will be mixed with error. The

perceptions will not be clear and distinct to understand the word and will of the Lord. There is danger of pursuing this course of disobedience until the wrong is gilded over, conscience is blunted, and the self-deceived one believes himself on the highway of holiness when he is on the downward road to perdition.

The work of the overcomer is a close and trying work. We have individually to fight the good fight of faith, and war against the powers of darkness; for when the truth commences the work of purifying the soul-temple, the conflict between good and evil begins in earnest.

A minister who is professedly preaching the gospel, in conversation with a sister learned that she was conscientiously keeping the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. "Well," said he, "you are right so far as the argument is concerned. Saturday is the true day to keep; the Bible is clear on that point. But," he added, "I do not keep it, because it would create confusion. The Lord will overlook this in me because it is so inconvenient, so contrary to the custom of society. And then I do not think it really makes any difference what day I observe, because I am sanctified; you know that makes every difference. But stick to your faith, for you have the right of it." Here is a man who claims to be sanctified while living in disobedience to the word of God; but what is there that sanctifies outside of the truth?

Said Christ: "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it." Two classes are here represented,--those who are sanctified through the truth, and the many who profess to be sanctified while knowingly breaking the law of God. The true foundation is the commandments of God; and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Men may erect a standard of righteousness of their own aside from that presented in the word of God; but their hope, like the house built upon the sand, will surely fall.

We are to listen to what God says, and be obedient to his word. It is not long sermons or prayers, it is not the things which we say, but it is the things we do, the

characters we form, that makes us acceptable to God. The truth should influence our daily life, and then when we associate together the tongue will not run upon unimportant, frivolous things.

"Ye are the light of the world," says Christ. Therefore "let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." In the death of Christ the priceless treasures of Heaven were poured out to humanity. Can we keep such precious riches to ourselves? Oh! we should lift up the risen Saviour before the people, and tell them what a dear Redeemer we have found. We are his representatives; let us walk worthy of our calling. The reason why we have no greater influence to win souls to Christ is that we are not doers of the word. When we do the works of Christ, when the truth becomes a living principle in the soul, we shall have power with God and men. Others will take knowledge of us, that we have been with Jesus and learned of him, and our very presence will be an influence for good. We shall not dare to sin, lest others follow our example of folly.

"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." Says the True Witness, "I know thy works." Then let us be careful that we are not half-way Christians. We can be brought into perfect harmony with God and his truth; but there is much for us to resist. We should search our Bibles, and learn what the Scriptures say in relation to our duty.

Said Christ: "Take ye heed, watch and pray; ... for the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch." Not one of us is excused from the duties here enjoined. We are to watch every avenue of the soul, lest Satan come in and desecrate the temple of the heart, which should be wholly consecrated to God. We are to watch lest passion take possession of the soul, to watch lest selfish thoughts are cherished. The reason why there is not more vitality and power in the church is that we do not work and watch as we should. We should stand as faithful sentinels at the post of duty. I pray that the grace of Christ 5/come into our hearts, and that we may be ever watching for opportunities to do good.

One who is truly converted will find no satisfaction in devoting God-given probationary time to the preparation of apparel, the outward adorning of the body. To

such, the pride of life, the vanities and follies of the world, will be a very inferior matter. They will ever feel, I am in the presence of God; his eye discerns every thought of vanity, every attempt to extol and glorify self. If the time that is wasted in vain attempts to make the outward appearance attractive, were devoted to the study of the Bible, to earnest prayer for the grace of Christ, the meek and quiet spirit which is the heavenly adorning of the soul, and will never perish, how easy, how pleasant, would the service of Christ become. The promise would be fulfilled, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you."

There is a constant warring of the flesh against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. The pollutions cherished in the soul war against the pure, sanctifying truth. Some have advanced the idea that if we are once in grace, we are always in grace. But our work is to overcome every day. Temptations press upon every hand; do we resist them, and come off victor in the name of Christ?

When we become children of God, our names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and they remain there until the time of the investigative Judgment. Then the name of every individual will be called, and his record examined by Him who declares, "I know thy works." If in that day it shall appear that all our wicked deeds have not been fully repented of, our names will be blotted from the book of life, and our sins will stand against us. If the professed believer becomes self-confident, if in word or spirit he breaks the least precept of God's holy law, he misrepresents Jesus, and in the Judgment the awful words will be spoken, "Blot out his name from the book of life; he is a worker of iniquity." But the Father pities the self-distrustful, God-fearing soul, harassed though he may be with doubts and temptations. Jesus pleads for him, and confesses his name before the Father and his holy angels.

He who is to be our judge knows our works. He understands every temptation and trial, and I am glad of it. He knows the circumstances that surround every soul. He knows our weaknesses, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. "If any man sin," says John, "we have an advocate with the Father! Jesus Christ the righteous." Oh, how precious is the name of Jesus, and how precious every name that he confesses before the Father! When our gracious Redeemer says of the poor penitent, "He is mine; I have graven his name on the palms of my hands," the answer comes, "I will not blot his name from the book of life, but his sins shall be remembered against him no more."

The promise is, "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me." There is power in the blood of Christ to remove sin. Poor, trembling sinner, today you are the prisoner of hope. Jesus lives, and because he lives you may live also.

Said the angel of God to John, as he beheld the multitudes of the redeemed gathered about the throne: "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." Through the blood of the Lamb it is the privilege of every one of us to make our life a glorious victory. We shall have trials and difficulties to meet, but if we sanctify ourselves by obedience to the truth, the God of Israel will be our strength. "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord, his going forth is prepared as the morning." The Lord wants to give power to his people. He wants them to rejoice in the God of their salvation. He wants them to be conformed to his image, that when he comes, he may receive them to himself. If we lay hold upon the arm of Infinite Power, it will sustain us through every conflict and discouragement of life, and will finally place a crown of glory upon our heads, and bring us to share the eternal reward of the righteous.

"Blessed are they that do His commandments," says the Saviour, "that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it, and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it." "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth," "but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

August 13, 1885

Sabbath-School Duties in the Camp-Meeting and at Home

Dear brethren and sisters who assemble at our camp-meetings, we wish to address to you a few words in the interest of our Sabbath-schools. This is one of the important branches of the work, and should not be left to chance, or to hap-hazard management. If these schools are conducted as they should be, the efforts made in the pulpit to present the truth in a manner to win souls may be deepened; and if the labor bestowed is followed up by interested workers in the Sabbath-school, much good will be accomplished. But it is not enough to have the Sabbath-school move like well-regulated machinery. There should be practical workers; the teachers should be of that class who have a living connection with God, who have an appetite for study themselves, who will give time and moral earnestness to their work, and who will not be satisfied unless they see something accomplished.

There should be a living, growing interest in storing the mind with Bible truth. The precious knowledge thus gained will build a barrier about the soul. Although assailed with temptation, there will be a firm trust in Jesus, through the knowledge of him who hath called them to glory and to virtue. Let the teachers enter heart and soul into the subject-matter of the lesson. Let them lay plans to make a practical application of the lesson, and awaken an interest in the minds and hearts of the children under their charge. Let the activities of the scholars find scope in solving the problems of Bible truth. The teachers may give character to the work, so that the exercises will not be dry and uninteresting.

Teachers do not make as earnest work as they should of the Sabbath-school exercises; they should come close to the hearts of the scholars, by aptness, by sympathy, by patient and determined effort to interest every scholar in regard to the salvation of the soul. These exercises should become altogether what the Lord would have them,-- seasons of deep conviction of sin, of heart reformation. If the right work is done in a skillful, Christ-like manner, souls will be convicted, and the inquiry will be, "What shall I do to be saved?" In some Sabbath-schools, positions are given to persons who have no aptitude to teach. They have no earnest love for souls. They do not half understand the practical bearings of the truth themselves. How, then, can they lead the children and

youth to the living fountain? Let the teachers themselves drink deep of the water of salvation; and then angels of God will minister to them, and they will know just what course the Lord would have them take to win the precious youth to Jesus. It requires aptitude, a will, perseverance, a spirit such as Jacob had when he wrestled in prayer and exclaimed, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." When the blessing of God rests upon the teachers, it can but be reflected to those under their charge. Never place the youth under individuals who are spiritually indolent, who have no high, elevated, holy aspirations; for the same mind of indifference, Phariseeism, of form without the power, will be seen in both teachers and scholars.

Let parents do their part, not only helping the children in their study, but becoming familiar with the lessons themselves. The Bible is our text-book. Parents, teachers, and scholars need to become better acquainted with the precious truths contained in both the Old and the New Testaments. We must come up to a higher plane of action. Let the spirit of Jesus vitalize the souls of the workers. Then their plans and methods of labor will be of that character to win souls to Jesus Christ. In our large churches, where there are many children and youth, there is great danger of so managing the Sabbath-school that it will become a mere form, mechanical but spiritless. It lacks Jesus. Do not allow all your strength and energy to be given to worldly, temporal things during the week, and so have no energy and moral strength to give to the service of Christ on the Sabbath. There is earnest work to be done just now. We have not a moment's time to use selfishly. Let all we do be done with an eye single to the glory of God. Never rest till every child in your class is brought to the saving knowledge of Christ.

It is important that the exercises in our camp-meeting Sabbath-schools be conducted with order, promptness, and efficiency. Then the right mould will be given to Sabbath-schools in the different churches, as the people return to their homes. Do not allow business and other interests to crowd out the Sabbath-school interest, so that it shall be considered a matter of no special consequence.

Very much can be done for the education and moral and religious training of our youth by well organized, properly conducted Sabbath-schools. Time and attention should be given to this branch of the work; for its importance in its influence upon our youth cannot be estimated. But our teachers need to be converted men and women, who know what it means to wrestle with God, who will not be at rest until the hearts of the

children are tuned to love, praise, and glorify God. Who will be the earnest workers for souls in our Sabbath-schools? Who will take the youth separately, and talk and pray with them, and make personal appeals to them, beseeching them to yield their heart to Jesus, that they may be as a sweet savor to Christ? As we view the magnitude of the work, and see how little it is appreciated, we feel like groaning in spirit and exclaiming, Who will accept these grave responsibilities and watch for souls as they that must give an account? We are Christ's representatives upon the earth. How do we fulfill our mission? Christ's representatives will be in daily communion with him. Their words will be select, their speech seasoned with grace, their hearts filled with love, their efforts sincere, earnest, persevering, to save souls for whom Christ has died. Let all do their utmost to work for the salvation of the dear children and youth, and by and by they will listen with joy to the words of Jesus, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." What is this joy?--It is beholding the redeemed saints saved through their instrumentality, through the blood of Jesus Christ. Mrs. E. G. White, in S. S. Worker

August 27, 1885

A Profitable Occasion

The following paragraphs were not intended for publication, but are from a private letter written by sister White to members of her family. We take pleasure in presenting them to the readers of the signs, feeling assured that they will be interested in the success that is attending her labors:

We reached Worcester, Mass., about half past eight, Friday evening, July 31, and went directly to the mission rooms. In the evening we had a New England thunder-storm; but it cleared away before meeting time, and at the appointed hour the tent was filled with interested listeners. I spoke from the words of the Saviour found in Matthew 7:24-27. The bitterest opposition and prejudice had been created against me here, and some who were the most prejudiced were out to hear me. The Lord enabled me to present the truth with such power that the people listened as if spell-bound, and many were deeply impressed. One, an infidel, took his stand for the Sabbath, and others expressed their intention never again to disregard God's holy day.

On the Sabbath we had a congregation of about one hundred. I spoke from the fifty-eighth chapter of Isaiah, and had special freedom. In the afternoon several stated that they were keeping the Sabbath for the first time.

It was cloudy all day Sunday, and in the evening it began to mist. We feared it would rain so that we should not have a congregation, but the tent was packed full, and there was a large crowd outside. The best part of the community was represented. I spoke from the third chapter of First John: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God," etc. I dwelt particularly on the binding claims of the law of God, and I never saw greater interest manifested. The police had been notified to see that there was no smoking or talking outside the tent. Three powerful men were placed on guard; but Elder Canright said they stood like marble pillars, never for a moment looking away from me.

When the meeting closed, the people did not leave the tent, but lingered as if loth to go. A merchant who had attended the meetings and the infidel of whom I have

spoken, came together. Said the merchant, "Henceforth the doors of my place of business shall be closed every Sabbath evening at sundown." The infidel responded, "I will never break another Sabbath." "Good," said the merchant, "give me your hand on that." And they there clasped hands, pledging each other to keep the Sabbath of the Lord.

About twenty-five are keeping the Sabbath here. The work has but just begun, and we expect more fruit will be seen as the result of this effort.

September 10, 1885

Influence and Importance of Associations

In our social relations, in our intercourse one with another, the words of Christ, "Ye are the light of the world," are especially true. Every association we form, however limited, exerts an influence on the life and character; and the extent of that influence will be determined by the degree of intimacy maintained, the constancy of the intercourse, and the love and confidence felt for the one with whom we associate. Even the enemies of Christ, as they see his spirit and life exemplified in the daily life of his followers, will be led to glorify God, the source of their strength and honor. Thus those who have a living connection with God can exert a saving power in the church and in society. Reader, examine your own course; consider the character of the associates you are choosing. Do you seek the company of the wise, or are you willing to choose worldly associates, companions who fear not God, and obey not the gospel? Are your recreations such as to impart moral and spiritual vigor? Will they lead to purity of thought and action?

Many parents are disregarding the most sacred claims of God, by their neglect to consecrate themselves and their children to him. Many are reposing in false security, absorbed in selfish interests and attracted by earthly treasures. They fear no evil. Danger seems a great way off. They will be deceived, deluded, to their eternal ruin, unless they arouse, and with penitence and deep humiliation, return unto the Lord.

The pride, self-indulgence, impiety, and iniquity that surround us, have an evil influence upon us. Few realize the importance of shunning, so far as possible, all associations unfriendly to religious life. In choosing their surroundings, few make their spiritual prosperity the first consideration.

Parents flock with their families to the cities, because they fancy it easier to obtain a livelihood there than in the country. The children, having nothing to do when not in school, obtain a street education. From evil associates they acquire habits of vice and dissipation. The parents see this, but because it will require a sacrifice to correct their error, they stay where they are, until Satan gains full control of their children. Better sacrifice any and every worldly consideration than to imperil the precious souls

committed to your care. They will be assailed by temptations, and should be taught to meet them; but it is your duty to cut off every influence, to break up every habit, to sunder every tie, that keeps you from the most free, open, and hearty committal of yourselves and your family to God.

Instead of the crowded city, seek some retired situation where your children will be, so far as possible, shielded from temptation, and there train and educate them for usefulness. The prophet Ezekiel thus enumerates the causes that led to Sodom's sin and destruction: "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." All who would escape the doom of Sodom, must shun the course that brought God's judgments upon that wicked city.

Who will heed the counsel of the True Witness, to seek the gold tried in the fire, the white raiment, and the eye-salve? The gold is faith and love, the white raiment is the righteousness of Christ, the eye-salve is that spiritual discernment which will enable us to see the wiles of Satan and shun them, to detect sin, and abhor it, to see truth and obey it.

The deadly lethargy of the world is paralyzing the senses. Sin does not appear repulsive to those who are blinded by Satan. The judgments of God are soon to be poured out upon the earth. "Escape for thy life," is the warning from the angels of God. Other voices are heard saying, "Do not become excited; there is no cause for special alarm." Those who are at ease in Zion, cry peace and safety, while Heaven declares that swift destruction is about to come upon the transgressor. The young, the frivolous, the pleasure-loving, consider these warnings as idle tales, and turn from them with a jest. Parents are inclined to think their children about right in the matter, and all sleep on at ease. Thus it was at the destruction of the old world, and when Sodom and Gomorrah were consumed by fire. On the night prior to their destruction, the cities of the plain rioted in pleasure. Lot was derided for his fears and warnings. But these scoffers perished in the flames. That very night the door of mercy was forever closed to the wicked, careless inhabitants of Sodom.

It is God who holds in his hands the destiny of souls. He will not always be mocked; he will not always be trifled with. Already his judgments are in the land. Fierce and awful tempests leave destruction and death in their wake. The devouring fire lays

low the desolate forest and the crowded city. Storm and ship-wreck await those who journey upon the deep. Accident and calamity threaten all who travel upon the land. Hurricanes, earthquakes, sword, and famine follow in quick succession. Yet the hearts of men are hardened. They recognize not the warning voice of God. They will not flee to the only refuge from the gathering storm.

Many who have been placed upon the walls of Zion, to watch with eagle eye for the approach of danger, and lift the voice of warning, are themselves asleep. The very ones who should be most active and vigilant in this hour of peril are neglecting their duty, and bringing upon themselves the blood of souls.

Let no one put aside the warning, and say, "It does not mean me. I will not be disturbed by this excitable message." It is the evil servant who says in his heart, "My Lord delayeth his coming." Professedly a servant of Christ, he may not, in words, deny that the Lord is soon to come; but his actions show that he puts off that day to a distant period. He guiltily presumes on the supposed delay; he becomes careless, and his works testify his unbelief. He adopts the maxims and conforms to the practices of the world.

As soon as the evil servant begins to lose the spirit and power of the message, he manifests his unbelief. He smites his fellow-servants. He is ready to pass censure on those who are better than himself. "The poison of asps is under their lips" His course is downward. Erelong he may be found "eating and drinking with the drunken"--uniting with worldlings in their gatherings for pleasure, and, to all intents and purposes, one with them. Such is the condition of very many among us today.

In the instruction given by our Saviour to his disciples are words of admonition especially applicable to us: "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." Watch, pray, work--this is the true life of faith. "Pray always," that is, be ever in the spirit of prayer, and then you will be in readiness for your Lord's coming.

The Christian life is a warfare. The Apostle Paul speaks of wrestling against principalities and powers as he fought the good fight of faith. Again, he declares, "Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." Ah, no. Today sin is cherished and excused. The sharp sword of the Spirit, the word of God, does not cut to the soul.

Has religion changed? Has Satan's enmity to God abated? A religious life once presented difficulties, and demanded self-denial. All is made very easy now. And why is this? The professed people of God have compromised with the powers of darkness.

The path to Heaven is no smoother now than in the days of our Saviour. All our sins must be put away. Every darling indulgence that hinders our religious life must be cut off. The right eye or the right hand must be sacrificed if it cause us to offend. Are we willing to renounce our own wisdom, and to receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child? Are we willing to part with self-righteousness? Are we willing to give up our chosen worldly associates? Are we willing to sacrifice the approbation of men? The prize of eternal life is of infinite value. Will we put forth efforts and make sacrifices proportionate to the worth of the object to be attained?

Great importance is attached to our associations. We may form many that are pleasant and helpful; but none are so precious as that by which finite man is brought into connection with the infinite God. When thus united, the words of Christ abide in us. We are not actuated by a spasmodic feeling, but by a living, abiding principle. The result will be a purified heart, a circumspect life, and a faultless character. But it is only by acquaintance and association with Christ that we can become like him, the one faultless example.

Communion with Christ--how unspeakably precious! Such communion it is our privilege to enjoy, if we will seek it, if we will make any sacrifice to secure it. When the early disciples heard the words of Christ, they felt their need of him. They sought, they found, they followed him. They were with him in the house, at the table, in the closet, in the field. They were with him as pupils with a teacher, daily receiving from his lips lessons of holy truth. They looked to him as servants to their master, to learn their duty. They served him cheerfully, gladly. They followed him, as soldiers follow their commander, fighting the good fight of faith. "And they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful."

October 8, 1885

Workers With Christ

Many profess to be followers of Christ and to be working for the upbuilding of his cause, when the whole weight of their influence is cast on the side of the great adversary. For this reason it becomes very important to inquire, By what means shall we determine whose side we are on? This question may be easily settled if we will consider the character of our thoughts and of the subjects upon which we love to converse, also who it is that has our best energies and the warmest affections of our hearts. If we are on the Lord's side, our sweetest thoughts will be of him. We shall have no friendship with the world. All that we have and are will be consecrated to our God; we shall long to bear his image, breathe his Spirit, and do his will and please him in all things.

A great work has been committed to the church of God. Oh that we could each realize how much is depending upon our earnestness and fidelity! All who realize their accountability to God, will be burden-bearers in the church. There can be no such thing as a lazy Christian, though there are many indolent professors of Christianity. While Christ's followers will realize their own weakness, they will cry earnestly to God for strength, that they may be workers together with him. They will constantly seek to become better men and women, that they may more faithfully perform the work which he has committed to their hands.

Every one may do something to strengthen and build up the church, and to enlighten those who are in the darkness of sin and error. There must be a feeling of individual responsibility. Each must seek to maintain a close connection with God, that he may have strength to aid and counsel others. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." The heart in which his Spirit dwells, will be a channel of light to others. It cannot be otherwise.

Those who do not preserve a living connection with God themselves, will have little interest in the salvation of others. They have no light from Heaven to reflect to the world. If these careless, irresponsible ones could see the fearful results of their course, they would be alarmed. Every one of us is exerting an influence upon some other soul; and we shall each be held accountable for the effect of that influence. Words and actions

have a telling power, and the long hereafter will show the results of our life here. Yet how few consider these things. The members of the church listen to the words of God spoken by his servant, and then one goes to his farm, another to his merchandise; and by their absorbing interest in the affairs of this life, they declare that eternal things are of secondary importance.

The days are evil, wickedness prevails; therefore there is the greater need that Christ should be faithfully represented to the world as a mighty Saviour, able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him. But the professed people of God are asleep. They are not doing what it is in their power to do for the salvation of souls. Especially are the youth deficient. They seem to feel no burden for souls, no duty to represent Christ to those with whom they associate. In all this, are they not following in the steps of church-members who are older in experience, and who should have set them a better example?

The young, as well as those of more advanced age, are accountable to God for their time, their influence, and their opportunities. They have their fate in their own hands. They may rise to any height of moral excellence, or they may sink to the lowest level of depravity. There is no election but one's own by which any may perish. Every person is a free moral agent, deciding his own future by his daily life. What course, then, is it wisest for us, as rational beings, to pursue? Shall we live as becomes candidates for eternity, or shall we fail to fulfill the great end of our creation?

Jesus died that through his merits men might be redeemed from the power of sin, and be adopted into the family of God; and in view of the great sacrifice which has been made for us, we are exhorted to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. Yet how many, endowed by their Creator with reasoning powers, reject the high honors which Christ proffers, and degrade themselves to the level of the brute. Because they do not like to retain God in their thoughts, he leaves them to follow their own evil ways. They yield to Satan's control the souls for whose redemption Christ has died.

We are free to obey or to disregard the will of God; free to live without prayer or to pray. As God compels no man to be righteous, so none are compelled to be impenitent and vicious. Human passions may be strong and wayward, but help has been laid upon One who is mighty. While that help will not be forced upon any who despise the gift, it is freely, gladly given to all who seek it in sincerity.

We may be assailed by strong temptations, for we have a powerful, cunning foe; but these temptations are never irresistible. He who struggles against them in the strength of Christ, will overcome; but God will never deliver those who will not strive to free themselves. The Christian must be watchful against sins of the flesh, watchful against sins of the mind. Says the apostle, "Gird up the loins of your mind." The thoughts and feelings must be restrained with a firm hand, lest they lead us into sin. How many have become the willing slaves of vice, their mental and physical powers enervated, their souls debased, because impure thoughts were allowed to dwell in the mind, and to stain the soul. "Unto the pure, all things are pure." To those who are pure in heart, all the duties and lawful pursuits of life are pure; while to those whose heart and conscience are defiled, all things are impure.

Another sin of the mind is that of extolling and deifying human reason, to the neglect of divine revelation. Here, too, we must "gird up the loins of the mind." We are living in an age when the minds of men are ever on the stretch for something new. Rightly directed, and kept within proper limits, this desire is commendable. God has given us in his created works enough to excite thought and stimulate investigation. He does not desire men to be less acute, less inquiring, or less intelligent. But with all our aspirations and in all our researches, we should remember that arrogance is not greatness, nor is conceit knowledge. Human pride is an evidence, not of strength, but of weakness. It reveals not wisdom, but folly. To exalt reason unduly is to abase it. To place the human in rivalry with the divine, is to make it contemptible.

How can man be just with God? This is the one great question that most concerns us. Can human reasoning find an answer? No; revelation only can solve the all-important problem, can shed light upon the pathway of man's life. What folly, then, to turn from the one great source of light, the Sun of Righteousness, to follow the feeble and uncertain light of human wisdom.

We must each have an experience for ourselves. The work of our salvation lies between God and our own souls. Though all nations are to pass in judgment before him, yet he will examine the case of each individual with as close and searching a scrutiny as though there were not another being on the earth. Every individual has a soul to save or to lose. Each has a case pending at the bar of God. Each must meet the great Judge face to face. How important, then, that every mind contemplate often the solemn scene when

the Judgment shall sit and the books be opened, when, with Daniel, every individual must stand in his lot at the end of the days.

At the final day, we shall be approved or condemned according to our works. The Judge of all the earth will render a just decision. He will not be bribed; he cannot be deceived. He who made man, and whose are the worlds and all the treasures they contain--he it is who weighs character in the balance of eternal justice.

Oh that Christ's followers might realize that it is not houses and lands, bank stock or wheat-fields, or even life itself, that is now at stake, but souls for whom Christ died! We should ever remember that the men and women whom we daily meet are Judgment-bound. They will stand before the great white throne, to testify against us if we are unfaithful to duty, if our example shall lead them away from the truth and from Christ, or to bear witness that our fidelity has encouraged them in the path of righteousness. These souls will either live to offer praise to God and the Lamb through ceaseless ages, or they will perish with the wicked. Christ suffered and died that they might enjoy a blissful eternity. What sacrifices are we willing to make for their salvation?

October 15, 1885

Letter from Mrs. E. G. White

On Board S.S. "Cephalonia" Near Queenstown, Ireland, August 17, 1885.

I feel urged to address those who are engaged in giving the last message of warning to the world. Whether those for whom they labor see and accept the truth depends very much upon the individual workers. The command of God is, "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord." Paul charges Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine." The work must commence with the worker. He must be united to Christ as the branch is united to the vine. "I am the true vine," said Christ, "ye are the branches." Here is represented the closest possible connection. Insert the leafless rod into the flourishing vine stalk, and it becomes a living branch, drawing sap and nourishment from the vine. Fiber by fiber, vein by vein, the sapling clings until it buds and blossoms and bears fruit. The sapless twig represents the sinner. When united to Christ, soul is joined to soul, the feeble and finite to the holy and infinite, and this man becomes one with Christ. "Without me," says Christ, "ye can do nothing." God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification. Are we who claim to be workers with Christ united with him? Do we abide in Christ, and are we one with him? The message that we bear is worldwide. It must come before all nations, tongues, and people. The Lord will not require any one of us to go forth with this message unless he shall give us power and grace to present it to the people in a manner corresponding to its importance. The great question with us today is, Are we carrying this solemn message of truth in a manner that is equal to its importance? The Lord will work with the workers if they will make Christ their only dependence. He never designed that his missionaries should work without his grace, and destitute of his power. The humble, contrite heart will be the abode of the Spirit of Christ. "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."

God has chosen us out of the world that we might be a peculiar and holy people. "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." God's workers must be men of prayer, diligent students of the Scriptures, hungering and thirsting after righteousness,

that they may be a light and strength unto others. Our God is a jealous God, and he requires that we worship him in spirit and in truth, and in the beauty of holiness. The psalmist says: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." We must, as workers, take heed to our ways. If the psalmist could not be heard if he regarded iniquity in his heart, how can the prayers of ministers be heard if iniquity is regarded among them? There are dangers to which we are continually exposed. It is Satan's studied plan to make the workers weak in prayer, weak in power, weak in influence before the world, because of the defects in their characters, defects which in no way harmonize with the truth. We must, as workers, be united in frowning down and condemning anything that bears the least approach to evil in our association with one another. Our faith is holy, and our work is to vindicate the honor of God's law. Our work is not of a character to bring any one down to a low level in thought or in deportment. There are many who claim to believe and to teach the truth, who have error and fanciful ideas of their own mingled with the truth. There is an exalted platform upon which we must stand. We must believe and teach the truth as it is in Jesus.

Holiness of heart will never lead to impure actions. When one who claims to be teaching the truth is inclined to be much in the company of young women or even of married women; when he familiarly lays his hand upon their shoulders, or is often found conversing with them in a familiar manner, be afraid of him. The pure principles of truth are not inwrought in the soul. Such are not workers with Jesus; they are not in Christ, and Christ is not abiding in them. They need a thorough conversion before God can accept their labors. The truth of heavenly origin never degrades the receiver, never leads him to the least approach to undue familiarity. On the contrary, it sanctifies the receiver, refines the taste, elevates and ennobles him, and brings him in close connection with Jesus. It does not lead him to disregard the Apostle Paul's injunction, to abstain from even the appearance of evil, lest his good should be evil spoken of. We have a great work to do to elevate man and to win him to Christ, to lead him to choose and to seek earnestly to be a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Every thought, every word, and every action of the workers should be of that elevated character that is in harmony with the sacred truth they advocate. We are living in an age where iniquity abounds, and an unguarded word or an improper action may greatly injure the usefulness of the one showed this weakness. Keep up the barriers of reserve. Let not one instance occur in your relation to others that the enemy may make capital of. If you begin to place your affections upon one another, giving special attention to favorites, using flattering words, God will

withdraw his Spirit. If married men leave their wives to care for their children at home, the wife and mother is doing fully as great and important a work as the husband and father. Although one is in the missionary field, the other is a home missionary, whose cares and anxieties and burdens frequently far exceed those of the husband and father. Her work is a solemn and important one. It is to mould the minds and fashion the characters of her children, and train them for usefulness here, and fit them for the future, immortal life. The husband in the open missionary field may receive the honors of men, while the home toiler may receive no credit for her labor. But if she works for the best interest of her family, to fashion their characters after the divine model, the recording angel writes her name as one of the greatest missionaries in the world. God does not see things as man's finite vision views them.

I am pained when I see men praised, flattered, and petted. God has revealed the fact that some who receive these attentions are unworthy to take his name into their lips. Yet they are exalted to Heaven in the estimation of finite man, who reads only from outward appearance. My sisters, never fawn over, pet, and flatter poor, failing, erring men, either young or old, married or unmarried. You know not their weaknesses, and you know not but these very attentions and this profuse praise may prove their ruin. I am alarmed at the short-sightedness, the want of wisdom, that many manifest in respect to this familiarity. Men who are doing God's work and who have Christ abiding in their hearts, will not lower the standard of morality, but will ever seek to elevate it. They will not find pleasure in the flattery of women, or in being petted by them. Let young men and married men say, "Hands off! I will not give the least occasion to have my good evil spoken of. My good name is capital, of far more value to me than gold or silver. Let me preserve it untarnished. If men assail that name, it shall not be because I have given them any occasion to do so, but for the same reason that they spoke falsely of Christ,--because they hated the purity and holiness of his character, for it was a constant rebuke to them."

I wish I could impress upon every worker the great need of continual, earnest prayer. They cannot be constantly upon their knees, but they can be uplifting their hearts to God. This is the way that Enoch walked with God. When young, or even married men and women open their family secrets to you, beware. When they express a desire for sympathy, know that it is time to exercise great caution. Those who are imbued with the Spirit of Christ, and who are walking with God, will have no unholy repining for sympathy. They have a companionship that satisfies every desire of the mind and heart.

Married men who accept the attention, the praise, and petting of women, should be assured that the love and sympathy of this class is not worth the obtaining. It is valueless. This is a subject to which we must give heed. We must guard against the sins of this degenerate age. We must stand aloof from everything that savors of commonness and undue familiarity. God condemns it. It is forbidden ground, upon which it is unsafe to set the feet. Every word and action should tend to elevate, refine, and ennoble the character. There is sin in thoughtlessness about such matters. The Apostle Paul exhorted Timothy to diligence and thoroughness in his ministry, and urged him to meditate upon those things that are pure and excellent, that his profiting might appear unto all. The same counsel is greatly needed by young men of the present age. Thoughtful consideration is essential. If men would only think more and act less impulsively, they would meet with much greater success in their labors. We are handling subjects of infinite importance, and we cannot afford to weave into our work our own defects of character. We want to represent the character of Christ.

Women are too often tempters. Through one pretense or another they engage the attention of the married or unmarried men, and lead them on till they transgress the law of God. Their usefulness is ruined and their souls jeopardized. The history of Joseph is left on record for the benefit of all who, like him, are tempted. He was firm as a rock to principle, and answered the tempter, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" Moral power like his is what is now needed. If women would elevate their lives and become workers with Christ, there would be less danger through their influence. But with their present feelings of unconcern in regard to home responsibilities, and in regard to the claims that God has upon them, their influence is often strong in the wrong direction. Their powers are dwarfed, and their work bears not the stamp of the divine. They are not home missionaries, neither are they missionaries away from home, and frequently home, precious home, is a desolation. Is there not enough transpiring about us to show us the dangers that beset our path? Everywhere are seen wrecks of humanity, broken-down family altars, broken-up families. There is a strange abandonment of principle. The standard of morality is lowered, and the earth is fast becoming as Sodom. The Sodomitish practices which brought the judgment of God upon the old world and caused it to be destroyed by water, and which caused Sodom to be destroyed by fire, are fast increasing.

We are nearing the end. God has borne long with the perversity of mankind, but their punishment is no less certain. Let those who profess to be the light of the world

depart from all iniquity. We see the very same spirit manifested against the truth as was seen in Christ's days. For want of Bible arguments those who are making void the law of God will manufacture falsehoods to stain and blacken the workers. They did this to the world's Redeemer; they will do it to his followers. Reports that have not the least foundation will be asserted as truth. May the Lord attract souls to himself, and impart to them individually a sense of their sacred responsibilities to form such characters that Christ will not be ashamed to call them brethren. Elevate the standard, and then the heavenly benediction will be pronounced upon you in that day when every man will receive according to the deeds done in the body. Workers for God must live as in his sight, and be constantly developing in character, true virtue, and godliness. Their minds and hearts must be so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Christ, and solemnized by the sacred message they have to bear, that every thought, every action, and every motive will be above the earthly and sensual. Their happiness will not be in forbidden, selfish gratification, but in Jesus and his love.

The standard of morality is not exalted high enough among God's people. In view of the dangers of this time, shall not we, as commandment-keeping people, put away from among us all sin, all iniquity, and all perverseness? Shall not the women professing the truth keep strict guard over themselves, lest the least encouragement be given to unwarrantable familiarity? They might close many a door to temptation if they would observe at all times strict reserve, and propriety of deportment. Let men find an example in the life of Joseph, and stand firm to principle, however strongly tempted. We want to be strong men and women for the right. There are those around us who are weak in moral power. They need to be in the company of those who are firm, and whose hearts are closely knit with the heart of Christ. Every one's principles will be put to the test, but there are those who go into temptation like a fool to the correction of stocks. They invite the devil to tempt them. They unnerve themselves, are weakened in moral power, and shame and confusion are the result. Never should the mark of distinction between the followers of Jesus and the followers of Satan be obliterated. There is a distinct line drawn by God himself between the world and the church, between commandment-keepers and commandment-breakers. These do not blend together. They are as far separated, as much different, as midday and midnight; different in their tastes, their aims, their pursuits, their characters. If we cultivate the love and fear of God, we will loathe the least approach to impurity.

My prayer is, O Lord, anoint the eyes of thy people, that they may discern

between sin and holiness, between pollution and righteousness, and come off victorious at last. Ellen G. White.

October 22, 1885

Character-Building

"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." Colossians 3:1-4.

"Seek those things which are above," says the apostle. Are we obeying this injunction? Are we withdrawing our affections from the things of earth, and setting them on things which are eternal, pertaining to the kingdom of God? Let us not disregard these words, lest we pass on, following our own ways, encouraging ourselves in evil thoughts and unlovely actions, which separate us from God, and place us on the enemy's ground, subject to his control.

"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." 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 or in the words and acts. The peace of Christ, ruling in the heart of the earnest, working Christian, while it will elevate and refine the taste and sanctify the judgment, will be reflected upon others, and help them on in the upward path. Such will be the character of those who are indeed "risen with Christ," and are seeking "those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

But we are none of us perfect. We are only learners in the school of Christ. If with unprejudiced mind and humble heart we carefully search the Scriptures, we shall find much in our lives and characters to condemn, much that needs to be remedied. But in that word the way of life is fully pointed out, so that there need be no mistake. Thus the apostle explains what it is to die to self and live to God:

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry; for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience; in the which ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them. But now

ye also put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him."

"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." What solemn and important words are these! And what weight do they have with us? If any have been in the habit of giving them away to someone else, I hope they will now take them home to their own hearts. Closely examine yourself, Christian reader, not once a week, but daily, and see if you are cultivating a spirit which is meek, forbearing, long-suffering, humble, and teachable, and are thus bearing in your life the precious fruits of the Spirit, which grow on no other than the Christian tree.

Some will be ready to ask, "How can I get out of the worries in which I find myself involved? How shall I ever be understood and appreciated? I have no confidence in this one's religion or honesty, and that one has done me wrong." Be careful how you sin against your brethren by misjudging them, and speaking evil of them. God has not given you permission to climb upon the judgment-seat, and pronounce one good because he praises, pets, and favors you, and denounce another because he is not your particular friend. This selfish, narrow, bigoted spirit does harm to those with whom you associate. It is not the spirit of Christ, but of him who has been from the beginning the accuser of the brethren. Instead of misjudging others, examine your own conduct. Place the most favorable construction on the words and actions of others, and you will thus be exercising the mercy that is becoming to those who are the holy and beloved of God, members of the royal family. Seek the meekness of Christ. He suffered wrong, and did not attempt to avenge himself.

Perhaps some child of God may be commissioned to give you a word of reproof for some inconsistency in your words or deportment, and instead of feeling grateful for the faithful discharge of a really unpleasant duty, and heeding the warning given in love to your soul, you may turn away in anger. All the wrath and malice of an unsubdued heart may be stirred up, and the foul waters poured forth to poison the minds and hearts of others. This shows that you have not mortified your members. "Anger, wrath, malice," have not been "put off." You have not been seeking to repress everything in

your character that is contrary to the word of God. Satan laughs, and angels weep, because you are too proud and stubborn to confess and forsake your faults.

Trials cannot be avoided. When they come, do not indulge the thought, "If those around me would do right, it would be easy to be cheerful, happy, and contented. Oh that I could get into a place where there would be no irritations, where life to me would not be filled with discouragements, and my temper constantly tried. If I could only escape these things!" You can escape them only by having a new heart and dying to self. You will gain no real victories so long as you allow your temper to rise the minute your track is crossed; neither will you conquer by fleeing from the field of battle. He who runs is a coward, not a conqueror.

Meet your trials in the strength of Jesus, and endure them. Let the inquiry be, How can I endure the provings of God? How can I meet provocations, and not lose self-control? When you claim that you cannot do this, you acknowledge that your life is not hid in Christ; that you are not exemplifying the character of your divine Lord; that self is not dead, but is clamoring for the supremacy. Your Christian life may be a victorious one; but you must strain every nerve and muscle in the contest against self and sin. There is no release in this war, no delightful arbor where you may rest and slumber; for your wily foe would gain advantages that would result in eternal loss.

When you have done all that you can on your part, you may in faith ask help of the Captain of your salvation, and he will bring divine aid to be combined with human effort; and he will bind upon your brow the laurels of the conqueror, just as though you had yourself wrought out the victory. And remember, it is the overcomer that enters the portals of the kingdom of glory; it is the overcomer that wears the crown of life, and stands with the blood-washed throng around the great white throne.

Our work here is that of character-building; and let each build over against his own house. Time is graciously given us for this work; and day by day, brick by brick, the structure is going up. Let it not be defective and deformed, but make it symmetrical and beautiful, strong to resist cold and heat, storm and sunshine.

In the wise providence of God, obstacles are permitted, yes, ordered, as a means of discipline, and to nerve us with determination not to be conquered by circumstances. The life of Christ is our example. Did he seek ease and self-indulgence? Ah, no! He

"was in all points tempted like as we are;" he was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." Yet his heart was so full of love and interest for others that he thought not, planned not, lived not, for himself. He came to seek and to save that which was lost, and he left his followers to carry on this work in his name. But no one can bear another upward to Heaven; each must tread the rough pathway which Jesus has trodden before him, and which he has brightened by his presence.

We must not think that we can wait till we get to Heaven before we perfect pure, chaste, lovely characters. The Christian will be Christlike here. There is a diversity among us. We each have traits of character, tastes, gifts, and capacities peculiar to ourselves, all of which have been established or modified by education and habit. But by the grace of Christ all these varied characteristics may be brought into harmony with the will of God.

In our early experience, a gray-haired brother, giving his testimony in a social meeting, expressed the fear that he should be overcome by temptation, and give up the faith once delivered to the saints. Said he, "I cannot afford to lose eternal life. What would I not give to know that I should never fall!"

A week from this time, when he arose to speak in the social meeting, his face was all aglow with the light and peace of Heaven. "Brethren," he exclaimed, "I have found a sure rule for success in the Christian journey. You will read it in 2 Peter 1:5-7: '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.' We must climb this ladder, round after round, remembering that God is above it, ready to help us in our efforts. We must live upon the plan of addition, and God has promised that he will multiply his grace to us." Then with earnestness and enthusiasm he added: "Let us begin today to climb Peter's ladder, never looking back; for we have the word of the inspired apostle that if we do these things we shall never fall, but an entrance will be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour."

This brother continued to follow Peter's excellent rule for Christian living until his work on earth was done; and he now sleeps in Jesus, awaiting the resurrection morning.

Will we be diligent to make our calling and election sure? Will we patiently climb the ladder of Christian progress, until from the topmost round we step into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ? We may become pure and holy. We may become more precious than fine gold, even the golden wedge of Ophir. And what joy it will be to hear from the lips of Jesus the sweet benediction, "Well done, good and faithful servant." What a victory to be of that company of whom John speaks: "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 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."

October 29, 1885

The Test of Christian Living

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell; and great was the fall of it." Matthew 7:24-27.

In this text there is presented something for us individually to do in order to build securely, where the fierce tempest will not sweep away our foundation. The earnest, anxious inquiry of every soul should be, How am I building? Is my foundation sliding sand, or solid rock?

Let us consider more fully the lesson that Jesus gave in his sermon on the mount, as with great distinctness and power his words fell on the ears of the listening multitude. "Enter ye in at the strait gate," he says; "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, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Many tell us, "You are too particular. God does not expect us to be constantly on guard lest we make mistakes. He is too good to hold us accountable for our course of action day by day." But we are to remember that the way to destruction is broad, while the way to eternal life is strait and narrow. Listen again to the words of the great Teacher: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." This shows us that we are to be guarded on every side, lest we mistake the way. We must be careful not to listen to agents of the great adversary, who would guide our feet into forbidden paths, as our first parents were led into transgression.

Our Lord does not leave us in darkness as to whom to trust. Here is the rule by which to decide; "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns,

or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." Here is the test by which to judge every man who claims to be a teacher and a guide to the people. And now listen to his startling denunciation of those teachers who make high pretensions to godliness, while their works do not correspond with their profession: "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." Do their high claims prove them to be genuine Christians and reliable guides? No, indeed! We must look carefully at the life and character, the words and deeds.

Jesus is guarding his hearers from deceptions that would endanger their souls; and he warns them to beware of false teachers, who are wolves in sheep's clothing. He would have every one for whom his precious blood is a ransom, constantly on his guard, comparing every man's pretentious claims with the great standard of righteousness. The question is, "What saith the Scriptures?" Human lips may utter perverse things, lying doctrines that have no foundation in God's word, and souls may be sincere in accepting these erroneous doctrines; but will their sincerity save them from the sure and disastrous result? The Bible is the standard of truth and holiness. If they were carefully and prayerfully living by this word, they would not be deceived.

The words of Jesus are full of awful significance: "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." That will is made known in his law, which is the foundation of his government in Heaven and upon earth. Those who cheerfully obey that law are doing the will of God.

The lesson continues: "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." Here attention is called to a class who are actively engaged in religious work, making high claims to the favor of God, while they are all the time serving the great adversary of souls. They are transgressing the law of God, and are teaching others to transgress it also. Thus they are zealous workers of iniquity, while claiming Christ as their Lord, and professedly doing great works in his name.

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock." "And every one that heareth

these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand."

Here are two houses. One is built on a rock, and is almost inaccessible; the other is on the level ground, in a much pleasanter location. To the thoughtless observer it seems that the man who built his house on the steep rock was odd and foolish, while the one who built on the low, level plain is considered wise and prudent. But by and by the storm comes. The winds blow and the tempests beat upon these houses. And what is the result? The beautiful home upon the plain is overthrown, and lies upon the beach, a useless ruin, while the other, perched on the high rock, stands firm, unmoved by storm and flood.

Jesus compared the man who hears and obeys his words to the one who built his house upon a rock. The floods of temptation may come and the tempests of trial beat; but he remains unmoved, for his foundation is sure. But the man who built his house on the sand, where it had no firm foundation, but was quickly undermined and overthrown, fitly represents the one who hears the words of Christ and disregards them. Will we let this lesson impress our hearts, and have an influence on our character building? Will we plant our feet upon the truth of God--the sure foundation, or will we trust in erroneous doctrines, which are but sliding sand? Holiness and sin are opposed to each other. "Sin is the transgression of the law;" therefore the "doers of the word" are not those who are making void the law of God. "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." The blessing is pronounced on those that obey, not on those that transgress, the holy law of God.

Everywhere error will be presented for truth; and unless we have a living connection with God, and are diligent in searching the Scriptures, there is danger of being misled. Voices will be heard on every side, saying, "Come with us; we have the truth." Jesus is the true Shepherd. His sheep hear his voice, and follow him; but a "stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." But unless we are ever on our guard, there is constant danger of listening to strange voices.

The Lord commanded Adam in Eden, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat;" "for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die."

But another voice was heard saying, "Ye shall not surely die." This strange voice tested Adam and Eve, and proved their loyalty. They had an opportunity to show whether they would be obedient to God, or would disregard his word, and accept that of the deceiver who came to destroy them.

The Lord did not prove Adam and Eve in a large matter. The test given them was the smallest that could have been devised. Had it been a large test, then men and women whose hearts incline to evil would excuse themselves by saying, "This is a trivial matter, and God is not so particular about little things," and there would be constant transgression in things looked upon as small, and which pass unrebuked among men. But the Lord has made it very evident that sin, in any degree, is offensive to him.

To Eve it seemed a small thing to disobey God by tasting the fruit of the forbidden tree, and to tempt her husband to transgress also; but their sin opened the floodgate of woe upon the world. And their posterity would have remained in hopeless bondage to sin, had not Christ had pity on them. He left his throne in the courts of Heaven; he laid aside his royal robe, clothed his divinity with humanity, and came to our world all seared and marred by the curse, to reach men where they were. He descended step by step in humiliation, that he might reach to the very depths of human woe, where man had been plunged by his transgression of the law, while with his divine arm he grasped the Infinite One, thus connecting man with God, and earth with Heaven. This great sacrifice was not made to verify the words of Satan by saving man in his transgressions. The design was not to do away and make of none effect the law of God, but to give man another trial, another opportunity to prove his loyalty to the God of Heaven.

"By the law is the knowledge of sin." The law is the great mirror, into which man must look to discern the defects in his character. If he refuses to consult this divinely appointed detector, and thus learn his true state, can we be surprised that he proudly boasts of perfection? He must see his character in the light of God's law. He must have a new heart, one that is pure, loving, and obedient. The old life of sin and alienation from God must be given up, and a new life of loving, trusting obedience begin. Then the peace of Christ will rule in the heart and sanctify the life; and the path in which he treads will be the highway cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, where light from Heaven is ever shining.

November 12, 1885

Labor a Blessing

Many look upon useful labor as a curse originating with the enemy of souls; but this is a mistaken view. Judicious labor is indispensable to both the happiness and the prosperity of the race. God ordained it for man as a blessing, to occupy his mind, to strengthen his body, and to develop his faculties. Industry makes the feeble strong, the timid brave, the poor rich, and the wretched happy. Adam labored in the garden of Eden, and he found in mental and physical activity the highest pleasures of his holy existence. When, as the result of his disobedience, he was driven from that beautiful home, and was forced to struggle with a stubborn soil to gain his daily bread, that very labor was a relief to his sorrow and remorse, a safeguard against temptation.

Idleness is one of the greatest curses that can fall upon man; for vice and crime follow in its train. Satan is never more successful than when he comes to men in their idle hours. He lies in ambush with his temptations, ready to surprise and destroy those who are unguarded, whose leisure gives him opportunity to insinuate himself into their favor under some attractive disguise.

The greatest curse following in the train of wealth is the fashionable idea that work is degrading. "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." Here are presented before us, in the words of Holy Writ, the terrible results of idleness. It was this that caused the ruin of the cities of the plain. Idleness enfeebles the mind, debases the soul, and perverts the understanding.

The rich often consider themselves entitled to the pre-eminence among their fellow-men and in the favor of God. Many feel above honest labor, and look down with contempt upon their poorer neighbors. The children of the wealthy are taught that to be gentlemen and ladies they must dress fashionably, avoid all useful labor, and shun the society of the working classes. They dare not shock their fashionable associates by putting to a practical use the talents which God has given them. But such ideas of useful industry are wholly at variance with the divine purpose in the creation of man. What are

the possessions of even the most wealthy, compared with the heritage given to the lordly Adam? Yet Adam was not to be idle. Our all-wise Creator, who understands well what is for man's happiness, appointed Adam his work.

The Son of God honored labor. Though he was the Majesty of Heaven, he chose his earthly home among the poor and lowly, and worked for his daily bread in the humble carpenter shop of Joseph. Christ is our example. He came to earth to teach us how to live. Is it too great a humiliation for us to walk in the path of useful industry, where the King of glory has led the way?

God ordained labor for man; but misguided parents are trying to improve upon his plan. Many send their children away from home influences and home duties, to some boarding-school or college, to obtain an education. There, deprived of parental care, they spend precious hours that should be devoted to useful study and useful employment, in novel reading, in frivolous amusements, or in studying the adornment of their person, that they may outrival their companions. For such pursuits, their duties to God and their fellow-beings are neglected.

This false education leads young ladies to regard uselessness, frivolity, and helplessness as proofs of gentility. They are merely fashionable butterflies, having nothing to do for the good of others, at home or abroad. Here may be found the secret of many of the unhappy marriages, and the flirtations ending in shame, that curse our world today.

Young men as well as young women manifest a sad lack of earnest purpose and moral independence. To dress, to smoke, to talk nonsense, and to indulge their passion for amusement, is the ideal of happiness, even with many who profess to be Christians. It is painful to think of the time which is thus misspent,--of the hours that should be given to some useful employment, to the study of the Scriptures, or to active labor for Christ, that are worse than wasted.

Those who possess wealth and leisure, and yet have no aim in life, have nothing to arouse them to either mental or physical activity. Yet life was given for a true and holy purpose, and is too precious to be squandered. There is work to be done, and it is not physical labor alone that is called for. There is the mind, with all its capabilities, to strengthen and store with the treasures of divine wisdom. There is a Heaven to win;

there are souls to save; there are battles to fight. Young friend, Christian reader, you may come to the front in the warfare against the hosts of evil. In the strength of God you may do a good and noble work for the Master.

God designed that all should be workers. Our varied trusts are proportioned to our various abilities, and our Creator expects corresponding returns for the talents he has intrusted to our keeping. Upon those whose opportunities and abilities are greatest rest the heaviest responsibilities. Upon them also will fall the heaviest condemnation if they are unfaithful to their trust. Yet a large class refuse to think or act for themselves. They have no disposition to step out of the old ruts of prejudice and error; and by their negligence and perversity, they block up the way of those who would make advancement, and occasion the overwork of the few earnest, devoted laborers. These often fail for want of a helping hand, and sink beneath their double burdens.

The true glory and joy of life are found only by the working man and woman. Labor brings its own reward, and the rest is sweet that is purchased by the fatigue of a well-spent day. But there is a self-imposed toil which is utterly unsatisfying and injurious. It is that which is done to gratify unsanctified ambition for display or notoriety. The love of appearance or possession leads thousands to carry to excess that which is in itself lawful, to devote all the strength of mind and body to that which should occupy but a small portion of their time. They bend every energy to the acquisition of wealth or honor; they make all other objects secondary to this; they toil unflinchingly for years to accomplish their purpose; yet when the goal is reached, and the coveted reward secured, it turns to ashes in their grasp; it is a shadow, a delusion. They have given their life for that which profiteth not.

Yet all lawful pursuits may be safely followed, if the spirit is kept free from selfish hopes and the contamination of deceit and envy. It is the working men and women, who are willing to bear its responsibilities with courage and hope, who see something great and good in life. But the business life of the Christian should be marked by the same purity that held sway in the work-shop of the holy Nazarene.

Patient laborers, remember that they were sturdy working men whom Christ chose from among the fishermen of Galilee to labor with him in the work of salvation. And from these humble men went forth a power that will be felt through all eternity.

The angels are workers; they are ministers of God to the children of men. Those slothful spirits who look forward to a Heaven of inaction will be disappointed, for the Creator has prepared no place for the gratification of sinful indolence. But to the weary and heavy-laden, rest is promised. It is the faithful servants who are welcomed from their labors into the joy of their Lord. Gladly will they lay off their armor, and forget the tumult of battle in the peace that shall be the inheritance of the saints.

The path of the Christian laborer may be hard and narrow; but it is honored by the footprints of the Redeemer, and he is safe who follows in that sacred way.

November 26, 1885

The Bible the True Test

"The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."

It is of consequence to every one to know what the Bible teaches. Like the noble Bereans, we should search the Scriptures carefully, prayerfully, to become acquainted with the utterances of God. We should inquire, not what the minister, the church, or some personal friend may say, but what the Lord says. "To the law and to the testimony. If they [ministers, churches, or friends] speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

While searching for the truth as for hid treasures, light from the written word breaks into the mind. The benumbed and dormant faculties are awakened to new life and energy, the limited capacities are expanded to comprehend the truth, and earnest efforts are put forth to bring others into the light. Then why is it that there is such blindness in regard to the Scriptures? Why are ideas entertained, and sometimes taught to others, that are so vague and inconsistent? It is because the heart is not in harmony with the revealed word; the conscience has been so long depraved by practices condemned by that word, that the mental and moral powers are incapable of discerning spiritual things.

A great responsibility rests upon those who minister in word and doctrine. They should deal kindly, yet faithfully with souls. If they speak as the ambassadors of God, they will echo the teachings of the prophets and the apostles, and, above all, of Christ himself. Not only in the desk, but out of it also, they should seek to lead their hearers to search the Scriptures, and to impress upon them the necessity of understanding the word for themselves.

Let no man think that it is only the minister who is able to understand the Scriptures. Every man may have an intelligent knowledge of God's word; and he who does not make it his life-work to understand it is in danger of making shipwreck of faith. He must study it, comparing scripture with scripture. Such study strengthens and enlarges the mind. By it, under the guidance of the Spirit of God, truths which have

been hidden for ages, buried under the rubbish of superstition and error, have been dug out, and brought to the light of day.

Many do not want to know the truth, because it condemns their practices. The words of Christ are applicable to 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." They do not have moral courage to obey the truth when it calls upon them to leave the customs and practices of the world. They have decided that they will not follow the teachings of the Bible if it requires a separation from the world. When obedience to God requires them to become peculiar in faith and practice, and to take their position with a people who are distinct from the world, they think the cross is too heavy for them to lift. They listen to the truth, and are convicted that it is the truth; but the world has a large place in their affections, and they go away and forget the word spoken.

Those who are seeking salvation must undertake the work understandingly. God's word is our text-book. It tells us what sin is, and points out the remedy. When the lawyer inquired, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Christ referred him to the law. "What is written in the law?" he asked; "how readest thou?" The apostle tells us: "Sin is the transgression of the law." Conviction of sin is the first step in conversion; and the law of God is the instrument to convict the sinner. It is this holy law that discovers the deformity of character, that reveals the plague-spot of sin.

And when man is convicted of sin, when he realizes his lost and undone condition, Jesus reveals himself as a sin-pardoning Saviour. Through him the sinner may obtain forgiveness, though he has failed so decidedly in his duty to render obedience to God. But salvation is never gained by abolishing the law, or lessening its sacred claims.

"If I had not come and spoken unto them," said Christ of those who rejected his gospel, "they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin." There is no condemnation where light is not given. But Jesus came as the light of the world. He taught men the true aim in life, the purposes and principles that underlie right living. The acquisition of property is not the great end of our being. We have individually a work to do to place ourselves in right relations to God, to bless others, and to win souls to Christ. There is true nobleness and dignity in this service. Riches are not enduring; they are often swept away in a moment. But the treasure in Heaven, which the God-

fearing worker is garnering up, will endure to all eternity. It will be to its possessor riches and joy in the future life, when wealth, and fame, and worldly honors have perished.

Just before his crucifixion, Jesus prayed for his disciples: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." But those who love the truth, and will cling to their Bibles, will have trials and persecutions to meet. In all ages the defenders of the faith have realized the truth of the apostle's words: "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." But there have ever been some who have stood unmoved in their adherence to principle, and have refused to yield their faith to save their lives. The early Reformers were of this number. When urged to accept tradition and the commandments of men in place of the word of God, these men, firmly grasping their Bibles, replied, "Here is the foundation of our faith. Show us from the Bible that we are in error, and we will willingly renounce our doctrines." But their enemies knew that if the Bible were to decide the matter, they would be condemned; for they had not a plain "Thus saith the Lord" for the doctrines they held. They therefore refused to bring their views to the test of God's word, and tried to wrench the Scriptures from the hands of the defenders of the faith.

There are many ministers who are now pursuing a course similar to that of the papists. When the truth is presented to them, and they know that they cannot prove their doctrines by the Bible, they advise their congregations to have nothing to do with these new doctrines; the best way is to take no notice of them. And they take this course because they know that the Bible condemns their doctrines and their practices.

Jesus met with just such teachers in his day. The Pharisees claimed to be teaching the word of God to the people; but instead they taught their own sentiments and the commandments of men. Jesus said to those who would catch him in his words: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." From the great Teacher a steady light was reflected to the world; but the prejudice of the chief priests and rulers was excited against him. They saw the light; the evidence from the Old Testament Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ was overwhelming. But they exerted their influence to turn the people away from hearing the truth; and many who believed the teachings of Christ had not the courage, in the face of prejudiced, frowning, self-righteous priests to acknowledge their faith in the despised Nazarene.

Says the psalmist, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." When light from the word of God shines into the soul, a man ceases to be sensitive to reproach, neglect, or contempt. He will not be ambitious for worldly rank or honor, but will become a meek and quiet learner in the school of Christ. Those who are sanctified through the truth will have courage to stand on the side of truth and right, no matter who may scoff or how bitter the opposition they may have to meet. Nor will those who thus serve God lose their reward. "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."

December 3, 1885

Co-laborers with Christ

"For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost."

Before Christ came to the world, his home was in the kingdom of glory, among beings that had never fallen. They loved him, and he might have stayed there and rejoiced in their love. But he did not do this. He left the royal courts, and went without the camp, bearing the reproach of sin. He came to a world all marred and seared by the curse to save the lost sheep; and he gathered into his divine bosom all that would come to him. He was a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He trod the rugged path of self-denial himself, and so set us an example. This was the work of Christ for us. Had he not done this, we should have been left to perish without hope in God.

We find here a duty that rests upon all alike; not one of us is excused. Those who see the preciousness of the Saviour's love as he hung upon the cross, those who understand its value as there revealed, will be in earnest; they will be anxious to become co-laborers with Christ in seeking for the lost and perishing. We are not placed here merely to seek our own gratification. There are sinners to be saved, and they are all about us.

It is a terrible thing to be lost at last. Once when I was at my home in Battle Creek, Mich., a bitter cry rang through the house. I hurried to see what was the matter, and found that one of my children was drowning. When he had been rescued from the water, and his apparently lifeless form laid in his little cradle, I remember how I stood over him for three-quarters of an hour, working for that little one whose life was trembling in the balance. Those around me thought my efforts were in vain; yet I labored on until that little life was given back to me.

That night, as my child that had been, as it were, raised to life, was lying upon my breast, and I was rejoicing in my heart that he was spared to me, though he was still in a very precarious condition, the bells rang out sharply, and a shrill cry was borne on the still night air, "Lost! lost! a child lost!" Then I thought how the little one that God had given to me had almost been lost, of the vacant place that would have been left in the

little wicker cradle at my bedside; and the word "lost" came home to me with a force and meaning it had never possessed before.

Never shall I forget the incidents of that night. It was just one little life that was at stake; but it seemed as though the whole city of Battle Creek was stirred to go out in search of the lost child. Lights were glimmering everywhere. They flashed through the streets, along the river bank, and through the adjacent woods, and the cry resounded, "A child is lost! A child is lost!" After a long search, a shout was raised, "The child is found!"

Yes, the child was found; but it might go astray on the journey of life, and be lost at last. I knew, too, that death might come to the little one that was saved to me; and that should he live, he would have the evils of this life to meet and to battle with. And the thought with me was, Will this little child, whose life I hold so dear, be finally lost, or will he be saved to praise God forever in his kingdom?

There was no sleep for my eyes that night. I thought of the lost sheep that Jesus came from Heaven to earth to seek and to save. I thought of Christ as he looked down from Heaven upon a world of lost sinners, lost without hope, and of the sympathy that led him to leave his high and exalted place upon his Father's throne, and make the infinite sacrifice necessary to lift man up from the degradation of sin, and bring him back to the fold of God.

The sin of our first parents had cut off this world from Heaven. But Christ took upon himself our weaknesses and sins. He was tempted; he was ridiculed; he was beset on every hand. He suffered all the woes, all the griefs and sorrows of humanity, without a murmur, that he might leave us an example. He descended step by step in the path of humiliation, until he hung as a criminal upon the cross, that with his right arm of infinite love he might encircle the race, while he grasped the throne of Infinite Power, thus connecting earth with Heaven. This was his work; this was his mission to this world; and how earnest was he in his efforts to seek and to save that which was lost.

Then what is our work to be co-laborers with Christ? As I look over the field, I ask the question, Why do we see such indifference, such neglect of the salvation of others? Why is the whole work of laboring for souls left to the minister? God has promised to all alike, as many as will seek for it, the same redemption, the same love,

the same light. Why are we not by living faith grasping the power that he is so willing to give us, that we may be a blessing to those that are lost? Our hearts have throbbed with love at the very mention of the name of Christ, when we have remembered that he has saved us from our sins. Now what if we should all go forth, as Christ did, to save that which was lost, how would our works appear? Would they not be very different from what they are today?

Our first work is to bring our families to understand their accountability to God. There is not a father or a mother who has studied the Bible but may know just what course to take with the children, and how to restrain them. Parents may have wisdom from God to bind their children to the throne of mercy. Next to our families, we should try to exert an influence to sway others in the right direction, to lead them out of the darkness of error into the precious light of truth.

The perils of the last days are about us; and we should have such an intense love for souls for whom Christ died that we cannot remain at home. When our hearts are overflowing with love for sinners, we shall be anxious to go out in the harvest field to labor for others, and we shall work as Jesus worked. But we know there are some who do not want to be disciplined to work under the Captain of our salvation. It is very difficult matter to make them see their duty, because they have so long had their own way. Their inclinations have been permitted to govern them. Such will have to render an account for their course in the day of God. May the eyes of these blinded ones be opened to see their God-given responsibility.

All desire happiness, and many seek it in every way but the right way. Some travel from place to place in its pursuit; some seek it at a mountain or sea-side resort; some go to places of amusement; and some try change of employment. True happiness is not found in any of these ways, and yet it is not difficult to find. It may be secured if we will try to help one another,--to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

There is peace and happiness in Heaven, and we all hope to share it. This is our privilege. An abundant entrance may be administered unto us into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; but we must prepare for the heavenly society by a life of unselfish labor for others. There are many who do not understand the path of life; this is one reason that more do not travel in it. Multitudes are following the

dictates of an unconsecrated heart who do not know what they are doing. And we are not to think that there is no responsibility resting upon us. We are each a part of the great human family, and we are to lay every one's case to our hearts. The nearer our lives approach to the life of Christ, the more helpful shall we be to those around us, and the more happiness we can bring into their lives. We are called upon to labor understandingly for fallen humanity. And by and by, when the Man of Nazareth shall "see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied," we shall enter into the joy of our Lord. But let us be faithful in the work that is committed to us; for it is only to those who have done well that the "Well done" will be spoken.

December 10, 1885

Christian Helpfulness

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

We have read accounts of travelers climbing mountains. How careful they must be where they step! They must have a guide along the rugged and dangerous ascent, lest they make a misstep, and be lost. Sometimes, in passing over very dangerous places, the whole party is bound together with ropes, so that if one should slip, the others would hold him until he could regain his footing. And thus they were able to make their way up the steep and dangerous mountain.

We are on our way to the city of God, and the perils of the last days are all about us. The path we are climbing is narrow and dangerous, and we do not want to make any false steps. At such a time as this, a faithful guide is as necessary to us as to the mountain-climbers, and such a guide is provided for us in the word of God.

On this perilous journey we should be a stay to one another. It is not safe for any of us to stand alone. We must be bound together by the cords of truth and love. Let us press together, allowing nothing to weaken the bonds of union, so that if one should slip and fall, others can lift him up. We must not think that no responsibility rests upon us in the case of our brother; but we should ever manifest the tenderest interest in one another's welfare, and should seek to be helpful to those around us. Being thus bound together, and to the great heart of Infinite Love, the powers of darkness cannot harm us; and when the storms of temptation and persecution break upon us, we shall not be swept away.

Many wish to engage in the missionary work, and this is right; it is our duty to do what we can for others. But do not think, Christian friends, that you can let your children go to destruction, and yet bring others into the kingdom of God. This is not commencing in the right place. The work should begin at home, and then go to others. But we cannot begin the work in our families, unless we first bring our own hearts into subjection to the will of God. "Return unto me, saith the Lord of hosts;" "and I will heal your backslidings." We must each have an experience in the things of God. Like Joshua

of old, we must decide, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." When we see the power of God manifested in our families, we may take it as evidence that we shall have divine aid in working for others.

The children need guidance. It is true there are some that do not want any restriction placed upon them. They do not want any one to say to them that they must do so and so. But they should be taught the lesson of perfect obedience. When they are not called away by duty, they should be at home, under the parental roof. When, with our children, we go to the house of God, they should take a seat by our side; and when the service is over, they should return with us to our homes.

Parents, agonize with God in behalf of your children. If you have Christ in your hearts and in your homes, you will not exert an influence to lead others away from the path of righteousness. You will not, like Eli, let your children go on in sin until the leaven has gone through the camp of Israel, while you feel that your darlings are about right. How can you expect the divine presence in your homes, when you take just the course that Eli did? It is the letting down of the standard of piety that is depriving us of the blessing of God; and yet his blessing is of more worth than the golden wedge and the Babylonish garment, for which it is so often bartered.

There is a doubting and fear that is not Heaven-born; it is unbelief. Persons who are affected by it will go this way and that, until they are confused, and do not know when they are right, and when they are wrong. Small things take their minds, and keep them in a constant fever and unrest. Some matter which does not belong to them attracts their attention, and they keep agitating it, as though that were the all-important matter to be considered. If these persons would manifest all this earnestness and zeal to strike the blow where it is so much needed, their course would be commendable; but they neglect the weightier matters,--the duties of the heart and the home. When it comes to being a true Christian, one that does his duty every day, and endures trials without complaining, these persons know nothing about it.

The time is not far distant when Satan will come down having great power, and will work wonderful signs and great miracles; and with his delusions he will sweep away every one who does not stand upon the rock of eternal truth. God is even now proving us. We see some who claim to be followers of Christ working miracles; but do they keep the commandments of God? We will go to the inspired word, and try every

one of them. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." When the youth go out from our schools, they will have to meet these people; and we want them to be firmly established in the truth. We want them to have a training that will prepare them to withstand error, and will guide their feet in the narrow, upward way.

And as you go out into the world, dear youth, remember that you are to seek and to save that which was lost. How precious are the souls for whom Christ died; but where is the love for sinners which he manifested? Who will go and bring back those whose feet have wandered from the right way? And where is the rejoicing over the lost sheep that has been found and brought back to the fold again?

There is very little of this work done today. If there were more of it done, there would be more order and harmony in our churches. In order to do this work, we must connect with Christ, take hold of Infinite Power, and be real Christians at home. But none should feel that they are entitled to eternal life because they have given to God their money, their education, or even themselves; for all was his before, and they have only returned to him his own. For our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich. He has intrusted us with ability; he has given us all things freely; and he expects his gifts to be returned with usury.

If we appreciated what Christ has done for us as we should, what we do for him would not be done reluctantly. Here is the means which has been intrusted to us. Our Saviour directs: "Provide yourselves bags which wax not old" These "bags which wax not old" are the treasuries of Heaven. Are we putting our means into them? Are we cutting down, or adding to, our earthly possessions? If we sell a farm now and another by and by, and put the proceeds into the bank of Heaven; we may not be able to embellish our homes so elaborately; but it will not be like putting money into the banks of this earth. We shall have a treasure "that faileth not," and it will be something to rejoice over when we reach Heaven.

But some one will say, "Suppose I give away all that I have, and then become dependent on others. It would be said, That man was a fool to do as he did; and what shall we do then? That is not the way the Majesty of Heaven talked. He did not count the cost of saving sinners. He became a man sorrows and acquainted with grief, and had not where to lay his head, that you and [I] might be saved. But we seem to think that if

we make a little sacrifice, we have done a great deal, when we should say with David, "All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee."

Christian friends, let your treasures go over on the other side, and let your sympathies go out for one another and for sinners around you. And we want our hearts to go out after Jesus, the Fountain of living waters, that we may behold his matchless charms. I love him, and I want him to take possession of my soul. We can afford to be ridiculed and to suffer for his sake, if we can have his blessing with us. What are the sufferings of this present life, compared with the final eternal weight of glory? "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."

May God help us to get our hearts right before him. When divine love transforms the heart, working out of it everything that is selfish and covetous, we shall bring all our tithes and offerings into the store-house of the Lord, and he will pour us out a "blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive." And by and by, when we have kept the truth even to the end, the gates of the heavenly city will be opened to us, and we shall hear the voice of our Saviour saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

December 17, 1885

The Christian's 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."

Here is revealed the secret of the Christian's rest. It is found only in Christ. If we possess his meekness of spirit, we shall find peace and joy in him. The world is full of unrest, trials, and difficulties. It is an enemy's land, and on every hand we are beset by temptations. "In the world," says Jesus, "ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world;" and "my peace I give unto you."

Our Saviour represents his requirements as a yoke, and the Christian life as one of burden-bearing. Yet, contrasting these with the cruel power of Satan and with the burdens imposed by sin, he declares: "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." When we try to live the life of a Christian, to bear its responsibilities and perform its duties without Christ as a helper, the yoke is galling, the burden intolerably heavy. But Jesus does not desire us to do this. To the sin-sick soul, weary and heavy laden with its burden of guilt and care, he extends the gracious invitation: "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Many profess to come to Christ, while they yet cling to their own ways, which are a painful yoke. Selfishness, covetousness, ambition, love of the world, or some other cherished sin, destroys their peace and joy. They are restless, impatient, dissatisfied, their spirits chafe under the weight of care and responsibility, all because they have not made a complete surrender to Jesus, and are seeking to carry their burden without his aid. If he were by their side, the sunshine of his presence would scatter every cloud; the help of his strong arm would lighten every burden.

Christ gave himself for us, "that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." His true followers are unlike the world in words, in works, and in deportment. But many are so fearful of provoking

unfriendly criticism or malicious gossip that they have not the moral courage to act from principle. They dare not identify themselves with those who follow Christ fully. They love the world; and they desire to conform to its customs and to secure the approbation of worldlings. They thus cumber themselves with needless cares and anxieties, and weigh themselves down with heavy burdens. Oh! why will not all the professed children of God follow the Saviour fully? Why will they take upon themselves burdens which he has not imposed?

We should be much happier and more useful, if our home life and social intercourse were governed by the principles of the Christian religion, and illustrated the meekness and simplicity of Christ. Instead of toiling to make a display, and to excite admiration and envy, let it appear that we are striving to conform to the will of Christ. Let visitors see that we try to make all around us happy by our cheerfulness, sympathy, and love.

While we endeavor to secure the comfort and happiness of our guests, let us not overlook our obligation to God. The hour of prayer should not be neglected for any consideration. Do not give the time to conversation and recreation until you are too weary to enjoy the season of devotion. To do this is to present to God a lame offering. At an early hour of the evening, when you can pray unhurriedly and understandingly, present your supplication, and raise your voices in happy, grateful praise. Let all who visit Christians see that the hour of prayer is the most sacred, the most precious, and the happiest hour of the day. Such an example will not be without effect. These seasons of devotion exert a refining, elevating influence upon all who participate in them. Right thoughts and new and better desires will be awakened in the hearts of the most careless. The hour of prayer brings a peace and rest grateful to the weary spirit; for the very atmosphere of a Christian home is that of peace and restfulness.

In every act the Christian should seek to represent his Master, to make his service appear attractive. Let none make religion repulsive by persistent gloominess, and by relating their trials and their difficulties, their self-denials and their sacrifices. Talk of these things less, my fellow-Christian, and more of the matchless love of Jesus, of Heaven and its glories. Do not give the lie to your profession of faith by impatience, fretfulness, and repining. Let it be seen that with you the love of Christ is an abiding motive; that your religion is not like a garment that may be put off and resumed again, as the circumstances demand, but a principle, calm, steady, unvarying,--one that rules

your whole life. Alas, that pride, unbelief, and selfishness, like a foul cancer, are eating out vital godliness from the heart of many a professed Christian! When judged according to their works, how many will learn, too late, that their religion was but a glittering cheat, unacknowledged by the world's Redeemer.

Whatever your lot in life may be, remember that you are in the service of Christ, and manifest a contented, grateful spirit. Whatever your burden or cross, lift it in the name of Jesus; bear it in his strength. He pronounces the yoke easy, and the burden light; and I believe him, for I have proved the truth of his words. Every provision has been made for us at an infinite cost, that we may have the blessedness of Heaven wrought into our every-day life. We may walk in the sunlight of the divine presence, and weave into our characters the golden threads of forbearance and love, gratitude and peace. We shall thus be reflecting the light of Heaven amid all the frets and irritations that come to us day by day.

It is only through earnest, persevering effort, aided by the grace of God, that we can reach this height of moral excellence. But this is the religion that is the light of the world. The church is becoming weak for the want of consecrated members, who feel that they are not their own; that their time, their talents, their energies, belong to Christ; that he has bought them with his blood, and is pleading for them in the sanctuary above. There are many who have never felt the necessity of subduing self, and overcoming wicked tempers. They cherish bitterness and wrath in their hearts, and these evil traits defile the soul. They thus deny Christ, and darken the pathway of others. None will be excused for the exhibition of uncontrollable tempers; thousands will miss of Heaven through their want of self-control.

We are to let nothing, small or great, unbalance us. Nine-tenths of the trials and perplexities that so many worry over are either imaginary, or brought upon themselves by their own wrong course. They should cease to talk of these trials, and to magnify them. The Christian may commit every worryment, every disturbing thing to God. Nothing is too small for our compassionate Saviour to notice; nothing is too great for him to carry. Then let us set our hearts and homes in order; let us teach our children that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; and let us, by a cheerful, happy, well-ordered life, express our gratitude and love to Him "who giveth us richly all things to enjoy." But above all things, let us fix our thoughts and the affections of our hearts on the dear Saviour who suffered for guilty man, and thus opened Heaven for us.

Love to Jesus cannot be hidden, but will make itself seen and felt. It exerts a wondrous power. It makes the timid bold, the slothful diligent, the ignorant wise. It makes the stammering tongue eloquent, and rouses the dormant intellect into new life and vigor. It makes the desponding hopeful, the gloomy joyous. Love to Christ will lead its possessor to accept responsibilities and cares for his sake, and to bear them in his strength. Love to Christ will not be dismayed by tribulation, nor turned aside from duty by reproaches. And the soul that is not imbued with this love for Jesus is none of his.

Peace in Christ is of more value than all the treasures of earth. Then let us open our hearts to the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Let us seek the Lord with all the heart, and learn of Christ to be meek and lowly, that we may find rest of soul. Let us work cheerfully, joyously in the service of our Master, remembering that the deportment as well as the words of the Christian should be such as to awaken in the heart of the sinner a desire to come to the Fountain of life.

Let us go forward; for we are striving for an immortal crown. Let us be diligent to make our calling and election sure. A slothful, languid professor will never secure an entrance into the kingdom of God. From the cross to the crown there is earnest work to be done. There is wrestling against inbred sin; there is warfare against outward wrong. But we shall triumph at last, if we do not become weary in well-doing. Heaven's portals will be opened for every one who does his best for God and his fellow-men.

January 7, 1886

Watchfulness and Prayer

"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. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." Luke 21:34-36.

In the solemn language of this scripture, a duty is pointed out which lies in the daily pathway of every one, whether old or young. This is the duty of watchfulness, and upon our faithfulness here our destiny for time and for eternity depends.

We are living in an important time. When in 1844 the message was proclaimed, "Fear God and give glory to him; for the hour of his Judgment is come," that announcement stirred every soul to its very depths. A deep solemnity rested upon all who heard it. How earnest we were to show our faith by our works, and to have our words and actions make a favorable impression on the world. More than forty years have passed since that time, and we are that much nearer the close of the Judgment and the coming of the Son of man--"nearer the great white throne, nearer the crystal sea."

Today angels are watching the development of character; and soon our lives will have to pass in review before God. Soon we shall be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, and over against our names will be recorded the judgment rendered. And we shall receive the crowning gift of eternal life or be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord. We may be unwilling to examine ourselves closely now to see what our spiritual condition is, and whether our hearts are being suitably impressed by the testing message of truth; but that will not make any difference with the work of the Judgment. Its decisions will be rendered just the same; and when the "Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels," "he shall reward every man according to his works."

"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." How many there are who are bereft of their reason, as much intoxicated with the cares of this life as is the drunkard with his liquor.

How many there are whose hearts are today aching under their load of care, and who are thinking, "Oh, if there was only some one to help me bear my burdens!" Well, there is some one to help you bear your burden; there is rest for you who are heavy laden. Jesus, the great Burden-bearer, invites, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Here is the promise of the Master; but it is on condition. "Take my yoke upon you," he says, "and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." "For my yoke is grievous." Is that what he says? No. "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." The burden you are carrying which is so heavy, and which causes such weariness and perplexity, is your own burden. You desire to meet the world's standard; and in your eager efforts to gratify ambitious and worldly desires, you wound your consciences, and thus bring upon yourselves the additional burden of remorse. When you do not want to be distinct from the world, but desire to mix up with it so that no difference is seen between you and the world, then you may know that you are drunken with the cares of this life. Oh, there are so many selfish interests, so many cords to bind us to this world! But we must keep cutting these cords, and be in a condition of waiting for our Lord.

The world has forced itself in between our souls and God. But what right have we to allow our hearts to become overcharged with the cares of this life? What right have we, through our devotion to the world, to neglect the affairs of the church and the interests of our fellowmen? Why should we manufacture for ourselves burdens and cares that Christ has not laid upon us? Why should we, through distrust of his promises, suffer from wearing, anxious care? He says: "Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" "for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."

"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." The magnificence of Solomon was not to be compared to the beauty of one of these little flowers, with its delicate colors, which the God of Heaven had painted upon it by his wondrous skill. Will not He who has taken so much thought for the flowers of the field care for your mortal bodies? Will he not see that you have bread to eat and

raiment to put on, O ye of little faith? And more than all this, will he not also clothe you with the garment of his own righteousness?

Our heavenly Father has a thousand ways to provide for us that we know nothing about. But we are not excused from effort. While we may trust his constant care, we must not conclude that we may be slack in that which our hands find to do. We are to be "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel."

There is one thing in which we must be deeply in earnest, and that is in the service of God. There is no danger of having too much zeal here. If we would only work with an eye single to the glory of God, the mists would roll away, and our views of right and wrong would become clear. We should consecrate our property. The language of our hearts would be, "Lord, here is the means for which thou hast made me responsible; what wilt thou have me do with it?" And we should make straight paths for our feet, lest by any false step the lame be turned out of the way. The whole effort of our lives would be to glorify the Saviour, the Man of Calvary, and to prepare for the life immortal.

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always." There is great need of watchfulness, not for our own sakes only, but also for the sake of our influence upon others. Our influence is far-reaching. We may think that it is confined to our own households; that only the members of our own families know what we are and what we are doing. In some cases this may seem to be true; but in some way the influence of the home life goes out beyond the home.

And what do we learn from this? That in our homes and in all the relations of life, we should be watchful and prayerful. Solemn, sacred duties devolve upon us. We should so speak and so walk that the Spirit of God may be in our hearts, and his blessing in our homes. If we had more of the love of God in our hearts, and his praise were oftener upon our lips, we should be better prepared to glorify him here and hereafter. But what will our words accomplish, if they are not backed up by a holy life?

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always," that "ye may stand before the Son of man," What a position to stand in before the world, to be ready and waiting for the coming of the Lord, that at his appearing we may be able to say, "Lo, this is our God;

we have waited for him, and he will save us." What a triumph it will be to enter in through the gates into the city of God, bearing the palm branch of victory! what a privilege to have a right to the tree of life, and to eat of its precious fruits!

If we would share in the glorious reward promised to the overcomer, we must fight the good fight of faith. This is what the apostle Paul did, and he says: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." Let us be of the number of those that are "rich in good works," "laying up for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

January 14, 1886

Christian Homes

Our time, our strength, and our energies belong to God; and if they are consecrated to his service, our light will shine. It will affect first and most strongly those in our own homes, who are most intimately associated with us; but it will extend beyond the home, even to "the world." To many it will be a savor of life unto life; but there are some who will refuse to see the light, or to walk in it. They are of that class spoken of by our Saviour, when he said: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Such are in a very dangerous position; but their course does not excuse any of us from letting our light shine.

Suppose that because some ship had disregarded his warning beacon, and gone to pieces on the rocks, the lighthouse-keeper should put out his lights, and say, "I will pay no more attention to the lighthouse," what would be the consequence? But that is not the way he does. He keeps his lights burning all night, throwing their beams far out into the darkness, for the benefit of every mariner that comes within the dangerous reach of rocks and shoals. Were some ship to be wrecked because the lights went out, it would be telegraphed over the world that on such a night, at such a point, a ship went to pieces on the rocks because there was no light in the tower. But if some ships are wrecked because they pay no attention to the light, the lighthouse-keeper is guiltless; they were warned, but they paid no heed.

What if the light in the household should go out? Then every one in that house would be in darkness; and the result would be as disastrous as though the light were to go out in the lighthouse tower. Souls are looking at you, fellow-Christians, to see whether you are drunken with the cares of this life, or are preparing for the future, immortal life. They will watch to see what the influence of your life is, and whether you are true missionaries at home, training your children for Heaven.

The Christian's first duty is in the home. Fathers and mothers, yours is a great responsibility. You are preparing your children for life or for death; you are training them for an abiding place here in the earth, for self-gratification in this life, or for the

immortal life, to praise God forever. And which shall it be? It should be the burden of your life to have every child that God has committed to your trust receive the divine mould. Your children should be taught to control their tempers and to cultivate a loving, Christlike spirit. So direct them that they will love the service of God, that they will take more pleasure in going to the house of worship than to places of amusement. Teach them that religion is a living principle. Had I been brought up with the idea that religion is a mere feeling, my life would have been a useless one. But I never let feeling come between Heaven and my soul. Whatever my feelings may be, I will seek God at the commencement of the day, at noon, and at night, that I may draw strength from the living Source of power.

Mothers, you have no right to spend time in ruffling, and tucking, and embroidering your children's dresses for display. Has not your time been given you for a higher and nobler purpose? Has it not been given you to be spent in beautifying the minds of your children, and cultivating loveliness of character? Should it not be spent in laying hold of the Mighty One of Heaven, and seeking him for power and wisdom to train your children for a place in his kingdom, to secure for them a life that will endure as long as the throne of Jehovah?

But how many mothers there are who are so far from God that they devote their time to their own gratification, and leave their children to be cared for by unconsecrated hands. Or perhaps the mother sits at her work night after night, while her children go to bed without a prayer or a good-night kiss. She does not bind their tender hearts to her own by the cords of love; for she is "too busy." And is this as God would have it? No, indeed! Something has taken away the mother's reason, and what is it? Is it not a desire to meet the world's standard and to conform to its customs?

Some may wonder why it is that we say so much about home religion and the children. It is because of the terrible neglect of home duties on the part of so many. As the servants of God, parents, you are responsible for the children committed to your care. Many of them are growing up without reverence, growing up careless and irreligious, unthankful and unholy.

If these children had been properly trained and disciplined, if they had been brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, heavenly angels would be in your homes. If you were true home missionaries, in your daily life exemplifying the

teachings of the word of God, you would be preparing yourselves for a wider field of usefulness, and at the same time fitting your children to stand by your side, as efficient workers in the cause of God. What an impression it makes upon society to see a family united in the work and service of the Lord. Such a family is a powerful discourse in favor of the reality of Christianity. Others see that there is an influence at work in the family that affects the children, and that the God of Abraham is with them. And that which has such a powerful influence on the children is felt beyond the home, and affects other lives. If the homes of professed Christians had a right religious mould, they would exert a mighty influence for good. They would indeed be the "light of the world."

A well-ordered Christian household is an argument that the infidel cannot resist. He finds no place for his cavils. And the children of such a household are prepared to meet the sophistries of infidelity. They have accepted the Bible as the basis of their faith, and they have a firm foundation that cannot be swept away by the in-coming tide of skepticism.

Said Christ, "Ye are the light of the world." He has committed talents to our keeping. What are we doing with his intrusted gifts? Are we letting our light shine by using them for his glory and the benefit of our fellow-men, or are we using them to advance our own selfish interests? Many are using them selfishly. They do not seem to realize that we are all Judgment-bound, and must soon give an account for the use we have made of our God-given opportunities to do good. But what excuse will they give in that great day for not using in the cause of God their skill, their education, their tact, and their perseverance and zeal?

We need divine help if we would keep our lights burning. But Jesus died to provide that aid. He extends the invitation: "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me." Cling to the arm of Infinite Power; then you will find him precious to your soul, and all Heaven will be at your command. "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light," we shall have the companionship of holy angels. To "Joshua" it was said, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts: If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge," "I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by." And who are "these that stand by"? They are the angels of God. Joshua must have a living, confiding trust in God every day; and then angels would walk with him, and the power of God would rest upon him in all his labors.

Then, Christian friends, fathers and mothers, let your light grow dim--no, never! Let your heart grow faint, or your hands weary--no, never! And by and by the portals of the celestial city will be opened to you; and you may present yourselves and your children before the throne, saying, "Here am I, and the children whom thou hath given me." And what a reward for faithfulness that will be, to see your children crowned with immortal life in the beautiful city of God!

January 14, 1886

The Missionary

A Warning

"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 foolish rich man loved and served himself. If he had loved God supremely, he would not have accumulated so great treasures that there would be lack of room to bestow them. Had he used his goods to supply the necessities of the poor, there would have been no need of tearing down his barns, and building greater. By employing his wealth as a bounty lent him of God with which to do good, he would have become rich in good works, would have laid up treasure in Heaven. But he disregarded the principles of the divine law. He did not love God supremely, nor his neighbor as himself.

While enjoying the gifts of Heaven, he failed to acknowledge whence all his possessions came. These earthly benefits he allowed to take his mind and absorb his affections so that the Giver was forgotten. He claimed as his own that which God had lent him. No grateful thanks ascended to his gracious Benefactor. The Master who had intrusted to him earthly riches with which to bless his fellow-men and glorify his Maker, was justly angry at his ingratitude.

This parable illustrates the sin and danger of a self-serving life. Poor are the devotees of mammon. They have embezzled the Lord's goods, placed their own name where God's name should be written, and robbed the soul of his love and favor. "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." There are a greater number following the example of the foolish rich man than we imagine. The worship

due to God is given to money. That which can satisfy the earthly, sensual faculties is sought as the highest good. Many show that they will not trust God's promises, but are trusting to property for happiness. They may call themselves rich, but God calls them poor. Men who claim to acknowledge God, forget him and disown him. They turn from the heavenly treasure for worldly pleasures and enjoyments, until the patience of God is exhausted, and he says, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee." "Lo, this is the man that made not God his strength, but trusted in the abundance of his riches."

These warnings are for us, and it is for our interest to heed them. They should be repeated as earnestly, and set home as pointedly, as is the gospel of salvation through Christ. But though so plainly given by our Lord himself, but few dwell upon these lessons, because they would disturb the complacency of the rich man who lives for selfish enjoyment. Ministers have but little to do with these sharp warnings. God's professed people are not told of their danger. They follow the example of the foolish rich man, and flatter themselves they have all that the soul requires.

Listen to the words of your Redeemer: "'If riches increase, set not your heart upon them.' Riches are mine. I have placed them in your hands to be wisely employed in my service, to aid the suffering, to invest in opening the gospel to those who are in darkness. Riches must not be your trust, your god, or your saviour."

The channels for doing good are many, and they stand wide open. Your barns are large, too large already. If they overflow, instead of building larger, send your treasure before you into Heaven. There are widows to feed, orphans to be taken under the guardianship of your home, and share your ample stores; there are souls perishing for the bread of life; missions are to be supported, meeting-houses to be built. If God's cause demands a part, not only of your interest, but of your principal, you are to give back to him his own. He calls upon you to sow now, that you may reap your harvest with eternal joy.

God's gifts increase as they are imparted. We see this illustrated in the case of the poor widow whom the prophet Elisha, by a miracle, relieved from debt. She had only one jar of oil; but the prophet told her to borrow vessels of her neighbors, and the oil poured from that one jar continued to flow till all the vessels were filled. The supply ceased only when no more vessels were brought to receive it. So it will be now. So long as we let the gifts of God flow into channels of good, the Lord will supply the flow.

Christ says to his sons and daughters, "Ye are the light of the world." But who gave you light? You did not have it in you naturally. God is the source of light; the truth has shone into our hearts, to be reflected to others. True love to God will produce love to man. This is what we need,--love that is patient, self-sacrificing, persevering, intelligent, practical.

The Lord has given you means, that in putting it to a right use you may develop good and noble traits of character. When you follow the purpose of your own selfish hearts, you are not only keeping your means from the cause of God, but depriving yourselves of the opportunity to cultivate noble, unselfish principles; and thus your own character suffers loss.

The day of trial is before us; shall we stand acquitted or condemned? You who believe that the Lord is soon to come, will show your faith by your works. The Judgment is to sit, the books are to be opened, and every man will receive as his works have been. We are now trees in the Lord's garden, and he says, "By their fruits ye shall know them." If our faith has not led us to deny self, to make any and every sacrifice to save the souls of our fellowmen, it will not save us.

Every excuse which men offer for neglecting to obey God's requirements in regard to the use of their property, is an evidence of rebellion against him. The plea of the unprofitable servant is man's plea today, that the Lord has no right to require his servants to employ their time and ability in making money for him. But God requires of none of us that which it is not for our best interest to do. Many would be loth to put into words the reason they secretly cherish to vindicate themselves and silence their own conscience; but they are no less bringing upon themselves the denunciation pronounced upon the unprofitable servant. "Take the talent from him," will be heard by many unwilling ears.

What wrong have I done? may be asked. The answer comes, You tied up your Lord's money in large barns, in which to bestow your goods. You bound up his means in a fine house, in expensive carpets, furniture, and goodly things, while souls were left to perish in their sins. You buried your talents because you did not love God and his cause half so well as you loved yourself. God and man lost all the profits your means would have brought if rightly employed. Today the Lord is disappointed in you. He

looked for a precious offering of gratitude, but no returns are made for his wondrous love and his great sacrifice for you. Do you inquire, Of what have I to repent?--Of a godless, self-loving, self-pleasing life. You have not reflected the light of a godly example. You said plainly, I claim my portion as my own.

I hope to see our brethren and sisters improving the little remaining moment of probationary time. Brethren, be not deceived; God is not mocked. The excuses you have prepared for the Judgment will not stand the test. Let us see active, energetic workers, who are looking for their Lord's return, and who are ready to present the talents they have traded upon, saying, Here, Lord, thy five talents have gained other five talents; thy two talents have gained other two. Where are the God-fearing workers? Let them come to the front. The Lord is coming. You have no time to lose. You are not to do as did the inhabitants of the antediluvian world,--plant and build, eat and drink, marry and give in marriage, the same as the careless worldling. Let the books of Heaven present a different record from that which now appears. Make haste to redeem the time; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not. E. G. White.

January 21, 1886

Bible 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 promises to the liberal are very great; and He who made them is able to fulfill his word, for his resources are infinite. Yet all his promises are based upon conditions, and it is only by complying with these that we can hope to gain the proffered blessing. God has intrusted of his bounties to every man, but in varying measure, according to their several capacities. These gifts of a kind Providence are to be wisely employed in the service of the Giver, and to be returned with interest at the day of reckoning. Those who prove themselves good stewards will receive in greater measure, as they dispense their means to advance the cause of God and to bless their fellow-men.

The children of God are not like worldlings, enshrouded in moral darkness, loving self, and seeking for earthly treasure. They are ever a "peculiar people, zealous of good works." It requires self-denial and self-sacrifice to follow in the footsteps of our Saviour. And in order to do this, we must cultivate a spirit of beneficence. The first great principle of God's law is supreme love to the Creator; the second, equal love to our neighbor. "On these two commandments," said Christ, "hang all the law and the prophets."

Experience shows that a spirit of benevolence is more frequently found among those of limited means than among the more wealthy. Many who greatly desire riches would be ruined by their possession. When such persons are intrusted with talents of means, they too often hoard or waste the Lord's money, until the Master says to them individually, "Thou shalt be no longer steward." They dishonestly use that which is another's as though it were their own. God will not intrust them with eternal riches.

The cry of souls that have been left in darkness, and the cry of the widow and the

fatherless, go up to Heaven as a swift witness against the unfaithful stewards. But the poor man's gift, the fruit of self-denial to extend the precious light of truth, is as fragrant incense before God. Every act of self-sacrifice for the good of others will strengthen the spirit of beneficence in the giver's heart, allying him more closely to the Redeemer of the world, "who was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through, his poverty might be rich."

The smallest sum given cheerfully as the result of self-denial is of more value in the sight of God than the offerings of those who could give thousands and yet feel no lack. The poor widow who cast two mites into the treasury of the Lord, showed love, faith, and benevolence. She gave all that she had, trusting to God's care for the uncertain future. Her little gift was pronounced by our Saviour the greatest that day cast into the treasury. Its value was measured, not by the worth of the coin, but by the purity of the motive which prompted her. God's blessing upon that sincere offering has made it the source of great results. The widow's mite has been like a tiny stream flowing down through the ages, widening and deepening in its course, and contributing in a thousand directions to the extension of the truth and the relief of the needy. The influence of that small gift has acted and reacted upon thousands of hearts in every age and in every country. As the result, unnumbered gifts have flowed into the treasury of the Lord from the liberal, self-denying poor. And again, her example has stimulated to good works thousands of ease-loving, selfish, and doubting ones, and their gifts also have gone to swell the value of her offering.

Liberality is a duty on no account to be neglected; but let not rich or poor for a moment entertain the thought that their offerings to God can atone for their defects of Christian character. Says the great apostle: "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

Again, he sets forth the fruits of true charity: "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, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth." If we would be accepted as the followers of Christ, we must bring forth the fruits of his Spirit; for our Saviour himself declares: "Ye shall know them by their fruits."

It is to cultivate a spirit of benevolence in us that the Lord calls for our gifts and offerings. He is not dependent upon men for means to sustain his cause. He declares, by the prophet: "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."

The Lord will not accept our offerings, if we withhold ourselves. He asks for that which is his own--not only the means intrusted to us, but all that we have and are, in body, soul, and spirit; for all has been purchased at the infinite price of the blood of Christ. God might have made angels the ambassadors of his truth. He might have made known his will, as he proclaimed the law from Sinai, with his own voice. But he has chosen to employ men to do this work. And it is only as we fulfill the divine purpose in our creation, that life can be a blessing to us.

The Majesty of Heaven yielded up his high command, his glory with the Father, and even his own life, to save us. And now what will we do for him? God forbid that his professed children should live for themselves! There is work to be done for the Master, by our means and by our influence. God's claim underlies every other. The first and best of everything rightfully belongs to him. When Christ shall come in the clouds of heaven, he will have no use for the money which he has intrusted to us. It is in this life that he requires all our talents to be put out to the exchangers. In this life he calls upon us to bring all the tithes into the store-house, and thus prove him and see if he will not pour us out a blessing. This proposition is made by the Lord of hosts. Shall we comply with the conditions, and thus secure the promised blessing?

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings." There has been a fearful withholding from God, and, as a result, the withdrawal of his special blessing. We should not look upon the tithe as the limit of our liberality. The Jews were required to bring to God numerous offerings besides the tithe; and shall not we, who enjoy the blessings of the gospel, do as much to sustain the cause of God as was done in the former, less-favored dispensation? As the work for this time is extending in the earth, the calls for help are constantly increasing. And in view of this the Lord commands us, "Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in mine house," that is, a surplus of means in the treasury, that the work of God in its various branches may be amply

sustained.

As we are continually receiving the blessings of God, so are we to be continually giving. When the heavenly Benefactor ceases to give to us, then we may be excused; for we shall have nothing to bestow. God has never left us without evidence of his love. He gives us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, providing us abundantly with his bounties, and filling our hearts with gladness. He has declared that "while the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

We are sustained every moment by God's care, and upheld by his power. He spreads our tables with food. He gives us peaceful and refreshing sleep. Weekly he brings to us the Sabbath, that we may rest from our temporal labors, and worship him in his own house. He has given us his word to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. In its sacred pages we find the counsels of wisdom; and as oft as we lift our hearts to him in penitence and faith, he grants us the blessings of his grace. Above all else is the infinite gift of God's dear Son, through whom flow all other blessings for this life and for the life to come.

Surely, goodness and mercy attend us at every step. Not till we wish the Infinite Father to cease bestowing his gifts on us, should we become impatient of giving. Not only should we faithfully render to God our tithes, which he claims as his own, but we should bring a tribute to his treasury as an offering of gratitude. Let us with joyful hearts bring to our Creator the first-fruits of all his bounties,--our choicest possessions, our best and holiest service.

January 28, 1886

"Preach the Word"

"Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth," was the prayer of Christ for his disciples. In every age God has committed to his people some special truth which is directly opposed to the desires and purposes of the human heart, and which tends to separate his church from the world; and it has been the duty of his ministers to proclaim this truth, whether men would hear or forbear.

When Christ came as the teacher and guide of mankind, he brought to them truths glowing with the light of Heaven, showing in contrast the darkness of error, and revealing the superstition, self-righteousness, and bigotry of that age. His heart overflowed with love for the poor, the ignorant, the afflicted, and the fallen. He healed the sick, comforted the desponding, cast out devils, raised the dead, and preached to all the words of eternal life. But many who listened to the divine Teacher received his words with little favor. The priests and elders, the professed expositors of divine truth, were sending forth no rays of light. In their self-righteousness they held themselves aloof from the benighted people, who needed instruction and guidance. When Jesus took up the work which they had left undone, they felt that his life was a constant rebuke to them, and they feared that he would turn the hearts of the people from them, and destroy their influence. They were filled with pride, love of ostentation, and desire for praise; and they despised the humility and self-denial of Jesus. They hated the purity while they feared the power of his teachings. They refused to accept him themselves, and bent all their energies to hinder others from believing in him. No wonder he brought against them the terrible accusation: "Ye have taken away the key of knowledge. Ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered."

It is no argument against the truth that there are few who are willing to accept it. Few accepted the world's Redeemer. Though the multitude flocked around him, eager to receive temporal blessings, yet he sadly declared: "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life." Men are now no more favorable to practical godliness; they are just as intently seeking earthly good, to the neglect of eternal riches. And reformers of the present day will meet with the same discouragements as did their Master.

Of the people in his day Christ said: "For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." The Jews willfully closed their eyes and their ears, and barred their hearts with prejudice, lest they should see a better way, and be aroused from their dream of security. The people of the present generation are pursuing a similar course. New truths are constantly unfolding; new and clearer light is shining upon the pathway of God's people. But the great mass of mankind are satisfied with their present condition, and are unwilling to exchange error for truth. But we are to be sanctified through obedience to the truth. For want of this Bible sanctification, the soul of many a professed Christian has become a desecrated shrine, the haunt of hollow formalism, of selfishness and hypocrisy, pride and passion.

It is harder to reach the hearts of men today than it was twenty years ago. The most convincing arguments may be presented, and yet sinners seem as far from repentance as ever. The work of the faithful minister is no child's play. Earnest, untiring effort is required to wrench the prey of Satan from his grasp. But God will sustain his servants in the work which he himself has committed to their hands. Said Christ to his disciples, as they toiled upon the Sea of Galilee, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." When the gospel net is cast, there should be a watching by the net, with tears and earnest prayers. Let the workers determine not to let the net go till it is drawn ashore, with the fruit of their labor. Sometimes, indeed, we may say with Peter, "We have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing;" but still it is the Master's command, as of old, "Let down the net on the right side of the ship,"--work on in faith, and God will give success.

Whatever the trials and difficulties that the ambassador of Christ have to meet, he can carry them all to God in prayer. He can weep between the porch and the altar, pleading, "Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach." And by study of the Scriptures and earnest, wrestling prayer, he may become "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Labor on, then, while the day lasts, you who have been called to preach the good news of salvation through Christ; for the night cometh, wherein no man can work. God has called us to labor in his vineyard, and if we neglect our duty, souls will be lost through our unfaithfulness.

Though the servants of Christ may, at times, feel almost disheartened as they see

how many obstacles there are in the way of Christian living, and how slowly the work of God seems to advance, their duty remains the same. They are to sow the seed of truth beside all waters. A constant effort to promote personal piety should be seen in all their public labors. They should not preach sermon after sermon on doctrinal subjects alone. Practical godliness should find a place in every discourse, and the discourses should be short and to the point.

The minister should not merely present the truth from the desk, but as the shepherd of the flock he should care for the sheep and the lambs, searching out the lost and straying, and bringing them back to the fold. He should visit every family, not merely as a guest to enjoy their hospitality, but to inquire into the spiritual condition of every member of the household. His own soul must be imbued with the love of God; then by kindly courtesy he may win his way to the hearts of all, and labor successfully for parents and children, entreating, warning, encouraging, as the case demands. Let him seek to keep the church alive, and laboring with him for the conversion of sinners. This is good generalship; and the results will be found far better than if the minister performed all the work alone.

Jesus bids his people, "Go forward." The minister may labor for the people, but he cannot take the responsibility that God has placed upon them. There are higher attainments for us, there is a purer love, a deeper experience, if we will consecrate ourselves to God, and humbly take him at his word. The reason why we have no greater confidence and joy, is that we are not sanctified through obedience to the truth. There is in us an evil heart of unbelief. Our heavenly Father is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. Then let us shake off the spiritual sloth that dishonors him and imperils our own souls. If we draw near to God, he will draw near to us. We must not wait for better opportunities, for strong persuasions, or for holier tempers. We can do nothing for ourselves. We must trust to the power of Jesus to save us. He is holding out to us the crown of life, and shall we not accept it? Let us come to him just as we are, and we shall find him a present help in our time of need.

The sweet sense of sins forgiven, the light and love which Christ alone can give, fill the soul with peace and joy. The assurance that we are under the protection of Omnipotence imparts courage and confidence, inspires a hope that is "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail." This

assurance is a source of strength unknown to the worldling or to the half-hearted professor. So long as we have the presence of our Saviour, difficulties cannot dismay nor dangers appall us; and we are ready cheerfully to perform whatever duty God requires of us. If we were only as free to speak of the blessings we receive from God as we are to talk of our doubts and discouragements, we should enjoy far more of his presence. Our kind heavenly Father declares: "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." Let us praise him more, and complain less; let us talk more of the love and wondrous power of our Redeemer, and we shall be brought nearer and nearer to him, into closer and still closer relations with him in whom our hope centers.

Shall we not consecrate ourselves to God without reserve? Christ, the King of glory, gave himself a ransom for us. Can we withhold anything from him? Shall we think our poor, unworthy selves too precious, our time or property too valuable, to give to Jesus? No, no; the deepest homage of our hearts, the most skillful service of our hands, our talents of ability and of means,--all are but too poor an offering to bring to Him who was slain, and has redeemed us to God by his blood "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

January 28, 1886

Home Missionaries

Many professed Christians are laying upon the foundation-stone, wood, hay, and stubble, which the fires of the last day will consume. They engage in work that wearies, work that occupies golden hours; but it is not work that need be done. Their time is occupied, their energies exhausted, in that which will bring no precious returns either in this life or in the future, immortal life. What a difference will be seen when spiritual work engages the mind, when the talents are employed in the service of Jesus! The light that he has given us will then shine forth in direct, concentrated rays to others. All that we do for Jesus will enable us to enjoy this life better. Oh that all could see, as I have seen, the joy of those who have labored to the best of their ability, in humility and meekness, to help souls to come to Jesus! Oh, the joy that will be realized by the workers when the souls saved through their instrumentality express their gratitude in the mansions above! While Christ will be glorified as the only Redeemer, there will be an overflowing of gratitude from the saved for the human instrumentalities employed in their salvation. Their gratitude to those who rescued them will find expression in words like these: "I was pursuing a course that was a dishonor and an offense to my Redeemer; you manifested a love for my soul; you opened to me the word of God. I was on the brink of ruin; your prayers, your tearful entreaties, your earnest interest, arrested my attention. I thought that you must have the truth or you would not be so earnest for the salvation of others. I read the word of God for myself, and found that what you had told me was the truth. I am saved, and I will praise my Redeemer for his matchless mercy and pardoning love."

Those who think they can do but little, should improve every opportunity to do that little. It may be the smallest link in the longest chain. Separated from other influences, it may appear of little worth; but in God's great chain of circumstances it may be the link which connects a soul to Heaven. All can do something if they will; but too often selfishness prevents them from doing what they might, until the souls whom they might have saved, are beyond the reach of human effort. Dear brethren and sisters, you need divine enlightenment. When you have such a close connection with the world's Redeemer as you should have, you will be led to make prompt, determined, personal efforts to save your fellow-men.

The future of God's people lies in the present. He has given us a time of probation in which our fidelity to him is to be tested. It is now that the test is being applied. Time, strength, means, light, and mental abilities are intrusted to us. What use are we making of these gifts? How are we standing the test? Do we realize that our eternal welfare is determined by our present course of action? If we fail to honor God here by making a right use of our trusts, we would not honor him if taken to Heaven. If we prove unfaithful to the lesser responsibilities, how can God put upon us those weightier, eternal responsibilities which every inhabitant of Heaven must bear? In those who are cleansed and renewed, the fruits will appear, not only in their confession of sins, but in their conduct toward others. If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. Christ gave himself a sacrifice to save perishing sinners. He consented to poverty because he could thus best reach the poor and the oppressed; he could thus best understand their privations and sorrows. It was his great love for our souls that led him to renounce the enjoyments of Heaven, and even the comforts of this life; and if we have his spirit in our hearts, it will be manifested in a similar earnestness to save perishing souls. The measure of Christ's love that we possess, will be evidenced by the course we pursue. God is testing us to see whether we have chosen Christ or mammon as our master. His word plainly declares that we cannot serve both. Mrs. E. G. White

February 11, 1886

Temperance Reform from a Bible Standpoint

We can have no right understanding of the subject of temperance until we consider it from a Bible standpoint. And nowhere shall we find a more comprehensive and forcible illustration of true temperance and its attendant blessings than is afforded by the history of the prophet Daniel and his associates in the court of Babylon. When they were selected to be taught the "learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans," that they might "stand in the king's palace," "the king appointed them a daily portion of the king's meat, and of the wine which he drank." "But Daniel 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."

Not only did these young men decline to drink the king's wine, but they refrained from the luxuries of his table. The food apportioned to them "from the king's table" would include swine's flesh and other meats pronounced unclean by the law of Moses, and which the Jews were forbidden to eat. They requested the officer who had them in charge to grant them more simple fare; but he hesitated, fearing that such rigid abstinence as they proposed would affect their personal appearance unfavorably, and bring himself into disfavor with the king. Daniel pleaded for a ten days' trial. This was granted; and at the expiration of that time, these youth were found to be far more healthy in appearance than were those who had partaken of the king's dainties. Hence the simple "pulse and water" which they at first requested was thereafter the food of Daniel and his companions.

It was not their own pride or ambition that had brought these young men into the king's court, into the companionship of those who neither knew nor feared the true God. They were captives in a strange land, and Infinite Wisdom had placed them where they were. They considered their position, with its difficulties and its dangers; and then, in the fear of God, made their decision. Even at the risk of the king's displeasure, they would be true to the religion of their fathers. They obeyed the divine law, both natural and moral, and the blessing of God gave them strength and comeliness, and intellectual power.

These youth had received a right education in early life; and now, when separated from home influences and sacred associations, they honored the instructors of their childhood. With their habits of self-denial were coupled earnestness of purpose, diligence, and steadfastness. They had no time to squander in pleasure, vanity, or folly. They were not actuated by pride or unworthy ambition; but they sought to acquit themselves creditably, for the honor of their down-trodden people and for His glory whose servants they were.

God always honors the right. The most promising youth of every land subdued by the great conqueror, had been gathered at Babylon; yet amid them all, the Hebrew captives were without a rival. The erect form, the firm, elastic step, the fair countenance showing that the blood was uncorrupted, the undimmed senses, the untainted breath,--all were so many certificates of good habits,--insignia of the nobility with which nature honors those who are obedient to her laws. And when their ability and acquirements were tested by the king at the close of the three years of training, none were found "like unto Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah." Their keen apprehension, their choice and exact language, their extensive and varied knowledge, testified to the unimpaired strength and vigor of their mental powers.

The history of Daniel and his companions has been recorded on the pages of the inspired word for the benefit of the youth of all succeeding ages. What men have done, men may do. Did those faithful Hebrews stand firm amid great temptation, and bear a noble testimony in favor of true temperance? The youth of today may bear a similar testimony, even under circumstances as unfavorable. Would that they would emulate the example of these Hebrew youth; for all who will, may, like them, enjoy the favor and blessing of God.

The lesson from the experience of these youth is one which we would all do well to ponder. Our danger is not from scarcity, but from abundance. We are constantly tempted to excess. But those who would preserve their powers unimpaired for the service of God must observe strict temperance in the use of all his bounties, as well as total abstinence from every injurious or debasing indulgence.

Right physical habits promote mental superiority. Intellectual power, physical strength, and longevity depend upon immutable laws. There is no happen-so, no chance, about this matter. Heaven will not interfere to preserve men from the consequences of

the violation of nature's laws. There is much of truth in the adage that every man is the architect of his own fortune. While parents are responsible for the stamp of character, as well as for the education and training which they give their sons and daughters, it is still true that our position and usefulness in the world depend, to a great degree, upon our own course of action.

Let old and young remember that for every violation of the laws of life, nature will utter her protest. The penalty will fall upon the mental as well as the physical powers. And it does not end with the guilty trifler. The effects of his misdemeanors are seen in his offspring, and thus hereditary evils are passed down, even to the third or fourth generation. Think of this, fathers, when you indulge in the use of the soul-and-brain-benumbing narcotic, tobacco. Where will this practice leave you? Whom will it affect besides yourselves?

Wherever we go, we encounter the tobacco devotee, enfeebling both mind and body by his darling indulgence. We rarely pass through a crowd, but men will puff their poisoned breath into our face. Is it honest to contaminate the air which others must breathe? Have men a right to deprive their Maker and the world of the service which was their due? Is such a course Christlike?

We are suffering for the wrong habits of our fathers, and yet how many take a course every way worse than theirs! Every year millions of gallons of intoxicating liquors are drunk, and millions of dollars are spent for tobacco. Opium, tea, coffee, tobacco, and intoxicating liquors are rapidly extinguishing the spark of vitality still left in the race. And the slaves of appetite, while constantly spending their earnings in sensual indulgence, rob their children of food and clothing and the advantages of education.

There can never be a right state of society while these evils exist. And no real reform will be effected until the law shall close up liquor saloons, not only on Sunday, but on all days of the week. The closing of these saloons would promote public order and domestic happiness. And why can they not be closed? It is not too much to say that liquor saloons would speedily be closed, in obedience to the dictates of reason and religion, if public officers were not among the patrons. These men by their influence corrupt society, and then they judge and condemn the erring ones who follow their example.

Only men of strict temperance and integrity should be admitted to our legislative halls and chosen to preside in our courts of justice. Property, reputation, and even life itself, are insecure when left to the judgment of men who are intemperate and immoral. How many innocent persons have been condemned to death, how many more have been robbed of all their earthly possessions, by the injustice of drinking jurors, lawyers, witnesses, and even judges!

The use of intoxicating liquor dethrones reason, and hardens the heart against every pure and holy influence. The inanimate rock will sooner listen to the appeals of truth and justice than will that man whose sensibilities are paralyzed by intemperance. The finer feelings of the heart are not blunted all at once. A gradual change is wrought. Those who venture to enter the forbidden path are gradually demoralized and corrupted. And though in the cities liquor saloons abound, making indulgence easy, and though youth are surrounded by allurements to tempt the appetite, the evil does not often begin with the use of intoxicating liquors. Tea, coffee, and tobacco are artificial stimulants, and their use creates the demand for the stronger stimulus found in alcoholic beverages. And while Christians are asleep, this giant evil of intemperance is gaining strength and making fresh victims.

There is need now of men like Daniel,--men who have the self-denial and the courage to be radical temperance reformers. Let every Christian see that his example and his influence are on the side of reform. Let ministers of the gospel be faithful in instructing and warning the people. And let all remember that our happiness in two worlds depends upon the right improvement of one.

February 18, 1886

The Burning of the Books on Magic

The temple of the goddess Diana at Ephesus, noted for its size and splendor, was one of the wonders of the world, and was the pride of both the city and the nation. The idol itself was but an uncouth wooden image, on which were inscribed characters and symbols that were supposed to possess great power. When pronounced, these mystic words were said to accomplish wonders; when written, they were considered a potent charm to guard their possessor from robbers, from disease, and even from death.

In the days of the apostles, the city of Ephesus was famed for the worship of the goddess Diana and the practice of magic. There were many devotees of magic arts, and numerous and costly books had been written in explanation of these mysteries. Here, in this stronghold of superstition and sorcery, the apostle Paul labored for several years. And the power of God was mightily displayed through his servant in the healing of the sick and the casting out of evil spirits.

The miracles wrought by Paul in the name of Jesus created great excitement among the Ephesians. And certain Jewish exorcists, believing that the sacred name acted as a charm, determined to cast out evil spirits by the same means that the apostle had employed. Seven brothers, the sons of Sceva, a chief priest of the Jews, were of this number. Finding a man who was possessed of an evil spirit, they addressed him, "We adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth." But the evil spirit answered with scorn, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" And the man who was possessed attacked them, and overcame them, "so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded." Their discomfiture was soon known to Jews and Gentiles throughout Ephesus; and it furnished unmistakable proof of the sacredness of the name of Jesus, and of the peril incurred by those who would invoke it while they had no faith in his divine mission.

Many who had hitherto heaped reproach on the name of Jesus now dared not breathe that name aloud. A large number, convinced that Jesus was all that Paul claimed him to be, determined to receive the gospel. These openly renounced the practice of sorcery, and acknowledged their secret arts to be Satanic and deceptive. They brought

together the costly books on enchantment, containing the mystic symbols of Diana and the secrets of their art, and burned them in the presence of the people. The value of the books thus sacrificed was estimated at fifty thousand pieces of silver, equal to about ten thousand dollars.

These books contained rules and forms of communication with evil spirits. They were the regulations for the worship of Satan, directions for soliciting his help and obtaining information from him. The system of magic, or sorcery, then extant, was the same as that which in this Christian age and nation is known as Spiritualism. In Paul's day many were deceived by this Satanic delusion, and many are deceived today by the same power. Satan finds access to thousands of minds by presenting himself under the guise of departed friends. The Scriptures of truth declare that "the dead know not anything." Their thoughts, their love, their hatred, have perished. The dead do not hold communion with the living. But Satan--true to his early cunning, when in the form of a serpent he deceived the mother of our race--employs this device to gain control of the minds of men.

And "magical books" have not been confined to the apostolic age, or to nations that are called heathen. The freedom of the press has been taken advantage of to spread abroad the influence of this baleful literature. Could all the modern productions of this class--all the publications of Spiritualism--be treated as were these magical books of the Ephesians, one of Satan's most successful avenues by which to gain access to the souls of men would be cut off.

This incident was placed on record that it might serve as an important lesson for every age. When convinced that their magical books were false and pernicious, the Ephesians were unwilling to sell them, and thus place temptation in the way of others. The power of truth triumphed over their prejudices, their favorite pursuits, and their love of money; and though it involved a great personal sacrifice, they promptly burned the records of divination.

The Ephesians directed their efforts against the very sin of which they were guilty. Do the people of God in this age take a similar course? There are many who do not. They manifest supreme devotion to their money, their business, their houses and lands. The covetous man fosters his love of gain. The sensualist is wedded to his darling passion. The ambitious man worships fame as his idol. These love their cherished

objects of pursuit more than they love God. They are idolaters. But those who thus venture to cherish the sin which they love best are tampering with Satan's bewitching sorcery. The enchanting power of temptation has paralyzed conscience and blinded reason, so that they do not perceive their danger. The magical books have not been destroyed.

When the truth is presented to the understanding, and exerts its sanctifying power upon the heart, the sins which once reigned in the heart will be put away, that Jesus may occupy the soul-temple. If covetousness has been indulged, it will be given up. If ambition or love of the world has captivated the senses, a higher attraction will break its power. Deceit, falsehood, impurity, will be cleansed from the heart. He who maintains his allegiance to Christ can render no service to Christ's bitterest foe.

When the Ephesian converts burned their books on magic, they laid the ax to the root of the tree. They showed that they hated that which they had once loved, and loved that which they had once hated. The light of truth, shining into their minds, had convinced them of the unlawfulness of their arts, and had stirred their souls with abhorrence of their unholy deeds. However earnest and vigilant they might have been to correct other evils, had they spared this one sin they would eventually have yielded their faith.

Such a change as was wrought in these Ephesians by the preaching of the truth will ever attend true conversion, and is the best evidence of a genuine work of grace in the heart. The world and the church have a right to expect such proof of conversion as was given by the Ephesians,--proof that a new moral taste has been created. You, dear reader, may not have practiced sorcery, you may not have tampered with Spiritualism; but remember that "to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey." If you indulge in any practice forbidden in God's word, you have yielded obedience to Satan; you are his servant.

A person may not be able to tell the exact time or place of his conversion; yet this does not prove him to be unconverted. Said Christ to Nicodemus, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Though the work of grace is silent and almost imperceptible, it may be fully as effective as when its operations are more apparent. But if the heart has been renewed by the Holy Spirit, the

life will bear witness to the fact. "By their fruits ye shall know them." Light and darkness are not more distinct than are the states of the converted and the unconverted. A change will be seen in the character, the habits, and the pursuits. The contrast will be clear and decided between what they have been what they are.

The infidel, when converted, will abhor the books that led him to doubt the word of God. The dissolute man who has purified his soul by obedience to the truth, will not, from curiosity or habit, venture into the haunts of dissipation; neither will he permit his mind to dwell on the familiar scenes of vice. He will be awake to his danger, shunning temptation himself, and warning others of its subtle and bewitching power. The converted man will not only resist evil, but he will, so far as possible, place himself beyond the power of Satan's devices. Followers of Christ, have you burned the magical books?

March 4, 1886

The Sin of Presumption

When the Christian worker is pressed by the adversaries of God and his truth, and is thus brought into difficult places, he should remember the example of Christ, and learn from it not to be presumptuous. Instead of rashly attempting to make a providence for himself, he should patiently wait for God to deliver him. And none should feel that they have a right to ask for an interposition of divine power in their behalf, simply that they may be saved from personal annoyance, or that they may not suffer humiliation and anxiety. The great inquiry should be, How can God be glorified, and his truth vindicated?

In their encounters with the enemies of the truth, Christians should move in the strength and fear of God, as did David when he met Goliath. There were assembled the armies of Israel and Philistia, and before them stood the giant, his massive form towering high above other men. He was armed with a spear like a weaver's beam; upon his brow was a helmet of brass; his body was inclosed in a coat of mail; greaves of brass were upon his limbs; and a target was between his shoulders. And listen! From this mighty giant, this trained man of war, comes the challenge, ringing out on the still air, "I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together."

The proud boaster struck terror to the hearts of the men of Israel. But David asked, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" And David said to Saul, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine."

Was it presumption that led David to think that he might be a match for Goliath? Was it a spirit of pride and self-sufficiency that made him dare to meet this mighty warrior who was defying the Israel of God? David had none of this spirit. Modest and unassuming, he did not make this declaration trusting in his own wisdom, skill, or power, but in the strength of God, who had delivered him out of the paw of the lion and the bear when he was watching his father's flocks in the wilderness.

In obedience to the royal command, the king's armor was placed upon David; the

heavy helmet of brass was set on his head, and the sword of Saul was girded upon his thigh. But David could not go out with these; he had not tried the king's armor, and was unaccustomed to the use of the sword. With a staff in his hand, and a sling for his only weapon, he went to meet the boastful champion of the Philistine host. When the proud giant saw his antagonist, he scornfully and indignantly asked, "Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves?" And he cursed David by his gods. After this outburst of passion, he exclaimed with lofty disdain to the youthful shepherd who had accepted his challenge, "Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air and to the beasts of the field."

David's heart was not in the least intimidated; for he knew in whom was his trust. "Thou comest to me," he said, "with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand," "that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands."

With what anxious interest do both armies watch the unequal combat. The Philistines and many of the Israelites think David fool-hardy; but this is but for a moment. As he runs to meet Goliath, he adjusts a stone in the sling, and presently it has sped to its mark, and is imbedded in the forehead of the giant. A dimness comes over his sight; he reels, and falls heavily to the ground, like some mighty oak overthrown by a lightning stroke. Consternation seizes upon the Philistines, and they make a confused and hasty retreat. The warriors of Israel, with a shout of triumph, follow the flying hosts, and the victory is complete.

Here we have an example of lofty courage, of a humble, but living faith. David's trust was not in himself, neither was his motive a selfish one. But he was ready, in the strength of God, to meet Israel's foe, to test Jehovah's might against a heathen giant, that he might "take away the reproach from Israel." This was the divine plan for distinguishing David, Israel's future king, and for humbling the adversaries of the true God.

Those who are loyal to God, keeping all of his commandments, will meet a spirit of opposition similar to that which David encountered. Learned men, proud and boastful

in their supposed superiority, will feel, as did Goliath, to despise the little band who are loyal to God. Many of these never graduated from a college; but, with the Bible in their hands, they stand in defense of the truth of God, and vindicate his Sabbath, which has been trodden beneath lawless feet. But the Lord can make his strength perfect in man's weakness. If, like David, men will forget self, and seek to honor God and to vindicate his name and his truth, he will work mightily with them, and crown their efforts with success. But there are many who take the glory to themselves if the work of God is prospered in their hands. They become proud and self-sufficient, and flatter themselves that their success is owing to their own superior abilities. Prosperity would often prove the ruin of the one thus honored of the Lord. Our compassionate Father in Heaven pities the weakness of our nature, and bears long with our follies. If this were not the case, he would not have given his Son to come to a fallen world and bear the buffetings and temptations of Satan, that he might show men how to overcome.

The enemies of the truth will grow stronger and more bitter in their opposition to the law of God. They will resort to ridicule and insult; they will wrest and misinterpret the Scriptures, and will sustain their positions by human opinions and arguments. They will present things in a false light, and thus pervert even honest minds. They will glory in their strength, as did the Philistine giant, and for a time they may appear to prosper. But their triumph will not always last; they will themselves fall into the pit which they have digged for others.

When, in the providence of God, we are brought in contact with these revilers, and find ourselves in positions of peculiar trial, we should not allow ourselves to become irritated at their provoking taunts and insulting words, which are calculated to throw us off our guard, and lead us to reply in our own spirit. Neither should we make rash moves to free ourselves from these unpleasant positions, where we must suffer humiliation and defeat.

In the presence of opposers of the truth, and while in conversation with them, Christians should be careful not to exalt self or to utter a word to provoke or irritate. Let them taunt and sneer if they will; but go straight forward as though you heard them not. Ofttimes the greatest victories are gained through silence. Self may clamor for vindication; but silence gives time for reflection and prayer, and for God to speak to the soul. Silence is an evidence, not of weakness, but of strength, and is often more powerful than the strongest arguments.

The people of Christ are his representatives upon the earth. They are to labor for the salvation of souls. This is the purpose for which our Saviour made his advent into the world, and he was steadfast in carrying out that purpose. He did not allow himself to be diverted in the least from his great work. He was not swerved from his course by the opposition of his enemies, or the flattery and persuasions of his friends. In this, as in all things, Christ is our example. We must be diligent and faithful in the work that has been committed to our hands. We must reach the people, not through the strength of argument merely, but through the mighty power of God working through our efforts.

Especially should ministers feel their responsibility in this matter. They are dealing with minds, and it is necessary that they should be as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves. They should be ever ready to give a "reason of the hope that is in them," but "with meekness and fear," lest the words they utter shall be of a character to make an unfavorable impression, and balance minds in the wrong direction. The honor of God and the salvation of souls should be their ruling motive; then they will not mar the work by a rash, presumptuous spirit.

March 11, 1886

Parental Responsibility

"Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

Notwithstanding the boasted advancement that has been made in educational methods, the training of children at the present day is sadly defective. It is the home training that is neglected. Parents, and especially mothers, do not realize their responsibility. They have neither the patience to instruct, nor the wisdom to control, the little ones intrusted to their keeping.

It is too true that mothers are not standing at their post of duty, faithful to their motherhood. They are generally the willing servants of worldliness and fashion. Many, even among those who profess to have renounced the world, are influenced to a great degree by its customs and its spirit. Many times the mother neglects her precious charge, and looks to the teacher of the Sabbath and the day school to make up her deficiency. But she has no right thus to shift her responsibility upon others, and leave them to do her work. God does not call her to engage in any enterprise to advance his cause or to benefit mankind that will lead her to neglect the physical, mental, and moral training of her own children; and what shall we say of her course when she neglects her sacred duties from worldly and selfish motives?

The opinions and maxims of the world should not govern the mother, nor should she labor to reach the world's standard. She should decide for herself what is the great end and aim of life, and then bend all her efforts to attain that end. She may, for want of time, neglect many things about her house, with no serious results; but she cannot with impunity neglect the proper discipline of her children. Their defective characters will publish her unfaithfulness. The evils which she permits to pass uncorrected,--the coarse, rough manners, the disrespect and disobedience, the habits of idleness and inattention,--will reflect dishonor upon her, and will embitter her life. Mothers, to a great degree the destiny of your children rests in your hands. If you fail in duty, you may place them in the ranks of the enemy, and make them his agents to ruin souls; but by a godly example and faithful discipline you may lead them to Christ, and make them the instruments in

his hands of saving many souls.

Wherever I go, I am pained by the lack of proper home discipline and restraint. Little children are allowed to answer back, to manifest disrespect and impertinence. Parents who permit this are more worthy of blame than their children. Impertinence should not be tolerated in a child even once. But fathers and mothers, uncles and aunts and grandparents, laugh at the exhibition of passion in the little creature a year old. Its imperfect utterances of disrespect, its childish willfulness, are thought pretty and cunning. Thus wrong habits are confirmed, and the child grows up an object of dislike to all around him.

One great reason why so many children are forward, bold, and impertinent is, that they are noticed and praised too much, and their smart, sharp sayings are repeated in their hearing. Do not put them on exhibition before visitors as prodigies of wit or wisdom, but leave them, as far as possible, to the simplicity of their childhood. Endeavor not to censure unduly, nor to overwhelm with praise and flattery.

Parents, you should begin early to teach your children respect, obedience, and self-control. Remember that every exhibition of passion that is not firmly and decidedly checked is a lesson of evil. Your neglect of proper restraint opens the door to Satan, and invites him to come in and control your children; and he will not be slow to improve his opportunity.

Children require patient, faithful care. It is not enough that they are fed and clothed; their mental powers must be developed, and their hearts imbued with right principles. They need constant care; but you need not let them see that you are ever guarding them. Learn the disposition of your children as revealed in their association with one another, and then seek to correct their faults by encouraging opposite traits. Children should be taught that the development of both the physical and the mental powers rests with themselves, and is the result of effort. They should early learn that happiness is not found in selfish gratification, but follows only in the wake of duty.

I have heard mothers say that they had not the ability to govern which others have; that it is a peculiar talent which they do not possess. Those who realize their deficiency in this respect should make the subject of family government their most diligent study. And yet the most valuable suggestions of others should not be adopted

without thought and discrimination. They may not be equally adapted to the circumstances of every mother, or to the peculiar disposition and temperament of each child in the family. Let the mother study with care the experience of others, note the difference between their methods and her own, and carefully test those that appear to be of real value. If one mode of discipline does not produce the desired results, let another plan be tried, and the effects carefully noted.

Mothers, above all others, should accustom themselves to thought and investigation. If they will persevere in this course, they will find that they are acquiring the faculty in which they thought themselves deficient; that they are learning to form aright the characters of their children. The result of the labor and thought given to this work will be seen in their obedience, their simplicity, their modesty and purity; and it will richly repay all the effort made.

A want of steadiness in family government is productive of great harm; in fact, it is nearly as bad as no government at all. The question is often asked, Why are the children of religious parents so often headstrong, defiant, and rebellious? The reason is to be found in the home training. The children have not had a good example, faithful instruction, and proper restraint. Too often the parents are not united in their family government. The father, who is with his children but little, and is ignorant of their peculiarities of disposition and temperament, is harsh and severe. He does not control his temper, but corrects in passion. The child knows this, and instead of being subdued, the punishment fills him with anger. The mother allows misdemeanors to pass at one time for which she will severely punish at another. The children never know just what to expect, and are tempted to see how far they can transgress with impunity. Thus are sown seeds of evil that spring up and bear fruit.

Firmness and decision are necessary. I have known parents to say, You cannot have this or that, and then relent, thinking they may be too strict, and give the child the very thing they at first refused. A life-long injury is thus inflicted. It is an important law of the mind--one which should not be overlooked--that when a desired object is so firmly denied as to remove all hope, the mind will soon cease to long for it, and will become occupied in other pursuits; but so long as there is any hope of gaining it, a persistent effort will be made for its attainment.

When it is necessary for parents to give a direct command, the penalty for

disobedience should be as unvarying as are the laws of nature. Children who are under this firm, decisive rule, know that when a thing is forbidden or denied, no teasing or artifice will secure their object; hence they soon learn to submit, and are much happier in so doing. The children of undecided and overindulgent parents have a constant hope that they may gain their end by coaxing, crying, or sullenness, or that they may venture to disobey without suffering the penalty. Thus they are kept in a state of suspense, which makes them restless, irritable, and insubordinate. God holds such parents guilty of wrecking the happiness of their children. This wicked mismanagement is the key to the impenitence and irreligion of thousands. It has proved the ruin of many who have professed the Christian name. In many cases the restless, rebellious spirit, unsubdued in youth, creates disturbance in the church. Many church trials may be traced to defective family government. Intemperance and crime of every degree are often the fruits of seed sown by parents.

Let none imagine, however, that harshness and severity are necessary to secure obedience. I have seen the most efficient family government maintained without a harsh word or look. I have been in other families where commands were constantly given in an authoritative tone, and harsh rebukes and severe punishments were often administered. In the first case the children followed the course pursued by the parents, and seldom spoke to one another in harsh tones. In the second also the parental example was imitated by the children; and cross words, fault-findings, and disputes were heard from morning till night.

Fathers and mothers, you are teachers; your children are the pupils. Your tones of voice, your deportment, your spirit, are copied by your little ones. You should be united in their government. Study their dispositions with care, and together seek wisdom and strength from God to deal with them aright. If you attempt to govern without exercising self-control, without system, thought, and prayer, you will most assuredly reap the bitter consequences. But when you have faithfully done your duty, you may then ask the Lord to do for your children that which you cannot do. And having trained them in the way they should go, you will find that when old they will not depart from it.

March 11, 1886

The Work in Europe

The following interesting paragraphs are from a private letter from Sister White, dated Basel, Switzerland, January 27:

"Every week letters come to this place from France, Italy, Russia, and India, stating that souls are embracing the truth from reading our French paper. Today one has been received with five names signed of persons who are much interested in the truth from reading *Les Signes*, and who send the pay for a year's subscription. Another comes from a man in France, thanking Brother Whitney for the papers sent him. He says he has no money to pay for the paper, and asks if Brother Whitney will take a blank book (a register) in exchange for it. His father and mother have been opposed to his reading *Les Signes*, but now they are reading it themselves. Brother Whitney has most precious letters from India and Russia also, commending *Les Signes*, and telling the good it has accomplished. These testimonies are cheering to our hearts.

"There have been some conversions here. One young man, a German, who was attending the theological college, left school, and is now in the office, working on the German paper. He is just the help that is needed here.

"These tokens that God is working in Europe are matters of great rejoicing to us. We expect the truth will go forth as a burning lamp. But it is harder for men and women who receive the truth here than it is in America. Workmen, jewelers, receive but one dollar a day as the highest wages, and they have large families to support. Many get for their day's work only from one to two francs; and when they receive the Sabbath, it is doubtful whether they can get any work, and they are obliged to take up with any jobs they can get.

"If our people in America could understand the privations that have to be endured here, and the close economy that has to be practiced in order to obtain even the necessities of life, they would guard their means that not one penny should be expended needlessly. There would not be a feather on their bonnets, and they would wear no needless ornaments; neither would there be any extravagant houses built, or money laid

out in costly furniture. They should bear in mind that it is God's money that they are using,--money that could be invested in saving souls for whom Christ died. Any needless expenditure of this money is blocking up the way; for the means thus used would send publications and the living preacher to those who have not the truth."

March 18, 1886

The Bible System of Tithes and Offerings

"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." Proverbs 11:24, 25.

Giving is a part of gospel religion. The foundation of the plan of salvation was laid in sacrifice. Jesus left the royal courts of Heaven, and became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. His life on earth was unselfish, marked with humiliation and sacrifice. And is the servant greater than his Lord? Shall men, partakers of the great salvation which he wrought out for them, refuse to follow their Lord, and to share in his self-denial? When the world's Redeemer has suffered so much for us, shall we, the members of his body, live in thoughtless self-indulgence? No; self-denial is an essential condition of discipleship.

"I am the vine," says Christ; "ye are the branches." What a close union is this! The very vital principle, the sap, which flows through the vine, nourishes the branches, that they may flourish and bear fruit. The spirit of the Master will actuate his followers. Again Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." He leads the way in the path of self-denial, and requires nothing of his followers but that of which he has given them an example in his life.

Christ, as our head, led out in the great work of salvation; but he has intrusted that work to his followers upon earth. It cannot be carried on without means, and he has given his people a plan for raising means sufficient to make his cause prosperous. The tithing system, instituted for this purpose, reaches back to the time of Moses. Even as far back as the days of Adam, long before the definite system was given, men were required to offer to God gifts for religious purposes. They were thus to manifest their appreciation of the mercies and blessings they received.

These offerings were continued through successive generations. The principle was not unknown in the days of Job. Abraham gave tithes to Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God. Jacob, when at Bethel, an exile and a penniless wanderer, 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 to his cause. Their action must be voluntary. He will not have his treasury replenished with unwilling offerings. His design in the plan of systematic giving was to bring man into close relationship with his Creator and in sympathy and love with his fellow-men, thus placing upon him responsibilities that would counteract selfishness and strengthen disinterested, generous impulses. Man is inclined to be selfish, and to close his heart to generous deeds. The Lord, by requiring gifts to be made at stated times, designed that giving should become a habit, and be looked upon as a Christian duty. The heart, opened by one gift, was not to have time to close and become selfishly cold, before another offering was bestowed.

As to the amount required, God has specified one-tenth of the increase as his due; but other offerings should be made, and while the directions are definite enough for all to understand their duty, there is room for the judgment and the conscience to have free play. Says the apostle: "Let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." The tithing system is beautiful in its equality and simplicity. It gives all an opportunity to help carry forward the precious work of salvation. Every man, woman, and child may become a treasurer for the Lord.

Great objects may be accomplished by this system. If all accept it, there will be no want of means to carry forward the work of God in the earth. The treasury will be full, and the contributions will not be left to the poorer members of the church. Every investment made will draw out the heart to love the cause of God more and more; and the liberal, who are willing to sacrifice for the spread of the truth and the salvation of souls, will be "laying up in store for themselves, a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

The Christian church, as a general thing, disregard the claims of God upon them to give of the things which they possess to support the warfare against the moral darkness which is flooding the world. Every church member should be an earnest worker, a liberal, systematic giver. But some rich men feel like murmuring because there are demands for money. They say that one object after another is continually arising, and there is no end to the calls for means. They do not remember that they will have a debt to settle with the Master by and by.

Says the apostle, "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price;" not with "corruptible things, as silver and gold," but with the "precious blood of Christ." In return he asks us to use his intrusted gifts to aid in the salvation of souls. He has given his blood; he asks our talents of means and of influence. It is through his poverty that we have eternal riches; and will we refuse to return to him the silver and the gold which are his own gifts? If men prefer to set aside the claims of God, and to hoard the means which he gives them, he will hold his peace at present. Frequently he will continue to test them by increasing his bounties, letting his blessings flow on; these men may pass on receiving honor of men, and without censure in the church, but soon it will be said to them, "Give an account of thy stewardship."

God is not dependent upon man. He says: "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine." "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." It is for our own good that he has planned to have us bear some part in the advancement of his cause. He has honored us by making us co-workers with himself. He has ordained that there should be a necessity for the co-operation of men, that they may cultivate and keep in exercise their benevolent affections.

In the wise providence of God, the poor are always with us, that while we witness the various forms of suffering and necessity in the world, we may be tested, and may develop Christian character. God has placed them among us to call out Christian sympathy and love. They are here as Christ's representatives. He identifies himself with suffering humanity. He makes their necessities his own, and takes to his bosom the woes of the children of men. "Inasmuch," he says, as ye ministered not to "one of the least of these, ye did it not to me."

The moral darkness of a ruined world also appeals to Christian men and women to put forth individual effort. They are required by the Scriptures to keep in constant exercise an interest in the salvation of their fellow-men. The condition of eternal life, as expressed by Christ himself, is supreme love to God and equal love to our neighbor.

The first disciples expressed their gratitude for the benefits of the Christian age 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 need, Paul, appealing to

the Gentile Christians in their behalf, urged them to prove the sincerity of their love by their liberality. "Therefore," he says, "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.

The gospel, as it extends and widens, requires greater provisions to sustain it than were called for anciently, and this makes the law of tithes and offerings a more urgent necessity now than under the Hebrew economy. The cause of God requires, not less, but greater gifts than at any other period of the world's history. The principle laid down by Christ is, that the offerings should be in proportion to the light and blessings enjoyed. "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." But those who give in accordance with this rule will reap a proportionate blessing. "The liberal soul shall be made fat." "The liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand."

March 25, 1886

The Christian Light-Bearer

"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."

"Ye are the light of the world" said Christ to his disciples. As the sun goes forth in the heavens, dispelling the shades of night, and filling the world with brightness, so must the followers of Jesus let their light shine to dispel the moral darkness of a world lying in sin. But they have no light of themselves; it is the light of Heaven which they are to reflect to the world.

"A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." Our thoughts and purposes are the secret springs of action, and hence determine the character. The purpose formed in the heart need not be expressed in word or deed in order to make it sin, and bring the soul into condemnation. Every thought, feeling, and inclination, though unseen by men, is discerned by the eye of God. But it is only when the evil that has taken root in the heart reaches its fruition in the unlawful word or deed that man can judge the character of his fellow-man. The Christian is Christ's representative. He is to show to the world the transforming power of divine grace. He is a living epistle of the truth of God, known and read of all men. The rule given by Christ by which to determine who are his true followers is, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Many professed Christians, some even who expound the sacred truths of the Bible, are yet living as though there were no God who can read the innermost recesses of the soul. They forget the dignity and solemnity of their high calling as children of the heavenly King, and their responsibility as "the light of the world." They may not now realize their sinfulness; but when summoned before the great white throne, they will in speechless terror stand condemned. With the eye of the Judge looking upon them, they will not dare to mention the excuses which they now so flippantly urge to shield themselves from the divine requirements. They knew their Master's will, but did it not.

And yet the faults and errors of church members will be no shield for the impenitent in the day of God. Those who would make them such when the claims of God are presented, evince their true character as lovers of sin. They are actuated by the same spirit as their master, whom the Bible declares to be the "accuser of the brethren." The fact that some professed Christians are not what they should be, proves nothing against religion, but only that these persons are not faithful to their profession. Neither does it prove that the church is corrupt. Does she not deal with offending members, and separate from her company those who persist in an evil way? And these persons who point so complacently to the faults of Christians are not consistent. They will make the most of a man's faults while he is a member of the church; but let him be expelled, and they turn about, and sympathize with him, declaring the church to be uncharitable and severe.

"Let your light so shine before men that they may ... glorify your Father which is in Heaven." The Christian's godly life and holy conversation are a daily testimony against sin and sinners. But he must present Christ, not self. Christ is the great remedy for sin. Our compassionate Redeemer has provided for us the help we need. He is waiting to impute his righteousness to the sincere penitent, and to kindle in his heart such divine love as only our gracious Redeemer can inspire. Then let us who profess to be his witnesses on earth, his ambassadors from the court of Heaven, glorify Him whom we represent, by being faithful to our trust as light-bearers to the world.

Every one who at last secures eternal life will here manifest zeal and devotion in the service of God. He will not desert the post of duty at the approach of trial, hardship, or reproach. He will be a diligent student of the Scriptures, and will follow the light as it shines upon his pathway. When some plain Scriptural requirement is presented, he will not stop to inquire, What will my friends say, if I take my position with the people of God? Knowing his duty, he will do it heartily and fearlessly. Of such true-hearted followers Jesus declares that he is not ashamed to call them brethren. The God of truth will be on their side, and will never forsake them. All apparent losses for Christ's sake will count to them as infinite gain.

Said our Saviour: "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." The word of God, believed and obeyed, exerts a transforming power upon the life and character. Its sublime truths, its pure and holy principles, strengthen the intellect, ennoble the

affections, enlighten the understanding. How great the loss which they sustain who neglect this store-house of eternal riches. But the word of God is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. This is why so many are opposed to the truths which it teaches. They love some indulgence which it condemns, and hence hate the light which reveals their sin. "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

Many whom the world styles liberal, generous-hearted, noble men, are in the sight of God wicked and corrupt. For God sees not as man sees; his thoughts are not as our thoughts. Men in their self-complacency attempt to gloss over the defects in their lives and characters, and flatter themselves that all is well. But the light of truth would reveal their danger, and strike a death-blow to their self-satisfaction. Then they would see the importance of a holy life, and their own need of Christ as a Saviour.

We have but a brief space in which to prepare for the future life; and all who expect to dwell hereafter with the pure and holy, must here obtain a fitness for such society. Then let the moments heretofore squandered in idleness and folly be henceforth devoted to prayer and the reading of God's word. This discipline every Christian may have, and, rightly improved, it will make him wise unto eternal life.

The mind grows by what it is fed upon. The understanding gradually adapts itself to the subjects which it is required to grasp. If allowed to dwell only on the things of this life, it becomes dwarfed and enfeebled. If absorbed in vanity and folly, it will after a time almost lose the power of growth. To secure strength and vigor, the mind must be tasked; and there is no other means by which this can be so successfully accomplished as by the study of the Holy Scriptures.

The means which God has provided to enable us to resist temptation are the study of his word, and earnest prayer. In his encounter with the prince of darkness in the wilderness of temptation, our Saviour prefaced every answer with the words, "It is written." It was the word of God that vanquished Satan. Those who make that word their study are arming themselves with weapons of divine power against the attacks of the foe. "Thy word," said the psalmist, "have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee."

In his conversation with Nicodemus, Christ explained the nature and importance

of true conversion. He solemnly declared, "Except a man be born again,"--unless he receive a new heart, new desires, purposes, and motives, leading to a new life,--"he cannot see the kingdom of God." He is no longer to be a willing subject to the enemy of Christ, to remain in subjection to the power of sin.

Those who have experienced the new birth have but entered upon the Christian life. To such are addressed the words of the apostle, "As ye have received the Lord Jesus Christ, so walk ye in him." In the temptations and trials of life, it is often hard to maintain the patience and gentleness of Christ; but let not those be discouraged who are sorely tried, and who feel that they have not strength enough to cope single-handed with the power of evil. God has promised grace according to our day. By patient endurance we may become strong, by failure we may learn success, and through apparent defeat we may conquer.

All the people of God should become co-laborers with him. None need wait for great opportunities nor ask for extraordinary talents. The ability that God has given them is all that he requires. He would have us each quietly, faithfully do what we can, and leave the result with him. Our daily life may be a light to the world, a living testimony to the power of divine grace; and the influence of that testimony will widen and deepen, so long as we are connected with the God of wisdom and power.

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." This is the rule of life laid down in the Holy Scriptures. And those who practice it will not love darkness rather than light; but they will come to the "light, that their deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God."

April 1, 1886

A Lesson from Noah's Time

"As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot. They did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed."

It is the nature of sin to spread and increase. Since the first sin of Adam, from generation to generation it has spread like a contagious disease. While the world was yet in its infancy, sin became fearful in its proportions. Hatred of God's law, and, as the sure result, hatred of all goodness, became universal. God, who had created man, and given him with an unsparing hand the bounties of his providence, was dishonored by the beings he had created, slighted and despised by the recipients of his gifts. But though sinful man forgot his benevolent Benefactor, God did not forget the creature he had formed. Not only did he send "rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons," filling man's heart with "food and gladness," but he sent him also messages of warning and entreaty. Man's wickedness was fully set before him, and the result of transgressing the divine law.

In the days of Noah, the wickedness of the world became so great that God could no longer bear with it; and he said, "I will destroy man whom I have created, from the face of the earth." But he pitied the race, and in his love provided a refuge for all who would accept it. He gave the message to Noah to be given to the people: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." Noah was directed to build an ark, and at the same time to preach that God would bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy the wicked. Those who would believe the message, and would prepare for that event by repentance and reformation, should find pardon and be saved; but a continued resistance of the entreaties and warnings from God through his servant Noah, would separate them from God, and as a result infinite mercy and love would cease its pleadings. The Spirit of God continued to strive with rebellious man until the time specified had nearly

expired, when Noah and his family entered the ark, and the hand of God closed its door. Mercy had stepped from the golden throne, no longer to intercede for the guilty sinner.

All the men of that generation were not in the fullest sense of the term heathen idolaters. Many had a knowledge of God and his law; but they not only rejected the message of the faithful preacher of righteousness themselves, but used all their influence to prevent others from being obedient to God. To every one comes a day of trial and of trust. That generation had their day of opportunity and privilege while Noah was sounding the note of warning of the coming destruction; but they yielded their minds to the control of Satan rather than of God, and he deceived them, as he did our first parents. He set before them darkness and falsehood in the place of light and truth; and they accepted his sophistry and lies, because they were acceptable to them, and in harmony with their corrupt lives, while truth that would have saved them was rejected as a delusion.

Numbers were not on the side of right. The world was arrayed against God's justice and his laws, and Noah was regarded as a fanatic. Satan, when tempting Eve to disobey God, said to her, "Ye shall not surely die." Great men, worldly, honored, and wise men, repeated the same story, "Ye shall not surely die." "The threatenings of God," they said, "are for the purpose of intimidating, and will never be verified. You need not be alarmed. Such an event as the destruction of the world by the God who made it, and the punishment of the beings he has created, will never take place. Be at peace; fear not. Noah is crazy; he is the wildest fanatic." So the people did not humble their hearts before God, but continued their disobedience and wickedness, the same as though God had not spoken to them through his servant.

But Noah stood like a rock amid the tempest. He was surrounded by every species of wickedness and moral corruption; but amid popular contempt and ridicule, amid universal wickedness and disobedience, he distinguished himself by his holy integrity and unwavering faithfulness. While the world around him were disregarding God, and were indulging in all manner of extravagant dissipation which led to violence and crimes of every kind, the faithful preacher of righteousness declared to that generation that a flood of water was to deluge the world because of the unsurpassed wickedness of its inhabitants. He warned them to repent and believe, and find refuge in the ark.

The message of Noah was to him a reality. Amid the scoffs and jeers of the world, he was an unbending witness for God. His meekness and righteousness were in bright contrast to the revolting crimes, intrigue, and violence continually practiced around him. A power attended his words; for it was the voice of God to man through his servant. Connection with God made him strong in the strength of infinite power, while for one hundred and twenty years his solemn warning voice fell upon the ears of the men of that generation in regard to events, which, so far as human wisdom could judge, seemed impossible. Some were deeply convicted, and would have heeded the words of warning; but there were so many to jest and ridicule that they partook of the same spirit, resisted the invitations of mercy, refused to reform, and were soon among the boldest and most defiant scoffers; for none are so reckless, and go to such lengths in sin, as those who have once had light, but have resisted the convicting Spirit of God. Thus while God was working to draw man to himself, man, in his rebellion, was drawing away from God, and continually resisting the pleadings of infinite love.

The world before the flood reasoned that for centuries the laws of nature had been fixed. The recurring seasons had come in their order. The rivers and brooks had never yet passed their boundaries, but had borne their waters safely to the sea. Fixed decrees had kept the waters from overflowing their banks. But these reasoners did not recognize the Hand that had stayed the waters, saying, Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.

As time passed on without any apparent change in nature, men whose hearts had at times trembled with fear, began to be reassured. They reasoned then as many reason now, that nature was above the God of nature, and that her ways were so fixed that God himself could not change them. Reasoning that if the message of Noah was correct nature would be turned out of her course, they made that message, in the minds of the world, a delusion, a grand deception. They manifested their indifference and contempt of the solemn warning of God by doing just as they had done before the warning had been given. They continued their festivities, their gluttonous feasts, eating and drinking, planting and building, in reference to the advantage they hoped to gain in the far future; and they went to greater lengths in wickedness, and in defiant disregard of God's requirements, to testify that they had no fear of the Almighty before their eyes.

How simple and childlike, amid the unbelief of a scoffing world, was the faith of Noah. His faith was indeed the "substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It was a faith that was perfected and made evident by his works. He gave to

the world an example of believing just what God said. In accordance with the directions of God, he commenced to construct the ark, an immense boat, on dry ground. Multitudes came from every direction to see this strange sight, and to hear the earnest, fervent words of this singular man, who seemed to believe every word he uttered. Noah was indeed singular. He was one in the world, but not one of the world. He made himself the object of contempt and ridicule by his steadfast adherence to the words of God; yet he obeyed without a questioning doubt. What a marked contrast to the prevailing unbelief and disregard of God's law.

The time of Noah prefigures the present age. Christ tells us that as it was in the time of Noah, so shall it be in the days that immediately precede his appearing in the clouds of heaven. Human nature in our day, uninfluenced by the Spirit of God, is the same as in the age of Noah. And Satan is not asleep; he is as active and vigilant now as he was then. While the voice of God is making itself heard through his servants in warning and entreaties, he is mustering his forces. He engages his host with gigantic energies to make, through his sophistry, cruelties, and oppression, the words of warning of none effect. The people are tested, and the great mass will be found on the side of the great deceiver, and will be overwhelmed in swift and irretrievable destruction. But those that heed the warnings of God, and in their lives bring forth fruits meet for repentance, shall "dwell in the secret place of the Most High;" they "shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." For them is the promise: "With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation."

April 8, 1886

The Law of God the Standard of Home Government

The work of parents is an important, a solemn work; the duties devolving upon them are great. But if they will study the word of God carefully, they will find in it full instructions, and many precious promises made to them on condition that they perform their work faithfully and well. It exhorts them to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," and assures them that if they train up their children in the way they should go, when they are old they will not depart from it. Again, the admonition is given concerning the commands of God: "Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

In order to do this work, parents must themselves become acquainted with the word of God. Instead of spending their time in gossip, or in needless ornamentation of their houses or their persons, they will seek diligently to understand the will of God as revealed to them in his word. And instead of speaking vain words and telling idle tales to their children, they will talk with them upon Bible subjects. That book was not designed for scholars alone. It was written in a plain, simple style to meet the understanding of the common people; and, with proper explanations, a large portion of it can be made intensely interesting and profitable to very small children.

Both parents and children should be under the control of God. There should be no oppression on the part of the parents, and no disobedience on the part of the children. Intelligent reason should take the lines of control. If parents in this age of the world meet the mind of God in the training of their children, a great reformation will be experienced in the character of many. Their habits, their tempers, and their ideas will have to be entirely changed before they can lead their children to obey God. They must first control their own will, and obey the word of God themselves. Instead of scolding, flying into a passion, and then indulging their children, those parents who are conscientiously walking in the way of the Lord will seek by precept and example to educate their children in self-denial and self-control. They will also feel the responsibility of teaching them the truth. With the word of God spread out before them, the parents will show their children the importance of following the teaching of the

Bible, and not departing from it under any consideration.

After the death of Moses, Joshua was the leader of Israel. But notwithstanding his national burdens, he could not forget the duties which rested upon him in regard to his own family. He enquires of the people whether they will serve the Lord fully and keep all of his commandments; and then he declares emphatically, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." This should be the language of every father and mother in our day.

Parents have before them the example of Abraham, the father of the faithful. The God of Heaven says: "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." There will be no betrayal of the truth on his part; there will be no compromise in the matter. He will keep the law of God, he will teach his children to keep it. He will not allow blind affection, which is the veriest cruelty, to control him, neither will he permit his children to become the ruling power in the household. He will see that allegiance is given to the God of Heaven, and that Satan does not gain control over the members of his family.

Not until the parents themselves walk in the law of the Lord with perfect hearts will they be prepared to command their children after them. The Holy One of Israel has made known to us the statutes and laws which are to govern all human intelligences. These precepts, which have been pronounced "holy, just, and good," are to form the standard of action in the home. There can be no departure from them without sin; for they are the foundation of the Christian religion. One of the plainest of these precepts is that which relates to the observance of the Sabbath. "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work; thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates."

All through the Bible we find that a careful observance of the Sabbath is repeatedly enjoined, and God has plainly stated that those who knowingly break the Sabbath shall not prosper. He who has given man six days wherein to labor to obtain a livelihood, has reserved only one day to himself; and he looks with indignation upon those who appropriate any portion of this time to their own secular business. There are some who carry their business into the hours of the Sabbath to such an extent that they

write business letters, and even collect debts, pay bills, and settle accounts upon the Sabbath. But God's eye is upon them, and although they may appear for a time to prosper, he will surely visit them with judgment. He can by a word scatter faster than they can gather. By fire, by flood, by the tempest or the earthquake, he can cause them to lose all that they have gained by violating the Sabbath.

How blind are the Christian world to their own highest interest! They could see if they would, how the favor of God was removed from his people anciently, and they were left to be overcome by their enemies and to become a scattered and hated people, because they transgressed his commands and violated his Sabbath. The Lord has not changed, neither has he removed the sanctity from his rest-day.

Some who claim to be giving allegiance to the law of Jehovah have even gone so far in Sabbath desecration as to unite in partnership with those who have no respect for the Sabbath. The professed Sabbath-keeper may cease his own labors on the Sabbath, but his partner continues the work. How must angels look upon this partnership, as the Sabbath-observer kneels reverently before God in the house of worship, while those with whom he is united in business continue their labor just the same as on any other day? How does Heaven look upon the noise and confusion, the sound of the mechanic's ax and hammer, which ascends instead of thanksgiving, as if in defiance of his injunctions? Can the Lord regard as guiltless the man who thus unites with transgressors?

Atheism and infidelity prevail in every land. Bold blasphemers stand forth in the earth, the house of God's own building, and deny the existence of the Creator, and challenge the God of Heaven to strike them dead on the spot if their position is wrong. See the societies of infidels everywhere forming to devise means to spread their hellish poisons! See the papists plotting how to suppress the word of God, and to cover up the truth with the rubbish of error!

In view of all these influences which are at work in the world to instill infidel sentiments into the minds of the rising generation, shall those parents who have the light of truth aid in this work? Shall they, by their example, their influence, give the impression to their own children and to the world that it makes little difference whether they obey God in every particular? We all need both sound Bible doctrine and pure heart religion in order that we may represent the truth as it is in Jesus. We need

continually to breathe the vitalizing atmosphere of Heaven that we may have spiritual health and strength. The truth of God must be an abiding, active principle in the heart, if we would exert a correct influence over others. It must have a controlling influence upon the conscience and the understanding, and upon the thoughts, and words, and deeds.

There is such a thing as holding the truth in unrighteousness; professing to believe it while our actions are like those of transgressors. Bible truth will be a power in the true believer's life. It will give directness to all his efforts, and a holy purpose to all his labors. Unbelievers frequently argue that those who profess to believe the Bible do not exemplify its teachings in their business relations with their fellowmen. My soul has often been grieved as I have seen those who advocate the law of God failing to carry out its principles in the public and private walks of life.

We have no time now to confer with flesh and blood. No time to study profits and losses, and to cut the sharp corners of truth so that they shall not disturb others. The customs of the world should not be imitated by the people of God. What may seem perfectly proper in unbelievers may not be at all right for those who profess to love God and keep his commandments. The question should not be, What is custom? What will others think and say? but, What has God said in his word? What will the effect of my example be upon the world and upon the members of my own family?

If religion is to influence society, it must first influence the home circle. If children were trained to love and fear God at home, when they go forth into the world they would be prepared to train their own families for God, and thus the principles of truth would become implanted in society, and would exert a telling influence in the world. Religion should not be divorced from home education. May God pity the parents who do not teach their children, by precept and by example, the way of the Lord; for they will have a fearful account to give to the Judge of all the earth for their wicked neglect of duty to their children and to society. They should present to their children the divine warnings against sin, and teach them the importance of implicit obedience. They should show them the danger of joining hands with the world if they ever expect to become children of God.

Many Christian parents fail to command their children after them, and they wonder that their children are perverse, disobedient, unthankful, and unholy. Such

parents are under the rebuke of God. They have neglected to bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They have failed to teach them the first lesson in Christianity: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." "Foolishness," says the wise man, "is bound in the heart of a child." The love of folly, the desire to do evil, the hatred of holy things, are some of the difficulties that parents must meet in the home mission field.

There are many, even among those who profess to be Christians, who do not take up their home duties in the fear of the Lord. There is many a prayerless home, and that, too, among those who profess to believe the special truths for this time. The Bible is not brought into the family as the guide of life. The parents not being men and women of prayer, do not train and command their households in the way of God's commandments. That holy standard is set aside because finite man thinks he sees a better way.

In the strength of God, parents must arise and command their households after them. They must learn to repress wrong with a firm hand, yet without impatience or passion. They must not leave the children to guess at what is right; but they must point out the way in unmistakable terms, and teach them to walk therein. Parents should pray much, and should lead the minds of the children up to God and Heaven. A religion of simple faith in the all-atoning sacrifice of Christ, and of implicit obedience of God's moral rule of right, will make the household such a one as Heaven can smile upon. It will be productive of purity and peace; for they are obeying that guide who came from Heaven to earth to lead erring man to the mansions above.

Oh, the sin of parental neglect! How many children are lost to God and become a source of sorrow and distress to their parents, because they are not trained according to God's express directions! What a history the Judgment will reveal of affliction and misery produced by the children of parents who professed to be Christians, but who did not make the word of God their standard, their rule of life. What a record of crimes of every magnitude will then be opened to the view of parents, and traced to their lax discipline. Their children, like Eli's, did wickedly from childhood; but instead of firmly restraining them, they caressed and indulged them. The inborn evil of the natural heart was permitted to grow and strengthen. Even the house of God was not revered.

Eli was a believer in God and in his word; but he did not, like Abraham, "command" his children and his household after him. Let us hear what God says about

Eli's neglect: "Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle," The Lord had borne long with Eli. He had been warned and instructed; but, like the parents of today, he had not heeded the warning. But when the Lord took hold of the case, he ceased not till he had made thorough work. He says: "When I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told Eli that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not."

Here the neglect of Eli is brought plainly before every father and mother in the land. As the result of his unsanctified affection, or his unwillingness to do a disagreeable duty, he reaped a harvest of iniquity in his perverse sons. Both the parent who permitted the wickedness and the children who practiced it, were guilty before God, and he would accept no sacrifice or offering for their transgression. There are many lessons in the Bible calculated to impress fathers and mothers with the sin of neglecting their duty to their children; and yet how silent are the voices of the teachers in Israel on these important subjects! Parents allow the defects in their children to pass uncorrected, until the curse of God rests upon both their children and themselves. Like Eli, they do not show decision in repressing the first appearance of evil.

In what striking contrast do the cases of Eli and Abraham stand! The example of one is given that parents may shun a similar course; the example of the other is given for parents to imitate. The characteristics of each stand out sharp and distinct. Each was doing a work the result of which would not only be seen in his own life, but would reach down to future generations, to his children, and to his children's children. The influence that a person exerts in his own family is that which testifies of the genuineness of his religious experience. Neglectful and unfaithful there, he will be unfaithful everywhere. Home religion, home training, is what is now most needed. The future of society is indexed by the youth of today. Basel, Switzerland, March 4, 1886.

April 15, 1886

The Character of the Law of God

David says: "The law of the Lord is perfect." "Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them forever." And Paul testifies: "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."

As the Supreme Ruler of the universe, God has ordained laws for the government not only of all living beings, but of all the operations of nature. Everything, whether great or small, animate or inanimate, is under fixed laws which cannot be disregarded. There are no exceptions to this rule; for nothing that the divine hand has made has been forgotten by the divine mind. But while everything in nature is governed by natural law, man alone, as an intelligent being, capable of understanding its requirements, is amenable to moral law. To man alone, the crowning work of his creation, God has given a conscience to realize the sacred claims of the divine law, and a heart capable of loving it as holy, just, and good; and of man prompt and perfect obedience is required. Yet God does not compel him to obey; he is left a free moral agent.

The subject of man's personal responsibility is understood by but few; and yet it is a matter of the greatest importance. We may each obey and live, or we may transgress God's law, defy his authority, and receive the punishment that is meet. Then to every soul the question comes home with force, Shall I obey the voice from Heaven, the ten words spoken from Sinai, or shall I go with the multitude who trample on that fiery law? To those who love God it will be the highest delight to keep his commandments, and to do those things that are pleasing in his sight. But the natural heart hates the law of God, and wars against its holy claims. Men shut their souls from the divine light, refusing to walk in it as it shines upon them. They sacrifice purity of heart, the favor of God, and their hope of Heaven, for selfish gratification or worldly gain.

Says the psalmist, "The law of the Lord is perfect." How wonderful in its simplicity, its comprehensiveness and perfection, is the law of Jehovah! It is so brief that we can easily commit every precept to memory, and yet so far-reaching as to express the whole will of God, and to take cognizance, not only of the outward actions, but of the thoughts and intents, the desires and emotions, of the heart. Human laws

cannot do this. They can deal with the outward actions only. A man may be a transgressor, and yet conceal his misdeeds from human eyes; he may be a criminal,--a thief, a murderer, or an adulterer,--but so long as he is not discovered, the law cannot condemn him as guilty. The law of God takes note of the jealousy, envy, hatred, malignity, revenge, lust, and ambition that surge through the soul, but have not found expression in outward action, because the opportunity, not the will, has been wanting. And these sinful emotions will be brought into the account in the day when "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil."

The law of God is simple, and easily understood. There are men who proudly boast that they believe only what they can understand, forgetting that there are mysteries in human life and in the manifestation of God's power in the works of nature,--mysteries which the deepest philosophy, the most extensive research, is powerless to explain. But there is no mystery in the law of God. All can comprehend the great truths which it embodies. The feeblest intellect can grasp these rules; the most ignorant can regulate the life, and form the character after the divine standard.

If the children of men would, to the best of their ability, obey this law, they would gain strength of mind and power of discernment to comprehend still more of God's purposes and plans. And this advancement would be continued, not only during the present life, but during eternal ages; for however far we may advance in the knowledge of God's wisdom and power, there is always an infinity beyond.

The divine law requires us to love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves. Without the exercise of this love, the highest profession of faith is mere hypocrisy. "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. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments," says Christ, "hang all the law and the prophets."

The law demands perfect obedience. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." Not one of those ten precepts can be broken without disloyalty to the God of Heaven. The least deviation from its requirements, by neglect or willful transgression, is sin, and every sin exposes the sinner to the wrath of God. Obedience was the only condition upon which ancient Israel was to receive the

fulfillment of the promises which made them the highly favored people of God; and obedience to that law will bring as great blessings to individuals and nations now as it would have brought to the Hebrews.

Obedience to the law is essential, not only to our salvation, but to our own happiness and the happiness of all with whom we are connected. "Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them," says the inspired word. Yet finite man will present to the people this holy, just, and good law, this law of liberty, which the Creator himself has adapted to the wants of man, as a yoke of bondage, a yoke which no man can bear. But it is the sinner who regards the law as a grievous yoke; it is the transgressor that can see no beauty in its precepts. For the carnal mind "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

"By the law is the knowledge of sin:" for "sin is the transgression of the law." It is through the law that men are convicted of sin; and they must feel themselves sinners, exposed to the wrath of God, before they will realize their need of a Saviour. Satan is continually at work to lessen man's estimate of the grievous character of sin. And those who trample the law of God under their feet are doing the work of the great deceiver; for they are rejecting the only rule by which they can define sin, and bring it home to the conscience of the transgressor.

The law of God reaches to those secret purposes, which, though they may be sinful, are often passed over lightly, but which are in reality the basis and the test of character. It is the mirror into which the sinner is to look if he would have a correct knowledge of his moral character. And when he sees himself condemned by that great standard of righteousness, his next move must be to repent of his sins, and seek forgiveness through Christ. Failing to do this, many try to break the mirror which reveals their defects, to make void the law which points out the blemishes in their life and character.

We are living in an age of great wickedness. Multitudes are enslaved by sinful customs and evil habits, and the fetters that bind them are difficult to break. Iniquity, like a flood, is deluding [deluging] the earth. Crimes almost too fearful to be mentioned, are of daily occurrence. And yet men professing to be watchmen on the walls of Zion will teach that the law was designed for the Jews only, and passed away with the glorious privileges that ushered in the gospel age. Is there not a relation between the

prevailing lawlessness and crime, and the fact that ministers and people hold and teach that the law is no longer of binding force?

The condemning power of the law of God extends, not only to the things we do, but to the things we do not do. We are not to justify ourselves in omitting to do the things that God requires. We must not only cease to do evil, but we must learn to do well. God has given us powers to be exercised in good works; and if these powers are not put to use, we shall certainly be set down as wicked and slothful servants. We may not have committed grievous sins; such offenses may not stand registered against us in the book of God; but the fact that our deeds are not recorded as pure, good, elevated, and noble, showing that we have not improved our intrusted talents, places us under condemnation.

The law of God existed before man was created. It was adapted to the condition of holy beings; even angels were governed by it. After the fall, the principles of righteousness were unchanged. Nothing was taken from the law; not one of its holy precepts could be improved. And as it has existed from the beginning, so will it continue to exist throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. "Concerning thy testimonies," says the psalmist, "I have known of old that thou hast founded them forever."

By this law, which governs angels, which demands purity in the most secret thoughts, desires, and dispositions, and which "shall stand fast forever," all the world is to be judged in the rapidly approaching day of God. Transgressors may flatter themselves that the Most High does not know, that the Almighty does not consider; he will not always bear with them. Soon they will receive the reward of their doings, the death that is the wages of sin; while the righteous nation, that have kept the law, will be ushered through the pearly gates of the celestial city, and will be crowned with immortal life and joy in the presence of God and the Lamb.

April 22, 1886

The Law in the Patriarchal Age

When Adam and Eve were created, and placed in their Eden home, they had a knowledge of the law that was to govern them. Its precepts were imprinted on their hearts by Jehovah himself, and they were acquainted with its claims upon them. When they transgressed that law, fell from that state of happy innocence, and became sinners in the sight of God, the dark future of the fallen race was not relieved by a single ray of hope. Because of the transgression of the divine law, paradise was lost to man, the curse was pronounced upon the earth, and the reign of death commenced.

But Heaven pitied man, and the plan of salvation was devised. When the curse was pronounced upon the race, in connection with the curse there was given the promise of pardon through a Saviour who was to come. This promise was the star of hope that lighted up the gloom, that, like the pall of death, hung over the future of man, and of the world which was given him as his dominion. The gospel was first preached to Adam and Eve in Eden. They sincerely repented of their guilt, believed the promise of God, and were saved from utter ruin.

Those who lived before the flood were favored in receiving instruction from Adam, who had conversed with God and angels in Eden. He lived nearly a thousand years, and by his teachings, and his example of humble obedience, he exalted the law of God. He sought to turn his posterity from transgression to a life of obedience and faith in a promised Saviour; but he found from sad experience that it was easier to open the flood gates of sin and woe upon the world, than to resist and press back the tide of moral wretchedness that was pressing in upon mankind in consequence of his transgression.

Enoch also was a preacher of righteousness, and sought to turn men from their evil ways. For three hundred years he walked with God, giving to the world the example of a pure and spotless life, one which was in marked contrast with the lives of the men of that self-willed and perverse generation, who openly disregarded God's holy law, and boasted of their freedom from its restraints. But his testimony and his example were alike unheeded; because men loved sin better than holiness. Enoch served God with

singleness of heart; and the Lord communicated to him his will, and through holy vision revealed to him the great events connected with Christ's second appearing. And then this favored servant of the Lord was borne to Heaven by angels without seeing death.

At length the wickedness of man became so great that God could no longer bear with it; and he made known to Noah that because of the continual transgressions of his law, he would destroy man, whom he had created, by a flood of water which he would bring upon the earth. Noah and his family were obedient to the divine law, and for their loyalty to the God of Heaven they were saved from the destruction that overwhelmed the ungodly world around them. Thus the Lord preserved to himself a people in whose hearts was his law.

Noah warned the people. He believed that the threatened punishment would come upon the world, and he made every effort to turn that sinful generation from transgression to obedience. But he was unsuccessful. Only his own family at last received his message.

The terrible judgments of God in the destruction of the antediluvians should be a sufficient warning to all who have since lived upon the earth, that God will surely punish those who disregard his law. But the human heart is prone to evil; and as people multiplied upon the earth after the flood, they soon became bold in their transgressions. Idolatry existed, and increased to a fearful extent, until finally the Lord left the hardened transgressors to follow their evil ways, while he chose Abraham, and made him the depository of his law for future generations.

Abraham was called out from an idolatrous family, and was appointed of God to preserve his truth amid the prevailing and increasing corruptions of that idolatrous age. The Lord appeared to Abraham, and said: "I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly." "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee."

The Lord communicated his will to Abraham, and gave him a distinct knowledge of the requirements of the moral law, and of the salvation that would be accomplished through himself. It was a high honor to which Abraham was called, that of being the

father of the people who for centuries were the guardians and preservers of the truth of God for the world,--of that people through whom all the nations of the earth should be blessed in the advent of the promised Messiah. But He who called the patriarch judged him worthy. This is the testimony of God concerning his chosen servant, as it stands registered on the sacred page: "Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." And again: "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment."

It is God that speaks. He who understands the thoughts afar off, and places the right estimate upon men, says, "I know him." There will be on the part of Abraham no betraying of the truth for selfish purposes. He will keep the law, and deal justly and righteously; for he knows that he must answer to God for his conduct. And he will not only fear the Lord himself, but he will cultivate religion in his home. He will instruct his family in righteousness; the law of his God will be the rule in his household. Would that this testimony could be borne of all who in this day have the knowledge of the way of the Lord, and profess to walk in it.

God conferred upon his faithful servant special honor and blessings. Through vision, and through the angels that walked and talked with him as friend with friend, he was made acquainted with the purposes as well as with the will of God. When judgments were about to be visited upon Sodom, the fact was not hidden from Abraham. "The Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?" And at the request of Abraham, he would have spared that wicked city, had even ten righteous persons been found in it.

The blessings upon the patriarch Abraham 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, and my laws."

God gave to Abraham and to his seed the rite of circumcision as a token that he had separated them from all other nations as his peculiar treasure. By this sign, they solemnly agreed to fulfill the terms of the covenant made with Abraham and repeated to

Isaac and Jacob. 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 before their eyes, 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.

God revealed to Abraham that his posterity would become bondmen to an idolatrous nation. 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 be obedient reached Heaven. Their prayers were answered in a most wonderful manner, and Israel was brought forth from Egypt, and the covenant made with their fathers was renewed to them.

Thus was the knowledge of the law of God preserved through successive generations from Adam to Noah, from Noah to Abraham, and from Abraham to Moses.

May 6, 1886

The Law Given to Israel

When the Lord was about to deliver his people from Egyptian bondage, he selected Moses as their leader. Moses was learned in all the knowledge of the Egyptians, and was a skilled and mighty warrior. He had also been fitted for his duties by long years of quiet meditation and communion with God in the wilderness of Horeb. Through Moses the Lord wrought many signs and wonders in the land of Egypt. He brought his people out of the house of bondage "by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, and by great terrors," even parting the waters of the Red Sea to make a way for them.

At length they came to the wilderness of Sinai, and camped before the mount; and there, in the most solemn manner, the Lord made a covenant with them. Moses was called up into the mountain, and given this message for the people: "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; ... and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation." Moses returned to the camp, and laid before the people all the words that the Lord had commanded him to utter; and they answered together, and said, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do."

The Lord then 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, the law which had been from the beginning the foundation of his government. He would not permit even angels to communicate these sacred precepts to men, nor did he trust them to the memory of a people who were prone to forget his requirements. He would remove all possibility of misunderstanding, of mingling any tradition with the ten commandments of the moral law, or of confusing the divine requirements with the practices of men; and to do this, he not only spoke the ten words of the moral law in the hearing of all Israel, but he wrote them with his own finger upon tables of stone.

The Lord made the occasion of speaking his law a scene of awful grandeur and sublimity, in accordance with its exalted character. The people were to be impressed

that everything connected with the service of God must be regarded with the greatest reverence. They were required to sanctify themselves and wash their clothes, and "be ready against the third day," when the Lord would "come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai." Bounds were set about the mountain that was so soon to be honored with the divine presence; and it was commanded that if so much as a beast touched the mountain it should be stoned or thrust through with a dart.

The third day came; and there were "thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount." "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." The glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire on the top of the mount in the sight of the assembled multitudes. So terrible were the tokens of Jehovah's presence that the hosts of Israel shook with fear, and fell upon their faces before the Lord. Even Moses exclaimed, "I exceedingly fear and quake."

Then above the warring elements was heard the voice of Jehovah, speaking the ten precepts of his law. The people of Israel were overwhelmed with terror. The awful power of God's utterances seemed more than their trembling hearts could bear. They entreated Moses: "Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die." For as God's great rule of right was presented before them, they realized, as never before, the offensive character of sin, and their own guilt in the sight of a pure and holy God.

Speaking out of the thick darkness that enshrouded him, as he stood upon the mount surrounded by a retinue of angels, the Lord made known his law. Moses, describing the scene, says: "The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from Mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints; from his right hand went a fiery law for them." Thus were the sacred precepts of the decalogue spoken amid thunder and flame, and with a wonderful display of the power and majesty of the great Lawgiver. God accompanied the proclamation of his law with these exhibitions of his power and glory, that his people might never forget the scene, and that they might be impressed with profound veneration for the Author of the law, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. He would also show to all men the sacredness, the importance, and the permanence of his law.

The law of ten precepts was by no means given exclusively to the Hebrews, but

God highly honored them by making them the depositaries of his law for future generations. Those who trample upon God's authority, and show contempt for the law given in such grandeur at Sinai, virtually despise and set at naught the Lawgiver. For that law is Heaven's great standard of right, with which we are to compare our lives and characters. Because the law points out our sins and declares our guilt, we are not to trample it under our feet, nor to turn away when our characters stand revealed in all their moral deformity. But we are called upon to exercise repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. We must be doers of the word, and not hearers only. The heart, the seat of the affections, must be transformed; the moral nature must be renewed by grace.

It is a precious truth that the only one who can give peace to the weary, sin-sick soul is the originator of the law the sinner has violated. Christ knows the enormity of man's guilt; and for this reason he came to earth to open a way by which man may be released from the bondage of sin, and render acceptable obedience to the divine law. Thus may we become a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, to show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

But He who so freely pardons and receives the penitent sinner, will by no means justify those who remain willfully and persistently disobedient. The children of Israel, who had transgressed the first and second commandments, were charged not to be seen near the mount when God was about to descend to write the law a second time upon tables of stone, lest they should be consumed by the burning glory of his presence. And when Moses returned to the camp after spending forty days in the mount, communing with his Maker, they could not even look upon his face for the glory of his countenance. Even Aaron shrank from him in terror. How much less can transgressors look upon the Son of God when he shall appear in the clouds of heaven, in the glory of his Father, surrounded by all the angelic host, to execute judgment upon all who have disregarded the commandments of God, and have trodden under foot the blood of Christ.

May 13, 1886

Israel and the Law

The Lord gave the Israelites evidences of his presence with them, that they might know that he was leading them, and that they might fear his name and obey his voice. Great and radical changes were to be wrought in the lives of these demoralized people, upon whose characters, habits, and appetites, servitude and the idolatrous associations of Egypt had left their mark. God was lifting them to a higher moral level by giving them a knowledge of himself through the manifestations of divine power seen in his dealings with them, and an acquaintance with his will as expressed in the laws given for their government.

Moses, who under the divine direction was leading the children of Israel through to the promised land, understood the character and value of the law of God. He assured the people that no other nation had such wise, righteous, and merciful rules as had been given to the Hebrews. "Behold," he says, "I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people."

Moses called their attention to the "day that thou stoodest before the Lord thy God in Horeb." "And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire; ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments." And he challenged the Hebrew host: "What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?"

When Moses was about to relinquish the position that he had so long held as the visible leader of the hosts of Israel, he rehearsed in the hearing of the people the dealings of God with them and the rules and regulations he had given them. He endeavored to impress upon their minds the importance of obeying the law of God, and

urged them to make its sacred precepts the rule of their daily life. As children of God, they should be willing to suffer any inconvenience, rather than to break one of his commandments. Such a course would be more pleasing to him than mere professions of loyalty or words of praise.

Obedience to God would preserve harmony between man and man and between man and his Maker, and would cause Israel to be regarded as a wise and understanding people. And in the path of obedience alone was there safety for them either as individuals or as a nation; for nothing but obedience would secure the divine favor, and insure to them happiness and prosperity in the land to which they were going. God had plainly stated this to them. If they did not keep his commandments, he would not--he could not--fulfill the rich promises which were given them on condition of obedience.

Israel was highly honored of God, and the surrounding nations looked upon them with wonder and admiration. Their laws and discipline, when compared with the laws of other nations, seemed, even to their enemies, in every way superior to their own. And Moses, as their visible leader and lawgiver, appears on the page of history as superior in wisdom and integrity to all the sovereigns and statesmen of earth; yet Moses ever recognizes that he is the servant of God, speaking and acting according to divine direction. He claims no credit for himself, but points the people to God as the source of power and wisdom.

When the law was given to Israel, the Sabbath was made specially prominent. It had been instituted in Eden as a memorial of God's creative work. After he had wrought six days, God rested on the seventh; and he blessed and sanctified that day, setting it apart as a day of rest and worship for mankind. And at Sinai he commanded: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." "In it thou shalt not do any work." Man was to rest from his labor, and as he should look upon the earth beneath, and the heavens above, his thoughts were to be directed toward Him who brought all these wonderful and beautiful things into existence; and his heart was to be filled with love and reverence to his Maker, as he should behold the tangible proofs of his infinite wisdom and goodness.

The Sabbath was placed in the decalogue as the seal of the living God, pointing out the Law-giver, and making known his right to rule. It was a sign between God and his people, a test of their loyalty to him. Moses was commanded to say to them from the

Lord: "Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep; for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." And when some of the people went out on the Sabbath to gather manna, the Lord asked, "How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?"

Particular directions were given in regard to the manner of observing the Sabbath. All unnecessary work was strictly forbidden, and the day before the Sabbath was made a day of preparation, that everything might be in readiness for its sacred hours. "This is that which the Lord hath said, Tomorrow is the rest of the holy Sabbath unto the Lord. Bake that which ye will bake today, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning."

The Israelites were not in any case to do their own work on the Sabbath. The divine direction was, "Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest. In earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest." In the busiest seasons of the year, when their fruits and grains were to be secured, they were not to trespass on holy time. They were to remember that their temporal blessings came from the bountiful hand of their Creator, and he could increase or diminish them according to their faithfulness or unfaithfulness in his service.

The Lord places a high estimate upon his Sabbath. Through his prophet he has promised: "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 is merciful. His requirements are reasonable, in accordance with the goodness and benevolence of his character. He claims the Sabbath as his own, and will not let his blessing rest upon those who disregard his holy day; yet the Sabbath institution was designed as a blessing to mankind. Man was not made to fit the Sabbath; the Sabbath was made after his creation, to meet the necessities of his nature. The Sabbath should stand before the people in its moral power, answering its original design--to keep in remembrance the living God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. But the Sabbath has been treated with great disrespect. Men have dared to detract

from its dignity; they have ventured to remove the sanctity placed upon it by the Creator himself.

Temporal affairs must come under divine restrictions. The Sabbath is not to be moulded to meet men's business arrangements, but business affairs are to be arranged to meet God's great standard of righteousness. But the god of this world has confused the minds of many on this subject. They need to come into the divine presence, and listen to the voice of the great I AM.

With God there is no respect of persons. Those who fear him and work righteousness are precious in his sight; but he requires his people to show their allegiance by strict obedience to all the precepts of the moral law, the Sabbath commandment with the rest. God is jealous of his honor, and let men beware how they remove one jot or tittle of that law that he spoke with his own voice and wrote with his own finger upon tables of stone, and that he has pronounced holy, just, and good.

May 20, 1886

A Sabbath Reform Needed

As long as the children of Israel obeyed God, they were prosperous; but when they departed from him in disobeying his law, they brought upon themselves humiliation and distress. They were made to realize that their defense was of God, and that when his protection was withdrawn they were feeble, exposed to the ravages of their enemies. But though they were carried away into captivity, the eye of God was upon them; for they were to preserve the knowledge of his law until the promised Messiah should come.

One of the principal ways in which the Jews departed from God was in the desecration of the Sabbath. The heathen around them disregarded God's holy day, and through association with these idolatrous neighbors many had been led to imitate their example. Some not only traded with heathen merchants on the Sabbath day, but tried to overcome the scruples of their more conscientious countrymen, and lead them into the sin of Sabbath-breaking. Thus to a great extent the sacredness of the Sabbath was destroyed.

At this time Nehemiah was God's chosen instrument to effect a reformation among his people, and to deliver them from the oppression of their enemies. The circumstances were discouraging; but Nehemiah was a man of courage and fidelity. He caused the people to be instructed in the law they had broken. Precept by precept it was carefully explained, that all might fully understand the will of God.

The Jews acknowledged that their deplorable condition was the result of their transgressions; and in a general assembly, the Levites, as the representatives of the people, confessed the goodness of God in his dealings with them, and their ingratitude and sins as a nation. Having suffered punishment for their sins, and acknowledged the justice of God in his dealings with them, the Israelites covenanted to obey his law. And that it might be a sure covenant, and preserved in a permanent form, it was written out; and the priests, the Levites, and the princes "sealed unto it." They had a clear understanding of the claims of God and of the character of sin; and with those who had real principle, to see and understand was to act.

The church of today has followed in the steps of the Jews of old setting aside the commandments of God. She has changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant, and now, as then, pride, unbelief, and infidelity are the result.

We need Nehemiahs now, faithful men who shall arouse the people to see how far they are from God through their transgressions. Said the psalmist, "It is time for thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void thy law." These words are as applicable at the present time as they were in the days of the psalmist. The whole Christian world should search the Scriptures for themselves; for the law of God is made void by the teaching in the pulpits. The papal power has thought to change the law by instituting a Sabbath for the world and the Christian church; and this spurious Sabbath is exalted and revered, while the Sabbath of Jehovah is trampled beneath unholy feet. But will the Lord degrade his law to meet the standard of men? Will he accept a man made institution in place of the Sabbath which he has sanctified and blessed? No; the convenience or profit of men is not to interfere with the claims of God, for he is a jealous God. He does not alter his precepts to gratify the desires of the ambitious or the covetous. "Thus saith the Lord" is sufficient to settle all controversy.

He who instituted the Sabbath has never changed it to another day. He rested on a definite day, and blessed and sanctified a definite day, and he requires the human family to observe that definite day. The position that God blessed and sanctified a seventh part of time, and no day in particular, is a deception. By this means many have become so confused that they regard God's holy rest-day as possessing no special sacredness. Because the world do so, they feel at liberty to set the Bible Sabbath aside, and select one that suits their own convenience; and ministers of the gospel assure their congregations that this course is right.

There is need of a Sabbath reform among those who profess to observe God's holy rest-day. Many seek to please themselves rather than to honor God. Some discuss business matters and lay plans on the Sabbath; and God looks upon this in the same light as though they engaged in the actual transaction of business. Others enter into partnership with men who have no respect for the Sabbath. If, for the sake of gain, a Sabbath-keeper allows the business in which he has an interest to be carried on the Sabbath by his unbelieving partner, he is equally guilty with the unbeliever; and it is his duty to dissolve the relation, however much he may lose by so doing. He should not

allow men in his employ, paid by his money, to work on the Sabbath. Men may think they cannot afford to obey God in their business affairs; but they cannot afford to disobey him. He will not allow carelessness in the observance of the Sabbath to pass unpunished. If we would enjoy his blessing, the Sabbath must be kept holy.

Divine mercy has directed that the sick and suffering be cared for; the labor required to make them comfortable is a work of necessity, and no violation of the Sabbath. But all unnecessary work should be avoided. Many carelessly put off until the beginning of the Sabbath little things that should have been done on the day of preparation. This should not be. Any work that is neglected until the commencement of holy time, should remain undone until the Sabbath is past. This course might help the memory of these thoughtless ones, and make them more careful to do their own work on the six working days.

To keep the Sabbath holy, we should not even allow our minds to dwell upon things of a worldly character. Yet it is not necessary that we shut ourselves away from nature, and deprive ourselves of the free, invigorating air of heaven. The Sabbath was made to be a blessing to man, by calling his mind from secular labor to contemplate the goodness and glory of God. It is necessary that the people of God assemble stately for his worship, to interchange thoughts in regard to the truths of his word, and to devote a portion of time to 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.

Parents, why not make use of the precious lessons God has given you in the book of nature to give your children a correct idea of his character? Go and sit with them in the groves or bright sunshine, and give their restless minds something to feed upon by conversing with them on the wonderful works of God. Call their attention to the tokens of God's love to man as seen in his creative works, and their young minds will be attracted and interested, and their hearts will be inspired with love and reverence.

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. But by exalting the Sabbath in the family, it may be made the most interesting day in the week, so that its weekly return will be hailed with joy by every member of the family. In no better way can parents exalt and honor the Sabbath than by

devising means to impart proper instruction to their children and to interest them in spiritual things, giving them correct views of the character of God and what he requires of them in order to attain to eternal life. Parents, make the Sabbath a delight, that your children may look forward to it, and have a welcome for it in their hearts. Thus will God be honored in the home.

When Nehemiah moved out as a reformer and deliverer in Israel, he was actuated by love to God and anxiety for the prosperity of his people. His heart was in the work he had undertaken; and his hope, his energy, his enthusiasm, his determination of character, were contagious, and inspired others with the same courage and lofty purpose that animated him. Each man became a Nehemiah in his own sphere, and helped to make stronger the hand and heart of his neighbor; and soon feebleness was succeeded by strength and courage.

Here is a lesson for ministers and others who are laboring for the salvation of souls. Christian laborers should manifest the same zeal and earnestness that characterized Nehemiah. If ministers are inactive and irresolute, destitute of godly zeal, what can be expected of those to whom they minister? In some instances they may rise above the moral level of their teachers, but not often. But when ministers broaden their plans, and show that they are in earnest, the people will respond to their efforts; and disunited, dispirited workers will become united, strong, hopeful, and eager.

It is a sin to be heedless, purposeless, and indifferent in any work in which we may engage, but especially in the work of God. Every enterprise connected with his cause should be carried forward with energy, thought, and earnest prayer. Faithful standard-bearers for God and his truth are wanted, and many are ready to respond to the call. As these see the iniquity and violence that exist in consequence of making void the law of God, they will see greater reason than ever to reverence that law, and will highly prize its righteous, restraining influences. Contempt and reviling increase their love for the precepts of Jehovah. With David they will say: "I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold."

June 3, 1886

The Permanence of Truth

During all the wanderings of the children of Israel in the wilderness, Jesus, who was equal with the Father, was their leader and guide. Enshrouded in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, his presence was ever with them. There were symbols and shadowy types pointing to a Saviour to come; there was also a present Saviour, who gave commands directly to Moses for the children of Israel, and who was set forth before them as the only channel of blessings. The sacrificial system was designed to typify the Saviour, who was to become the perfect offering for sinful man.

In the Jewish age, all the revealings of God to his people, everything relating to his worship, was closely connected with the sanctuary,--with the tabernacle in the wilderness, and afterward with the temple. Here God was worshiped; here the sacrificial offerings were presented before him. Here was the breastplate of the high priest, set with precious stones, from which messages from Jehovah were received. Here, in the holy of holies, overshadowed by the wings of cherubim, dwelt the perpetual token of the presence of the Holy One, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Here was the ark of the covenant, containing the tables of the law,--the ark which was to Israel the symbol of the divine presence, and the pledge of victory in battle. Idols could not stand before the sacred ark of God, and death was the penalty of a rash, irreverent touch or the glance of curiosity.

All through the pages of sacred history, where the dealings of God with his chosen people are recorded, there are burning traces of the great I AM. Never has he given to the sons of men more open manifestations of his power and glory than when he alone was acknowledged as Israel's ruler, and gave the law to his people. Here was a scepter swayed by no human hand; and the stately goings forth of Israel's invisible King were unspeakably grand and awful.

Truly this was a wonderful dispensation, and those who speak derisively of the old Jewish law and the Dark Ages, should remember that they are treading on holy ground. While we rejoice today that our Saviour has appeared on earth, and that the offering for sin typified in the ceremonial law has become a reality, we are not

excusable in harboring feelings of disrespect for that period when Christ himself was the leader of his people. Those who do this may not know what they are doing; but they are showing themselves ignorant both of the Scriptures and of the power of God. They show that they need divine enlightenment, a more intelligent knowledge of God and his word.

The Christ typified in the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law is the very same Christ that is revealed in the gospel. The clouds that enshrouded his divine form have rolled back; the mists and shades have disappeared; and Jesus, the world's Redeemer, stands revealed. He came just as the prophecies foretold that he would come. In his life and death, type met antitype, and the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish church found their fulfillment. He appeared among men, not as the Messiah that the Jews expected,--a king coming in power and glory to conquer their enemies and to exalt their favored nation, but as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He, the Majesty of Heaven, condescended to be our friend, our counselor, our guide, our perfect pattern, as well as our redeemer. "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."

God's work is the same in all time, although there are different degrees of development, and different manifestations of his power to meet the wants of man in the different ages. Commencing with the fall, down through the patriarchal and Jewish ages, even to the present time, there has been a gradual unfolding of the purposes of God in the plan of redemption. Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses understood the gospel through Christ; they looked for the salvation of the race through man's substitute and surety. These holy men of old held communion with the Saviour who was to come to our world in human flesh; and some of them talked with Christ and heavenly angels face to face, as a man talks with his friend.

Through the sacred record, we may hold converse with the patriarchs, and listen to Moses as he legislates for Israel. We hear the warnings of the prophets as they look down through the ages, and reveal scenes that are to take place even down to the close of time. And as we see the events which they have foretold transpiring just as they predicted, we are brought into closer sympathy with these men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

As time rolls on, and new truths are revealed, light is thrown on that which has been known from the beginning; we see new beauty and force in the inspired word, and we study its sacred pages with a deeper and more absorbing interest. We see the significance of the Jewish economy, and the character and purposes of God are made manifest in his dealings with his chosen people. How grand was the arrangement of God to preserve the knowledge of himself, and of his law, which is the foundation of his government in Heaven and upon earth. Although darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people, the Lord would not leave himself without a witness.

In the solemn service of the temple, the grand truths were typified which were to be revealed through successive generations. The cloud of incense bore upward the prayer of the contrite heart. The bleeding victim on the altar of sacrifice testified of a Redeemer to come, and from the holy of holies the visible token of the divine presence shone forth. Thus through age after age of idolatry and apostasy, the star of hope was kept shining in the darkened moral heavens, until the time came for the advent of the promised Messiah. Now, Christ, the true sacrifice, has shed his blood for the remission of sins, and is presenting it before the Father in our behalf. But the increased light that shines upon our pathway should not tempt us to despise the beginning. Every additional ray of light that we receive gives us a clearer and more distinct understanding of the plan of redemption, which is the working out of the divine will in the salvation of man.

God made man in his own image. He laid the foundations of the earth, and dressed it in the garb of beauty; he created all the wonders of the land and the sea. And he requires man to reverence his commandments, which were spoken amid such displays of divine power and majesty, and to obey them without questioning the feasibility or convenience of such obedience. The example of Adam and Eve should be a sufficient warning to us against any disobedience of the divine law. Their sin in listening to the specious temptations of the enemy, brought guilt and sorrow upon the world, and, had it not been for the goodness and mercy of God, would have plunged the race into hopeless despair.

Let none for a moment deceive themselves with the thought that their sin will not bring its merited punishment. Their transgressions will be visited with the rod, because they have had the light, but have walked directly contrary to it. God will not more lightly pass over any violation of his law now than in the day when he pronounced judgment against Adam. The Saviour of the world raises his voice in protest against

those who regard the law of God with carelessness and indifference. Said he: "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of Heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of Heaven."

It is the grossest presumption for mortal man to venture upon a compromise with the Almighty, in order to secure his own temporal interests. "I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God," is thundered from Sinai; and we may not disregard that voice because the words were spoken more than three thousand years ago, and were addressed to the lineal descendants of Abraham. The Lord requires willing sacrifice. No partial obedience, no divided interest, is accepted by Him who declares that the iniquities of the fathers shall be visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate him, and that he will show mercy unto thousands of them that love him and keep his commandments.

There is nothing in the word of God to be thrown aside; there is nothing in the plan of redemption that is unimportant or that may be lightly disregarded. The Bible gives us an account of the dealings of God with man from the creation to the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven; it carries us even farther in the future, and opens before us the glories of the city of God, and the beauty and perfection of the earth made new, the saints' secure abode. But although the long line of events extends through so many centuries, and new and important truths are from time to time developed, that which was truth in the beginning is the truth still. The increased light of the present day does not contradict or make of none effect the dimmer light of the past.

All the truths of revelation are of value to us; and in contemplating things of eternal interest, we shall gain true perceptions of the character of God. The cultivation of reverence for him will affect the daily life. The entire character will be elevated and transformed. The soul will be brought into harmony with Heaven. The believer will become Christ-like, and will finally obtain an abundant entrance into the city of God.

June 10, 1886

Value of Bible Study

Said Christ: "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." No one can neglect the word of God, and yet attain to Christian perfection. But by carefully searching that word, we become acquainted with the divine Model; and in order to imitate the Pattern, it must be frequently and closely inspected.

As we study the life of Christ, we discover in ourselves defects of character; our unlikeness to him is so great that we cannot be his followers without a very great change in our life. Still we study, with a desire to be like our great Exemplar; we catch the looks, the spirit, of our beloved Master. By beholding, by "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith," we become changed into the same image. We cannot imitate the life of Christ while we are looking away from him; we must do it by dwelling upon and talking of him, by seeking to refine the taste and elevate the character, by trying through earnest, persevering effort, through faith and love, to approach the perfect Pattern. The attention being fixed upon Christ, his image, pure and spotless, becomes enshrined in the heart as "the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely." Even unconsciously we imitate that with which we are familiar; and by gaining a knowledge of Christ, of his words, his habits, his lessons of instruction, and by imitating the virtues of the character we have so closely studied, we become imbued with the spirit of the Master, which we have so much admired.

Those who know the blessedness of a union with God should not fail to exemplify the life of Christ in their daily conversation, in pure and virtuous characters. By doing good, by being courteous and beneficent, they adorn the Christian 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 lives recommend the truth of God to those who have been prejudiced against it by nominal professors, who have a form of godliness, while their lives testify that they know nothing of its sanctifying power.

The word of God has been sadly neglected, instead of being appreciated as it

should have been. This book, revealing the will of God to man, deserves to be held in the highest esteem; for it gives instruction of inestimable value to all classes. Its teachings are so plain that even the humblest and most ignorant can understand them, and learn to so order their conversation and be so circumspect in deportment as to bring no dishonor or reproach upon the cause of their Redeemer. If they have living faith in God, they will not by their inconsistencies furnish occasion to bring the truth into disrepute when it should be a savor of life unto life.

The truths of God's word, received into the heart, have an animating power; and those who will frame any excuse for neglecting to become acquainted with the Scriptures will neglect the claims of God in many respects. The character will be deformed, the words and acts a reproach to the truth.

The injunction of our Saviour to search the Scriptures should be religiously regarded by every man, women, and child who professes his name. The student in 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. Teachers in the Sabbath-school have a missionary work given them; it is 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 a 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 that word. 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 jewels of truth, which will enrich the mind, and fortify the soul against the wiles of the arch-deceiver.

Parents plead trifling excuses for not interesting themselves in the Bible lessons with their children, and they fail to become conversant with the Scriptures. Fathers 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 his word is the example they give their children, which moulds their minds after the worldly standard, and not after the exalted standard

erected by Christ. Mothers, too, are unfaithful to their trust. The inward adorning of the mind and the culture of the soul are neglected as though inferior to the adornment of the apparel. Their own minds and the minds of their children are starved in order to follow custom and fashion.

Fathers and mothers, 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.

Jesus, the greatest teacher the world has ever seen, recognized the value of the Holy Scriptures, and expounded them to his disciples. After his resurrection, he drew near to two of them as they were on the way to Emmaus, talking, as they went, of the disappointed hopes occasioned by the death of the beloved Master. They told him of the prophet mighty in word and deed who 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 enter into his glory?" And beginning at Moses and the prophets, "he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."

Jesus reproved the disciples for not being acquainted with the scriptures that testified of the Messiah. Had they been familiar with the Scriptures, their faith would have been sustained in the hour of trial, and their hope would have remained unshaken; for the treatment Christ would receive at the hands of those he came to save was plainly stated in the prophecies. The disciples were astonished that they had not recognized Jesus at once, as soon as he spoke with them by the way, and that they had failed to remember the scriptures which he had brought to their mind. They had lost sight of the divine word; but when the things spoken by the prophets were brought to their remembrance, faith revived, and hope again sprang up in their hearts. And when he was parted from them, they said one to another, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?"

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." If Christians would earnestly search the Scriptures, more hearts would burn with the vivid truths therein revealed. Their hopes would brighten as they dwell upon 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 who walked with him,--in dwelling upon the virtue and piety of these holy men of old,--the spirit which inspired them would kindle a flame of love and holy fervor in the hearts of those who would be like them in character.

June 17, 1886

The True Standard of Christian Excellence

"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."

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect."

It is the design of God that improvement shall be the life-work of all his people, and that in all their aims they shall be guided and controlled by Christian principle and correct experience. But many fail to understand the true object of life; and under the influence of cherished errors, they sacrifice all there is of life that is really valuable. The true man is one who is willing to sacrifice his own interest for the good of others, and who forgets himself in ministering to their happiness. Intellect is a mightier force than wealth or physical power. If sanctified and controlled by the Spirit of God, it can exert a powerful influence for good. Yet intellect alone does not make the man, according to the divine standard. When made a minister of vice, great intellect is a curse to the possessor and to all within its influence.

One's claim to a true manhood must be determined by the use of the powers which God has given him. Lord Byron had rare intellectual gifts; 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 ripened 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 acknowledged him only as one who had abused his God-given talents. 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. Nero was acknowledged by the world as a great man; but did God regard him as such? No! he was not connected by living faith to the great heart of humanity. He and others like him in the world ate, and drank, and slept, as men of the world; but they were Satanic in their cruelty. Wherever went these monsters in human form, bloodshed and destruction marked their pathway. They were lauded while living, but when they were buried, the world rejoiced. In contrast with the lives of such men, is that of Martin 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 noble, generous heart, as well as a vigorous intellect, and all his powers were exercised for the good of humanity. He stood bravely for truth and right, and breasted the world's opposition to benefit his fellow-men.

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." It should be our life-work to press forward continually toward the perfection of Christian character, ever striving for conformity to the will of God, remembering that the efforts begun upon earth will continue throughout eternity. God has set before the human family an elevated standard, and he who is true to his God-given manhood, will not only promote the happiness of his fellow-creatures in this life, but will aid them to secure an eternal reward in the life to come.

Nor should any duty be regarded as small and unimportant. It is difficult for human beings to give attention to lesser matters while the mind is engaged in business of greater 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 in reality they 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.

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 members of 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. Christ did not become weary in his efforts to save fallen men; and 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; and we must

wait and watch, submissive to God's will, ready and willing to respond to every call of duty.

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 come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

To deny self 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 duty requires it, not for applause, not for policy, but for the sake of the Master, who has given each of his followers a work to be done with unwavering fidelity; when one might praise himself, to keep silent and let other lips praise him. Self-denial is to do good to others when inclination would lead us to serve and please ourselves. Although our fellow-men may never appreciate our efforts, we are to work on.

Fellow-Christians, search carefully, and see whether the work of God is indeed the rule of your life. 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 Scripture 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. "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." Ever remember that the 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 trust to yourself, you lose your hold upon 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 him to interest himself in the concerns of the weakest of his creatures. But from the lips of Jesus we have the assurance: "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."

June 24, 1886

Acceptable Worship

Through the psalmist God declares, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." Much of the public worship of God consists of praise and prayer, and every follower of Christ should engage in this worship. There is also the preaching service, conducted by those whose work it is to instruct the congregation in the word of God. Although all are not called to minister in word and doctrine, they need not be cold and responseless listeners. 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 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 response to what is 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. They show zeal and ambition 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, and 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.

Those who profess to be guided by the word of God may be familiar with the evidences of their 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 are connected with Heaven, and intelligent in the things of God. The truth and the love of God is their meditation. They have feasted upon the word 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 concerning 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 workers 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 the 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. All 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.

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 those 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 he died?

In every act of life Christians should seek to represent Christ,--seek to make his service appear attractive. Let none make religion repulsive by groans and sighs and a relation of their trials, their self-denials, and sacrifices. Do not give the lie to your profession of faith by impatience, fretfulness, and repining. Let the graces of the Spirit be manifested in kindness, meekness, forbearance, cheerfulness, and love. Let it be seen that the love of Christ is an abiding motive; that your religion is not a dress to be put off and on to suit circumstances, but a principle, calm, steady, unvarying. Alas that pride, unbelief, and selfishness, like a foul cancer, are eating our vital godliness from the heart of many a professed Christian! When judged according to their works, how many will learn, too late, that their religion was but a glittering cheat, unacknowledged by Jesus Christ.

Love to Jesus will be seen, will be felt. It cannot be hidden. It exerts a wondrous power. It makes the timid bold, the slothful diligent, the ignorant wise. It makes the stammering tongue eloquent, and rouses the dormant intellect into new life and vigor. It

makes the desponding hopeful, the gloomy joyous. Love to Christ will lead its possessor to accept responsibilities for his sake, and to bear them in his strength. Love to Christ will not be dismayed by tribulation, nor turned aside from duty by reproaches. The soul that is not imbued with this love for Jesus is none of his.

Peace in Christ is of more value than all the treasures of earth. Let us seek the Lord with all our heart, let us learn of Christ to be meek and lowly, that we may find rest of soul. Let us arouse our dormant energies, and become active, earnest, fervent. The very example and deportment, as well as the words, of the Christian should be such as to awaken in the sinner a desire to come to the Fountain of life.

Then let us open our hearts to the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Let us work cheerfully, joyfully, in the service of our Master. Let us praise him, not only by our words in the congregation of his saints, but by a well ordered life and godly conversation,--a life of active, noble Christian effort. Let us give diligence to make our calling and election sure, remembering that we shall triumph at last, if we do not become weary in well-doing.

July 1, 1886

Importance of Home Training

In the words, "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace," the psalmist sums up the results of careful home training. It should be the object of every parent to secure to his children a well-balanced, symmetrical character. And this is a work of no small magnitude and importance, but one that will require earnest thought and prayer, no less than patient, persevering effort. A right foundation must be laid, a framework, strong and firm, erected, and then day by day the work of building, polishing, perfecting, must go forward.

Parents, your own home is the first field in which you are called to labor. The precious plants in the home garden demand your first care. To you it is appointed to watch for souls as they that must give account. Carefully consider your work, its nature, its bearing, and its results. Line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, you must instruct, warn, and counsel, ever remembering that your looks, words, and actions have a direct bearing upon the future course of your dear ones. Your work is not to paint a form of beauty upon canvas, or to chisel it from marble, but to impress upon a human soul the image of the Divine.

Did mothers but realize the importance of their mission, they would be much in secret prayer, presenting their children to Jesus, imploring his blessing upon them, and pleading for wisdom to discharge aright their sacred duties. Let the mother improve every opportunity to mould and fashion the disposition and habits of her children. Let her watch carefully the development of character, repressing traits that are too prominent, encouraging those that are deficient.

Mothers, will you not dispense with useless, unimportant labor for that which must perish with the using? Will you not seek to draw near to God, that his wisdom may guide and his grace assist you, in a work which will be as enduring as eternity? Aim to make your children perfect in character. Remember that such only can see God.

I speak the more freely and earnestly, because I know that many parents are

neglecting their God-given work. They are themselves far from purity and holiness, and they do not see the defects of their children as they would if their own eyes were beholding and admiring the perfection of Christ's character.

Parents, for Christ's sake, for the sake of your children, seek to conform your own lives to the divine standard. Set a pure and noble example before your precious charge. Let nothing come in between you and your God. Be earnest, be patient and persevering, instant in season, and out of season. Give your children intellectual culture, and moral training. Let their young hearts be fortified with firm, pure principles. Teach them to exert every faculty of mind and body. While you have the opportunity, lay the foundation for a noble manhood and womanhood, and your labor will be rewarded a thousand fold.

You must make the Bible your guide, if you would bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Let the life and character of Christ be presented as the pattern for them to copy. If they err, read to them what the Lord has said concerning similar sins. There is need of constant care and diligence in this work. One wrong trait tolerated by parents, uncorrected by teachers, may cause the character to become deformed and unbalanced. Teach the children that they must have a new heart; that new tastes must be created, new motives inspired. They must have help from Christ; they must become acquainted with the character of God as revealed in his word.

Family prayer receives too little attention. In many cases, the morning and evening worship is little more than a mere form, a dull monotonous repetition of set phrases in which the spirit of gratitude or the sense of need finds no expression. The Lord accepts not such service. But the petitions of a humble heart and contrite spirit he will not despise. The opening of our hearts to our Heavenly Father, the acknowledgment of our entire dependence, the expression of our wants, the homage of grateful love,--this is true prayer. When we come pleading the merits of Christ's blood, and trusting with implicit faith his promises, we shall secure the blessing of the Lord.

Redeem the precious hours worse than wasted in talking of your troubles, or gossiping over the faults of others. Seek earnestly to God for help, and you will become strong in his strength. You may have Christ as a guest in your home. Be not satisfied merely to bear the name of Christ. Be in truth followers of Jesus. Let your hearts be warmed with his love. Make him your friend, your helper, your counselor.

The most valuable rules for social and family intercourse, are to be found in the Bible. There is not only the best and purest standard of morality, but the most valuable code of politeness. Our Saviour's sermon on the mount contains instruction of priceless worth to old and young. It should be often read in the family circle, and its precious teachings exemplified in the daily life. The golden rule, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," as well as the apostolic injunction, "In honor preferring one another," should be made the law of the family. Those who cherish the spirit of Christ will manifest politeness at home, a spirit of benevolence even in little things. They will be constantly seeking to make all around them happy, forgetting self in their kind attentions to others. This is the fruit which grows upon the Christian tree.

Few realize the influence of the little things of life upon the development of character. Mothers, cease to spend your time and strength for that which is merely attractive to the eye, but which does not minister to comfort or real happiness, and you will cut off a large share of the cares and worries that make you nervous and irritable, impolite and unchristian. The precious moments heretofore given to needless labor should be devoted to beautifying the souls of your children, teaching them how they may obtain the inward adorning, that meek and quiet spirit which God accounts of great price.

If real politeness were practiced by all the followers of Christ, if obedience to the golden rule were made one of the corner-stones of Christian character, we would see fewer church-trials, less hardness and animosity between brethren. There would be no harsh, thoughtless words, no strife for the highest place. God's people will be tested. Every one will be exposed to the fierce fire of trial and temptation. If we would not be consumed as dross, we must have the love of God--the gold that has been tried--abiding in us. Now is the time to soften and subdue our rough, harsh traits of character. We must cherish kindness, forbearance, Christian integrity. Ungenerous criticism, hard speeches, questioning the motives of another, or magnifying his faults, open the door to Satan's temptations, and lead many away from God. The holy Scriptures give us a safe and profitable rule for thought and conversation. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." If we would have our children practice kindness, courtesy, and love, we ourselves must set them the example.

"Charity suffereth long, and is kind." It "thinketh no evil,"--another fruit borne on the tree of love. Our souls must be stayed upon God, imbued with his Spirit, if we would learn these sacred lessons. Said the apostle, "Gird up the loins of your mind." If the thoughts are rightly disciplined, it will be a far less difficult task to control the feelings. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, will give us courage, hope, and constancy. Shall we not obey the teachings of God's word? Shall we not make it our guide and counselor? Shall we not devote time and thought to its perusal? How can Christians neglect the book in which God has revealed his will to men? Our children need help to understand the Scriptures. They should become acquainted with the life and character of Jesus, that they may love him, and choose to obey him.

Parents and guardians must exercise unceasing watchfulness. Every day new thoughts are awakened in the minds of the young; new impressions are made upon their hearts. The associations they form, the books they read, the habits they cherish,--all must be guarded; for the interests of the children, for this life and the next, are at stake.

"What now you do, you know not, But shall hereafter know, When the seeds your hands are sowing, To a ripened harvest grow."

When you stand before the great white throne, then your work will appear as it is. The books are opened, the record of every life made known. Many in that vast company are unprepared for the revelations made. Upon the ears of some, the words will fall with startling distinctness, "Weighed in the balance, and found wanting." To many parents the Judge will say in that day, "You had my word, plainly setting forth your duty. Why have you not obeyed its teachings? Knew ye not that it was the voice of God? Did I not bid you search the Scriptures, that you might not go astray? You have not only ruined your own souls, but by your pretensions to godliness you have misled many others. You have no part with me. Depart, depart!"

Another class stand pale and trembling, trusting in Christ, and yet oppressed with a sense of their own unworthiness. They hear with tears of joy and gratitude the Master's commendation. The day's of incessant toil, of burden-bearing, and of fear and anguish, are forgotten, as that voice, sweeter than the music of angel harps, pronounces the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter ye into the joy of your Lord." There stand the host of the redeemed, the palm branch of victory in their hand, the

crown upon their head. These are the ones who by faithful, earnest labor, have obtained a fitness for Heaven. The life-work performed on earth is acknowledged in the heavenly courts as a work well done.

With joy unutterable, parents see the crown, the robe, the harp, given to their children. The days of hope and fear are ended. The seed sown with tears and prayers may have seemed to be sown in vain, but their harvest is reaped with joy at last. Their children have been redeemed. Fathers, mothers, shall the voices of your children swell the song of gladness in that day?

July 8, 1886

The Christian a Missionary Worker

"He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

None of us should feel content to save merely our own souls. Jesus, our perfect Pattern, left the royal courts of Heaven. He gave up his high command, and the glory that he had with the Father, 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 look upon the saints redeemed, he will see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.

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 fellowmen, that Christ should 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 cooperate 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 mould 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 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 half-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.

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 burden 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 acceptance 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.

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, sowing the precious seed of truth in imitation of the Redeemer, who was the Prince of missionaries.

He who gives increased talents to those who have made a wise improvement of the talents intrusted to them, is pleased to acknowledge the service 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.

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 by 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 thy 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.

July 15, 1886

A Lesson from the Miracle at Bethesda

"Wisdom is justified of her children."

The healing of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda teaches an important lesson,--a lesson of priceless value to the Christian and of fearful import to the unbelieving and the skeptical. As the paralytic lay beside the pool, helpless and well-nigh hopeless, Jesus drew near, and asked, in tones of pity, "Wilt thou be made whole?" Be made whole!--this had been the burden of his desire and prayers for long, weary years. With trembling eagerness he told the story of his trials and disappointments to the sympathizing Son of God. No friend was near to bear him to the healing fountain at the troubling of the waters. His agonizing appeals for help fell unheeded. All around him were those who sought the coveted boon of health for their own loved ones; and while he painfully sought to reach the pool, another would be hurried down before him.

Jesus said to the sufferer, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk." There was no assurance of divine help, no manifestation of miraculous power. What marvel had the man replied, "It is impossible! How can I be expected to use my limbs, that have not obeyed my will for thirty-eight years?" From a merely human point of view, such reasoning would appear consistent. The sufferer might have given place to doubt, and thus have permitted that God-given opportunity to pass unimproved. But no; without indulging a questioning thought, he seized his only opportunity. As he attempted to do what Christ had commanded, strength and vigor came; he was made whole.

Reader, is your mind filled with doubts and misgivings, and yet do you desire to receive the blessing of the Lord? Cease to question his word and distrust his promises. Obey the Saviour's bidding, and receive strength. If you hesitate, and wait to enter into a discussion with Satan, or to consider the difficulties and improbabilities, your opportunity will pass, perhaps forever.

The miracle at Bethesda should have convinced the Jews that Jesus was the Son of God; but they desired only a pretext for unbelief, and it was not hard to find what they sought. At the command of the Saviour, the impotent man had borne away the

simple bed, or mat, on which he had so long lain; and Satan, ever ready with his insinuations, suggested that this act might be construed into a violation of the Sabbath. The Jews, by their customs and traditions, had perverted this sacred rest-day from its original design, making its observance a burden rather than a blessing. It was hoped that a controversy on this point would destroy the faith inspired in some hearts by the healing of this poor paralytic.

As the restored one went on his way with quick, elastic step, his pulses bounding with the vigor of renewed health, his countenance glowing with hope and joy, he was met by the Pharisees, who told him, with an air of great sanctity, that it was not lawful to carry his bed on the Sabbath day. There was no rejoicing on their part at the deliverance of that long-imprisoned captive, no grateful praise that one was among them who could heal all manner of diseases. Their traditions had been disregarded, and this fact closed their eyes to the evidence of divine power. Bigoted and self-righteous, they would not admit that they could have misapprehended the true design of the Sabbath. Instead of this, they chose to condemn Jesus, notwithstanding the mighty miracle he had performed. There are men of the same spirit today, who are blinded by error, and yet they flatter themselves that they are right, and that all who differ from them are in the wrong.

The man who had been healed entered into no controversy with his accusers. He simply answered, "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk." The Pharisees, pretending ignorance, still urged, "What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?" It was their policy to question and cavil, that they might perplex and entangle him, and lead him to doubt, or else cast discredit upon his testimony.

When the Jews were informed that it was Jesus of Nazareth who had performed the miracle of healing, they sought to put him to death, "because he had done these things on the Sabbath day." To their charges, Jesus calmly replied, "'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.' Through the operations of nature, and by the ministration of angels, God is constantly working to sustain and bless humanity. I am working in perfect harmony with my Father." This answer furnished another pretext to condemn him. Murder was in their hearts, and they waited only for a plausible excuse to take his life. But Jesus steadily continues to assert his true position. "The Son," he says, "can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth,

these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth."

Ample evidence had been presented that Jesus was the promised Messiah; yet all who desired to doubt found opportunity. God works through whom he will, by ways and means of his own choosing; but there are ever some to act the part of the criticising Pharisees, who could make the healing of a poor sufferer the occasion of a murderous outbreak. They cannot deny that the power of God is manifested through his servants; but still in some points the work does not accord with their judgment, and if they can find but the semblance of an excuse, they are free to question, doubt, and oppose.

Unbelief will always find an excuse for its existence. If men could criticise and condemn the Saviour's work, when they had such evidence of divine power as the miracle at Bethesda, can we wonder that they criticise and condemn today? God would have men believe, not because there is no possibility of doubt, but because there is abundant evidence upon which to base an intelligent faith.

Christ bade the Pharisees, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." The Jewish teachers professed to expound the word of God; but had they prayerfully studied and rightly understood its teachings, they would not have substituted their own traditions for the divine law.

Jesus continued; "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life." "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" The word of God is slighted and looked upon with distrust for the same reason as was its Author--because it reproveth and condemns sin. Many who are unwilling to obey its requirements, endeavor to overthrow its authority. They read the Bible, or listen to its truths as presented from the sacred desk, merely to find fault with the Scriptures or with the sermon. Not a few become infidels, simply through their willful neglect of duty. Others are led to adopt skeptical principles from pride or indolence. They do not love close application, and will not put forth the effort necessary to accomplish anything noble or really useful; but they desire to be thought sharp and critical, to secure a reputation for superior wisdom. Turning their attention to the Bible, they find much which the finite mind, unenlightened by wisdom from above, is powerless to comprehend. Here is a field for the display of their talents, where they can gain a reputation for wit and sharpness without much effort; and

they begin to express their doubts and cavilings.

These scoffers may utter many sharp, witty, apt things; but the "poison of asps is under their lips." The father of lies lends them his power and his Satanic cunning. Christians should avoid controversy with these men. We may feel that we are in no danger from their influence; but others will gather about to listen, and some soul may be led into the path of doubt and skepticism. Treat them kindly, but give them no opportunity to parade their infidelity. Give no place for Satan to insinuate his presence. Do not take one step on the enemy's ground.

God would have his people shun the society of infidels, atheists, and spiritualists. He has warned us of their character and their fate: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." "The transgressors shall be destroyed together; the end of the wicked shall be cut off."

The great adversary will attempt to overthrow the faith of every follower of Christ. To some he appears as a roaring lion; to others he comes clothed in angel garments, his voice subdued to the gentlest whisper. Our only safety is in clinging with unwavering faith to the word of God, and promptly and resolutely shunning whatever that word condemns, no matter how pleasing its appearance or how specious its pretenses. Though the truth of God may be to the "Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness," to them that believe it is the "power of God and the wisdom of God;" for "wisdom is justified of her children."

July 22, 1886

Prompt and Cheerful Obedience

"Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

God, as the supreme ruler of the universe has ever required prompt and unquestioning obedience. Even Christ, in the days of his flesh, was obedient to the law of the Father. Through the inspired psalmist he declares: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire;" "burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." But men are lulled to sleep by the deceptions of Satan, who suggests excuses and conquers their scruples, saying, as he said to Eve in the garden, "Ye shall not surely die." They forget that the word of the Lord is steadfast, and that every transgression will receive a "just recompense of reward."

The Lord made a covenant with Abraham and his seed, and gave them the right [rite] of circumcision as a token that he had separated them from all nations as his peculiar treasure. Had the descendants of Abraham faithfully kept this covenant, they would have escaped a great temptation to indulge in the sinful practices of other nations, and would not have been seduced into idolatry. By mingling with idolaters, they lost, to a great extent, their peculiar, holy character. To punish them, the Lord brought a famine upon their land, which compelled them to go down into Egypt to preserve their lives. The Lord suffered them to be oppressed by the Egyptians; but because of his covenant with Abraham, he did not forsake his people. He gave them an opportunity to turn to him in their distress, choose his righteous and merciful government, and obey his requirements.

The Lord heard the cries of his people in the land of their captivity, and delivered them, that they might be free to serve him. After they had left Egypt, and the waters of the Red Sea had been divided before them, he proved them, to see if they would trust in Him who by signs and wonders had delivered them from the house of bondage. But they failed to endure the trial. They murmured against God because of the difficulties in

the way, and wished to return again to Egypt. Because of their dissatisfied, impatient, and rebellious spirit, they wandered for forty years in the wilderness. But the Lord was not chargeable with this delay in possessing Canaan. He was more grieved than they because he could not bring them into immediate possession of the promised land, and thus display before all nations his mighty power in the deliverance of his people. With their distrust of God, with their pride and unbelief, they were not prepared to enter Canaan. They would in no way represent that people whose God is the Lord; for they did not bear his character of purity, goodness, and benevolence.

The children of Israel forfeited the divine favor by their disobedience. Had they submitted to the authority of God, as a nation being governed by his judgments, and as individuals walking in his ordinances, they would have been a prosperous, holy, happy people. By their own perversity of spirit, the Israelites made it impossible for God to manifest his power in protecting them from the nations that opposed their passage to Canaan. When those who had been chosen of God as his peculiar people, who had witnessed so many displays of his greatness and the majesty of his power, imitated the iniquities of the heathen, their guilt was as much greater than that of the idolatrous nations as were their privileges. Not one of the good things that God had promised to his people would have failed, had they complied with the conditions upon which these blessings were to be bestowed; but God could not sanction sin, nor protect iniquity.

The history of the children of Israel is written for our admonition. We are probationers, as they were. God has given us his commandments, as he gave them to his people anciently. We may become strong in the strength of Israel's God, if we will believe and obey his word. But if we are disobedient, doubting, and rebellious, as were the multitudes who fell in the wilderness, we shall be found unworthy to possess those mansions which Christ has gone to prepare for his people.

Through Samuel, God commanded Saul to go and smite the Amalekites, and utterly destroy all their possessions. But Saul only partially obeyed the command; he destroyed the inferior cattle, but reserved the best, and spared the wicked king. The next day he met the prophet Samuel, and greeted him with flattering self-congratulations. Said he, "Blessed be thou of the Lord; I have performed the commandment of the Lord." But the prophet immediately responded, "What meaneth then the bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?"

Saul was confused, and sought to shirk responsibility by answering, "They have brought them from the Amalekites; for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God, and the rest we have utterly destroyed." Samuel reproved the king, reminding him of the explicit command of God directing him to destroy all things belonging to Amalek. He pointed out Saul's transgression, and declared that he had disobeyed the Lord. But Saul refused to acknowledge that he had done wrong, and again excused his sin by pleading that he had reserved the best of the cattle to sacrifice unto the Lord.

The king's persistency in refusing to see and confess his sin grieved Samuel to the heart. He sorrowfully asked, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offering and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king." And for his transgression, the kingdom of Israel was rent from the hands of Saul, and given to a neighbor that was better than he, even David, the son of Jesse.

God is no less particular now than he was in ancient times. His eye is upon all his people, and over all the work of their hands. He will accept of no partial obedience; he will sanction no compromise with self. Nor will he suffer those who disobey his word to go unpunished. Though he may bear long with the transgressor, retribution will surely come at last.

God spoke to the children of Israel by the mouths of prophets and apostles; but there never was a time when men were more fully informed than they now are concerning his will and the course he would have them pursue. But will they profit by his teachings? Will they receive his reproofs and heed the warnings?

Disobedience hardens the heart and deadens the conscience of the guilty, and it also tends to corrupt the faith of others. That which at first looks very wrong to them, gradually loses this appearance, till finally they question whether it is really sin, and unconsciously fall into the same error. When a duty presents itself, we should not delay to meet its demands. Delay gives time for doubts to arise, unbelief creeps in, the judgment is perverted, the understanding darkened; and at length the reproofs of God's Spirit do not reach the heart of the deluded one, who has become so blinded as to feel that they cannot possibly be intended for him or apply to his case.

Precious probationary time is passing, and few realize its worth. The golden hours are squandered in worldly pursuits, in pleasure, in absolute sin, while a preparation for eternity, the great object for which they were given, is entirely overlooked. The law of God is slighted and forgotten; yet its precepts are none the less binding, and every transgression will receive its merited punishment. For purpose of worldly gain men desecrate the Sabbath; yet the claims of that holy day are not abrogated or lessened. God's command is clear and unquestionable on this point. He has peremptorily forbidden us to labor on the Sabbath; he has set it apart as a day sanctified to himself.

Those who would walk in the path of obedience to God's commandments will encounter many hindrances. There are strong and subtle influences that bind them to the ways of the world; but the power of the Lord can break these chains. He will remove these obstacles from before the feet of his faithful, humble children, or give them strength and courage to conquer every difficulty, if they earnestly beseech his help. All hindrances will vanish before an earnest desire and persistent effort to do the will of God. Light from Heaven will illuminate the pathway of those who, no matter what trials and perplexities they may encounter, go forward in the way of obedience, looking to Jesus for help and guidance. Basel, Switzerland.

July 29, 1886

Christ and the Law

The law of God is changeless. For this reason, Christ died, taking upon himself the guilt of the transgressor, and making it possible for every penitent, repenting sinner to take hold of his strength, and through him to make peace with the offended Lawgiver.

"Sin is the transgression of the law," and "the wages of sin is death." It was sin that brought death into the world. Had there been no sin, there would have been no death. Christ died as the sinner's substitute, to save him from the penalty of his disobedience. Could the law of God have been changed or abolished, Christ need not have died; for death was not necessary in order to abolish the law. The fact that God spared not his own sinless, beloved Son from the penalty he pledged himself to bear as the sinner's substitute, is the most telling argument that could be produced to show that the claims of his law will not be released, even in the slightest degree, to save the transgressor. So in the death of Christ we have evidence, not only of God's love for sinful man, but of the changeless character of his law. The law could not be abolished; one precept could not be altered to save the sinner and meet man in his fallen condition; but God so loved the world that he gave his Son to suffer the penalty of its transgression in the sinner's stead.

It is by grace that the sinner is saved, being justified freely by the blood of Christ. But Christ did not die to save the sinner in his sins. The whole world is condemned as guilty before God, for they are transgressors of his holy law; and they will certainly perish unless they repent, turn from their disobedience, and through faith in Christ claim the merits of his precious blood. The sin of Adam and Eve lost holy Eden for themselves and their posterity, and those who continue to live in the transgression of God's law will never regain the lost paradise. But through the grace of Christ man may render acceptable obedience, and gain a home in the beautiful Eden restored.

There are some who do not understand the plan of redemption, but make the death of Christ an argument to prove that the law of God is abolished. Men who claim to be teachers of the people blind the eyes of the ignorant by blending the moral law with the ceremonial, and using the texts which speak of the ceremonial law to prove that

the moral law has been abolished. This is a perversion of the Scriptures. There are two distinct laws brought to view. One is the law of types and shadows, which reached to the time of Christ, and ceased when type met antitype in his death. The other is the law of Jehovah, and is as abiding and changeless as his eternal throne. After the crucifixion, it was a denial of Christ for the Jews to continue to offer the burnt offerings and sacrifices which were typical of his death. It was saying to the world that they looked for a Redeemer to come, and had no faith in Him who had given his life for the sins of the world. Hence the ceremonial law ceased to be of force at the death of Christ.

The gospel of Christ reflects glory upon the Jewish age. It sheds light upon the whole Jewish economy, and gives significance to the ceremonial law. The tabernacle, or temple, of God on earth was a pattern of the original in Heaven. All the ceremonies of the Jewish law were prophetic, typical of mysteries in the plan of redemption. The rites and ceremonies of the law were given by Christ himself, who, enshrouded in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, was the leader of the hosts of Israel; and this law should be treated with great respect, for it is sacred. Even after it was no longer to be observed, Paul presented it before the Jews in its true position and value, showing its place in the plan of redemption and its relation to the work of Christ; and the great apostle pronounces this law glorious, worthy of its divine Originator. That which was to be done away was glorious, but it was not the law instituted by God for the government of his family in Heaven and on earth; for as long as the heavens shall remain, so long shall the law of the Lord endure.

Christ came to teach men the way of salvation; and we might expect that when the shadowy service was no longer of any value, if the law of ten commandments were no longer binding, he would declare its abrogation. If the Old-Testament Scriptures were no longer to be regarded as a guide for Christians, he would make known the fact. But this was not the work of Him who came to seek and to save that which was lost. In his memorable sermon on the mount, in which he announced to his followers the object of his mission, he expressly declared the perpetuity of the moral law. His solemn warnings to the neglecters and despisers of the law of God, echo down even to our time in the words: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of Heaven."

These are the words of the great Teacher, but they are often perverted, and made to mean something altogether different from the lesson he designed to give to his disciples, and through them to all who should believe on his name. He came to fulfill the demands of the law, to magnify and make it honorable, to show to all that God will not remit the penalty of its transgression. The Most High will fulfill his word; it shall not return unto him void.

After his resurrection, when Jesus revealed himself to the two disciples who were on the way to Emmaus and to those assembled in Jerusalem, he did not point to the mighty works which he had done, to revive their faith in him as the promised Messiah; but he went back to Moses and the prophets, and explained the scriptures concerning himself. Holy prophets had foretold the manner of his birth, the events of his life, his mission, and his death and resurrection; and Jesus impressed upon his disciples the fact that in his life and death these prophecies had met their fulfillment. Hope revived in the hearts of the disciples, as for them the words of the prophets were clothed with new life and power, and they were ready to accept Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God, the long-expected Messiah.

There is no discord between the Old Testament and the New. In the Old Testament we find the gospel of a coming Saviour; in the New Testament we have the gospel of a Saviour revealed as the prophecies had foretold. While the Old Testament is constantly pointing forward to the true offering, the New Testament shows that the Saviour prefigured by the typical offerings has come. The dim glory of the Jewish age has been succeeded by the brighter, clearer glory of the Christian age. But not once has Christ stated, that his coming destroyed the claims of God's law. On the contrary, in the very last message to his church, by way of Patmos, he pronounces a benediction upon those who keep his Father's law: "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."

The world is full of evidences of the greatness, majesty, and benevolence of God; but the strongest evidence of his love for fallen man is contained in the gift of his Son, who took the nature of man, descended to the office of a servant, tasted life's bitterest pain, and even died a terrible and ignominious death, that through him we might be restored to obedience and the favor of God, and gain eternal life. Christ, as our exemplar, kept his Father's law. As he overcame, so may we. And he has promised: "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." Basel, Switzerland.

August 5, 1886

The Law in the Christian Age

After the ascension of Christ, when his followers no longer enjoyed his personal presence and instruction, his disciples took up the work where he left it; and the words of truth, as they received them from Him who spake as never man spake, have come down to us clothed with divine power. Paul declared that he had taught the Ephesians "publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Peter and the other apostles preached the same gospel.

Why should the apostles teach repentance toward God?--Because the sinner is in trouble with the Father. He has transgressed the law; he must see his sin, and repent. What is his next work?--To look to Jesus, whose blood alone can cleanse from all sin. Faith in Christ is necessary; for there is no saving quality in law. The law condemns, but it cannot pardon the transgressor. The sinner must depend on the merits of the blood of Christ. "Let him take hold of my strength," says our merciful Redeemer, "that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me." Our Lord declared that he would love most to whom most was forgiven; and he only will feel that he needs forgiveness who sees himself as he is, defiled by sin, a transgressor of God's holy law. He who has the fullest conviction of the sacred claims of the law, will most clearly see the enormity of his offenses, and will feel that he is indeed forgiven much.

We are nearing the close of time; and a broader, clearer light than others have been favored with shines upon us. The mists are rolling away, and if we are humble students of the divine word, its truths will be clearly revealed to us. But Satan and his host are warring against the commandments of God as never before. Every attempt is made to blind men's eyes to the truth. If it were possible, even the elect would be deceived. This is no common deception. Satan's great success consists in keeping men in ignorance of his devices; for then, through his subtlety, he can confuse the minds of the unwary, and, as it were, lead them blindfolded. He is close on the track of all who make profession of Bible truth. He is constantly planning their overthrow, and his temptations are soliciting them on every hand.

If there is one in a position to have a controlling influence over others, Satan works in a masterly manner to confuse that man's mind, and make right appear wrong, and wrong right. His suggestions are always designed to lessen the importance of God's requirements, and to set the mind at rest while the daily walk is contrary to the divine law, until finally the victim of his delusions flatters himself that he is walking with God, while he is all the time going contrary to his law.

Such persons think they have faith; but it is presumption. The great adversary has woven a snare for their feet; and when once they become entangled, he has no lack of agencies to involve them still more deeply in his toils. Thus the deception grows stronger and stronger until souls are involved in irretrievable ruin.

As Satan, the god of this world, tempted Christ in the wilderness, so he will tempt every son and daughter of Adam. Our faith will be proved, our motives and principles will be tested; and if we have not a daily, living experience in the truth, and a union with Christ, we shall be swept away from our steadfastness into the error of the wicked.

If we could always remember that Satan comes to us in disguise, his motives concealed, and he himself clad in garments of light, we would be on our guard, and would not fall a prey to his devices. A defense has been furnished us. Says the apostle: "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

This is a safe armor, but it is not safer than we need; for the apostle continues: "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places," We should study the nature, character, and extent of this spiritual wickedness in high places, lest we become the dupes of the powers of darkness. But how difficult it is to awaken minds to realize the continual activity and great earnestness of our wily foe, notwithstanding the warnings and cautions of the Bible, and the experience of many who have been overthrown by his subtlety. The testimony loses its force; the warning passes out of the mind. Men cease to watch and pray; they do not solicit the aid of holy angels, who would lift up for them a standard against the enemy.

When this earth's history shall close, there will be only two divisions,--the righteous and the wicked. Every man, woman, and child will be found in one of these

two armies. Jesus will be the leader of the righteous, and Satan of the opposing hosts. The angels who kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, are rebels against the law of God, and enemies to all who love and obey his commandments; and all who are breaking, and teaching others to break, the law of God, the foundation of his government in Heaven and on earth, are co-operating with these fallen angels in their work, and are marshaled under the same chief, who directs their operations in opposition to the government of God. These will seek to strengthen their forces by gathering as many as possible into their ranks; and they will annoy and harass, falsify and misrepresent, all whom they cannot influence to join them in their work.

When Christ was upon the earth, there were some who bitterly opposed him. They did not like his teaching; his holy life was a rebuke to them. The apostles had the same spirit of opposition to meet. Spies were upon the track of these early preachers of righteousness, who caught up every word where there was the least chance to wrest the meaning. Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, was an especial object of wrath. His work and its results were falsely stated. His enemies sought to excite the malice of both Jews and Gentiles; and had it not been for the care of God, through the ministration of holy angels, his life would have been sacrificed long before it was, and his work cut short.

God has a people in the world now, whom he has set for the defense of his law; and we need not be surprised, or in any way discouraged, if we have to meet the same spirit of enmity. Christ said to the religious teachers in his day: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" Why was this woe pronounced upon them? Was it because they kept the law of God?--No; "For ye shut up the kingdom of Heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." There are just such teachers now. They will not obey the plainest requirements of the word of God; and after they have turned from the light themselves, they use all their influence to lead others to reject it also. They will not enter the path of obedience, and they are very earnest to hedge up the way that others may not enter.

They pervert the Scriptures, even teaching that it is a denial of Christ to keep the moral law. Error is cherished as precious light, while plain truth, so clear and pointed in the word of God, marking out the course they should pursue, is regarded as an idle tale. They may be professedly serving Christ; but they have changed masters, and are wholly on the enemy's side. The reason is given by the apostle, when he says: "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." These false teachers manifest the same spirit toward those who keep the commandments of God that the scribes and Pharisees manifested toward Christ.

Some who are unacquainted with the Bible think that what the ministers tell them must be true. They do not, like the noble Bereans, search the Scriptures for themselves; but they accept the statements of those who have studied the word of God, not to learn the truth, but to sustain false doctrines, to justify their own theories. Many times these false theories are a jumble of inconsistencies; and if men would use their reason, and take the Bible as it reads, they would see the absurdity of their positions. The plain "Thus saith the Lord," would dispel their errors, as the mist is dispelled by the glories of the rising sun.

As Protestants, the Bible, and the Bible alone, is the foundation of our faith; but by many "the Fathers" are quoted as authority. They do not come as humble learners in the school of Christ, saying, "Lord, what I know not, teach me. 'Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.'"

Says the wise man: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Men may close their eyes to the plainest truths in the word of God, they may trample his law under their feet; but the law, instituted in the beginning, proclaimed from Sinai, and engraven on tables of stone, will judge them in the last day. Basel, Switzerland.

August 12, 1886

The Teacher's Responsibility

In an age like ours, in which iniquity abounds, and God's character and his law are alike regarded with indifference, and even contempt, special pains should be taken to teach the youth to study and to reverence and obey the divine will as revealed to man. Through the medium of the press, knowledge of every kind is placed within the reach of all; and yet how large a proportion in every community are depraved in morals, and superficial in mental attainments. This is because the words of God to men, which should receive our first attention, are neglected for the utterances of human wisdom. The fear of the Lord is fading from the minds of the youth because of their neglect of Bible study. If all, both old and young, would become Bible readers and students, we should see a different state of things.

In our schools and colleges, moral and religious influences should not be put in the background. The study of the sciences, taken alone, cannot give students the discipline they need. A broader foundation must be laid. The student must receive such discipline as will afford the fullest and noblest development of character. An education is needed that will demand from teachers and principal such thought and effort as mere instruction in the sciences does not require.

The young should every day be impressed with a sense of their obligation to God. His law is continually violated, even by the children of religious parents. As a general thing the youth have but very little moral strength, because their education in this direction has been neglected; and a knowledge of the character of God, and of our obligations to him should not be regarded as of minor importance.

Morality and religion should receive special attention in our educational institutions; for the religion of the Bible is the only safeguard of the young. This is the education that is so much needed at the present time.

If morality and religion are to live in a school, it must be through a knowledge of God's word. As an educating power, the Bible is without a rival. This sacred word is the will of God revealed to men, and its study will ennoble every thought, feeling, and

aspiration. Here we learn what God requires of the creatures formed in his image. Here we learn how to improve the present life so as to secure the future, immortal life. Here we may hold communion with patriarchs and prophets, and listen to the voice of the Eternal as he speaks with men. Here we may behold the Majesty of the Heavens, as he humbles himself to become our substitute and surety, to cope single-handed 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. No other book can satisfy the questionings of the mind and the cravings of the heart.

A clear conception of what God is, and what he requires us to be, will give us humble views of self. He who studies the sacred word until he is imbued with its sacred spirit, will learn that human intellect is not omnipotent; that without the help that none but God can give, human strength and wisdom are but weakness and ignorance.

Connected with God, every teacher will exert an influence to lead his pupils to study God's word and to obey his law. He will direct their minds to the contemplation of eternal interests, opening before them vast fields of thought, grand and ennobling themes, which the most vigorous intellect may put forth all its powers to grasp, and yet feel that there is an infinity beyond. How important it is, then, that teachers be persons capable of exerting a right influence; that they be men and women of religious experience, daily receiving divine light to impart to their pupils.

The object of our institutions of learning is to educate and train young men and women for lives of usefulness. This can only be accomplished by ever keeping before them their high and holy calling, the exalted claims which God has upon them, and by properly cultivating the mind and talents to meet the high standard of God's word. We cannot over-estimate the importance of having a right class of educators. They should be men and women of irreproachable morals, who have stability of character, a clear conception of duty, and a depth of experience which will enable them to guide, counsel, and properly educate the youth under their care.

Everything connected with the work and influence of educators of youth is of importance. If they are lax in morals, if they are trifling in their deportment, if they are wanting in devotion, if they are not spiritual, the same want will be seen in the students under their care. If teachers bear the stamp of a pampered, petted life, if their parents

have neglected the work of properly bringing them up, and educating them to meet the great moral standard of God's law, to bow in obedience to its claims, they will not be inclined to see the necessity of strict discipline in our schools, of yielding obedience to the ruler themselves, and thus giving a worthy example to their students. Those who have never been taught to yield to discipline, to be subordinate to authority, who have been left to their own head, their own master, will not be the ones to wisely discipline others, to preserve order in the school-room, and require obedience to the laws of the school. If this work is left to them, any amount of disorder and irregularity will be allowed to come in and demoralize the school.

Very much is at stake. Teachers should rule with all wisdom, observing invariably the laws of Christian politeness, courtesy, and kindness, at the same time possessing a firmness and dignity that will not be trampled upon. Educators should be men and women who value the souls of those placed under their charge; they are all to be treated as younger members of the Lord's family, as the purchase of the blood of Christ, his property. Teachers should not manifest preferences, nor have pets; but they should treat all with equity, without partiality. Life and immortality are brought to light in the gospel, and for every one who believes in Christ there is an immortal life in the future world. This fact gives dignity to every human being. All the instruction and every act of the teacher should be with the view of so educating the pupils under his charge as to not disappoint the expectations of Christ in these youth; for they are the purchase of his blood.

Teachers should ever bear in mind that in their lives, and characters, they should represent Christ's character, exemplifying his meekness, lowliness, and purity. They should always have one aim, one object in life,--the perfection of character according to the Divine Model, and the purpose to so teach, so educate, so labor, that they will, through the Mighty Helper, present every youth under their charge perfect in Christ Jesus. They may fail in some instances; for not all the youth will be subordinate. Some have so long chosen their own wills, that they will act without reference to God or man, they will not bring their lives within the line of law or duty. Self, undisciplined, rough, coarse and untamable, will seek for the mastery; and when the will is crossed they will lose self-control, and take the bit in their own mouth. Persuasion, counsel, prayers, entreaties are of no account with them. They are as unreasonable as the inebriate, and Satan controls their thoughts and their actions. The demon within them is enraged and they are as verily under his control as the person whose reason is dethroned by the

intoxicating glass.

When these persons come to a better state of mind, they will consider how much they have lost. In the place of bruising Satan under their feet, they have opened the door of their lips and permitted him to control their tongues; they have opened the door of their minds and permitted him to take possession of them; they opened the door of their hearts and permitted him to occupy the highest seat in the soul temple. After these inglorious defeats, they will ever carry the wounds and scars with them. Even if Christ has mercy upon them, and pardons their sins, the scars remain; they were conquered instead of conquering. In such conflicts with the enemy they are taken captives by Satan at his will.

Many times parents are justly censurable for the failures of their children. They have neglected their duty, and the teacher should not be expected to do the parent's work. The parents have the first and most favorable opportunity to control and train their children, when the spirit is teachable, and the mind and heart easily impressed. But sometimes they neglect these golden opportunities, and permit their children to follow their own will until they become hardened in an evil course; and then they send these undisciplined children to school, to receive the training which should have been given them at home. If the teachers succeed in reforming these wayward youth, they receive but little credit; but if the youth choose the society of the evil-disposed, and go on from bad to worse, the teachers are censured, and the school is denounced.

In our conversation one with another, our influence is constantly at work. Every one is dependent upon others, and there are obligations resting upon all,--something every day to receive, something to impart. By the human associations around us we are bound to one another, as by cords, in one great web of mutual obligations. These attachments are firm and strong and genuine. We may ignore or abuse them, but we cannot possibly break one of them. We may be disloyal to every one of them, but they exist all the same, and our accountability and responsibility are the same. Every teacher should impress these principles upon all who are under his influence. If the teacher is a Christian, he will reveal these principles in his every-day life. As one connected with God, as a representative of Jesus Christ, he will not require of the student that which he does not exemplify in his own life,--purity, impartiality, nobility of soul. He may then, as Christ's servant, teach all under his charge what is really a Christian life.

August 19, 1886

Have You Chosen Christ?

Just before his death, Joshua called upon the children of Israel to decide whether or not they would be loyal to the God of Heaven. Said he, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." The decision made by Israel that day is one that all are called upon to make; for there are still rival powers in the world. Let us consider the characters of these powers that are claiming the homage of men.

Christ, the loved commander of the hosts of Heaven, left the world of glory and the honor that he had with the Father, and came to this earth to live as a man among men, that he might rescue man from the pit of destruction into which he had fallen. He might have appeared with all the display of royalty, attended by ten thousand times ten thousand of his ministering angels; but he did not do this. He humbled himself, not only to take our nature, but to take upon him the form of a servant, to become a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He came to do good, to help the needy and the distressed; to heal the sick; to speak peace to the suffering; to deliver those whom Satan was afflicting; to bring redemption to all who would accept the Heaven-sent blessing. Such is the character of Him who says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

There is another who claims to be the prince of this world; and very few have any idea of his activity and subtlety. He seeks the destruction of the children of men; the ruin of souls is his delight and his only employment. But his step is noiseless, his movements stealthy, and his batteries masked. He has so concealed himself from view that many can hardly believe that he exists, much less can they be convinced of his amazing malignity, activity, and power. If he were to show himself openly in his true character, he would arouse the Christian's dormant energies, and send him to God in prayer.

Many have forgotten the past record of our old adversary; soon they will cease to regard him as an enemy at all, but will look upon him as a friend, one who is doing a good work. Under his specious, bewitching influence they will obey the worst impulses of the human heart, and yet believe that God is leading them. Could their eyes be opened to distinguish their captain, they would see that they are not serving God, but the

enemy of all righteousness. They would see that the independence of which they boast is one of the heaviest fetters that Satan can rivet on unbalanced minds.

When Christ was in the world, Satan was constantly working to turn men's minds from him; and he succeeded to a great degree, because the natural heart chooses to do evil rather than good. There was an unceasing battle between Satan and his angels, and Christ and his angels. Our Saviour himself encountered this wily foe in the wilderness of temptation. During the forty days and nights of Christ's long fast, Satan, concealing his real character, sought by every means which he could devise, to overcome the Saviour of the world. He even disguised himself as an angel of light, a Heaven-sent friend, and offered to show him an easier way to gain his object than the path of trial and suffering upon which he had entered. But Jesus repulsed the enemy, and forced him to depart, a conquered foe.

And now Satan comes with his temptations to the children of men, who are often ignorant of his devices, and here he has better success. One of his most successful devices is to keep men in ignorance of his devices; for they will not be on their guard against an enemy of whose existence they are ignorant. It is not very long since I was asked, "Do you believe in a personal devil?" "I do," was the reply. "Well," rejoined the questioner, "I do not believe that there is any such being; our evil thoughts and impulses are all the devil we know anything about!" "But," I asked, "who suggests these thoughts? Whence do they originate, if not from Satan?"

Christian friends, do not be deceived by the fast-spreading delusion that Satan has no existence. Just as surely as we have a personal Saviour, we have also a personal adversary, cruel and cunning, who ever watches our steps, and plots to lead us astray. Wherever the opinion is entertained that he does not exist, there he is most busy. When we least suspect his presence, he is gaining advantage over us. I feel alarmed as I see so many yielding to his power while they know it not. Did they but see their danger, they would flee to Christ, the sinner's refuge. They would resist the wiles of the adversary. They would pray much for wisdom, grace, and strength, and would seek most earnestly to overcome every evil trait of character. They would walk in the path that Jesus trod, and shun that which Satan urges them to choose.

The tempter often whispers that the Christian life is one of exaction, of rigorous duties; that it is hard to be on the watch continually, and there is no need of being so

particular. It was thus that he deceived and overthrew Eve in Eden, telling her that God's commands were arbitrary and unjust, given to prevent man from becoming free and exalted, like himself. His object is the same now that it was then. He desires to deceive and ruin us.

It is true that our Saviour represents his service as a yoke, and the Christian life as one of burden-bearing; yet contrasting these with the cruel power of Satan and the burdens imposed by sin, he exclaims, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." If we try to meet the responsibilities of the Christian life and to perform its duties without Jesus as a helper, the yoke is galling, and the burden intolerably heavy. But it is not necessary that we should do this. We should study the life of Christ, cherish his spirit, and copy his example; then we shall be like him, and his peace will rule in our hearts. And the more we become like him, the more clearly shall we discern the temptations of Satan, and the more successfully resist his power.

Jesus invites us: "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." True happiness is to be found, not in self-indulgence and self-pleasing, but in learning of Christ, taking his yoke, and bearing his burden. Those who trust to their own wisdom and follow their own ways, go complaining at every step, because the burden which selfishness imposes upon them is so heavy and its yoke so galling. Selfishness cannot exist in a heart where Christ dwells; if cherished, it will crowd out everything else. It will lead persons to follow inclination rather than duty, to make self the subject of thought, and to gratify and indulge themselves, instead of seeking to be a blessing to others. Their wants, their pleasures, must come before everything else. In all this they exemplify the spirit of Satan. By their words and deeds they represent his character, instead of the character of Christ.

All this might be changed; for the grace of Christ is sufficient, if they would come to him. If they would lay off their self-imposed burden, renounce their allegiance to Satan, and take the burden which Jesus gives them, and let his yoke bind them to him in willing service, hope and joy would spring up in their hearts.

Jesus loves the purchase of his blood, and he longs to see them possess the peace which he alone can impart. He bids them learn of him meekness and lowliness of heart. This precious grace is rarely seen at the present day, even in those who profess to be

Christians. Their own ways seem right in their eyes. In accepting the name of Christ, they do not accept his character, or submit to wear his yoke; therefore they know nothing of the joy and peace to be found in his service.

If we have become the disciples of Christ, we shall be learning of him--every day learning how to overcome some unlovely trait of character, every day copying his example, and coming a little nearer the pattern. If we are ever to inherit those mansions that he has gone to prepare for us, we must here be forming characters in accordance with our high destiny,--characters that will not mar the bliss of Heaven.

We now have the privilege of deciding whether we will be numbered with the servants of Christ or the servants of Satan; and every day we show by our conduct whose service we have chosen. If we are wise, we shall decide as did Joshua: "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord."

August 26, 1886

Right Methods in Education

There is at the present time an unparalleled interest in the subject of education. The wide diffusion of knowledge through the agency of the press, placing the means of self-culture within the reach of all, has awakened a general desire for mental improvement. But while we gratefully acknowledge our increased educational facilities, we should not ignore the defects in our present school systems. In many cases, physical as well as moral training has been neglected in the too eager desire to secure intellectual culture; and the youth have left school with morals debased and physical powers enfeebled, with no knowledge of practical life, and little strength to perform its duties.

As these evils have come under my observation, the inquiry has arisen, Must our sons and daughters become moral and physical weaklings, in order to have the advantages afforded by an education in our schools? This should not be; and it need not be if teachers and students will but be true to the laws of nature, which are also the laws of God. A right education will make the youth strong, well-balanced men and women, by developing and calling into active exercise all the powers of mind and body. It will make them a blessing to the world; for it will enable them to attain a true and noble manhood and womanhood.

Many times students are so anxious to complete their education that they are not thorough in anything that they undertake. They do not understand the true object of education, and so fail to take such a course as to secure this object. They apply themselves to the study of mathematics or the languages, while they neglect a study far more essential to happiness and success in life. Many who can explore the depths of the earth with the geologist, or traverse the heavens with the astronomer, take not the slightest interest in their own bodies. Others can correctly describe every organ of the body, and tell how many bones there are in the human frame, and yet they are as ignorant of the laws of health, and the cure of disease, as though life were controlled by blind fate, instead of definite and unvarying law.

Sound health lies at the very foundation of the student's success. Without it, he can never see the fruition of his ambitions and his hopes. Hence a knowledge of the

laws by which health is secured and preserved is of preeminent importance. The human body may be compared to nicely adjusted machinery, which needs care to keep it in running order. One part should not be subjected to constant wear and pressure, while another part is rusting from inaction. While the mind is taxed, the muscles also should have their proportion of exercise. Every young person should learn how to regulate his dietetic habits,--what to eat, when to eat, and how to eat. He should also learn how many hours may be spent in study, and how much time should be given to physical exercise.

It is a duty which every student owes to himself, to society, and to God, to properly regulate his habits of eating, sleeping, study, and exercise; but there are few who have the moral courage and the self-control to act from principle. The student who studies hard, sleeps and exercises little, and eats irregularly of an improper or inferior quality of food, is obtaining mental discipline at the expense of health and morals, of spirituality, and, it may be, of life itself.

Young persons are naturally active, and if they find no legitimate scope for their pent-up energies after the confinement of the schoolroom, they become restless and impatient of control; they are thus led to engage in the rude, unmanly sports that disgrace so many schools and colleges, and even to plunge into scenes of dissipation. And many who leave their homes innocent, are corrupted by their associations at school. Much could be done to obviate these evils, if every institution of learning would make provision for manual labor on the part of the students,--for actual practice in agriculture and the mechanic arts. Competent teachers should be provided to instruct the youth in various industrial pursuits, as well as in their studies in the school room. While a part of each day is devoted to mental improvement and physical labor, devotional exercises and the study of the Scriptures should not be overlooked.

Students trained in this manner would have habits of self-reliance, firmness, and perseverance, and would be prepared to engage successfully in the practical duties of life. They would have courage and determination to surmount obstacles, and moral stamina to resist evil influences.

If young persons can have but one set of faculties disciplined, which is most important, the study of the sciences, with the disadvantages to health and morals under which such knowledge is usually obtained, or a thorough training in practical duties,

with sound morals and good physical development? In most cases both may be secured if parents will take a little pains; but if both cannot be had, we would unhesitatingly decide in favor of the latter.

Where useful labor is combined with study, there is no need of gymnastic exercises; and much more benefit is derived from work performed in the open air than from indoor exercise. The farmer and the mechanic each have physical exercise; yet the farmer is much the healthier of the two, for nothing short of the invigorating air and sunshine will fully meet the wants of the system. The farmer finds in his labor all the movements that were ever practiced in the gymnasium. And his movement room is the open fields; the canopy of heaven is its roof, and the solid earth its floor. A farmer who is temperate in all his habits usually enjoys good health. His work is pleasant; and his vigorous exercise causes full, deep, and strong inspirations and exhalations, which expand the lungs and purify the blood, sending the warm current of life bounding through arteries and veins.

In what contrast to the habits of the active farmer are those of the student who neglects physical exercise. The student sits day after day in a close room, bending over his desk or table, his chest contracted, his lungs crowded. His brain is taxed to the utmost, while his body is inactive. He cannot take full, deep inspirations; his blood moves sluggishly; his feet are cold, his head hot. How can such a person have health? It is not hard study that is destroying the health of students, so much as it is their disregard of nature's laws. Let them take regular exercise that will cause them to breathe deep and full, and they will soon feel that they have a new hold on life.

Young ladies, too, should be taught how to work. Experienced teachers should be employed to instruct them in the mysteries of the kitchen. A knowledge of domestic duties is beyond price to every woman. There are families without number whose happiness is wrecked by the inefficiency of the wife and mother. It is not so important that girls learn painting, fancy work, music, or even the more solid branches of study, as it is that they learn to cut, make, and mend their own clothing, and how to prepare palatable and wholesome food. That was a wise father, who, when asked what he intended to do with his daughters, replied, "I intend to apprentice them to their excellent mother, that they may learn the art of improving time, and be fitted to become wives and mothers, heads of families, and useful members of society."

Every young woman should be so educated that if called to fill the position of wife and mother, she may preside as a queen in her own domain. She should be fully competent to guide and instruct her children, and to direct her household affairs. It is her duty to understand the mechanism of the human body and the principles of hygiene, the matters of diet and dress, labor and recreation, and countless other things that intimately concern the well-being of her household. Many ladies, accounted well-educated, having graduated with honors at some institution of learning, are shamefully ignorant of the practical duties of life. They are destitute of the qualifications necessary for the proper regulation of the family, and hence essential to its happiness and well-being. They may talk of woman's rights and her elevated sphere; yet they themselves fall far below the true sphere of woman.

Ignorance of useful employment is contrary to the design of God in the creation of man, and is by no means an essential characteristic of the true gentleman or lady. Idleness is sin, and ignorance of common duties is the result of folly,--a folly which the after-life will give ample occasion to bitterly regret.

"Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," will be the rule of life with students who desire to serve and honor God. Such students will preserve their integrity in the face of temptation; they will come from school with well-developed intellects, and with health of body and soul, and the world will be the better for their influence and labors.

September 2, 1886

The Love of Gain

Paul writes to the Philippians: "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." He admonishes his Hebrew brethren: "Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." To the Corinthians he writes: "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." These exhortations are needed; for naturally "all seek their own and not the things which are Jesus Christ's" or their neighbors'.

In the end it does not profit any one to be selfish; for God marks all such acts, and he will render to every man according to his works. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly."

Our mission in this world is to live for the good of others. And it is little things which test the character. It is the unpretending acts of daily self-denial, performed heartily and cheerfully, that God smiles upon. We should cherish love and forbearance, and should be a blessing to others by our forgetfulness of self and our care for their welfare.

Hospitality should be practiced. We should entertain those who need our care, and the benefit of our society and our homes, even though it be at some inconvenience. Some one must bear these necessary burdens; but many close their eyes to the good which they have opportunity to do for others, and by their neglect they lose the blessing which they might obtain, and those who have willing hearts, and who cheerfully make the cases of the needy their own, are burdened. The Lord has work enough to employ all his followers. All can show forth his glory if they will, but the majority refuse to make the necessary sacrifice. They profess faith, but have not works; and their faith is dead, being alone. They shun responsibilities and burdens, and will be rewarded as their works have been.

The work of the Lord is a great work, and wise men are needed to engage in it. God calls for earnest, unselfish, disinterested laborers, who will keep up the various

branches of the work. Sacrifice, self-denial, toil, and disinterested benevolence characterized the life of Christ, who is our example in all things. He laid aside his glory, his high command, his honor, and his riches, and humbled himself to our necessities. The work and character of a true laborer will be in accordance with the life of Christ. We cannot equal the example, but we should copy it. Love for souls for whom our Lord made this great sacrifice should stimulate his people to self-denying effort for their salvation. When this spirit actuates ministers and people, their labors will be fruitful; for the power of God will be seen upon them in the gracious influences of his Holy Spirit.

God would have his people arouse, and summon strength and courage to surmount obstacles. He would have them, if need be, labor, as did the apostle Paul, in weariness, in painfulness, in watching, forgetting infirmities in the deep interest felt in souls for whom Christ died. Many could do a good work in his cause if they were consecrated, having no selfish interests of their own to serve.

All are required to have an unselfish interest in the work of God, to labor for its advancement, and to give of their means for its support. Anciently the covetousness of some led them to make stinted offerings, and to withhold that which the Lord required. This was recorded against them in Heaven, and they were cursed in their harvests and their flocks just in proportion as they had withheld from the cause of God. Some were visited with affliction in their families. God would not accept a stinted offering nor one that was lame. It must be without blemish, the best of their flocks, and the best fruits of their fields. And it must be a free-will offering, if they would have the blessing of the Lord rest upon their families and their possessions.

Hearts will be tested and proved by the calls for means. This is a constant, living test, and one that it will be hard for the naturally selfish and covetous to bear. It is a test that enables each one to understand his own heart, to see whether the love of the truth or the love of the world predominates.

When the young man came to Jesus, and asked him what he should do to gain eternal life, Jesus told him to keep the commandments. The young man declared that he had done this from his youth, and Jesus said to 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." The result was, that the young man went away sorrowful; "for he had great possessions." There are many like this

young man. They desire eternal life; but the true spirit of sacrifice, which alone is acceptable to God, they do not possess. They love the world better than they love the truth. They are not being fitted up and made ready for the kingdom of God; and because of their covetousness, the prospering hand of God will not be with them to bless their undertakings.

God is acquainted with every heart. Every selfish motive is known to him; and he suffers circumstances to arise to try the hearts of his professed people, to prove them, and develop character. The lives of the professed people of God should testify that they are sincere. Unless their faith is shown by their works, it is dead; and nothing but a living faith will save them in the great day of final accounts.

It is time for those who have large possessions to begin to work fast. They should not only lay by them in store as God is now prospering them, but as he has prospered them. In the days of the apostles, arrangements were made that all should share equally in the burdens of the church, according to their several abilities. They did not think it consistent that some should be eased and others burdened.

Those who, like Judas, have set their hearts on their earthly treasure, will complain as he did when calls are made for the cause of God. His heart coveted the costly ointment poured upon Jesus, and he sought to hide his selfishness under the disguise of a pious, conscientious regard for the poor. "Why," he asked, "was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?" He wished that he had the ointment in his possession; it would not thus be lavished upon the Saviour. He would sell it for money, and apply it to his own use.

As Judas brought up the poor as an excuse, so professed Christians whose hearts are covetous will seek to hide their selfishness under a pretended conscientiousness. They quote: "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them." And they urge that these texts teach that they must be secret in their works of charity. They seem to have a conscientious desire to follow the Bible plan exactly, just as they understand it; but they entirely ignore the plain texts that enjoin liberal giving. The left hand does not know what the right hand does; for the right hand does nothing worthy of the notice of the left hand.

These persons do very little excusing themselves because they do not know how

to give. But Jesus explained the matter so that there need be no misapprehension. "When thou doest thine alms," he says, "do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do, in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward." They gave to be regarded noble and generous by men. They received the praise they sought, and this was all the reward they would have. This lesson was designed to rebuke those who wished to receive glory of men. They gave large sums with this object in view, and the means given was often obtained by oppressing the hireling in his wages, and grinding the face of the poor.

Scripture testimony will harmonize when it is rightly understood. And our Saviour says: "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." "By their fruits ye shall know them." The good works of the children of God are the most effectual preaching that the unbeliever has. He thinks that there must be a strong motive to actuate the Christian to deny self, and use his means to benefit his fellowmen, and advance the cause of God. It is unlike the spirit of the world. Such fruits testify to the genuineness of Christianity.

"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."

September 9, 1886

Woman in the Home

The principle inculcated by the injunction, "Be ye kindly affectioned one to another," lies at the very foundation of domestic happiness. Christian courtesy should reign in every household. It is cheap, but it has power to soften natures which would grow hard and rough without it. The cultivation of a uniform courtesy, a willingness to do by others as we would like them to do by us, would banish half the ills of life. The wife and mother may bind the hearts of her husband and children to her own by the strong chords of love, if in her intercourse with them she will manifest unvarying love in gentle words and courteous deportment.

Marked diversities of disposition and character frequently exist in the same family; for it is in the order of God that persons of varied temperament should associate together. When this is the case, each member of the household should sacredly regard the feelings, and respect the rights of the others. By this means mutual consideration and forbearance will be cultivated, prejudices will be softened, and rough points of character smoothed. Harmony may be secured, and the blending of the varied temperaments may be a benefit to each. Christian courtesy is the golden clasp uniting the members of the family in bonds of love that become closer and stronger every day.

In many cases homes are made unhappy by the useless repining of the wife and mother, who turns with distaste from the simple, homely tasks of her domestic life. She looks upon her cares and duties as hardships, and the ministrations which might be made pleasant and interesting become the merest drudgery.

Many a woman goes through the routine of her daily duties with fidelity and exactness, while she is all the time comparing her lot with that of others whom she considers more favored, and is cherishing unsanctified longings for an easier position, where she will be free from the petty cares and exactions that vex her spirit. She little dreams that in that widely different sphere to which she aspires, trials fully as vexatious, though perhaps of a different nature, would certainly beset her. And while she is fruitlessly yearning for a different life, she is, by her sinful discontent, casting from her the blessings which a kind Providence has already granted.

Others become so occupied with their household cares that they forget the little courtesies which make life pleasant to their husbands and children. While their time and energies are absorbed in the preparation of something to eat or to wear, their husbands and sons come in and go out as strangers. And very many, finding nothing attractive at home, perhaps being greeted with continual scolding and murmuring, seek comfort and amusement in the dram-shop, or in other forbidden places.

The true wife and mother will pursue an entirely different course. She will perform her duties with dignity and cheerfulness, not considering it degrading to do with her own hands whatever it is necessary to do in a well-ordered household.

In order to be a good wife, it is not necessary that woman's nature should be utterly merged in that of her husband. Every individual has a life distinct from all others, an experience differing essentially from theirs. It is not the design of our Creator that our individuality should be lost in another's; he would have us possess our own characters, softened and sanctified by his sweet grace. He would hear our words fresh from our own hearts. He would have our yearning desires and earnest cries ascend to him marked by our own individuality. All do not have the same exercises of mind, and God calls for no second-hand experience. Our compassionate Redeemer reaches his helping hand to us just where we are.

If woman looks to God for strength and comfort, and in his fear seeks to perform her daily duties, she will win the respect and confidence of her husband, and see her children coming to maturity honorable men and women, having moral stamina to do right. But mothers who neglect present opportunities, and let their duties and burdens fall upon others, will find that their responsibility remains the same, and they will reap in bitterness what they have sown in carelessness and neglect. There is no chance work in this life; the harvest will be determined by the character of the seed sown.

Many who do well under favorable circumstances seem to undergo a transformation of character when trials and adversity come; they deteriorate in proportion to their troubles. God never designed that we should thus be the sport of circumstances. We are not responsible for circumstances over which we have no control, and it is useless to deny that these often affect our life-work; but we sin when we permit circumstances to subvert principle, when we are unfaithful to our high trust,

and neglect known duty.

The first and most urgent duty which the mother owes to her Creator is to train for him the children that he has given her. Infant children are a mirror for the mother in which she may see reflected her own habits and deportment. How careful, then, should be her language and behavior in the presence of these little learners. Whatever traits of character she wishes to see developed in them, she must cultivate in herself.

When the mother has gained the confidence of her children, and taught them to love and obey her, she has given them the first lesson in the Christian life. They must love and trust and obey their Saviour, as they love and trust and obey their parents. The love which in faithful care and right training the parent manifests for the child, faintly mirrors the love of Jesus for his faithful people.

Mothers, awake to the fact that your influence and example are affecting the character and destiny of your children; and in view of your responsibility, develop a well-balanced mind, and a pure character, reflecting only the true, the good, and the beautiful. Your compassionate Redeemer is watching you with love and sympathy, ready to hear your prayers, and to render you the assistance which you need. He knows the burdens of every mother's heart, and is her best friend in every emergency. His everlasting arms support the God-fearing, faithful mother. When upon earth, he had a mother that struggled with poverty, having many anxious cares and perplexities, and he sympathizes with every Christian mother in her cares and anxieties. That Saviour who took a long journey for the purpose of relieving the anxious heart of a woman whose daughter was possessed by an evil spirit, will hear the mother's prayers, and will bless her children.

He who gave back to the widow her only son as he was carried to the burial, is touched today by the woe of the bereaved mother. He who wept tears of sympathy at the grave of Lazarus, and gave back to Martha and Mary their buried brother; who pardoned Mary Magdalene; who remembered his mother when he was hanging in agony upon the cross; who appeared to the weeping women, and made them his messengers to spread the first glad tidings of a risen Saviour,--he is woman's best friend today, and is ready to aid her in all the relations of life.

Our Saviour, who understands our heart-struggles, and knows the weakness of

our natures, pities our infirmities, forgives our errors, and bestows upon us the graces which we earnestly desire. Joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, faith, and charity are the elements of the Christian character. These precious graces are the fruit of the Spirit, and the Christian's crown and shield. Where these graces reign in the home, the sons are "as plants grown up in their youth," and the daughters "as corner-stones polished after the similitude of a palace." These heavenly attainments are not dependent upon circumstances, nor the will or imperfect judgment of man. Nothing can give more perfect contentment and satisfaction than the cultivation of a Christian character; the most exalted aspirations can aim at nothing higher.

September 16, 1886

Women as Christian Laborers

He who died to redeem man from death, loves with a divine love; and he says to his followers: "This is my commandment that ye love one another as I have loved you." Christ showed his love for the fallen race by his actions. The true child of God will be Christlike; and as he grows in the knowledge of the truth, and is sanctified through the truth, he will be more and more like Christ, and more desirous to save souls, the purchase of his blood.

Some can do more than others; but all can do something. Women should not feel that they are excused because of their domestic cares. They should become intelligent as to how they can work most successfully and methodically in bringing souls to Christ. If all would realize the importance 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, hundreds would be engaged as active workers who have hitherto been dull and uninterested, accomplishing nothing, or at most but very little.

In many cases the rubbish of the world has clogged the channels of the soul. Selfishness controls the mind and warps 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 to 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 beautiful 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 make 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.

Christian women are called for. There is a wide field in which they may do good service for the Master. There are noble women who have had moral courage to decide in favor of the truth from the weight of evidence. They have tact, perception, and good ability, and could make successful Christian workers. There is work neglected or done imperfectly that could be thoroughly accomplished through the help that they are able to give. They could reach a class that ministers cannot reach. There are offices in the church that they could fill acceptably, and many branches of the church work that they could attend to if properly instructed.

Women can do good work in the missionary field, by writing to friends, and learning their true feelings in relation to the cause of God. Very valuable items are brought to light through this means. The workers 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 devoted to the cause of God, and used to bring the light of truth to those who are in the darkness of error. The souls saved through their efforts will be more precious to them than costly and fashionable dress. The white robes and jeweled crown given them by Christ as the 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. When the love of God and his truth is an abiding principle, they will let nothing deter them from duty, or discourage them in their work. They will fear God, and will not be diverted from their labors in his cause by the temptation of lucrative situations and attractive prospects. They will preserve their integrity at any cost to themselves. These are the ones who will

correctly represent the religion of Christ, whose words will be fitly spoken, like apples of gold in pictures of silver. Such persons can in many ways do a precious work for God. He calls upon them to go out into the harvest field, and help gather in the sheaves.

Intelligent Christian women may use their talents to the very highest account. They can show by their life of self-denial, and by their willingness to work to the best of their ability, that they believe the truth, and are being sanctified through it. Many need a work of this kind to develop the powers they possess. Wives and mothers should in no case neglect their husbands and their children; but they can do much without neglecting home duties, and all have not these responsibilities.

Who can have so deep a love for the souls of men and women for whom Christ died, as those who are partakers of his grace? Who can better represent the religion of Christ than Christian women, women who are earnestly laboring to bring souls to the light of truth? Who else is so well adapted to the work of the Sabbath-school? The true mother is the true teacher of children. If with a heart imbued with the love of Christ, she teaches the children of her class, praying with them and for them, she may see souls converted, and gathered into the fold of Christ. I do not recommend that woman should seek to become a voter or office-holder; but as a missionary, teaching the truth by epistolary correspondence, distributing reading matter, conversing with families and praying with the mother and children, she may do much, and be a blessing.

The Lord of the vineyard is saying to many women who are now doing nothing, "Why stand ye here all the day idle?" They may be instruments of righteousness, rendering holy service. It was Mary who first preached a risen Jesus; and the refining, softening influence of Christian women is needed in the great work of preaching the truth now. If there were twenty women where now there is one who would make the saving of souls their cherished work, we should see many more converted to the truth. Zealous and continued diligence in the cause of God would be wholly successful, and would astonish them with its results. The work must be accomplished through patience and perseverance, and in this is manifested the real devotion to God. He calls for deeds, and not words only.

The work of God is worthy of our best efforts. In fulfillment of the divine plan, the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost. He taught the erring and sinful ones whom he came to save, and wrestled in earnest prayer to his Father in their

behalf; and we should engage in the same work. If it was not beneath the dignity of the Son of God, the Creator of worlds, should it be considered too humiliating or too self-sacrificing for his followers?--No, indeed. However aspiring we may be, there is no calling that is higher, holier, and more ennobling than to be a co-laborer with the Son of God.

Often we are so 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 are needed who are not self-important, but gentle in manners and lowly of heart, who will work with the meekness of Christ wherever they can find anything to do for the salvation of souls. All who have been made partakers of the heavenly benefits, should be earnest and anxious that others, who do not have the privileges which they have enjoyed, should have the evidences of the truth presented before them. And they will not merely desire that others should have this benefit, but will see that they do have it, and will do their part toward the accomplishment of this object.

Those who become co-laborers with God will increase in moral and spiritual power, while those who devote their time and energies to serving themselves will dwarf, and wither, and die. Christian women, the youth, the middle-aged, and those of advanced years, may have a part in the work of God for this time; and in engaging in this work 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, and will realize the blessedness of the service. And soon the time will come when "they that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

October 28, 1886

Talents a Trust from God

We are indebted to God for all the powers of mind that we possess. To each of us he has intrusted talents, and for their proper use he holds us responsible. It is his will that we so educate ourselves as to be able to use these talents in a manner to accomplish the greatest good in the world and to reflect glory to the Giver; and our faculties may be so cultivated, so discreetly directed and controlled, as to accomplish this object.

We are not all constituted alike. We have varied minds; some are strong upon certain points, and very weak upon others. These deficiencies, which are often so very evident, need not and should not exist. If those who have them would take pains to strengthen the weak points in their character by cultivation and exercise, they would soon find these inequalities disappearing. And when all the faculties are in harmonious exercise, the intellect will be clear and strong and the judgment sound.

It is duty to so educate the mind as to bring out all its energies and develop every faculty. If certain faculties are used to the neglect of others, the design of God is not fully carried out in us; for in a great measure our faculties are mutually dependent, each having a bearing upon all the rest. One set of faculties cannot be effectually used while the others are weak and inactive. If all the attention is given to those faculties that are already strong, while the others are permitted to lie dormant, the development will be strong in one direction, and there will be extremes in the character, because the mental balance has not been preserved. And many minds are dwarfed because all their powers have not been cultivated.

It is agreeable, but not most profitable, to exercise those faculties that are naturally the strongest, to the neglect of those that are weak, and need to be strengthened. We are dependent upon God for the preservation of our faculties, and we have no right to neglect any of the powers that he has given us. There are monomaniacs all over the country. It is frequently the case that many are sane upon every subject but one. Their minds are unbalanced because one organ was specially exercised, while the others were permitted to lie dormant. The one that was in constant use became worn and diseased, and the others were weakened through inaction. God is not glorified when

such a course is pursued, and his creatures become wrecked through an injudicious use of the powers that he has given them.

Many are not doing the greatest amount of good of which they are capable, because they exercise their minds in one direction, and neglect to give careful attention to those things for which they think they are not adapted. Faculties that are weak are thus allowed to remain so, because the work that would call them into exercise, and give them strength, is not pleasant. And yet the power to concentrate the mind upon one subject to the exclusion of all others, is well in a degree, if it is not carried so far that the mind cannot act healthfully.

Ministers should be guarded, lest they concentrate their minds and energies upon one subject, to the exclusion of others that may be of equal importance. They are in danger of narrowing down the work of God, and becoming one-idea men. Many times all the strength of their being is concentrated on the subject to which the attention is called for the time, and every other consideration is lost sight of. This one favorite theme is the burden of their thoughts and the subject of their conversation. All the evidence which has a bearing upon that subject is eagerly seized upon and appropriated, and dwelt upon at so great length that minds are wearied in following them.

Those who put the whole strength of their mind into one subject, are greatly deficient on other points. The subject before them enchains their attention, and they are led on and on, and go deeper and deeper into the matter. They become interested and absorbed, and see new light and beauty as they advance. But there are few minds that can follow them, unless they have given the subject the same careful thought. There is danger of such men planting the seed of truth so deep that the tender, precious blade will never find the surface.

Much hard labor is often expended that is not called for, and that will never be appreciated. Time is lost in explaining points which are either self-evident or really unimportant, and which would be taken for granted without proof. But while time should not be spent on unnecessary and trifling arguments, the really vital points should be made as plain and forcible as language and proof can make them.

The most essential points of Bible truth may be made indistinct by giving attention to every minute particular. Some, in their writings, need to be constantly

guarded, lest they make blind points that are plain in themselves, by covering them up with many arguments which will not be of lively interest to the reader. If they linger tediously upon points, giving every particular which suggests itself to the mind, their labor will be nearly lost; for the interest of the reader will not be deep enough to lead him to pursue the subject to its close. Much ground may be covered; but the work upon which so much labor is expended is not calculated to do the greatest amount of good, because it fails to awaken a general interest.

In this age, when pleasing fables are drifting upon the surface and attracting the mind, truth presented in an easy style, backed up by a few strong proofs, is better and more effective than if its advocates were to search extensively, and bring forth an overwhelming array of evidence; for the simple propositions do not then stand so clear and distinct in many minds as before the objections and evidences were brought before them. There are some who take many things for granted, and assertions will go farther with them than long, labored arguments.

This is a busy world. Men and women who engage in the business of life have not time to meditate, nor even to read the word of God thoroughly enough to understand all its important truths. Long, labored arguments will interest but few; for the people read as they run. It is better to keep a reserve of arguments and proof than to pour out a depth of knowledge on a subject that is in itself clear and plain.

Christ's ministry lasted only three years; but a great work was done in that short period. In these days there is also a great work to be done in a short time; and while many are getting ready to do something, souls will perish for the want of light and knowledge.

If men who are engaged in presenting and defending the truth of the Bible, undertake to investigate the statements, and show the fallacy and inconsistency of men who dishonestly turn the truth of God into a lie, Satan will stir up opponents enough to keep their pens constantly employed, while other branches of the truth of God will be left to suffer.

Said Nehemiah, when his enemies sought to entice him from his post of duty: "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?" We, too, are doing a great work, and we cannot

come down. And we need more of the spirit of those men who were engaged in building the walls of Jerusalem. If Satan sees that he can keep men answering the objections of opponents, and thus keep their voices silent, and hinder them from doing the most important work for this time, he rejoices; for his object is accomplished.

The world needs laborers now. From every direction is heard the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us." Our success consists in reaching common minds. Plain, pointed arguments, standing out as mile-posts, will do more toward convincing people than will a large array of arguments which none but investigating minds will have interest to follow. And if the laborers are pure in heart and life, if they use to the glory of God the talents that he has committed to their keeping, they will have God on their side and heavenly angels to work with their efforts. Basel, Switzerland.

November 4, 1886

Daniel an Example of Faithfulness

When Darius set over the provinces of his kingdom a hundred and twenty princes, and over these, three presidents, to whom the princes were to give account, we read that "Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was found in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm." But evil angels, fearing the influence of this good man over the king and in the affairs of the kingdom, stirred up the presidents and princes to envy. These wicked men watched Daniel closely, that they might find some fault in him which they could report to the king; but they failed. "He was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him."

Then Satan sought to make Daniel's faithfulness to God the cause of his destruction. The presidents and princes came tumultuously together unto the king, and said, "All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors and the princes, the counselors and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions." The king's pride was flattered. He was ignorant of the mischief purposed against Daniel, and he granted their request. The decree was signed, and became one of the unalterable laws of the Medes and Persians.

These envious men did not believe that Daniel would be untrue to his God, or that he would falter in his firm adherence to principle; and they were not mistaken in their estimate of his character. Daniel knew the value of communion with God. With full knowledge of the king's decree, he still bowed in prayer three times a day, "his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem." He did not seek to conceal his act, although he knew full well the consequences of his fidelity to God. He saw the dangers that beset his path; but his steps faltered not. Before those who were plotting his ruin, he would not allow even the appearance that his connection with Heaven was severed.

In all cases where the king had a right to command, Daniel would obey. He was willing to obey so far as he could do so consistently with truth and righteousness; but kings and decrees could not make him swerve from his allegiance to the King of kings.

He knew that no man, not even his king, had a right to come between his conscience and his God, and interfere with the worship due to his Maker.

Daniel was true, noble, and generous. While he was anxious to be at peace with all men, he would not permit any power to turn him aside from the path of duty. He had an opportunity to testify in favor of the true God, and to present the reasons why he alone should receive worship, and the duty of rendering him praise and homage, and nobly did he improve it. Had he respected the king's decree in this instance, he would have dishonored God. He was surrounded by proud idolaters; but he was a faithful witness for the truth. His dauntless adherence to a right course of action, was as a bright light amid the moral darkness of that heathen court.

On account of his praying to God, Daniel was cast into the lion's den. Envious and wicked men thus far accomplished their purpose. But Daniel continued to pray, even among the lions. Did God forget his faithful servant, and suffer him to be destroyed? Oh, no; Jesus, the mighty Commander of the hosts of Heaven, sent his angels 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 the miraculous preservation of Daniel, and brought him out with honors; while those who had plotted his destruction were utterly destroyed, with their wives and children, in the terrible manner in which they had planned to destroy Daniel.

Through the moral courage of this one man who chose, even in the face of death, to take a right course rather than a politic one, Satan was defeated, and God honored. For the deliverance of Daniel from the power of the lions was a striking evidence that the Being whom he worshiped was the true and living God. And the king wrote unto "all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth:" "I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel; for he is the living God, and steadfast forever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end."

Daniel was sorely tried; but he overcame because he was of a humble and prayerful spirit. Although he was surrounded with distrust and suspicion, and his enemies laid a snare for his life, yet he maintained a serene and cheerful trust in God, never once deviating from principle. Although Daniel was a man of like passions with ourselves, the pen of inspiration presents him as a faultless character. His life is given us

as a bright example of what man may become, even in this life, if he will make God his strength, and wisely improve the privileges and opportunities within his reach.

Daniel was a moral and intellectual giant; yet he did not reach this pre-eminence all at once and without effort. He was continually seeking for greater knowledge, for higher attainments. Other young men had the same advantages, but they did not, like him, bend all their energies to seek wisdom,--the knowledge of God as revealed in his word and in his works. Daniel was but a youth when he was brought into a heathen court in service to the king of Babylon; and because of his extreme youth when he was exposed to all the temptations of an Eastern court, his noble resistance of wrong and his steadfast adherence to the right, throughout his long career, are the more admirable. His example should be a source of strength to the tried and tempted, even at the present day.

Daniel loved, feared, and obeyed God; yet he did not flee away from the world to avoid its corrupting influence. In the providence of God, he was to be in the world, yet not of the world. With all the temptations and fascinations of court life surrounding him, he stood in the integrity of his soul; for he made God his strength; and he was not forsaken of him in his hour of greatest need.

From the history of Daniel we may learn that a strict compliance with the requirements of God will prove a blessing, not only in the future, immortal life, but also in the present life. Through religious principles, men may triumph over the temptations of Satan and the devices of wicked men, even though it costs them a great sacrifice. What if Daniel had made a compromise with those heathen rulers, and had denied his God? What if, on first entering the court, he had yielded to the pressure of temptation, by eating and drinking as was customary among the Babylonians? That one wrong step would probably have led to others, until, his connection with Heaven being severed, he would have been borne away by the power of temptation. But while he clung to God with unwavering, prayerful trust, he could not be forsaken. The divine protection is pledged to those who thus seek it, and God cannot forget his word.

It was through prayer and adherence to right principles that Daniel was enabled to stand firm in the hour of trial and temptation. The prayer of faith is the great strength of the Christian, and will assuredly prevail against the devices of the hosts of darkness. Satan well knows how needful are meditation and prayer to keep Christ's followers aroused to understand his devices, and resist his temptations; so he tries to lead men to

believe that prayer is useless, and but a mere form. If he can divert the mind from these important exercises, so that the soul will not lean for help on the Mighty One, and obtain divine strength to resist his attacks, he knows full well that he has gained a decided advantage.

We are living in the most solemn period of this world's history, when the last conflict between truth and error is raging; and we need courage and firmness for the right, and a prayerful trust in God no less than Daniel did. The destiny of earth's teeming millions is about to be decided; and our own future well-being, and the salvation of other souls, depend upon the course which we pursue. If we possess the same unwavering integrity that characterized the prophet of old, God will be honored through our course, and souls will be saved to shine as stars in the crown of our rejoicing. Basel, Switzerland.

November 11, 1886

Courtesy a Christian Grace

As Christians we are commanded to be separate from the world; we are not to drink in its spirit or to follow its customs; but it is not necessary for us to become coarse and rough in our manners and expressions. The truth of God is designed to elevate the receiver, to refine his taste, and to sanctify his judgment. The character of the Christian should be holy, his manners comely, his words without guile. There should be a continual effort to imitate the society he hopes soon to join, that of angels who have never fallen by sin.

No man can be a Christian without having the Spirit of Christ; and if he has the Spirit of Christ, it will be manifested in kind words and a refined, courteous deportment. The religion of Jesus is designed to soften whatever is hard and rough in the temper, and to smooth off whatever is rugged or sharp in the manners. External change will testify to an internal change. The truth is the sanctifier, the refiner. Received into the heart, it works with hidden power, transforming the character. But those who profess to be followers of Christ, and are at the same time rough, unkind, and uncourteous in words and deportment, have not learned of Jesus. A blustering, overbearing, fault-finding man is not a Christian; for to be a Christian is to be Christ-like. It is no mark of a Christian to be continually jealous of one's dignity. All these manifestations show that men are still servants of the wicked one.

Very many who are seeking for happiness will be disappointed in their hopes, because they seek it amiss, and are indulging in sinful tempers and selfish feelings. By neglecting to discharge the little duties and observe the little courtesies of life, they violate the principles on which happiness depends. True happiness is not to be found in self-gratification, but in the path of duty. God desires man to be happy, and for this reason he gave him the precepts of his law, that in obeying these he might have joy at home and abroad. While he stands in his moral integrity, true to principle, and having the control of all his powers, he cannot be miserable. With its tendrils twined about God, the heart will be full of peace and joy, and the soul will flourish amid unbelief and depravity.

Kind words, pleasant looks, a cheerful countenance, throw a charm around the Christian that makes his influence almost irresistible. It is the religion of Christ in the heart that causes the words to be gentle, and the demeanor winning, even to those in the humblest walks of life. In forgetfulness of self, in the light and peace and happiness he is constantly bestowing on others, is seen the true dignity of the man. This is a way to gain respect, and extend the sphere of usefulness, which costs but little; and the one who pursues this course will not complain that he does not receive the honor that is his due. But Bible rules must be written on the heart; Bible rules must be carried into the every-day life.

We are none of us what we may be, what God would have us be, and what his word requires us to be. And it is our unbelief that shuts us away from God; for we may at any time lift up our souls to him, and find grace and strength. When Christ shall come, our vile bodies are to be changed, and made like his glorious body; but the vile character will not be made holy then. The transformation of character must take place before his coming. Our natures must be pure and holy; we must have the mind of Christ, that he may behold with pleasure his image reflected upon our souls.

Enoch was a marked character, and many look upon his life as something far above what the generality of mortals can ever reach. But Enoch's life and character, which were so holy that he was translated to Heaven without seeing death, represent the lives and characters of all who will be translated when Christ comes. His life was what the life of every individual may be if he will live near to God. We should remember that Enoch was surrounded by unholy influences. The society around him was so depraved that God brought a flood of waters on the world to destroy its inhabitants for their corruption. Were Enoch upon the earth today, his heart would be in harmony with all of God's requirements; he would walk with God, although surrounded by influences the most wicked and debasing. The palm-tree well represents the life of a Christian. It stands upright amid the burning desert sands, and dies not; for it draws sustenance from springs beneath the surface.

Joseph preserved his integrity when surrounded by idolaters in Egypt, in the midst of sin and blasphemy and corrupting influences. When tempted to turn aside from the path of virtue, his answer was, "How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" Enoch, Joseph, and Daniel depended upon a strength that was infinite; and this is the only course of safety for Christians to pursue in our day.

The lives of these marked men were hid with Christ in God. They were loyal to God, pure amid depravity, devout and fervent when brought in contact with atheism and idolatry. Through divine grace they cultivated only such qualities as were favorable to the development of pure and holy characters.

Thus may it be with us. The spirit which Enoch, Joseph, and Daniel possessed, we may have; we may draw from the same source of strength, possess the same power of self-control, and the same graces may shine out in our lives. Said Christ: "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." By reflecting the light of Christ to all around us, we shall become the light of the world; but a selfish, fault-finding, uncourteous person cannot have this sacred influence.

Pleasant, kind, and well-bred Christians will have an influence for God and his truth; it cannot be otherwise. The light borrowed from Heaven will shed its brightening rays through them to the pathway of others, leading them to exclaim, "O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man whose strength is in thee." The words we speak, our daily deportment, are the fruit growing upon the tree. If the fruit is sour and unpalatable, the rootlets of that tree are not drawing nourishment from a pure source. If our characters are meek and lowly, if our affections are in harmony with our Saviour, we show that our life is hid with Christ in God, and we leave behind us a bright track. Our life will be in such marked contrast to that of unbelievers, that our associates will discern that we have been with Jesus and learned of him.

The Christian need not become a recluse; but while necessarily associating with the world, he will not be of the world. Christian politeness should be cultivated, and daily put in practice. That unkind word should be left unspoken; that selfish disregard of the happiness of others should give place to thoughtful sympathy. True courtesy, blended with truth and justice, will make the life not only useful, but beautiful and fragrant with love and good works. It is no evidence that the Christian has lost his religion, because he has a good report among them that are without. Virtue, honesty, kindness, and faithful integrity make noble characters; those who possess these characteristics will win esteem, even of unbelievers, and their influence in the church will be very precious. We are required to be right in important matters; but faithfulness in little things will fit us for higher positions of trust.

On the part of many, there is a great lack of true courtesy. Much is said of the improvements that have been made since the days of the patriarchs; but those living in that age could boast of a higher state of refinement, and of more true courtesy of manners, than are possessed by the people in this age of boasted enlightenment. Integrity, justice, and Christian kindness, blended, make a beautiful combination. Courtesy is one of the graces of the Spirit. It is an attribute of Heaven. The angels never fly into a passion, never are envious, selfish, and jealous. No harsh or unkind words escape their lips. And if we are to be the companions of angels, we too must be refined and courteous. And we have none too much time to change our wrong habits, reform our defective characters, and obtain a fitness for the society of those heavenly beings. All harshness and severity, coarseness and unkindness, must be overcome; and now is the time for us to do the work. We can have no second probation. But if we do not improve these hours of privilege, we would not improve a second probation, should it be granted to us.

A Christian will cultivate that charity that is not easily provoked, that suffereth long and is kind, that hopeth all things, endureth all things. If this grace be in you, if you are ruled by the Spirit of Christ, your words and actions will testify that your religion is genuine; for your life will be full of good fruits. The children of God never forget to do good and to communicate. Good works are spontaneous with them; for God has transformed their natures by his grace. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit."

November 18, 1886

The Value of Prayer

"The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers."

We are told that Elijah "was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly," and his prayer was answered. A royal decree was signed in the courts of Babylon, that if for thirty days any man asked a petition of any God or man, save of Darius the king, he should be cast into the lions' den; but Daniel, notwithstanding he knew of the decree, failed not to pray three times a day, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, as he had done before the decree was made; and the God whom he served continually, delivered him out of the power of the lions. These holy men knew the value of communion with God.

When Jesus was upon earth, and walked a man among the children of men, he prayed, and oh, how earnest were his prayers! How often he spent the whole night upon the damp, cold ground, in agonizing supplication! And yet he was the beloved and sinless Son of God. If Jesus felt the necessity of communion with his Father, and manifested so much earnestness in calling upon him, how much more should we, whom he has called to be heirs of salvation, who are subject to the fiery temptations of the wily foe, and dependent upon divine grace for strength to overcome, have our whole souls stirred to wrestle with God. The language of our souls should be, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." But many have allowed their hearts to become overcharged with the cares of this life, and God and his word have been neglected.

The subjects of Satan, although they hate and war with one another, are active and united in the one object of destroying souls. They are vigilant in improving every opportunity to advance their common interest, and war against the kingdom of Christ. But He who is the great Commander in Heaven and on earth, has limited their power.

Satan is ever ready to insinuate that prayer is a mere form, and avails us nothing. He cannot bear to have his powerful rival appealed to. At the sound of fervent prayer, the hosts of darkness tremble. Fearing that their captive may escape, they form a wall

around him, that Heaven's light may not reach his soul. But if in his distress and helplessness the sinner looks to Jesus, pleading the merits of his blood, our compassionate Redeemer listens to the earnest, persevering prayer of faith, and sends to his deliverance a re-enforcement of angels that excel in strength. And when these angels, all-powerful, clothed with the armory of Heaven, come to the help of the fainting, pursued soul, the angels of darkness fall back, well knowing that their battle is lost, and that one more soul is escaping from the power of their influence.

Prayer is the Christian's life. There is a remedy for the sin-sick soul, and that remedy is in Jesus. Precious Saviour! his grace is sufficient for the weakest, and the strongest must have his help or perish. A Christian has victory over his passions and besetments. I would not dishonor my Master so much as to admit that a careless, trifling, prayerless person is a Christian. It is the privilege of the Christian to enjoy the deep movings of the Spirit of God. A sweet, heavenly peace will pervade his mind. He will love to meditate upon God and Heaven, and to feast upon the glorious promises of the written word.

But how shall this victory over the world be obtained? Go to your closet, dear reader, and there plead with God: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Be in earnest; be sincere; Jacob-like, wrestle in prayer. Do not leave your closet until you feel strong in God. Remain until unutterable longings for salvation are awakened in your heart, and the sweet evidence is obtained of pardoned sin. Then when you leave your closet, watch; and so long as you watch and pray, the grace of God will appear in your life.

In no case neglect secret prayer; for it is the soul of religion. If you expect salvation, you must pray. Take time. Be not hurried and careless in your prayers. Intercede with God to work in you a thorough reformation, that the fruits of the Spirit may dwell in you, and that, by your godly life, you may shine as a light in the world. When you sincerely feel that without the help of God you perish, when you pant after him as the hart panteth after the water-brooks, then will the Lord strengthen you speedily, and you will have that peace that passeth understanding.

While you pray that you may not be led into temptation, remember that your work does not end with the prayer. You must then answer your own prayer as far as possible, by resisting temptation, and leave that which you cannot do for yourselves for

Jesus to do for you. We cannot be too guarded in our words and deportment, lest we invite the enemy to approach us with his temptations. With the word of God for our guide, and Jesus for our heavenly teacher, we need not be ignorant of the divine requirements or of Satan's devices. And it will be no unpleasant task to be obedient to the will of God, when we yield ourselves fully to be directed by his Spirit.

Pray in the family. Morning and evening obtain the victory at your family altar. Let not your daily labor keep you from this duty. Take time to pray. And as you pray, believe that God hears you, have faith mixed with your prayers. Let faith take hold of the blessing, and it is yours.

In the morning the Christian's first thoughts should be of God. Come before him with humility, with a heart full of tenderness, and with a sense of the temptations and dangers that surround yourself and your children. Morning and evening, by earnest prayer and persevering faith, make a hedge about your children. Patiently instruct them; kindly and untiringly teach them how to live so that they may please God.

Teach your children reverence for God and the hour of prayer. The Lord our God is holy, and his name is to be treated with great reverence. Angels are displeased and disgusted with the irreverent manner in which the name of God, the great Jehovah, is sometimes used in prayer. They mention that name with the greatest awe, even veiling their faces when they speak the name of God; the name of Christ also is sacred, and is spoken with the greatest reverence. And those who in their prayers use the name of God in a common and flippant manner, have no sense of the exalted character of God, of Christ, or of heavenly things.

Pray in faith. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Prevailing prayer is the prayer of living faith; it takes God at his word, and claims his promises. Feeling has nothing to do with faith. When faith brings the blessing to your heart, and you rejoice in the blessing, then it is no more faith, but feeling. How strange it is that men will put confidence in the word of their fellow-men, and yet find it so hard to exercise living faith in God! The promises are ample; why not accept them just as they read? "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

Every petition that is offered to God in faith, and with a true heart, will be

answered. Such prayer is never lost; but to claim that it will always be answered in the very way and for the particular thing that we desire, is presumption. God is too wise to err, and too good to withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly. Then do not fear to trust him even though you do not see the immediate answer to your prayers. Rely upon his sure promise, "Ask, and ye shall receive."

Fervent and effectual prayer will be regarded in Heaven. It is the privilege of Christians to obtain strength from God to hold every precious gift of his Spirit. The power of God has not decreased. His grace and his Spirit will be just as freely bestowed now as formerly. It is the church of God that 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, and must be revived in the hearts of God's people. There must be a claiming of the blessing of God. Living faith always bears upward to God and glory; unbelief, downward to darkness and death.

"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, fully, entirely. Jesus died to make a way of escape for us, that by prevailing prayer by his grace, we might overcome every temptation, every subtle snare of the adversary, and at last sit down with him in his kingdom. Basel, Switzerland.

November 25, 1886

The Sin of Covetousness

"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?" Luke 16:9-12.

The parable of the unjust steward was given to teach us a lesson in regard to our duty in temporal things. Every man is a steward of God. To each the Master has intrusted his means, and he says, "Occupy till I come." A time is coming when he will require his own with usury. He will say to each of his stewards, "Give an account of thy stewardship." But men often claim their means as their own. They seem to have no sense of the fact that the property they are using belongs to God, and that they must give him an account for the use they make of it.

Said the Saviour: "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations." By using our means to the glory of God here, we lay up a treasure in Heaven; and when earthly possessions are all gone, the faithful steward has Jesus and angels for his friends, to receive him home to everlasting habitations.

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." He that is faithful in his earthly possessions, which are least, making a judicious use of the means which God has intrusted to his care, will be faithful in every other respect. Every investment made in the cause of God will increase his love for it. He will not be the poorer in this world, and he will be "laying up in store" for himself "a good foundation against the time to come," that he "may lay hold on eternal life."

"He that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." If he will not give of his means to support the warfare against the moral darkness that is flooding the world, he

will be unfaithful in the things of God in every respect. He keeps his means from doing good in the cause of God, and often that which is committed to his trust is taken from him.

"If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" The Christian church, as a general rule, are disowning the claims of God upon them to give alms of the things which they possess; and the work of God can never advance as it should until the followers of Christ realize their duty in this respect. If they prove unfaithful in the management of their temporal affairs, God will never give them the true riches, the immortal inheritance.

"If ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?" Jesus has purchased redemption for us. It is ours; but we are placed here on probation to see if we will prove worthy of eternal life. Our heavenly Father tests us by trusting us with earthly possessions. If we use these freely to advance his cause and to benefit our fellow-men, we shall prove good stewards, and shall gain the approbation of our Lord. But we "cannot serve God and mammon;" for "if any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him."

The idea of stewardship should have a practical bearing upon all the people of God. The parable of the talents has not been fully understood, or it would bar out covetousness, which God calls idolatry. The talents do not represent merely the ability to preach and to instruct from the word of God. The parable also applies to the temporal means which God has intrusted to his people. Those who received the five and the two talents traded, and doubled that which was committed to their trust. The servant who received the one talent, went and hid it in the earth; and that is what many of God's professed people are doing now. They claim that they have a right to do what they please with their possessions, and souls are not saved through the use they make of their Lord's money. Practical benevolence would give spiritual life to thousands of nominal professors of religion who now mourn over their darkness. It would 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 sacrifice. Jesus left the royal courts of Heaven, and became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. All who share the salvation purchased for them at such an infinite sacrifice by the Son of

God, will follow the example of the True Pattern. Christ is the chief corner-stone, and we must build upon this foundation. Each must have a spirit of self-denial and self-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. The life of Christ upon earth was unselfish; it was marked with humiliation and sacrifice. 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?--No; self-denial is an essential principle of discipleship.

The people of God should act from principle. They should always have a suitable object in view, and should give, not to be seen of men, and to be praised for their liberality, but to glorify God and help their fellow-men. Sometimes the motive in giving is selfish. There are persons who make large donations to public enterprises or charities, while a poor brother may be suffering close by them, and they do nothing to relieve him. Little acts of kindness performed in secret for this needy brother would bind their hearts together, and would be noticed and rewarded in Heaven; for the true spirit of sacrifice is acceptable to God. "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."

When Jesus was upon earth, he rebuked those who gave to be seen of men. He said to his disciples: "When thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you. They have their reward." They received praise of men, and this was all the reward they would ever have. Their alms giving was done in a very public manner, and their generosity was proclaimed before the people. In this way they often gave large sums which had been extorted from the needy by oppressing the hireling in his wages and grinding the face of the poor. The case of the Pharisees is not unlike that of many at the present time, who suppose themselves in a state of spiritual prosperity, and flatter themselves that they are in favor with God, when he despises their selfishness.

The selfish, covetous heart will be tested. Every motive is known to God, and he suffers circumstances to arise that will develop character, and show them themselves. "By their fruits ye shall know them," says the Saviour. The good deeds and generous works of the children of God are the most effectual preaching that the unbeliever has. He thinks that the Christian must have strong motives to lead him to deny self, and use his possessions for the good of others.

The principle of worldlings is to get all they can of the perishable things of this life. With them selfish love of gain is the ruling principle, and they cannot understand disinterested benevolence. There are thousands who are passing their lives in indulgence, and whose hearts are filled with repining. They are the victims of selfishness and discontent. Unhappiness is stamped upon their countenances, and behind them is a desert, because their lives are not fruitful in good works. For the purest joy is not found in riches, nor where covetousness is always craving, but where contentment reigns, and where self-sacrificing love is the ruling principle.

The principle of the cross of Christ places all who believe under heavy obligations to deny self, to impart light to others, and to give of their means to extend the light. In proportion as the love of Christ fills our hearts and controls our lives, covetousness, selfishness, and love of ease, will be overcome, and it will be our pleasure to do the will of Him whose servants we claim to be. And our happiness will be proportionate to our unselfish works, prompted by divine love; for in the plan of salvation God has appointed the law of action and reaction, making the work of beneficence, in all its branches, twice blessed. Basel, Switzerland.

December 9, 1886

The Standard of Christian Excellence

"Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth; even in him; in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Ephesians 1:8-11.

Our heavenly Father presents before his finite creatures no impossibilities; he requires not at their hands that which they cannot perform. He has not set before his church a standard to which they cannot attain; yet he designs that they shall labor earnestly to reach the high standard set before them in the text. He would have them pray that they may be "filled with the fruits of righteousness," and then expect this blessing and receive it, and in all things grow up into Christ their living Head. This was the apostle's great desire, not with reference to the church at Ephesus only, but to all the churches that he had been instrumental in raising up.

It is because the individual members of the church do not cultivate personal piety, that they do not realize more of the help of God and of their own personal responsibility. There is a higher standard for us to meet. The world has too much of our thoughts, and the kingdom of Heaven too little. God has given us talents that he requires us to use for the upbuilding of his kingdom. Reader, will you look upon these talents as a sacred trust? Will you today inquire, "What use have I made of these entrusted talents, and what use am I now making of them? Have I given to temporal, earthly things my strength of purpose, my ability to plan and devise, my tact and skill, and brought to the Lord's work only a feeble, inefficient service? Shall the eternal be made secondary to the temporal? Will the Lord accept this at my hands?"

We often hear Christians express the desire that husband, or wife, or children, may join them in serving the Lord. This desire is right. It is the true missionary spirit,-- the spirit that should actuate all the followers of Christ. His first disciples felt thus when

they listened to the words of life from the lips of the divine Master. They were convinced that he was the Messiah, and they wanted their relatives and friends to acknowledge his claims.

But while we desire the conversion of our friends, are we doing all we can on our part? Are we faithful in our appointed work? On the contrary, do we not often come short of the duty required of us as co-laborers with Christ? Are we setting a right example in our families and before the world? Are we, like Abraham, commanding our children and our households after us, that they may keep the way of the Lord and do justice and judgment? Is Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith? and do we show forth in our character and our daily life, the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light? If we are doers of the word, and not hearers only, we shall be earnest, thorough, whole-hearted, and God will work with our efforts in behalf of our friends.

There is a work for each one to do; and none need err in that work; for the counsels of God in his word are broad and full. If we sincerely desire to make the name of God a praise in the earth, if we walk in the light that he permits to shine upon our pathway, we shall be children of the day, and not of the night. We shall know the will of God, and shall carry it out in all the transactions of our every-day life.

Many lack moral power, and know very little of the peace, and happiness, and joy of Heaven, because they do not live where Christ can be in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life. They claim to be children of God; but they are only a burden to the church, when God has given them the capacity to be great helps, and requires them to be co-laborers with Christ in the work of saving souls.

If those who are so wanting in spiritual life would see the force of the words of the text, and would realize their duty to heed and obey the lesson here given, there would be greater power in the church. If all the members would improve their talents to the best of their ability, their light would not be hidden under a bushel, but placed on a candlestick, where its clear, steady rays would shine forth to all around them.

We need greater earnestness in the cause of Christ. The solemn message of truth should be given with an intensity that would impress unbelievers that God is working with our efforts, that the Most High is our living source of strength. In this great work,

not one-third is accomplished that might be done, because a few willing ones take the burden, and the careless and ease-loving shirk all responsibility. This is not in the order of God, neither is it well-pleasing to him. He has not selected a few to become efficient laborers and bear all the burdens of the cause of God, to do all the praying and all the watching, all the winning and entreating of sinners, while the majority of professed Christians have nothing to do but to look on. He does not want the powers of the workers taxed to the utmost to counteract the influence of worldly-minded, halting, doubting ones, who bear no burdens and show no efficiency as workers.

Is this indifference to continue from year to year? Is Satan always to triumph, and Christ to be disappointed in the servants whom he has redeemed at an infinite price? We are looking forward to the time when the latter rain will be poured out, confidently hoping for a better day, when the church shall be endued with power from on high, and thus fitted to do more efficient work for God. But the latter rain will never refresh and invigorate indolent souls, that are not using the power God has already given them. Spiritual laziness will not bring us nearer to God. There must be energy and zeal as well as devotion and personal piety, woven into all our works.

Those who cherish this inexcusable indolence, this feeling that they have no burden of the work of God, are recorded in the books of Heaven as unfaithful servants. The "Well done, good and faithful servants," will never be spoken to them; it will be spoken to those only who have done well,--to those who have been faithful, earnest, unselfish workers in the Master's vineyard.

There is on the part of many a bustling, out-of-door piety, but little of that heart and home religion which gathers the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, and diffuses them to warm and gladden sorrowing hearts. The great need of such is a higher, purer, nobler life. A holy joy should reign in the soul, and then the daily life will be as a heavenly radiance to brighten the pathway of others.

If we love God with all the heart, we must love his children also. This love is of the Spirit of God. It is the heavenly adorning that gives true nobility and dignity to the soul, and assimilates our lives to that of the Master. No matter how many good qualities we may have, no matter how honorable and refined we may consider ourselves, if the soul is not baptized with the heavenly grace of love, we are deficient in true goodness, and unfit for Heaven, where all is love and unity.

When the heavenly principle of love fills the heart, it will flow out to others, not merely because favors are received of them, but because love is the principle of action, and modifies the character, governs the impulses, subdues enmity, and elevates and ennobles the affections. This love is not contracted so as to include only the home-circle, but is as broad as the world, and is in harmony with that of the angel-workers. This love cherished in the soul sweetens the entire life, and exerts a refining influence on all around. Possessing it, we cannot but be happy, let fortune smile or frown. God, in his providence, has willed that no one can secure happiness by living for himself alone. The joy of our Lord consisted in enduring toil and suffering for others; and we shall find true happiness in following his example, and living to do good to our fellow-men.

The mission of the church is to save souls. 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." God calls for talents of influence and of means; he calls for earnest, faithful toil. Shall we refuse to obey? Shall we not rather deny self that the wasting harvest be gathered?

In order to have our labors accepted, we must learn in the school of Christ; we must have practical godliness. When we have the saving power of truth in our own souls, we cannot forbear communicating to others the practical truths that have made our own hearts joyful in God.

"Being filled with the fruits of the Spirit," said the apostle. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another." Basel, Switzerland.

December 16, 1886

Cain and Abel Tested

"And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering; but unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? if thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted, and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door; and unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. And Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him." Genesis 4:3-8.

Cain and Abel, the sons of Adam, were unlike in character. Cain cherished feelings of rebellion and murmuring against God because of the curse pronounced upon the ground and upon the human race for Adam's sin; while Abel had a spirit of meekness and of submission to the authority of God.

These brothers were tested, as Adam had been tested before them, to see if they would be obedient to God's requirements. They had both been instructed in regard to the provision made for the salvation of man. Through the system of sacrificial offerings, God designed to impress upon the minds of men the offensive character of sin, and to make known to them its sure penalty, death. The offerings were to be a constant reminder that it was only through the promised Redeemer that man could come into the presence of God. Cain and Abel understood the system of offerings which they were required to carry out. They knew that in presenting these offerings they showed humble and reverential obedience to the will of God, and acknowledge faith in, and dependence upon, the Savior whom these offerings typified.

Cain and Abel erected their altars alike, and each brought an offering. Cain thought it unnecessary to be particular about fulfilling all the requirements of God; he therefore brought an offering without the shedding of blood. He brought of the fruits of the ground, and presented his offering before the Lord; but there was no token from Heaven to show that it was accepted. Abel entreated his brother to come into the

presence of God only in the divinely prescribed way. But his remonstrances made Cain all the more determined to carry out his own purpose. As the eldest, he felt above being advised by his brother, and despised his counsel.

Abel brought of the firstlings of the flock, the very best, as God had commanded him. In the slain lamb he sees by faith the Son of God, appointed to death because of the transgression of his Father's law. God has respect to Abel's offering. Fire flashes from heaven, and consumes the sacrifice of the penitent sinner.

Cain now has an opportunity to see and acknowledge his mistake. He may change his course of action, and testify his obedience by presenting an offering precisely in accordance with the divine specification; and He who is no respecter of persons will have respect to the offering of faith and obedience.

After the disrespect shown to his commands, God does not leave Cain to himself; but he condescends to reason with the man that has shown himself so unreasonable. "And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?"

The Lord was not ignorant of the feelings of resentment cherished by Cain; but he would have Cain reflect upon his course, and, becoming convinced of his sin, repent, and set his feet in the path of obedience. There was no cause for his wrathful feelings toward either his brother or his God; it was his own disregard of the plainly expressed will of God that had led to the rejection of his offering. Through his angel messenger, God said to this rebellious, stubborn man: "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." "If thou doest well"--not having your own way, but obeying God's commandments, coming to him with the blood of the slain victim, thus showing faith in the promised Redeemer, who, in the fullness of time, would make an atonement for guilty man, that he might not perish, but have eternal life.

"And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him." Abel's offering had been accepted; but this was because Abel had done in every particular as God required him to do. This would not rob Cain of his birthright. Abel would love him as his brother, and as the younger, be subject to him.

Thus the matter was plainly laid open before Cain; but his combativeness was

aroused because his course was questioned, and he was not permitted to follow his own independent ideas. He was angry with God and angry with his brother. He was angry with God because he would not accept the plans of sinful man in place of the divine requirements, and he was angry with his brother for disagreeing with him. Satan presents a temptation. The thought that he suggests is a terrible one; will Cain receive it?--Yes; he is opening the door of his heart to the whisperings of Satan. Envious and jealous of the preference shown to his younger brother, he will not hesitate to take his life.

Cain invites Abel to walk with him in the fields, and he there gives utterance to his unbelief and his murmuring against God. He claims that he was doing well in presenting his offering; and the more he talks against God, and impeaches his justice and mercy in rejecting his own offering and accepting that of his brother Abel, the more bitter are his feelings of anger and resentment.

Abel defends the goodness and impartiality of God, and places before Cain the simple reason why God did not accept his offering.

The fact that Abel ventured to disagree with him and even went so far as to point out his errors, astonished Cain. It was a new experience; for Abel had hitherto submitted to the judgment of his elder brother; and Cain was enraged to the highest degree that Abel did not sympathize with him in his disaffection. Abel would yield when conscience was not concerned; but when the course of the God of Heaven was brought in question, and Cain spoke derisively of the sacrifice of faith, Abel was courageous to defend the truth. Cain's reason told him that Abel was right when he spoke of the necessity of presenting the blood of a slain victim if he would have his sacrifice accepted; but Satan presented the matter in a different light. He urged Cain on to a furious madness, till he slew his brother, and the sin of murder was laid upon his soul.

Some time had elapsed since the death of Abel. "And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not. Am I my brother's keeper?" How true it is that one sin leads to another; and how forcibly is this truth illustrated in the case of Cain! He seemed surprised at the question, "Where is Abel thy brother?" He had gone so far in sin, had so far yielded himself to the influence of Satan, that he had lost a sense of the presence of God, and of his greatness and knowledge. So he lied to the Lord to cover up his guilt. Cain knew very well where his brother was; and God knew

where he was, for there was a witness to the bloody deed.

The spirit of Satan had entered into Cain. Satan was an accuser, and Cain began his evil course by accusing God of partiality and injustice. Satan was a deceiver, and Cain deceived Abel by inviting him into the field when murder was in his heart, that he might do the dark deed in secret. Satan "was a murderer from the beginning;" and he instigated Cain to do the same cruel work. "He is a liar, and the father of it;" and here, too, Cain showed himself an apt and proficient pupil.

Again the Lord said to Cain. "What hast thou done? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground." God had given Cain an opportunity to confess his sin before sentence should be pronounced against him. He had had time to reflect. He knew the enormity of the deed he had done, and of the falsehood he had told to conceal it. But he was rebellious still. The hand that had been stretched out against his brother was stretched out against God; and had the power been his, he would have silenced the accusing voice of God, as he had that of his brother.

Cain has proved himself incorrigible, and sentence is no longer deferred. The divine voice that has been heard in entreaty and expostulation pronounces the terrible words: "And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth." In remorse and anguish, but not in repentance, Cain exclaims, as many who have rejected the word of the Lord have done, and will do again, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." (Concluded next week.)

December 23, 1886

Cain and Abel Tested

These two brothers, Cain and Abel, represent the whole human family. They were both tested on the point of obedience, and all will be tested as they were. Abel bore the proving of God. He revealed the gold of a righteous character, the principles of true godliness. But Cain's religion had not a good foundation; it rested on human merit. He brought to God something in which he had a personal interest,--the fruits of the ground, which had been cultivated by his toil; and he presented his offering as a favor done to God, through which he expected to secure the divine approval. He obeyed in building an altar, obeyed in bringing a sacrifice; but it was only a partial obedience. The essential part, the recognition of the need of a Redeemer, was left out.

As far as birth and religious instruction were concerned, these brothers were equal, though Cain, being the first-born, was in some respects the favored one. Both were sinners, and both acknowledged the claims of God as an object of worship. To all outward appearance, their religion was the same up to a certain point of time; but the Bible history shows us that there was a time when the difference between the two became very great. This difference lay in the obedience of one and the disobedience of the other.

The apostle says that Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. Abel grasped the great principles of redemption. He saw himself a sinner; and he saw sin, and its penalty, death, standing between his soul and communion with God. He brought the slain victim, the sacrificed life, thus acknowledging the claims of the law which had been transgressed. Through the shed blood he looked to the future Sacrifice, Christ dying on the cross of Calvary; and, trusting in the atonement that was there to be made, he had the witness that he was righteous and his offering accepted.

How did Abel know so well the plan of salvation?--Adam taught it to his children and grandchildren. And the apostle says that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." After Adam had sinned, a feeling of terror seized him. A constant dread was upon him; shame and remorse tortured his soul. In this state of mind he wished to be as far removed as possible from the presence of God, whom he had so

loved to meet in his Eden home. But the Lord followed this conscience-stricken man, and while he condemned the sin of which Adam had been guilty, gave him words of gracious promise. In pronouncing the curse upon the deceiver, God had said: "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 was the first gospel sermon ever preached to fallen man; this promise was the star of hope, illuminating the dark and dismal future of the race. Adam gladly received the welcome assurance of deliverance, and diligently instructed his children in the way of the Lord. This promise was presented in close connection with the altar of sacrificial offerings. The altar and the promise stand side by side, and one casts clear beams of light upon the other, showing that the justice of an offended God could be appeased only by the death of his beloved Son. The bleeding victim consuming on the altar illustrated Adam's teachings, and thus the sight of the eyes deepened the impression made by the hearing of the ear.

Abel heard these precious lessons, and to him they were like seed sown on good ground. Cain also heard them. He had the same privileges as his brother, but he did not improve them. He ventured to go contrary to the commands of God; and the result is strongly presented before us. Cain was not the victim of an arbitrary purpose; one was not elected to be chosen of God, and the other to be rejected. The whole matter rested upon doing or not doing as God had said.

In the case of Cain and Abel we have a type of two classes that will exist in the world till the close of time; and this type is worthy of close study. There is a marked difference in the characters of these two brothers, and the same difference is seen in the human family today. Cain represents those who carry out the principles and works of Satan, by worshiping God in a way of their own choosing. Like the leader whom they follow, they are willing to render partial obedience, but not entire submission to God. Man, in the pride of his heart, would like to believe that he can confer some favor upon God; that our heavenly Father may be the receiver, and not always the giver. But God will not be bribed. 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." Man has nothing to give that he has not first received from God.

The Cain class of worshipers includes by far the largest number; for every false

religion that has been invented has been based on the Cain principle, that man can depend upon his own merits and righteousness for salvation.

The great controversy from Adam's day down to our time has been on the point of obedience or opposition to God's law; and every soul will be found on the side of the obedient or the rebellious. Satan, who was once a mighty and lofty angel in Heaven, is the leader of the rebellion against God. From the first it has been his object to dethrone God, by breaking down the rules of his government. He had induced angels to join him in Heaven; and when Adam sinned, he thought to carry the whole human race on his side. The declaration of God, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed," was the first intimation Satan received that the world would not be given over to his dark sway, but that man would have a Redeemer. There is naturally no enmity between fallen angels and fallen men. Both are evil; and evil, wherever it exists, will league against the good.

Man was promised a Redeemer, and was granted a second trial, to see if he would develop a righteous character; but he is left a free moral agent. And in all ages the multitudes have accepted the Cain principle, and have maintained that a partial obedience is all that is necessary. They have claimed a right to the favor of God, while disregarding his positive commands. This is the position of the Christian world today. God has given men a code of laws, and the fourth precept of that code enjoins the observance of the Sabbath as a memorial of creation. There is but one Sabbath of the Lord, and that is the seventh day. Special injunctions have been laid upon men to remember this day to keep it holy; but many show their contempt for the divine authority by keeping, in its place, a day which God has given them as a day of labor.

Those who cherish error have ever manifested a spirit of intolerance toward the obedient children of God. They are actuated by the spirit that led Cain to slay his brother. "And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." Abel, the first martyr, was not old and feeble, but a youth, full of life and vigor; but he lay down his life for the truth of God. And all the way down through the ages there have been some who have lost their lives because of their adherence to religious principles.

Our Saviour himself was a victim of religious intolerance. "He came unto his own; but his own received him not." Had he praised and exalted men, had he called

corruption purity, and given license to human creeds by teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, they would have received him gladly. But his zeal for God, the righteous fervor with which he denounced every abomination that was done in the land, and, above all, the sinless purity of his own character, aroused the bitter hatred of the "whited sepulchers" who deceived the people by the appearance of great sanctity. Satan and evil angels united with evil men to destroy from the earth the champion of truth. There was a bruising of the heel of the seed of the woman, when Christ was scorned as a deceiver, and was hunted down and put to death as a criminal; but could Satan have induced him to commit one sin, there would have been a bruising of the head, and the world would have been abandoned to the power of the prince of darkness.

The religion of Christ is for men to accept, with all its inconveniences. They may invent an easier way; but it will not lead to the city of God, the saints' secure abode. Only those who "do his commandments," will have "right to the tree of life," and "enter in through the gates into the city."

December 30, 1886

Intelligent Faith

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12.

The Jews rejected Christ; but they were self-deceived. They hated his teachings, because he exposed the secrets of their hearts and reproved their sins. They chose darkness rather than light, and would not come to the light, fearing that their deeds would be manifest. "This is the condemnation," said Christ, "that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." The Jews rejected Christ until their eyes were so blinded by the moral darkness that they thought they were doing God service in crucifying the Son whom he had sent unto them to be a messenger of light and hope.

Very many are in danger of a similar deception. God does not compel men to believe. He sets light before them, and Satan presents his darkness. While the deceiver is constantly crying, Light is here, truth is here; Jesus is saying, "I am the truth; I have the words of eternal life. If any man follow me, he shall not walk in darkness. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine."

Sufficient evidence is given to balance our minds on the side of truth. If we love God, and desire to do his will, we shall choose the light and reject the darkness. But if we desire to carry out our own plans, and maintain the independence of the natural heart, like the Jews we shall refuse to submit to God; and we shall be in danger of as great deception as came upon them, and in our blind infatuation we may go to as great lengths as they did, and yet flatter ourselves that we are doing the will of God.

Minds that are submitted to Satan's control are led farther and farther from the light of truth into error and darkness. He has great power to entangle souls by confusing the minds of those who do not walk in the light which a kind Providence permits to shine upon their pathway. If he gains the least advantage, he will push it to the utmost; he will watch every opportunity to advantage his cause and ruin human souls.

Christ warned his disciples: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Here is a test which all may apply if they will. None need be left in uncertainty and doubt. There is always sufficient evidence upon which to base an intelligent faith. But God will never remove from any man all occasion for doubts. Those who love to dwell in the atmosphere of doubt and questioning unbelief can have the unenviable privilege. He who turns from the weight of evidence because there are a few things that he cannot make plain to his finite understanding, will be left to the cold, chilling atmosphere of unbelief and skepticism, and will make shipwreck of faith.

It should not be considered a virtue to be on the side of the doubting rather than on the side of the believing. Jesus never praised unbelief, never commended a doubting, questioning spirit. He gave to his nation evidence of his Messiahship in the miracles he wrought; but there were some who reasoned these evidences away, and in every good work found something to question and censure.

The centurion who desired Christ to come and heal his servant felt unworthy to have Jesus come under his roof; but his faith was so strong that he entreated him just to say the word, and the work of healing would be done. "When Jesus heard it, he marveled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self-same hour."

Jesus here exalts faith in contrast with doubt. He shows the cause of stumbling on the part of the children of Israel. Their unbelief would lead to the rejection of light and would result in their condemnation and overthrow.

Thomas would not believe unless he could put his finger into the prints of the

nails, and thrust his hand into the side of his Lord. He received the evidence he desired; but Jesus reproved his unbelief: "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

When Christ sent out the twelve, he commanded them: "And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into a house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of Judgment, than for that city."

Jesus warned those whom he sent out to preach the gospel to beware of men; for they would be delivered up to the councils, and scourged in the synagogues. Men's hearts are no softer today than when Christ was upon the earth. They will scourge with the tongue of slander and falsehood. They will, with their evil surmisings, see fraud and dishonesty where all is right, and where perfect integrity exists.

Noah preached to the men of his time that God would give them one hundred and twenty years in which to repent of their sins and find refuge in the ark. This was abundant time in which to turn from their sins, overcome bad habits, and form righteous characters. But they refused the gracious invitation to repent and be saved. They denounced the preacher of righteousness as a visionary character, a fanatic, and an alarmist, and laughed to scorn what they termed his superstitious fears and forebodings. But though the merciful warning of God was rejected with mockery and derision, their unbelief did not hinder the predicted event. They were left in darkness to follow the curse that their own sinful hearts had chosen; but the flood came, and great was the wrath of God which was seen in the general ruin.

"As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." This is the attitude of the world today. Men reject the truth of God, as they did in Noah's time.

God's word is our standard; but how few follow it. And yet we are responsible for our influence. Many lose their interest in the truth of God, because they have taken unbelief into close connection with themselves. They breathe the atmosphere of doubt,

of questioning, of infidelity; their faith is imperceptibly undermined, and finally destroyed. The influence of the world and of selfishness is carried about by many who profess to be following the Bible. They are like a cloud, chilling the atmosphere in which others move. The baleful influence of sin poisons the life of the soul, and our only safety is in separation from those who walk in its darkness.

Our religion will be of little worth to our fellow-men, if it is only theoretical, and not practical. We must be steadfast in the faith; we must not be movable. We have our work before us, which is to cause the light of truth, as revealed in the law of God, to shine in upon other minds, and lead them out of darkness. This work requires determined, persevering energy, and a fixed purpose to succeed.

"If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." The greatest triumph given to us by the religion of Christ is control over ourselves. Our natural propensities must be controlled. Few realize what this is. They do not know their own weakness; and the natural sinfulness of the human heart often paralyzes their best endeavors. There must be a coming out from the world, and a nearness to God, if we would be adopted into the family of Heaven as children of the great King. We must walk by faith. When we do the will of God, we shall know of the doctrine. Our feet will be planted on the rock of eternal truth, and we shall not be swept away by the doubt and skepticism of an unbelieving age.

January 6, 1887

A Lesson in Humility and Love

"And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Matthew 18:2-6.

The disciples had been disputing among themselves which of them should be greatest, as we learn from the account of this incident given by Mark and Luke. The disciples did not understand the nature of the kingdom that Christ was to set up. They looked for an earthly kingdom, with an earthly rule; their ambition was aroused, and there was an anxiety for the first place. Jesus understood the thoughts and feelings of their hearts. He saw that they lacked the precious grace of humility, and that here was a lesson which it was essential for them to learn. He knew the subject of their conversation by the way, when they had spoken freely, thinking themselves alone. So calling a little child unto him, he said to them, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven."

Again Jesus said: "Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea." Here we have an expression of the care which our Saviour has for his people. Man is the crowning glory of the Creator's works, and he has been redeemed at an inconceivable cost to the Son of God. None but he could restore to man the moral image of God, which had been lost through transgression. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. He is represented as the true Shepherd. Leaving the ninety and nine in the wilderness, he goes in search of the wandering, straying sheep. He continues to search under the most discouraging circumstances, shrinking not from hardships and peril, until he finds the wanderer; and then all the suffering, and trial, and peril endured for its sake are forgotten in the joy of finding the lost sheep. When through genuine

repentance for sin, and faith in Christ, the sinner has been brought back to the fold of God, there is joy in Heaven.

Jesus here presents the duty of man to his fellow-man. Whatever his position in life, man is the purchase of the blood of Christ, and should not be treated with indifference or contempt. Satan opposes great obstacles to the salvation of the human family. There is a rugged path for them to tread if they would journey Heavenward, and each needs all the encouragement his fellow travelers can give him as he toils up the steep ascent. God's word opens to us the wonderful conflict between light and darkness, good and evil, Heaven and hell. We are each on the battle ground, and Satan is striving for the victory. We should never lay a stumbling-block in the way of one who is fighting the battle with the powers of darkness and his own carnal heart; but we should help one another in the close, hand-to-hand fight with the deceiver of souls, in which we are engaged.

I wish we could see this matter in its true light. A man sees himself in slavery to sin, led captive by Satan at his will, and he tries to break the chain of sinful habits by which he is bound. He flees to Jesus as his helper; and our all-pitying Saviour undertakes his case, and enters the field of battle in his behalf. It is the Son of God combating the prince of darkness; and the prize for which they contend is the soul of man. If the sinner trusts implicitly to the mighty Helper, through his strength he becomes a conqueror, and wins the prize of everlasting life. Thus the battle is fought over and over again, and with what interest angels watch the warfare. And when through earnest faith and prayer man obtains the victory, there is joy in the presence of God.

But too often man looks with cold indifference upon the conflicts through which his fellow-man is passing, as though these fierce struggles with the powers of darkness were nothing that concerned him. When we see the divine condescension, the sacrifices and sorrows, to which the Son of the infinite God subjected himself in order to accomplish the salvation of the fallen race, how can we remain indifferent? Should not the tenderness, pity, and love of Christ take hold of our very hearts, and lead us to manifest the same spirit toward every soldier in the ranks of our great Captain? Should we not remember that we too are weak, and that in the warfare we are waging we need help and sympathy?

Those who are co-laborers with Christ will exercise that carefulness, manifest that love, in dealing with their fellow-men, of which Christ has given us an example in his life, and which he has impressed upon our hearts by the lessons of his word. But our work does not end here. The poor, straying, lost sheep are to be hunted up, and brought back to the fold. They are to be cared for, strengthened, and encouraged. We each need a Saviour, and we each need the sympathy, watchcare, and love of our brethren. As we are brought together in church capacity, we pledge ourselves to be faithful one to another; and any failure in our duty here, any wrong done to our brother, is registered in the books of Heaven as a wrong done to Christ in the person of his saints.

If we had a true sense of the work of Christ, we should appreciate the worth of souls for whom he died. "Love one another, as I have loved you," said Christ. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us." As we see the love which Christ has shown for fallen man, the divine compassion which he has manifested for the weak, the erring, and the most sinful, how it should humble our proud hearts, and awaken in them a deep, earnest, and far-reaching love for souls.

We are erring, and we shall see errors in those who are connected with us in the faith. They will have to bear with our perversities, and we must bear with theirs. But let us be careful to move with an eye single to the glory of God, and not to offend or grieve the souls so precious in his sight. If we see that a brother is wrong, if we see that he is pursuing a course that will bring darkness upon his own soul, and is imperiling the souls of others, there is one course that Christ has told us to pursue, and there is no other safe course for us to take.

If a brother has done you an injury, my Christian friend, you are not to seek revenge, nor even to harbor a desire for retaliation; but you should pity him; he has need of your pity. Have the same feelings of compassion for him that you would have others manifest for you if you were enshrouded in darkness. Call to mind the many times that you have erred, and made mistakes in your life-work; and remember how hard it has been to find the right way when you had once left it. If you have the Spirit of Christ abiding in you, no unkind words will fall from your lips. You will not push your brother into greater darkness, but with a heart full of pity you will tell him of his danger. You will get down and pray with him, and perhaps save his soul from death, and thus cover a multitude of sins. What right have you to pursue any other course than this? If you do, you walk contrary to the rule given by God, and grieve his Holy Spirit.

Let us take the words of Christ. If the man has done you an injury, go to him, and between you and him alone seek to set the matter right. Do not go to any one but himself. If he refuses to hear you, then take two or three others, and go to him again; but do not publish it in the church or out of the church. When you have done your duty, if he still refuses to hear you, then let the church take it up; but let them deal gently with the erring. Do not even listen to the gossiping tongue. If one comes to you with an evil report, ask him if he has been to the offending brother, as the Bible directs. If he has not, refuse even to hear him. Nine-tenths of the church trials might be avoided, if all would, in the spirit of kindness and love, pursue the course marked out by Inspiration. This can only be done by breaking down everything like a spirit of self-righteousness.

We want love and mercy to take possession of our hearts, and be interwoven with our characters; for just as we deal mercifully with others, God will deal mercifully with us. Oh, for more of the tender love of Jesus, more of the spirit of true humility before God! These are the lessons we must learn individually, in order to preserve harmony and peace, and gain the approval of our heavenly Father.

What we need is to be obedient to the word of God. "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. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

Here is brought to view the work of purification that will be carried on by every child of God. Angels are weighing character. They are marking our errors and defects, and recording them in the books of Heaven. In a little time in the future these books will be opened, and every man will be judged according to his deeds, and according to the light that has shone upon his pathway. Basel, Switzerland.

February 10, 1887

The Invitation of Mercy

"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."

There is a work for all to do to open the door of the heart to the heavenly visitor. The Lord of glory, who has redeemed us by his own blood, seeks admittance; but too often we do not welcome him in. Worldliness does not incline us to throw wide open the door of the heart at the knock of him who is seeking entrance. Some open the door slightly, and permit a little light from his presence to enter; but they do not bid him hearty welcome. There is no room for Jesus; the place which should have been reserved for him is occupied with other things. He entreats, and for a time they feel inclined to hear and open the door; but even this inclination departs, and they fail to secure the communion with the heavenly guest which it was their privilege to have.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock," says the Saviour. The mansions in glory are his, and the joy of that heavenly abode; yet he humbles himself to seek an entrance at the door of the heart, that he may bless us with his light, and make us to rejoice in his glory. His work is to seek and to save that which is lost and ready to perish. He will redeem from sin and death all who will come to him; and will elevate them to his throne, and give them everlasting life.

Jesus will not force open the door of the heart. We must open it ourselves, and show that we desire his presence by giving him a sincere welcome. If all would make thorough work of clearing away the world's rubbish, and preparing a place for Jesus, he would enter, and abide with them, and would do a great work through them for the salvation of others. But many receive not the tokens of God's mercy and loving-kindness with thankful hearts; they do not bend their energies and unite their interests in his work, and they do not share in the blessing that he is waiting to bestow.

"If any man hear my voice," says Christ, "and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." These words are not addressed simply to the more intelligent and refined, but to all, without respect of persons. A man may not

bear the most pleasant exterior; he may be deficient in many respects; but if he will come to Christ, he will in nowise be cast out. The trouble is that many who make a profession of Christ are controlled by feeling. Their heart has not been renewed by the transforming influence of the Spirit of God. They have not depth and stability of character. Principle does not reach down deep, underlying the springs of action. And when sacrifices are to be made for the cause of Christ, they are found wanting.

To such cold-hearted professors I would say, Be entreated to seek Christ while he invites you to come to him that you may have life. I wish I could alarm you; I wish I could arouse you to action. You have no time to lose. Make mighty efforts to rescue yourselves from Satan's snare. He is vigilant in his efforts; his perseverance is untiring, his zeal earnest and unabated. He does not wait for his prey to come to him; he seeks for it. To wrench souls from the hand of Christ is his determined purpose. Yet if you will come to Christ, and make him your trust, you will be in no danger. He will fight the battle for you, and will overcome the powers of darkness in your behalf.

You need to humble your hearts before God, and seek meekness and righteousness, that you may be hid in the day of the Lord's fierce anger. You need to be forming a character for Heaven and eternal life. What account will you render to God for the time he has given you,--for the use you make of the privileges he has placed within your reach? To you the gracious words are spoken: "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." If you neglect the invitation, the mercy that you have despised will condemn you in the Judgment.

Dedicate yourselves unreservedly to the Lord; then it will not be difficult to serve him, and you can do good in the world. You can "let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

It is not enough that we admit Christ into our hearts; he must abide there. We must encourage his presence by a life of prayer. Jesus is our example in all things; and when our human nature was upon him, prayer became to him a necessity and a privilege. He found joy and comfort in communion with his Father. Here he could unburden the sorrows that were crushing him; for he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and he needed all the divine support and comfort which the Father was ready to impart to his Son, who had left the joys of Heaven, and chosen his

home, for the benefit of man, in a cold and thankless world.

Jesus had select places of prayer. He loved the solitude of the mountain in which to hold communion with his Father. Through the day he labored earnestly to save men from destruction. He healed the sick, comforted the mourning, called the dead to life, and brought cheerfulness and hope to the despairing. After his work was finished for the day, he went forth, evening after evening, away from the confusion of the city, and his form was bowed in supplication to his Father. At times the bright beams of the moon shone upon him, and then again the clouds and darkness shut away all light. He frequently continued his petitions through the entire night, and the dew and frost rested upon his head and beard while in the attitude of supplication. And he came forth from these seasons of prayer invigorated and refreshed, braced for duty and trial.

In thus becoming a suppliant, a mighty petitioner, seeking from his Father fresh supplies of strength, he identified himself with our needs and our weaknesses. As he is our example in all things, so he became a brother in our infirmities, but not a companion in our sins. His nature recoiled from evil, and in a sinful world he endured anguish and torture of soul. If the Saviour of men, with his divine strength, felt the need of prayer, how much more should feeble, sinful mortals feel the necessity of prayer, fervent, constant, importunate prayer!

Watch, pray, and work, are the Christian's watchwords. The life of a living Christian is a life of constant prayer. The light and strength of one day will not be sufficient for the trials and conflicts of the next. Satan is constantly changing his temptations, as he did with Christ. Every day we may be placed in new positions. And in the untried scenes that await us, we shall be surrounded by new dangers, and constantly assailed by new and unexpected temptations; but the strength and grace which we may gain from the accessible Heavens will enable us to meet the new temptations and bear the heavier responsibilities that are ever before us. Here, and here only, is our source of light and strength.

It is of the highest consequence that God manifest his will to us in the daily concerns of life; for the most important results frequently depend upon small occurrences. We cannot trust our own judgment, and the more we learn of the character and providence of God, the more fully we shall realize our own weakness and imperfection, and our dependence on divine strength and wisdom. We shall realize that

in him we have what we so much need,--a sure guide to direct our faltering steps.

"The path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The Christian's life is one of progression. He goes forward from strength to strength, from grace to grace, from glory to glory, receiving from Heaven the light which Christ, at infinite cost to himself, made it possible for man to obtain. But the Christian cannot let his light shine properly unless he receives, day by day, an increase of the divine illumination, corresponding with his growth in the knowledge of Bible truth. It would be as inconsistent to expect to be sustained on the morrow by food eaten today, as to depend on present light and present blessings for future strength.

The Master requires his servants not only to grow in grace, but to improve upon the talents that he has committed to them. The good works of God's people have a more powerful influence than words. Their virtuous life and unselfish acts testify for God, and lead the beholder to desire the same righteousness which has produced such good fruit in their characters. He is charmed with the power from God which transforms selfish human beings into the divine image, and God is honored, his name glorified.

Oh! why will not God's people comply with the conditions laid down in his word? If they would, they would not fail to realize the excellent blessings freely given to the humble and obedient. Perfection, holiness, nothing short of this, would give them success in carrying out the principles he has given them. Without this holiness, the human heart is selfish, sinful, and vicious; but holiness of heart will produce right actions, and will lead its possessor to abound in all good works. The Christian will never become weary in well doing, neither will he look for promotion in this world. He will look forward for promotion to the time when the Majesty of Heaven shall exalt the sanctified ones to his throne. Then, enumerating the works of self-denial and mercy, compassion and righteousness, which they have wrought, he will say unto them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Jesus is now inviting us to come unto him; who will listen to his voice? Let us take a higher stand than we have hitherto done. Let us make it our first business to gain the kingdom of Heaven and the righteousness of Christ, and the eternal reward will be ours at the end of the race.

February 17, 1887

Doing for Christ

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was a 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 a 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."

These are words which Christ addresses to his redeemed people. He invites them to become patient toilers in a field which calls for self-denying labor; but it is a glorious work, and one that Heaven smiles upon. Faithful work is more acceptable to God than the most zealous formal worship. True worship consists in working together with Christ. Prayers, exhortations, 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, and grow naturally upon a good tree.

Pure religion and undefiled before the Father consists in visiting the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and in keeping unspotted from the world. We should cultivate the doing principle. 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 at his fireside and at his board, then angels come very near with notes of joy and praise on their lips, and an answering strain responds in Heaven. Every deed of justice and mercy and benevolence makes music there. The Father from his throne beholds, and numbers the unselfish laborers among his most precious treasures. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." Every merciful act to the needy or the suffering is as though done to Christ. Whoever succors the poor, or sympathizes with the afflicted and oppressed, or befriends the orphan, thereby brings himself into a closer relationship with the pitying Saviour.

"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 a 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 a hungered, or a thirst, 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 to 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."

Jesus 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. While you were enjoying the food from your bountifully spread tables, I was famishing with 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. While your wardrobes were filled with an abundant supply of changeable suits of apparel, upon which means had been needlessly squandered,--means which you might have given to the needy, I was destitute of comfortable raiment. 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 at liberty. What a oneness Jesus here represents as existing between himself and his suffering disciples. He makes their case his own. He represents himself as being, in their person, the very sufferer. Mark this, selfish Christian; every neglect on your part to care for the needy and to sympathize with those in distress, is a neglect to Jesus in their person.

Some who make high professions are so encased in selfishness that they cannot appreciate the generous principles of the Christian religion. All their lives they have 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 at their hand. Precious weeks, months, and years pass into eternity; but no record is made in Heaven of kindly acts of self-sacrifice, 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.

When the King shall make investigation, the do-nothing, illiberal, selfish souls will learn that Heaven is for those who have been workers,--those who have denied themselves for Christ's sake. No provision has been made for those who have taken such special care in looking out for themselves. The terrible punishment threatened to those on the King's left hand is not, in this case, the penalty of some great crime. They are not condemned for the things which they did do, but for that which they did not do. They did not do those duties which Heaven assigned to them. They pleased themselves, and they must take their portion with self-pleasers.

"Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares," says the apostle. Has this injunction no force in the present age? Our heavenly Father lays in our pathway blessings in disguise; but some will not take these blessings for fear they will detract from their selfish enjoyment.

The widow of Sarepta shared her morsel with Elijah, and in return for making a home for the prophet of God, she was herself sustained, and her life and that of her son was preserved. Thus would it be with others, if, for the glory of God, they would cheerfully take a similar course. But many plead poor health. They have so long shut themselves up to themselves, and thought of their own poor feelings and sufferings, that they cannot think of others, however much they may be in need of sympathy and assistance.

You who are suffering from poor health, there is help for you. Doing good is an excellent remedy for disease. 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. You are invited to bring your prayers to God, and he has pledged himself to answer them. Your soul shall be satisfied in drought, and shall be like a watered garden, whose waters fail not.

If you engage in works 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 on this question by a pledge to you on condition of obedience. This promise covers all that the most exacting, the most hesitating could demand: "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily." Only believe that He is faithful who has promised. God can renew the physical health; 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.

"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 what is to be done; make yourselves acquainted with the wants of the needy. Hide not yourselves from them; close not your eyes to their needs.

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.

Some will excuse themselves on the plea that they have bestowed their charity on unworthy persons, and have become discouraged. To such I present the example of Jesus. 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 put to death him who came to give them life. But did our Lord turn from the fallen race because of this? Nay, verily; and he is our pattern. Though for ninety-nine times your efforts to do good are unsuccessful, and you receive only insult, reproach, and hate, yet if the hundredth time proves a success, and one soul is saved, oh, what a victory is achieved! This will a thousand times pay you for all your efforts. And to you Jesus will say, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

The reason that God's people are not more spiritually-minded, and that they have not more faith, is because they are narrowed by selfishness. 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. We must be less self-caring, and more benevolent. Our souls must expand. Then God will make them like a watered garden, whose waters fail not.

February 24, 1887

Courage for the Right

There are but few in this age of the world who have moral courage to take their position on the side of unpopular truth. Its principles are the principles of Heaven. Hence it conflicts with every wrong habit and sinful desire. Those who accept and obey the truth, must deny self, bear the cross daily, and follow in the footsteps of Jesus. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Therefore there is a constant warfare between inclination and duty. Inclination too often prevails, and silences the convictions of the Holy Spirit.

The faith which we cherish as "present truth" is sustained by the clearest and most conclusive evidence from the word of God. Still there is urged against it one objection which our ablest ministers cannot remove. Christ himself could not remove it. It has effectually barred the way of life to thousands. This hindrance is the cross. The cross, covered with shame and reproach, which Jesus bore for us, stands directly in the Christian's path. To evade that cross, the selfish, the world-loving, and the pleasure-seeking turn from the light that would guide their feet to Heaven. They choose doubt, unbelief, and infidelity, that they may have the pleasure of following inclination, and giving loose rein to the promptings of the carnal heart. Those who choose the broader and easier path, may enjoy the friendship of the world, which inspiration declares to be enmity with God; they may receive the empty praise of men whose hearts are not pure and whose lives are not holy; but they lose the only honor which is of lasting value, the honor which comes from above. They may secure worldly gain and transient pleasure, but they lose the eternal riches and that life which measures with the life of God. The language of many who are standing undecided is

"I thought that the course of the pilgrim to Heaven Would be bright as the summer, and glad as the morn; Thou show'dst me the path; it was dark and uneven, All rugged with rock, and all tangled with thorn.

"I dreamt of celestial rewards and renown; I grasped at the triumph which blesses the brave; I asked for the palm branch, the robe, and the crown: I asked--and thou show'dst me a cross and a grave."

Those who sincerely believe and teach the word of God must expect to be received by the world with no greater favor than was the ancient preacher of righteousness. Those who lived in Noah's day despised his prophecy; they styled his warnings the delusive fancies of an imbecile old man. But the unbelief and mockery of the people did not hinder the event. God manifested his power in a manner which has astonished the philosophers of every age.

The laws of nature cannot prevent the fulfillment of God's word. The law is never greater than the Lawgiver, nor are the things created greater than the Creator. As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man. As men are warned of impending judgment, thousands will say, It cannot be. They will despise the truth, make light of prophecy, and deride the teacher of righteousness. One will turn aside to his farm, another to his merchandise, and care for none of these things.

The inhabitants of the antediluvian world were condemned to destruction for their iniquity; yet they had the offer of mercy. By repentance and reformation of life, they might have secured forgiveness and the protection of God. So in this dispensation, everyone who believes and obeys the divine word will find pardon and a shelter from the wrath to come. The history of their sins, with the sure destruction that followed, should be a warning to us. There is to be a baptism of fire as there was of water, and all the unbelief and scoffing of the ungodly will not hinder the event.

The Scriptures briefly state the reason for the prevailing iniquity in Noah's day. The sons of God married the daughters of men. Those who still cherished the knowledge of God united themselves with the ungodly and corrupt, and as a result became assimilated to them in character. The message of warning would have been received by a larger number, had it not been for their connection and association with those who despised and derided the word of God.

In the days of Noah the Spirit of God was so long and stubbornly rejected that it ceased to strive with men. Thus will it be prior to the end of the world. When the gospel falls on closed ears, when the Holy Spirit ceases to imprint the truth upon the heart, preaching and hearing will alike be in vain. Are we not fast approaching this state of things?

Those who would stand now must be Bible readers and Bible Christians; they must faithfully obey the divine precepts, both in private and in public. There are some who think it an evidence of superior ability to manifest indifference for the Bible and for religious things. They think it weak and unmanly to be always fearing to do wrong. Many a man permits himself to be allured from Christ, from purity and holiness, by those whom at heart he despises. And these very persons will privately ridicule his weakness in yielding to temptation. Those who associate with godless companions learn ways of life, habits of thought and speech, which lead them down to darkness and perdition. To win the applause of the low, the worthless, and the vulgar, they degrade themselves in the sight of God and man.

There is no class in greater danger than the young. Evil men and seducers are no less active now than before the flood. On the contrary, the word of God declares that they shall wax worse and worse. There are not wanting agents of Satan to taunt and ridicule all who would be true to virtue and to God. We are pained to see young men fearful or ashamed to acknowledge their principle before the ungodly or the blasphemer; ashamed that they have cherished holier sentiments, and cultivated purer morals. Oh, if these youth would but be firm and bold in the practice of virtue; if they would frown down the base advances of the agents of Satan, what a victory might be gained over the world, the flesh, and the devil! God calls upon the youth of today to love and serve him with the whole heart. They need a daily connection with Heaven to keep them unsullied by the corruptions of the last days.

Says Christ, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." And again, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." Those who obey God's will as it is revealed to their understanding, will be safely guided into the way of life. But it is impossible for finite man to fully understand the purposes and ways of the Infinite One. Those who refuse to accept and obey God's word until every objection has been removed, and there is no longer an opportunity for doubt, will never come to the light. Truth and error are before us. God has given us sufficient evidence to determine the right way, and then he leaves us to choose for ourselves.

Jesus calls us to walk with him in the light, instead of wandering in the dark mazes of unbelief. If men would but stop to consider the worth of the soul, and their own need of a Saviour, they would gladly, gratefully accept the hand which he has stretched out to them. Alas that so many, in their pride and stubbornness of heart, refuse

to accept the guidance of infinite wisdom! Faith, hope, and love, man's highest and noblest faculties, have been paralyzed by sin and Satan. But Jesus stands ready to awaken them to new life, that they may be enlisted in his service. The power of renewing grace will bring them again into vigorous exercise.

Temptations to discouragement will at times come upon the children of God like an overwhelming torrent. Many are disheartened as they see that Christian example and instruction seem almost powerless before the tide of ignorance and unbelief. But Jesus is the stronghold of his people. His light shines still. It can never be quenched. Though evil now seems to prevail over righteousness and truth, yet it is by no means the strongest power. It shall not always conquer. Nay, even now its end is nigh. Truth and righteousness are plants of heavenly origin. God nourishes them every hour. He will no more suffer them to die than he will forget the honor of his own throne and name.

Every Christian must meet trial and temptation. Those who basely shun the reproach of Christ, and choose the honor which the world bestows, will surely reap the bitter harvest. Separation from God, the loss of Heaven, agony and despair, must be their portion. But if we will stand fearlessly and firmly for God and the right, relying upon the promises of the sacred word, we shall not be ashamed. Earth and hell can have no power to triumph over us. Let not the weakest be discouraged because they are assailed by temptation. The best men who ever lived have been grievously assaulted by Satan and his agents. Unless we yield to its power, temptation is not sin. The armor of truth will prove a sure defense against all the fiery darts of the enemy.

Yet the Christian should not place himself needlessly in the way of temptation. Every soul is surrounded by an atmosphere of its own, laden with the fragrance of love and piety, the heavy fogs of unbelief, or the deadly poison of infidelity and crime. When brought in contact with others, we are unconsciously affected by the atmosphere surrounding them. If this be laden with moral poison, the very life-blood of the soul may become tainted ere we are conscious of danger.

The worth of a human soul can be estimated only by the light reflected from the cross of Calvary. So terrible was the doom of the lost race, so great the glory to which the redeemed might be exalted, that the Father is satisfied with the infinite price which he pays for their redemption. It was the joy set before Christ in accomplishing so great salvation that led him to submit to shame, agony, and death. How do all the treasures

and the glories of earth sink into insignificance when compared with the value of a human soul! As I see in the world such astonishing indifference to the work of redemption; as I see the unbelief, the skepticism, the Heaven-daring rebellion against God and his law, I am more and more convinced that we have reached those days of peril foretold in the Scriptures. I feel assured that the end is near; that our time of waiting and watching is short; and that the cause and truth of God will soon triumph.

March 3, 1887

Love the Fulfilling of the Law

"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. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

We are in a world where hearts need human sympathy; and God has given us benevolence, that we may realize this need, and be kind and charitable to all with whom we come in contact. We often see a charitable disposition manifested by men and women who have never given their hearts to Christ, and it is a sad sight indeed when his professed followers lack this great essential of Christianity. They do not copy the Pattern; and it is impossible for them to reflect the image of Jesus in their lives and deportment.

Love is one of the fruits of true piety. Those who truly carry out the principles of the law of God in their daily lives will realize that suffering humanity has claims upon them. They will not only love God supremely, but their neighbor as themselves. Jesus illustrated this principle in the parable which he told to a certain lawyer who "stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered him by asking another question: "What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, 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. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live."

"This do," said Jesus, not merely believe, but do, "and thou shalt live." It is carrying out the principles of God's law, and not merely a professed faith in its binding claims, that makes the Christian.

But the lawyer, "willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?" Jesus illustrates the spirit of cheerful benevolence which should be exercised toward all,--friends, neighbors, and strangers,--in the story that follows: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." A priest and a Levite

who came that way, and saw his need of help, passed by on the other side. Notwithstanding their exalted professions of piety, their hearts were not stirred with pitying tenderness for the sufferer. A Samaritan, who made no such lofty pretensions to righteousness, came to the place. He saw in the unfortunate stranger a human being in distress, and his compassion was excited. He immediately "went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him." And on the morrow he left the wounded man in the care of his host, with the assurance that on his return he would pay all charges.

Christ asks, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise." Here is a lesson on the duties of man with reference to his fellow-man. Those who neglect to carry out the principles illustrated by this lesson, are not commandment-keepers, though they may pretend to revere the law of God.

Human sympathy, sanctified by the Spirit of Jesus, is an element that can be productive of great good. Those who cultivate benevolence are not only doing good to others, but they are benefiting themselves by opening their hearts to the benign influences of sympathy and love. Every ray of light shed upon others will be reflected upon our own hearts. Every kind and sympathizing word spoken to the sorrowful, every act to relieve the oppressed, and every gift to supply the necessities of the destitute, given or done with an eye single to God's glory, will result in blessings to the giver. Those who are thus working are obeying a law of Heaven, and will receive the approval of God.

In the parable, Christ exalts the Samaritan above the priest and the Levite, who were great sticklers for the letter of the law in the ten commandments. The one obeyed the spirit of these commandments, while the other was content to express an exalted faith in them. But the apostle tells us that "faith without works is dead."

When the advocates of the law of God plant their feet firmly on its principles, showing that they are loyal, not merely in name, but at heart also, carrying out in their lives the spirit of the law of God, and exercising true benevolence to man, then will they have moral power to move the world. But it is impossible for those who profess allegiance to God to correctly represent the principles of his law, while slighting the

injunction to love our neighbor as ourselves.

We are under obligation, not only to secure Heaven ourselves, but to show others the way, and, through our care and disinterested love, to lead toward Christ those who come within the sphere of our influence. We are accountable, to a great degree, for the souls of those around us. Our words and deeds are constantly telling for or against the truth of God; and we are under personal obligation to exert an influence in its favor. The most eloquent sermon that can be preached upon the law of ten commandments is to do them. Obedience should be made a personal duty. Negligence here is flagrant sin.

Let the world see that we are not selfishly narrowed up to our own exclusive interests and our religious joys, but that we desire them to share our blessings and privileges, through the sanctifying influence of the truth; let them see that the religion which we profess does not close up or freeze up the avenues to the soul, making us unsympathizing and exacting; let all who profess to have found Christ, minister, as he did, to the needs of man, cherishing a spirit of wise benevolence; and we shall then see many souls following the light that shines from our precept and example.

We should cultivate an amiable disposition, and subject ourselves to the control of conscience. The truth of God makes better men and women of those who receive it in the love of it. It works like leaven till the entire being is brought into conformity to its principles. It opens the heart that has been frozen by avarice; it opens the hand that has been closed to human suffering; and kindness and charity are seen as its fruits.

Let us not bring a reproach upon the Christian religion by manifesting jealousy and intolerance toward others. No one has ever been reclaimed from a wrong position by censure or reproach; but many have thus been driven away from God, with their hearts steeled against conviction. A tender spirit, a gentle, winning deportment, may save the erring, and hide a multitude of sins. We are required of God to exercise that charity that suffereth long and is kind.

The religion of Christ does not require us to lose our identity of character, but merely to adapt ourselves, in some measure, to the feelings and ways of others. Many people may be brought together in a unity of religious faith, whose opinions, habits, and tastes in temporal matters are not in harmony. But with the love of Christ glowing in their bosoms, looking forward to the same Heaven as their eternal home, they may have

the sweetest and most intelligent communion together, and a unity the most wonderful.

None should feel at liberty to preserve a cold and chilling reserve and iron dignity,--a spirit that repels those who are brought within its influence. This spirit is contagious; it creates an atmosphere that withers good impulses and good resolves; under its influence persons become constrained, and the natural current of human sympathy, cordiality, and love is choked. The gloom and chill of this unsocial atmosphere is reflected in the countenance; and not only is the spiritual health affected by this unnatural depression, but the physical health is affected also.

There are scarcely two whose experiences are alike in every particular. The trials of one may not be the trials of another; and our hearts should ever be open to kindly sympathy, and aglow with the divine love that Jesus manifested for all his brethren. Christ sometimes reprov'd with severity, and in some cases it may be necessary for us to do so; but we should consider that while Christ knew the exact condition of the ones he rebuked,--just the amount of reproof they could bear, and what was necessary to correct their course of wrong,--he also knew just how to pity the erring, comfort the unfortunate and encourage the weak. He knew just how to inspire hope and courage; for he was acquainted with the exact motives and the peculiar trials of every mind. He reprov'd with pity, and loved those he rebuked with a divine love.

Jesus could make no mistake; but human judgment is erring, and may be wrong. Men may misjudge motives; they may be deceived by appearances, and when they think they are doing right to reprove wrong, they may go too far, censure too severely, and wound where they wished to heal; or they may exercise sympathy unwisely, and, in their ignorance, counteract reproof that is merited and timely.

The Lord would have us submissive to his will, and sanctified to his service. Selfishness must be put away, with every other defect in our characters. There must be a daily death to self. Paul had this experience. He said, "I die daily." Every day he had a new conversion; every day he took an advance step toward Heaven. We, too, must gain daily victories in the divine life, if we would enjoy the favor of God.

Our God is gracious, of tender pity, and plenteous in mercy. He knows our weaknesses and needs, and he will help our infirmities if we will only trust in him.

March 10, 1887

Christ the True Vine

"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."

Our heavenly Father planted on earth a goodly vine, whose fruit should be to eternal life. But this precious plant appeared to human eyes as a root out of dry ground, having no form or comeliness. When the claim was put forth that it was of heavenly origin, the men of Nazareth became enraged, and cast it from them. The inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem took the vine of God's own planting, and bruised it, and trampled it under foot, hoping to utterly destroy it forever. But now the Husbandman removed this goodly 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 can be united to the vine, and, partaking of its nourishment, become flourishing branches, and bring forth much fruit.

The figure of the vine is a perfect symbol. God sent his Son from the heavenly courts to a world seared and marred by the curse of sin. In Christ all fullness dwelt; in him was righteousness, peace, life,--everything necessary to man's happiness and well-being. But the world hated the Son of the most high 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." He was hated by evil men because his character was spotless, his works righteous. He came as the Redeemer of the world; yet he was taken by cruel hands, and shamefully entreated and crucified. God raised him from the dead, and he ascended to Heaven to plead his blood as the propitiation for our sins.

Though invisible to mortal sight, Christ still lives as the Redeemer of the world, the representative of man in the heavenly courts, and the medium through whom all blessings flow to the fallen race. His love is without a parallel. We cannot estimate the value of his life of toil and sacrifice, the precious ransom paid for our redemption.

Surely it is not too much to ask the heart's best and holiest affections in return for such wondrous love.

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 the fullness of Christ alone can we obtain the nourishment that will enable us to bear fruit unto eternal life. The vine stock is unseen; but the branches, the members of his body, are visible. The branch that was apparently dry and leafless, by being connected with the living vine, becomes a part of it,--a partaker of its life and fatness. Fiber by fiber, and vein by vein, it adheres to the vine, till the life-giving sap causes it to bud, and blossom, and bear fruit.

The scion becomes a part of the vine by forming a perfect union with it. Thus it is with the sinner. The soul, dead in trespasses and sins, must experience a similar process in order to be reconciled to God, and to become a partaker of Christ's life and joy. As the graft receives life when united to the vine, so the sinner partakes of the divine nature when connected with Christ by repentance and faith. This connection joins soul with soul, the finite with the infinite. When thus united, the words of Christ abide in us, and we are not actuated by a spasmodic feeling, but by a living, abiding principle.

Every branch united to the true vine brings forth fruit, not of its own kind, but that of the vine of which it has become a part. The Spirit of Christ flowing into the hearts of all who are truly united with him, makes them partakers of the divine nature. They will walk in the footsteps of their self-sacrificing, self-denying Redeemer. His purity and love will appear in their characters and their daily lives, while meekness and truth will guide their way.

"I am the true vine," says Christ, "and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me [everyone who claims connection with me] that beareth not fruit, he taketh away." This is the solemn warning that is addressed to each disciple. The careless and indifferent will after a time be overcome of temptation, and at last wholly separated from Christ.

But "every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." Every fruitful branch is pruned; for even fruitful branches may display too much foliage, and appear what they really are not. Husbandmen clip off the surplus foliage of

the vines, and the tendrils that are grasping the rubbish of earth, thus making them more fruitful. And when the Master sees that worldliness, self-indulgence, and pride are cropping out in the lives of his followers, he prunes them. These hindering causes must be removed, and the defective overgrowth cut away, to give room for the healing beams of the Sun of Righteousness.

Said Christ: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love." The branch can maintain its connection with the living vine only on condition that it bear fruit. And the fruit borne on the Christian tree is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Rich clusters of this precious fruit will appear on every branch that is subjected to the pruning of the wise Husbandman. The result of union with Christ is purification of heart, a circumspect life, and a faultless character. Yet those who have attained to this degree of Christian perfection are the last to claim that they have any merits of their own. "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.

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 that they have gained high attainments in spiritual things, may for a time deceive their fellowmen, 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 misunderstand the object for which they were created. They do not realize that they were placed here to bless humanity and glorify God, rather than to enjoy and glorify self. God is constantly pruning his people, cutting off profuse, spreading branches, that they may bear fruit to his glory, and not produce leaves only. Idols must be given up, the conscience must become more tender, the meditations of the heart must be spiritual, and the entire character must become symmetrical.

Some who claim to be followers of Christ are withered branches, that must

erelong be separated from the living vine. The love of the world has paralyzed their spiritual life, and they are not awake to the precious theme of redemption. The impression made on the world by these professed Christians is unfavorable to the religion of Christ. They 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 on eternal things. They feast 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 hearts 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 his growth in grace will be more and more vigorous, as the principles of truth are carried out in his daily life.

He who is in harmony with God will constantly depend on him for strength. "Be ye therefore perfect, even 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 sure 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 diffuse light and gladness 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 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," thus 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."

March 17, 1887

Rest in Christ

"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."

Thus Jesus invites the weary and care-laden sons and daughters of Adam to come to him, and lay on him their heavy burdens. But many who hear this invitation, while sighing for rest, yet press on the rugged path, hugging their burdens close to their heart. Jesus loves them, and longs to bear their burdens and themselves also in his strong arms. He would remove the fears and uncertainties that rob them of peace and rest; but they must first come to him, and tell him the secret woes of their heart. He invites the confidence of his people as the proof of their love for him. The gift of the humble, trusting heart is more precious to him than all the wealth that riches can bestow. If they would only come to him in the simplicity and confidence with which a child would come to his parents, the divine touch of his hands would relieve them of their burdens.

Jesus, our compassionate Saviour, is the way, the truth, and the life. Why will we not accept his gracious offer of mercy, believe his words of promise, and not make the way of life so hard? As we travel the precious road cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, let us not overcast it with doubts and gloomy forebodings, and pursue our way murmuring and groaning, as though 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 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 come to Jesus with our trials and difficulties. Sometimes we pour our troubles into human ears, and tell our afflictions to those who cannot help us, and neglect to confide all to Jesus, who is able to change the sorrowful way to paths of joy and peace. Self-denying, self-sacrificing gives glory and victory to the cross. The promises of God 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 all, ministers and people, would take their burdens and perplexities to Jesus, who is waiting to receive them, and to give them peace and rest! He will never forsake those who put their trust in him.

Wickedness prevails at the present day. 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 in confiding faith trust in him. His meekness and lowliness, cherished in the heart, will bring peace and rest, and give moral power to every soul.

The shortness of time is frequently urged as an incentive for seeking righteousness and making Christ our friend. This should not be the great motive with us; for it savors of selfishness. Is it necessary that the terrors of the day of God should be held before us, that we may be compelled to right action through fear? It ought not to be so. 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 us, 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 count them as his 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 Jesus as our Redeemer. He has a right to command our love, but he invites us to give him our heart. He calls us to walk with him in the path of humble, truthful obedience. His invitation to us is a call to a pure, holy, and happy life,-- a life of peace and rest, of liberty and love,--and to a rich inheritance in the future, immortal life. Which will we choose--liberty in Christ, or bondage and tyranny in the service of Satan? Why should we reject the invitation of mercy, and refuse the proffers of divine love? If we choose to live with Christ through the ceaseless ages of eternity, why not choose him now as our most loved and trusted friend, our best and wisest Counselor?

It is our privilege to have daily a calm, close, happy walk with Jesus. We need not be alarmed if the path lies through conflicts and sufferings. We may have the peace which passeth understanding; but it will cost us battles with the powers of darkness, struggles severe against selfishness and inbred sin. The victories gained daily through

persevering, untiring effort in well-doing will be precious through Christ who has 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." We should seek to obtain the excellence of Christ. In the face of temptation we should school ourselves to firm endurance, nor should we allow one murmuring thought to arise, although we may be weary with toil and pressed with care.

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 indeed be discouraging. How could we know how to sympathize with the burdened, the sorrowing, the afflicted, and to afford them the help they need, if we had never experienced similar trials ourselves?

We can never have a clear appreciation of the value of our Redeemer, until, by an eye of faith, we see him taking upon himself the nature of man, the capacity to suffer, and then reaching the very depths of human wretchedness, that by his divine power he might save even the vilest sinner. Jesus died that the sinner might live,--that God's justice might be preserved, and guilty man pardoned. The Son of the Highest suffered shame on the cross, that sinners might not suffer everlasting shame and contempt, but be ransomed, and crowned with eternal glory. Why is it that we have so little sense of sin, so little penitence? It is because we do not come nearer to the cross of Christ. We do not consider the Captain of our salvation, and our conscience becomes hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

The cross of Calvary appeals to us in power, affording a reason why we should love our Saviour, and why we should make him first and last and best in everything. We should take our fitting place in humble penitence at the foot of the cross. Here, as we see our Saviour in agony, the Son of God dying, the just for the unjust, we may learn lessons of meekness and lowliness of mind. Behold Him who with one word could summon legions of angels to his assistance, a subject of jest and merriment, of reviling and hatred. He gives himself a sacrifice for sin. When reviled, he threatens not; when falsely accused, he opens 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 bears the penalty of man's sins 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 pleasure in forbidden joys and sinful indulgences, you who are scattering from Christ, look upon the cross of Calvary; behold the royal victim suffering on your account, and while you have opportunity be wise, and seek the fountain of life and true happiness. Come, you who complain and murmur at the little inconveniences and the few trials you must meet in this life, look on Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith. He turned from his royal throne, his high command, and, laying aside his divinity, clothed himself with humanity. For our sakes he was rejected and despised; he became poor that we through his poverty might be made rich. Can you, beholding by the eye of faith the sufferings of Christ, tell your trials, your tale of woe? Can you nurse revenge in your heart while you remember the prayer that came from the pale and quivering lips of Christ for his revilers, his murderers: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do"?

There is a work before us to subdue the pride and vanity that seek a place in our hearts, and through penitence and faith to bring ourselves into familiar and holy converse with 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, and let him appear in our character and conversation. While we look constantly to Him whom our sins have pierced and our sorrows have burdened, we shall acquire strength to be like Him. Our lives, our deportment, will testify how highly we prize our Redeemer, and the salvation he has wrought out for us at such a cost to himself. And our peace will be as a river while we bind ourselves in willing, happy captivity to Jesus.

It is high time that we devoted the few precious remaining 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 around the great white throne.

March 24, 1887

Religion and Health

"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 to 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." 2 Kings 1:2-4.

In this narrative we have a most striking display of the divine displeasure against those who turn from God to Satanic agencies. A short time previous to the events here 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 worshiped Baal, and provoked the 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.

In his father's time this wicked king of Israel had heard and seen much of the wondrous works of the Most High. What terrible evidence of his severity and jealousy had God given his apostate people! And yet Ahaziah acted 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 commanded his servants, "Go, inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease."

This idol was supposed, through the medium of its priests, to give information 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 he who instituted, and still maintains, the worship of idols, as a means of diverting the minds of

men from God.

The story of Ahaziah's sin and punishment contains a lesson of warning which none can disregard with impunity. 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. Though we do not pay homage to heathen gods, yet thousands in civilized and Christian countries are worshiping at Satan's shrine as verily as did the king of Israel. Every day adds sorrowful evidence that faith in the sure word of prophecy is 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 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 heathen oracles of ages long past have their counterpart in the spiritualistic mediums, the clairvoyants and fortune-tellers of today. The mysteries of heathen worship are replaced by the secret associations and seances, the obscurities and wonders, of the sorcerers of our time. And their disclosures are eagerly received by thousands who refuse to accept light from the word or the Spirit of God. They speak with scorn of the magicians of old, while the great deceiver laughs in triumph as they yield to his arts under a different form.

These Satanic agents claim to cure disease. They attribute their power to electricity, magnetism, or the so-called "sympathetic remedies," while 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.

God has made it our duty to preserve our physical powers in the best possible condition, that we may render to him acceptable service. He has placed it in our power to obtain a knowledge of the laws of health. Those who refuse to make use of the 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.

Many are unwilling to put forth the effort that is necessary in order to obtain a

knowledge of the laws of life, and the simple means to be used for the restoration of health. They do not place themselves in right relations to life. When sickness comes as the result of their transgressions of natural law, they do not seek to correct their errors, and then ask the blessing of God on their course.

Not a few, in this Christian age and Christian nation, resort to mediums 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 though he were standing by her side. And in how many instances is the future life of the child controlled by a Satanic power which it seems impossible to break!

Again: 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. 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?

Ahaziah sent his servants to inquire of Baal-zebub at Ekron; but instead of a message from the idol, he heard 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." The Lord had cause to be greatly displeased at Ahaziah's impiety. What had he not done to win the hearts of sinful men, and to inspire them with unwavering confidence in his care and affection? 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 that 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 the king turned for help to the Lord's worst enemy.

The Hebrews were the only nation favored with a knowledge of the true God. And when the king 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 some agent of the power of darkness.

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 exercise an intelligent, consistent faith in the promises of God, instead of placing so much confidence in deceitful agencies, they would realize in soul and body the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit.

There is danger in departing in the least degree from the Lord's instruction. When we deviate from the plain path of duty, a train of circumstances will arise that seems 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 of offending 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 encouragements, its threatenings and its promises. We need the perfect example that we find 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. These workers of iniquity are not few; and their path is marked by desolated homes, blasted reputations, and broken hearts. But of all this the world knows little; and Satan exults in the ruin that has been wrought.

Those who give themselves up to the sorcery of Satan may be able to boast of great benefit received thereby; but does this prove their course to be wise or safe? What if life should be prolonged or temporal gain secured? Will it pay in the end to disregard the will of God? Oh, no; all such apparent gain will at the last prove an irrecoverable loss.

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 appealed to apostate Israel: "If the Lord be God, serve him; but if Baal, then serve him."

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."

March 31, 1887

How Should Christians 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." 1 Peter 3:3, 4.

The human heart has never been in harmony with the requirements of God. Human reasoning has ever sought to evade or set aside the simple, direct instructions of his word. 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 has led to the adoption of the fashions, customs, and principles of the world. Vital godliness has given 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 to their simplicity, have lost, in a great measure, their early power.

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.

Notwithstanding their profession of godliness, many can hardly be distinguished from the unbelievers. They do not enjoy a religious life. Their time and means are devoted to the one object of dressing for display. Will not my Christian sisters reflect candidly and prayerfully on 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 of

untold value if spent in seeking to acquire right principles and solid attainments. But 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 probationary time in needless labor for display? The Lord would be pleased to 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, being a blessing to the world and an honor to her Creator.

I would ask the youth of today who profess to be followers of Christ, wherein they deny self for his sake. When they really desire some article of dress, or some ornament or luxury, 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 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 with debt, and yet the children were not trained to deny themselves 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 they were told that it would be impossible to

gratify their desires, the matter did not end there. The wish was expressed again and again, thus continually adding to the heavy burden of the parents. On another visit I saw the coveted musical instrument in the house, and knew that some hundreds of dollars had been added to the burden of debt. I hardly know 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 of Christ 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 take more interest in spiritual things than in those of a worldly nature. 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 wish to emphasize this thought, 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. He came to earth, veiling his dignity [divinity] with humanity. He had the command of worlds, he could summon the hosts of Heaven at his will; yet for our sakes he 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. In the cluster of Christian graces, he made meekness and humility prominent. He would have his disciples study these divine attributes, and seek to possess them. "Learn of me," he says; "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. Physical loveliness consists in symmetry, the harmonious proportion of parts; but spiritual loveliness consists in harmony with Christ, the likeness of our souls to him. The grace of Christ is indeed a priceless adornment. It elevates and ennobles its possessor, and it has an influence upon others, attracting them also to the Source of light and blessing.

"Our conversation is in Heaven," said the apostle; "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 lifts 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. But those who seek only to gratify the desires of the unconsecrated heart, will float with the current of worldliness and fashion. They will talk of what they love most, and give thought and study to that, until by beholding they are changed to the same earthly image. Their conformity to worldly customs holds them in captivity to the god of this world; for "his servants ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey."

Jesus is our only safe pattern; and his life is 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 manifesting his spirit, and by self-denial in obeying his words?

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 it lay in his power to do! My brother, my sister, there are all around you 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 your means, or expend it in the indulgence of pride. Remember that he will one day say, "Give an account of thy stewardship." Let us invest in the bank of Heaven the means intrusted to our care, 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 his glory.

April 7, 1887

Witnesses for Christ

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony."

Ere the Saviour was parted from his disciples, and a cloud received him out of their sight, his parting words to them were, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me." In his absence they were to be his witnesses and representatives on the earth. How faithfully they fulfilled their high commission is shown by their life of self-denial for their Master's cause, and by their joyful, triumphant witness for him and his truth in the face of torture, imprisonment, and death.

The words of our divine Lord have lost none of their force through the lapse of ages. There is a call for faithful witnesses in these days of hypocrisy and hollow formalism. But how few, even among the professed ambassadors for Christ, are ready to give a faithful personal testimony for their Master. They can tell what the great and good 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.

We would ask these ministers of Christ, What have you to say for yourselves. What soul-conflicts have you passed through that have given you a rich experience, and have been for the good of souls and for the glory of God? Does your character testify for Christ? Can you speak from experience 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 witnesses 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." How many are there who manifest their love by willing

obedience, making the service of Christ their first consideration, and worldly things secondary?

How often, even in the sacred desk, self is exalted, and the glory of God forgotten. And yet if the minister has not felt in his own heart the sanctifying influence of truth, if true piety and the power of the Holy Spirit are wanting, his labor will be an injury to the people to whom he ministers. Such men do not preach Christ from an experimental knowledge of him, but, parrot-like, repeat what they have learned from others. To this class the Lord addresses the question, "What hast thou to do to declare my statutes?"

Let us lift up Jesus--lift him up before the people; let us dwell upon his matchless love. But the heart must be imbued with that love before we can speak it, preach it, pray it, 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 shine forth in the character of his witnesses.

How many cling with great tenacity to their self-styled dignity, which is only self-esteem. In conversation, more time is spent in talking of self than in exalting the riches of the grace of Christ. These persons seek to honor themselves instead of waiting in humbleness of heart for Christ to honor them. They would teach others how to perfect a Christian character; but they have not such a character themselves. They have not learned of Him who says, "I am meek and lowly of heart."

Humility is inseparable from holiness of heart. 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 had been caught up into the third Heaven, and heard things that it was not lawful for a man to utter, spoke of himself as "less than the least of all saints." It was the beloved John, that leaned on Jesus's breast, and beheld his glory, who fell before the angels as one dead. The more closely and continuously we behold our Saviour the less we shall see to approve in ourselves.

In this age of the world, there is a feverish love of pleasure, a fearful increase of licentiousness, a contempt for all authority. Not only worldlings, but professed Christians also, are governed by inclination rather than duty. And yet the signs of the times are pointing us to the near approach of our Lord. The words of Christ are sounding down through the ages, "Watch and pray." Paul warns: "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."

Is it indeed true that the end of this world's history is near, and 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? And yet how necessary it is that there should be vigilance on the part of those who are set as watchmen on the walls of Zion. How many there are 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, and let the people be warned.

"Ye are my witnesses," saith the Lord. A living Christian will have a living testimony to bear. If we have been following Jesus step by step, we shall have something to relate of the way he has led us. We can tell of battles fought and victories gained. We can tell how we have tested the promises of God, and found them true. We can point to a living experience without going back 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. The conflict was grievous; but I humbled my heart before God, and wept in penitence before him. My trembling faith grasped the promises, and appropriated them to myself. Jesus revealed himself to me as a present help; and through him I have gained the victory." What a softening, subduing influence such testimonies would have on the heart of the unconverted or the backslider. They would realize that God was speaking through clay, and religion would seem a reality.

In this time of general intemperance and worldliness, every true Christian, who

would practice the principles of truth as well as assent to them, will have a battle to fight. The Captain of our salvation calls for witnesses fresh from the field of action. Those who have been fiercely assaulted by the enemy of righteousness, and have conducted themselves as did Jesus in his hour of trial, will have a testimony to bear which will thrill the heart. They will indeed be witnesses for Jesus.

Living witnesses for Christ will manifest piety at home. Those who fail to do this are denying their faith. Piety in the home 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; there is a sad lack of tenderness and sympathy. The servants of Christ do not love as brethren. They are harsh and dictatorial. Especially is their conduct toward the erring destitute of pity or compassion. In dealing with them, the caution of the apostle is forgotten, "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."

Jesus has given us an example of pity and love for the erring. While he reproved sin, he regarded the sinner with compassion. Looking to 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."

But while the servant of Christ should seek with all patience and love to save sinners, he should on no account permit compassion for the erring to degenerate into apology for transgression; for by excusing and palliating sin, we lose a sense of its heinous character. In order to preserve the safe mean, the Christian must add to patience godliness. Then he will see as God sees.

April 14, 1887

Walking in the Light

"Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you."

We are under obligations, as Christians, to let our light so shine before the world, that others, seeing our good works, may glorify our Father in Heaven. But we cannot exert a right influence upon others unless we walk in the light ourselves. If we have experienced the pardoning grace of God, and have his love in our hearts, we can, as opportunity presents, speak in counsel and affectionate entreaty to those who are in danger of losing eternal life; and our consistent deportment will give force to our words.

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 appreciated the blessings God has given them, and, while they share these blessings with others who are less fortunate, sought to win them to Christ. And many thus make life miserable by their own selfishness and love of ease. By diligent activity, their lives might become as bright rays of sunshine. If they would spend their energies in seeking to guide those who are in the dark road to death into the pathway to Heaven, their own hearts would be filled with the peace and joy that passes understanding.

It is for our profit in this life, and for our eternal interest, that we manifest earnestness and zeal in the work of God. In the wise providence of God, we are incapable of looking into the future. This often causes us disquietude and unhappiness; but one of the greatest evidences we have of the lovingkindness of God is his concealment of the events of the morrow. Our ignorance of tomorrow make 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 willing to follow the leadings of his providence. 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 for the coming of our Lord. Every man has been assigned his work, and the Master expects each one to do his part with fidelity. We are to sow beside all waters, 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 men of excellent ability,--men ambitious in worldly pursuits,--for whose salvation no efforts are made through fear of a repulse. But the skill and energy that make them successful in worldly pursuits, would, 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 shall endure through the ceaseless ages of eternity.

All the elements of character which help to make a man 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 nobler than worldly pursuits, as the heavens are higher than the earth. Jesus presents 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 desire for excellence and elevation; but he would have them seek, not for perishable treasure or fleeting honor, but for that which is enduring.

There is no place in the vineyard of God for listless souls. Ministers sometimes tell the people that they have nothing to do but believe; that Jesus has done it all, and their 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 just according 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 when those who are striving for eternal life aim high. There are 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 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. With a heart true to God, and imbued with his Spirit, he will see much to grieve over while surrounded by those who have thrown off their allegiance to the God of Heaven, and are on the side of the great rebel. 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 to 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 follow a multitude to do evil, because it is fashionable to do so. His soul will be vexed 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 advance the kingdom of Christ. As never before, resistance must be made against sin,--against the powers of darkness. But if, bowed by affliction and worn with toil, we feel impatient 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 hearts we may hear the words: "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

A gift from the hand of God awaits the overcomer, who walks in the light even to the end of the race. Not one of us deserves it; it will be a free gift. Wonderful and glorious will be this gift; but let us remember that "one star differeth from another star in glory." 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 brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever."

April 21, 1887

Growth in Grace

"Grow in grace;" says the apostle Peter, "and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." This is the rule of Christian living. But many, both individuals and churches, are like sickly plants, and make but a feeble growth. And the question is constantly pressing, What can be done to promote and maintain spiritual life in the churches?

Many churches have but a small membership. Must they therefore become inactive, 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 be able to use 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 devote all the energies of mind and heart to the work of making their church one of the most prosperous in the land, and one of the most efficient in its Heaven-appointed mission,--the work of rescuing perishing souls.

When Christ's mission on earth was ended, and he ascended to his Father, 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, nor 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, and were faithful stewards of the grace committed to them, they would make greater advancement in spiritual things. The solemn burden resting upon them would lead 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, nor by the names enrolled upon the church book, but by what she is actually doing for the Master, by the number of her faithful, persevering workers. Personal work,

and vigilant, individual effort, will effect more for the cause of Christ than can be accomplished by sermons or creeds.

True followers of Christ, the world over, will be Christ-like. 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 the disciples of Christ, while in works they deny him, are serving the arch-enemy in disguise. They are robing themselves in the garments of righteousness to conceal a worldly, selfish, unregenerate nature, and 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; and they are constantly exerting an influence contrary to true godliness.

We are taught in the word of God that it is the duty of Christ's followers to prove to the world that while Christianity will lead to industry and economy, it will also condemn avarice and over-reaching, and every other form of dishonesty. The talent, energy, and zeal will not be devoted exclusively to money-getting, but will be used in the interest of the church and the cause of God everywhere. 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. Unwavering integrity marked the character and life of Christ; one of the principles of Heaven was 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.

As he came to Christ, so Satan will come with his temptations to every Christian. "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 gain. But though for a time they may appear to be prosperous and happy, 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 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 integrity and consistent life of his faithful followers. Such Christians render effectual service to their Master.

A 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 among the true children of God. Worldlings are constantly watching and criticising with keenness and severity those who profess to serve God, yet 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 needs 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 though 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. The true disciple of Christ 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 the rule of life with all Christians who are truly growing in grace. Our influence, whether for good or evil, will affect others, and will live when we are no more. Then let us so live that our friends and associates may see that we are governed by the divine rule, full of wisdom and love. A pure, unselfish, well-ordered Christian life is the strongest argument that can be presented in favor of the religion we profess. Such a 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 those of his great adversary. If Jesus dwells in the heart, he will be

exemplified in the words, in the deportment, in all the acts and purposes of life. Such Christians will be connected with the Living Vine; they will be nourished by the sap in the parent stock, and will grow, and bring forth fruit in good works. They will have favor with God and with men. Peace and joy will be shed around their pathway, and glory will be reflected back to God.

The true spirit of the Christian religion is one of self-sacrifice; self-denial is required at every step. Jesus came down from Heaven to teach us how to live; and his life was one of toil and self-denial. He went about doing good, and those who are truly his representatives will follow his example in working for the good of others. They will delight to advance the interests of the cause of God, both at home and abroad. They will be seen and heard, and their influence will be felt in the prayer-meeting. Yet they do not seek to exalt self, or to receive credit for doing a great work, but labor humbly, meekly, faithfully, doing small errands if they are called for, or a greater work if necessary, to testify their love and gratitude to Christ, who has done so much for them.

May 5, 1887

A Sabbath Reform

"And the temple of God was opened in Heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament."

In holy vision John saw a door opened in Heaven. It is the arm of Almighty Power that has opened this door, and no man can shut it. Through this open door is revealed the temple of God, in the Most Holy Place of which is the ark, and in this ark is the law of ten commandments, written with the finger of God on tables of stone.

Glancing down the stream of time, the prophet sees a people whose attention is directed to the temple of God. The light that shines from the open door arrests their attention, and they begin to see that it contains the law of ten commandments. The angel of Revelation 14 is represented as flying in the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." This angel presents a message that is to be proclaimed to the world just before Christ comes in the clouds of heaven to take his elect to himself. Just prior to this time, then, the attention of the people is to be called to the down-trodden law of God, which is contained in the ark of the testament.

The people of God are seeking for light; and as they examine his law, precept by precept, they find in its bosom the fourth commandment as it was instituted in Eden, and proclaimed in awful grandeur from Sinai's mount: "Remember the Sabbath-day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it."

They see that instead of observing the seventh day, the day that God sanctified, and commanded to be observed as the Sabbath, they are keeping the first day of the week. But they honestly desire to do God's will, and they begin to search the Scriptures

to find the reason for the change. Failing to find any scriptural authority for the custom, the question arises, Shall we accept a truth that has become unpopular, and obey the commandments of God, or shall we continue with the world, and obey the commandments of men? With open Bibles they weep, and pray, and compare scripture with scripture, until, convinced of the truth, they conscientiously take their stand as keepers of the commandments of God.

As the Scriptures were opened to the first seekers for truth, they saw what their work must be. Said the prophet: "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."

Many and determined were the efforts made to overthrow the faith of those who would build up the old waste places, and heal the breach in the law of God. How hard evil men, headed by the prince of darkness, tried to close the door that had been opened into the sanctuary where Jesus had entered to make atonement for his people! Christ had opened the door, or ministration, of the Most Holy Place, and light was shining out, that all who desired might see the claims of the fourth commandment, and believe. God had established his law, and not a jot or tittle of it was to be annulled.

As those who had received the light of truth went forth to present it to others, they met opposition on every hand. Their names were cast out as evil, and they suffered privation and want; and yet from the first the work has moved steadily forward. Thousands have accepted the truth in America, and it has been carried to all parts of the world; people of all languages and nationalities are taking their stand upon it.

Many more will yet accept the truth on the Sabbath reform; but we must not expect a large number of the great men of earth to obey; the cross is too heavy for them to lift. How was it in Christ's day? Many of the rulers and chief men of the Jews believed his teaching; but they would not acknowledge it for fear of losing influence

with their fellowmen. The same spirit exists today; and that which prevented the Pharisees from confessing the truth, will prevent many from confessing it now.

The questions for each one to settle are, What is truth? and, What is your aim in life? If your object is to meet the world's standard, to accept the world's maxims and practices, the words of truth will have little weight with you. But if you have an earnest desire to answer the claims that God has upon you, if your desire is to be connected with God, and to reach the highest round of the ladder of progress in the divine life, then, when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him. But it is your own efforts, through the grace of Christ, that will bring you perfection of character. When the path of duty is opened before you, you are not at liberty to consult your own convenience; you are required to walk in the path of humble obedience. All who enter Heaven will do so as conquerors. You will have battles to fight; you will have difficulties to meet that can only be overcome by strong, determined resistance. But eternal life is worth a life-long, persevering effort.

We are not at liberty to cast our souls away; we are not at liberty to place ourselves under Satan's influence, and become slaves to his will. "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price," even the precious blood of the Son of God; "therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." We belong to God. He has claims upon us which we cannot throw off; we may ignore them, we may refuse to yield to his wise requirements, but they are nevertheless binding upon us. Says the True Witness, "I know thy works." Every day of our lives we have something to do to improve our God-given abilities. He has given us reasoning powers; and if we in any way weaken those powers, we shall be called to an account by the righteous Judge of all the earth. He has given us talents; and if these talents are rightly employed, our ability to work for the Master will be increased.

When the light of truth shines upon our path, and conscience is convicted, shall we turn away from the Heaven-sent warnings because all will not obey them? Shall we ask our friends and acquaintances whether it is best for us to obey the invitations of the Spirit of God?--No; these friends may make us err, but they cannot pay a ransom for our souls.

None are forced to accept of Jesus and his truth, but all are invited to do so. Life and death are placed before us, and it is for us to choose which we will have. A great

work is to be done for us all before we can attain to perfection of Christian character. The mighty lever of truth takes us out of the quarry of the world, and places us in the work-shop of God, where we must submit to be hewed, and squared, and polished, if we would be fitted for the heavenly building.

The law of God is the standard of righteousness. It is the mirror into which we are to look to discern the defects in our character. When we look into a mirror, it reveals the defects of our dress or person; but it does not remove a single imperfection. These we must remedy ourselves. So it is with the law of God. The law is God's great mirror, or moral detector of sin; but there is no saving quality in law; it has no power to pardon the transgressor. There is a provision made for the sinner: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Then what is the work before the sinner?--It is to exercise repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. In the precious blood of the Son of God, the stains of sin may all be washed away. There is a fountain open for Judah and Jerusalem, and the defilement of sin will be removed from all who will wash in this fountain.

Dear friends, you each have a case pending in the court of Heaven. Have you secured an advocate to plead in your behalf? Jesus is man's intercessor, and we must make him our friend or we shall lose our case. Now is the time for us to walk humbly with God, to watch unto prayer, and be diligent students of the Scriptures, that we may know the truth and obey it, and gain eternal life in the Paradise of God. Basel, Switzerland.

May 19, 1887

Search the Scriptures

Every Christian should become thoroughly acquainted with the word of God. The importance of this study can hardly be over estimated. "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 a 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.

It is of but little profit to read a certain number of chapters daily, or to commit to memory a stipulated amount, without careful thought as to the meaning of the sacred text. Earnest attention and prayerful study are required. 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 searches the word of God as for hid treasure find truths which are concealed from careless seekers.

Great pains should be taken to establish a right habit of study. If the mind wanders, bring it back. If the intellectual and moral taste has been perverted by overwrought and exciting tales of fiction, so that the mind is disinclined to the diligent study of God's word, then there is a battle to be fought with self to overcome this depraved habit. A love for fictitious reading should be broken up at once; and 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. I have known persons of well-balanced minds, whom God had endowed with mental powers of no ordinary character, to take up the reading of romance; and the more they indulged the appetite for this kind of mental 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.

There is another source of danger against which we should constantly be on our guard, and that is the works of infidel authors. Such works are inspired by Satan, and no one can read them without loss to the soul. 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. They invite his temptations, and they have neither wisdom to discern nor strength to resist them. With a fascinating, bewitching power, unbelief and infidelity fasten themselves upon the mind. To harbor them is like 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; and 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.

To the youth I would say, Be careful what you read. So long as the mind is directed into wrong channels by an improper course of reading, it is impossible for you to make the truth of God the constant subject of meditation. If there was ever a time when a knowledge of the Scriptures was more important than at any other, that time is the present. I appeal to old and young, Make the Bible your text-book. Here you will find the true standard of character. Here you will learn what is required of you in order to become a child of God.

Parents and children should improve the precious opportunity for the study of God's word which is afforded by the Sabbath-school. Sufficient time should be devoted to the study of the lesson to obtain a thorough knowledge of the facts presented, and of the spiritual truths which these facts are designed to teach. Special pains should be taken to impress upon the minds of the young the importance of seeking the full significance of the scripture under consideration.

Parents should set apart a little time each day for the study of the Sabbath-school lesson with their children. They should give up the social visit if need be, rather than sacrifice the hour devoted to the precious lessons in 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 the memory may be defective, it will gain strength by exercise, so that after a time you will delight in thus treasuring up the precious words of truth; and the habit will prove a most valuable aid to religious growth.

What blessings would be secured if the time that is worse than wasted in gossip, in ministering to pride or the gratification of appetite, were devoted with equal interest to the study of the Bible. 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, it is not strange that the children themselves soon learn to regard dress and display as of more consequence than the things which concern their eternal interests.

Parents, upon you rests an important and solemn responsibility. Make it your life-work to form the characters of your children according to the standard given in the word of God. 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.

The study of the Scriptures in the family should be conducted with system. It is better to neglect anything of a temporal nature, to dispense with all unnecessary sewing and with needless provision for the table, than to neglect to feed the soul 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 study of the Scriptures. Make the Bible its own expositor, bringing together all that is said concerning a subject at various times and under different circumstances. Do not break up the home class for callers or visitors. If they come in, invite them to take part in the exercises. Let it be seen that you consider a knowledge of the word of God of great importance. All through the book of revelation are scattered the glad words of truth, and peace, and joy. These precious 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 wherever we study the Bible with a prayerful heart, the Holy Spirit is near to open to us the meaning of the words we read.

The youth should be taught to love the study of the Bible. The first place in our thoughts and affections should be given to the Book of books; for it contains knowledge that we need above all other. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Let us seek to be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Let us draw near to God, that his angels may protect and bless us. Thus may we gain the victory over the powers of darkness, and finally receive the crown of glory, honor, and immortal life in the kingdom of God. Basel, Switzerland.

May 19, 1887

Individual Effort

It is in the power of every woman as well as every man to be a light to the world. Such home workers are needed in every church, and these home missionaries, if faithful to their great trust, can do a great amount of good. God will require at their hands the souls of those who live right at their own doors. With much prayer, with humility, you should seek, brethren and sisters, to know more and more of the truth, that you may be able to impart it to others. Train the mind, bind about the thoughts, center upon Heaven, and upon heavenly things, and strive to gain the confidence of your neighbors. Visit them, read the Scriptures with them, and suggest a season of prayer. It will require greater humility, greater faith, greater piety, than many of our church members possess, to do this work, but it will accomplish good. Be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Seek to have your instruction easy and simple, and at the same time thorough, so that those who are not familiar with the truth, will understand and comprehend it. You can at least sow the seed in the best way possible; it may fall into good ground.

We have few home missionaries, because there are so few church members who are connected with Christ. There ought to be far more personal labor than there now is. This work will accomplish much more than pulpit labor. Satan knows this, and he tries to keep the mind employed with unnecessary things. The time that mothers spend in the ornamentation of their own, and their children's clothing might profitably be spent in searching the Scriptures, in prayer, and in preparation to do this kind of labor. They should thus be laying upon the foundation, gold, silver, and precious stones, material that will be lasting as eternal ages. The fires of the last day cannot consume this kind of work, for it is impossible to destroy it. But your endless stitching, your ornamentation to gratify pride, your needless preparation of dishes for your tables, to gratify the appetite, is laying upon the foundation, hay, wood and stubble. If your own souls escape, your life work is lost. You obtain no reward. But the question is, Will these souls be saved, who have spent their time in nurturing vanity and pride in the hearts of their children? The great day will reveal their work, of what sort it is. What does God think of my work? should be asked by every soul. Am I doing those things only which are necessary for the decency, and comfort, and for the religious good of my family? These questions will be asked at the Judgment, and why not put them to the soul now?

Let not self be fostered. Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, else moral feeling will be blunted, and the sense of duty clouded, the response of conscience more feeble, and unsanctified self-reliance will dictate and control. May God help you to secure a clear title to an inheritance among the sanctified. Do not wait for a more favorable time. Whose time are you using? It is God's. He gave it to you to use for this very purpose. You are not to put business first and your soul's interest second; but you are to be doers of the words of Christ. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all necessary things shall be added." See that your life is hid with Christ in God before you enter into any business. Pray, believe, take Jesus with you, and he will guide your efforts; and if success attends them, do not become puffed up and think it is yourself that should receive the praise. It was God who worked in you to will and to do his good pleasure. You are not to take one atom of the glory; but you are to glorify God, and try to help everyone engaged in his work to understand that the secret of success is in Christ Jesus. Shall we become just such workers as he would have us become? Shall we have a firm hold from above? Shall we be true to God in every place, to co-operate with him? God help us is my earnest prayer. Satan will throw around us his influence to inspire us with ideas, to supply our motives, and lead us to have increased attachment to the world, by blunting our moral sensibilities, and by confirming us in selfishness and self-esteem. We need a great increase of spiritual perception, in order that we may not be ignorant of Satan's devices.

The opportunities and privileges granted will lose their value, unless we make haste to improve them. We should be constantly moving toward the light, co-operating with God in the plan of salvation. As the grace of God attracts us, we are to advance toward the light, and not make our chances of co-operating with God less and less by moving away from him.

Who will faint now in the field of labor? Let every man and every woman be ambitious to win from the Master the benediction of "well done, thou good and faithful servant." The great day will reveal the character of every man's work. Let all labor unselfishly in the vineyard of the Lord. Let them sow in faith and in tears, putting up the earnest prayer that there will be a harvest of souls to reap. Will all go to work now for time and for eternity? Those who cherish self-esteem and pride can make no headway in this work. Experimental piety is necessary to demonstrate the truth and to show its practical value by its saving influence on the life and character.

We are in need of Bible missionaries; those who have connected themselves with God, and who will examine themselves daily to see if there is not some defect in their character; those who will look into the great looking-glass, God's law, to see if it does not condemn some practice in which they are indulging. All should bear in mind that it is only those who are without spot or wrinkle who can stand acquitted before God. The temper, the taste, the thoughts, the feelings,--all must be brought to the test of God's word. This will be serious work for each one of us now; but it will be more serious when the Judgment shall sit, and the books be opened, and the defects of character appear just as they are when every case is decided for life or for death. The weighing of character in the balances of the sanctuary is God's work, but the close study of the Bible, the bringing up of our characters to God's standard is our work. Our great danger is of stopping short of full consecration of ourselves to God; of being Christians only in name. God holds us accountable for the great light that shines upon our pathway. He has done all for us that a God could do. He has placed salvation within our reach, and the question for us to decide now is, Will we make the most of these blessings? Mrs. E. G. White

May 26, 1887

The Divine Estimate of Worldly Wisdom

"Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God; for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men; for all things are yours."

Such is the admonition of Paul to the Corinthian church. He would not have them dazzled or misled by those who were "wise in this world." Instead of seeking distinction, they must become fools in the estimation of worldly wise men, if they would become wise in the estimation of God. Extraordinary talent was not to be considered the chief thing; for unless consecrated to God, and sanctified by his Spirit, it would prove a curse rather than a blessing.

"The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." The wisdom of this world is too highly valued, the wisdom from above too little sought, by the professed people of the Lord. Men may have a knowledge of Christian doctrine, and yet understand little of Christian experience. Many are keen, apt, prompt, in worldly affairs, while they manifest little interest, tact, or energy in the service of God. They do not bring their talent and shrewdness into exercise in watching to discern the devices of Satan, and studying how they may outgeneral the enemy. They do not summon all their powers to form wise plans, and to make earnest, systematic effort to advance the cause of God.

Every man, of whatever trade or profession, should make the cause of God his first interest; he should not only exercise his talents to advance the Lord's work, but he should cultivate his ability to this end. The wisdom and energy used in worldly, temporal things should be devoted to spiritual and eternal things. Many a man devotes months and years to the acquirement of a trade or profession that he may become successful in worldly matters, who yet makes no effort to cultivate those talents which would make him a successful laborer in the vineyard of the Lord. This is the great sin of the professed people of God. They serve themselves and serve the world; they become shrewd, successful financiers; but they neglect to use in his service the talents which

God has given them. Their tact in worldly matters is becoming stronger through exercise; that in spiritual things is becoming weaker through inactivity.

The present is a time when these talents, used in the cause of God, would tell with great effect in the upbuilding of his kingdom. But Satan has outgeneraled us in this matter. There are men professing godliness, who are false teachers, tempters, seducers. They have cultivated their talents in this direction, and they employ all their ingenuity in disseminating unbelief, impiety, infidelity. Had the true followers of Christ been cultivating their ability with equal zeal and diligence, they might now be wise enough to discern the devices of Satan; they would be prepared to stand in defense of the truth, and to meet and successfully expose the deceptions of the ungodly.

The church of Christ, and especially the ministers of the gospel, are building up the temple of the Lord,--building upon the foundation-stone, which is Christ himself. Paul testifies: "Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it." We are building for eternity; and it is doubly important now that we take heed how we build. If we indulge doubt and unbelief, we are bringing worthless material to the foundation-stone. It is only as we labor in faith that we can bring to the building that which is precious and enduring. Many are drifting into darkness and infidelity, picking flaws with the Bible, and bringing in superstitious inventions, unscriptural doctrines, and philosophical speculations; others divert the mind from important truths by exciting trifling inquiries and disputations. Those who permit themselves to be thus hindered are giving place to the adversary, while they might be bringing gold, silver, and precious stones to lay upon the foundation.

It is our work to direct souls to the living oracles. We must present to them sound doctrine, even the faith once delivered to the saints. We must show them the truth in its beauty, that they may be led to renounce error. We must instruct them in faith, love, obedience, and hope, that through much prayer they may grow up "a holy temple in the Lord." The day of Judgment will test every man's work. Let us so build that our work may endure the fiery trial.

Paul says: "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." A man of strict fidelity is a valuable steward, though he may not possess as great accomplishments or as high order of talents as do some others. One who seeks to

advance the truth for the glory of God and the good of souls, without respect of persons, and regardless of his own ease, interest, or honor,--such a man should be highly esteemed, though he may not possess learning or eloquence. He is God's nobleman. In the sight of Heaven he presents the highest type of manhood.

And such a man will not lose his reward. Paul testifies: "Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's: and Christ is God's." Here are presented the privileges of true believers. In possessing Christ, they possess all things. As his chosen, redeemed people, they are joint-heirs with him. The abilities, gifts, and services of apostles and ministers are intended for their benefit. All the treasuries of God are opened to them. The world, with everything in it, is theirs, so far as it can do them good. Even the enmity of the wicked will prove a blessing by disciplining them for Heaven. In the promise, "All things are yours," there is bounty without limit; but we must have faith in order to appropriate this promise, and receive the blessings which it offers.

When the Judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened, there will be many astonishing disclosures. Men will not then appear as they now appear to human eyes and finite judgments. Secret sins will then be laid open to the view of all. Motives which have been hidden in the dark chambers of the heart will be revealed. Designing ambitions, selfish purposes, will be seen where the outward appearance told only of a desire to honor God and to do good to men. What revelations will then be made. Men of pure motives and true and noble purpose may now be neglected, slandered, and despised; but they will then appear in their true character, and will be honored with the commendation of God. Hypocritical, ambitious teachers may now be admired and exalted of men; but God, who knows the secrets of the heart, will strip off the deceptive covering, and reveal them as they are. Every hypocrite will be unmasked every slandered believer will be justified, and every faithful steward of God will be approved and rewarded.

Not all are Christ's who adopt his name and wear his badge. Jesus says, "Follow me." Are they following him who indulge sinful habits and enjoy the frivolities of the world? Can we see the footprints of the Saviour in the path they tread?--No. If we have not the Spirit of Christ, we are none of his. We cannot serve two masters; we cannot belong to Christ and to Belial. If in our habits and practices we are the world's, we do not belong to Christ. We may be his in the sense in which the earth and the beasts of the

forest are his, but we are not his chosen ones.

To be Christ's is to be consecrated to his work, to employ every power of the mind and every member of the body to do his will and to advance his glory. It is to open the heart to his word, to contemplate his matchless charms until the overflowing tribute of the soul shall be, "Hear what the Lord has done for me."

The voice of Divine Wisdom, through the words of the apostle, speaks to us as it spoke to the church at Rome more than eighteen hundred years ago: "To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Will we hesitate to choose between the wisdom of this world, which ends in death, and the wisdom from above, which makes us wise unto everlasting life? Basel, Switzerland.

June 2, 1887

Acceptable Obedience

"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."

It is plainly written on the unrenewed heart and on a fallen world, All seek their own. Selfishness is the great law of our degenerate nature. Selfishness occupies the place in the soul where Christ should sit enthroned. But the Lord requires perfect obedience; and if we truly desire to serve him, there will be no question in our minds as to whether we shall obey his requirements or seek our own temporal interests.

The Lord of glory did not consult his convenience or pleasure when he 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. Jesus died, not to save man in his sins, but from his sins. We must leave the error of our ways, take up our cross and follow Christ, denying self, and obeying God at any cost.

Those who profess to serve God, yet really serve mammon, will be visited with judgments. None will be justified in a course of disobedience for the sake of worldly profit. If God would excuse one man, he might all. Those who disregard the Lord's express injunction for personal advantage, are heaping up for themselves future woe. Christ said: "Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves." The people of God should inquire closely if they have not, like the Jews of old, made the house of God a place of merchandise.

Many are 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 pursuit. But the law of God must be considered first of all, and obeyed in spirit and in letter. Jesus, our great exemplar, 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 set at naught the divine law? If God's word, spoken in awful solemnity from the holy mountain, is lightly regarded, what can move the hearts of the children of men?

To be commandment-breakers, it is not necessary that we trample upon the whole moral code. If one precept is disregarded, we are transgressors of the sacred law. The Son of God died to pay the penalty of transgression; then how will he deal with those who, in the face of all this evidence, dare venture in the path of disobedience?

Age does not excuse anyone from obeying the commands of God. Abraham was an old man when the command came to offer up his son Isaac for a burnt-offering. The ardor of his youth had passed away, and it was no longer easy for him to endure hardships and brave dangers. The burden of years was heavy upon him, and he longed for rest from toil and anxiety. The words of the Lord seemed terrible and uncalled-for to the stricken man; yet he never questioned their justice or hesitated in his obedience. He grasped the staff of faith, and in anguish of heart took the hand of his child, beautiful in the rosy health of youth, and went out to obey God. The grand old patriarch was human; his passions and attachments were like ours, and he loved his boy, who was the solace of his old age, and to whom the promise of the Lord had been given.

Abraham 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 promise that had been given in reference to his son. But his obedience was without a murmur or a reproach. His trust in God was implicit. He did not stay to reason with his aching heart, but carried out the divine command to the very letter, till, just as the knife was about to be plunged into the quivering flesh of his child, the word came, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad;" "for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me."

This great act of faith is recorded on the pages of sacred history as an illustrious example to all, even to the end of time. It is an example to us individually. The claims of God upon our faith, our service, 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.

The faith of Abraham is needed in our churches today, to lighten the darkness that gathers around them, shutting out the sweet sunlight of God's love, and dwarfing spiritual growth. Our faith should be prolific of good works; for faith without works is dead. Every duty performed, every sacrifice made in the name of Jesus, brings an exceeding great reward. In the very act of duty, God speaks, and gives his blessing. But he requires of us an entire surrender of the faculties. The mind and heart, the whole being, must be given to his service; or we fall short of becoming true Christians.

And this is our reasonable duty. God has withheld nothing from man that could promote his happiness or secure to him eternal riches. He has clothed the earth with beauty, and furnished it with everything necessary for the comfort of man during his temporal life. And what is infinitely more than this, he has given his Son to die for the redemption of a world that had fallen through sin and folly. Such matchless love, such infinite sacrifice, claims our deepest gratitude, our best and holiest affections.

Many are the hindrances that lie in the path of those who would walk in obedience to the commands of God. There are strong and subtle influences that bind them to the ways of the world; but the power of the Lord can break these chains. He will remove every obstacle from before the feet of his faithful ones, or give them strength and courage to conquer difficulties, if they will earnestly beseech his help. All hindrances will vanish before an earnest, persistent, prayerful effort to do the will of God.

Man has no right to consult his convenience or regard his temporal wants in this matter. God will provide. He who fed Elijah by the brook Cherith, will be mindful of the needs of his children.

Our Saviour knew that many times his followers would be pressed by poverty, and would be anxious and troubled in regard to what they should eat or how they should be clothed; and he cautioned them on this point: "Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" "Behold," he says, "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?"

We have always the promise: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things [the needed things of this life] shall be added unto you." Our heavenly Father knows our needs, and he will provide for them without our giving our time, strength, and affections to the mammon of this world.

June 9, 1887

A Lesson from the Pharisees

"Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses's seat. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works; for they say, and do not."

The scribes and Pharisees took the place of Moses as expounders of the law and judges of the people, and claimed to be invested with similar divine authority. In accordance with these claims, they expected the same deference and obedience from the people that had been accorded to the great lawgiver. Jesus admonished his hearers to follow the teachings of the priests so far as they were in harmony with the law, but not to copy their example; for they neglected the duties which they enjoined upon others.

Notwithstanding the abuse which he received from the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus held no personal grievance against them; and while he openly condemned their acts as opposed to their teaching, and therefore not to be imitated, he made it plain to all that he was not actuated by unkind feeling. Said he: "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."

The leading Jews, in teaching and administering the law, carried the prohibitions of God to unreasonable lengths. They also enjoined a multitude of minute regulations having their foundation in tradition, and unreasonably restraining personal liberty of action. They carried the regulations of eating and drinking so far that the mind was kept on a continual strain to discriminate between what was considered clean and unclean, and to follow out the multitude of injunctions imposed by the priests. All the water was strained, lest the presence of the smallest speck or insect might render it unclean, and therefore unfit to use. The people were thus kept in constant fear of infringing upon customs and traditions taught to them as portions of the law; and life was made a burden by these ceremonies and restrictions.

By their endless round of forms, the Pharisees fixed the minds of the people upon external services, to the neglect of true religion. They failed to connect the thought of

Christ with their ceremonies; and, having forsaken the fountain of living water, they hewed out for themselves broken cisterns that could hold no water.

Not only did the priests, scribes, and rulers reject Christ themselves, but they took the most unfair means to prejudice the people against him, deceiving them by false reports and gross misrepresentations. Said Jesus: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of Heaven against men; for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." These words, condemning this sin of the Pharisees, are applicable to all who follow their example. In all ages of the world truth has been unpopular; for its doctrines are not congenial to the natural mind. The cold professor, the bigot, and the hypocrite are not willing to accept a truth which searches the heart and reprove the life.

The Saviour then pronounced a woe upon those who, imitating the great rebel, compass all difficulties to make one proselyte. Said he: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves." These cutting words were applied to those who made the highest pretensions to godliness, and who regarded all other nations as contemptible in the sight of God. There are just such zealous adversaries of the truth now, who leave no means untried to subvert the minds and consciences of men. They are willing to make great sacrifices and endure rebuffs in order to attain their object, returning again and again to the same point, seeking to turn souls away from divine truth to superstitions and fables. And such is the downward road to ruin that those whom they succeed in gaining become even worse than the teachers who have led them into error.

The Saviour continued: "Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! Ye fools and blind; for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty. Ye fools and blind; for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?" The priests interpreted the requirements of God to meet their false and narrow standard. They presumed to make nice distinctions between the comparative guilt of various sins, passing over some lightly, assigning as an excuse that the end justified the means, while errors of perhaps less consequence were treated as unpardonable. Thus these blind guides confused the

minds of their followers in regard to sin and the proper standard of holiness.

The Pharisees took upon themselves the responsibility of deciding concerning the burdens and duty of others according to their own carnal minds. They accepted sums of money in return for excusing them from their vows, and in some cases crimes of an aggravated character were passed over in consideration of large sums of money paid to the authorities by the transgressor. At the same time these hypocritical priests were exact in the matter of sacrifices and ceremonies, as though it were possible for cold forms to blot out the unrepented sins of their daily lives. Thus these blind guides confused the minds of their followers in regard to sin and the true standard of holiness.

The Lord said unto Samuel: "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." No outward service, even such as is required by God, can be a substitute for an obedient life. The Creator desires heart service of his creatures.

Through Hosea God said: "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings. But they like men have transgressed the covenant; there have they dealt treacherously against me." The many sacrifices of the Jews, and the flowing of blood to atone for sins for which they felt no true repentance, was an offense to God. Micah says: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy; and to walk humbly with thy God?"

The favor of God cannot be won by costly gifts and a semblance of holiness. He requires for his mercies a contrite spirit, a heart open to the light of truth, love and compassion for our fellow-men, and a spirit that refuses to be bribed through avarice or self-love. These priests and rulers were destitute of these essentials to God's favor, and their most precious gifts and gorgeous ceremonies were an abomination in his eyes. They had gone step by step into darkness, rejecting the evidence that Jesus was the true Messiah, until the obscurity of their minds was so great that they called righteousness sin and sin righteousness. They evinced the same malice that in Heaven actuated Satan

against Christ, and for the same reason,--because of the superior goodness of the Son of God.

Unpopular truth is no more acceptable to Pharisaical, self-righteous hearts today than when Christ walked the earth, a man among men. If Christians were to be tested now as were the Jews at the first advent of Christ, few would accept him wrapped in his garment of humanity, living a life of humiliation and poverty. The Christian world can accept as Messiah a King at the right hand of God in Heaven; but their hearts reject a Saviour of humility and self-sacrifice. They shrink from the cross of Christ, even as did the haughty Pharisees, and many are in as great blindness concerning the plan of salvation. Jesus exhorts his disciples to follow in his footsteps; but there are few indeed who imitate his example, and follow his teaching in their daily lives.

When a man sacrifices righteous principles and truth because he can thus avoid persecution and trial, he barter his eternal welfare for trifling considerations. But he that obeys the requirements of Christ, neither looking nor planning for his own convenience, will secure the reward of immortal life. Jesus says: "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." Basel, Switzerland.

June 16, 1887

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

"And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself; whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian."

There is a solemn warning to us in these words of Christ to the men of Nazareth. Upon visiting the little town where he had been brought up, the Saviour, according to his custom, went into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and stood up to read. The book of the prophet Isaiah was handed him, and he read the words: "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." And then, as the eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him, he said unto them: "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

The scripture which he had read was understood by all to refer to the Messiah. And when Jesus explained the prophet's words, and pointed out the sacred office of the Messiah as a reliever of the oppressed, a liberator of the captive, a healer of the sick, and a revealer of truth to the world, "all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth." His impressive manner, the mighty import of his words, the divine light that shone from his countenance, thrilled that listening company; their hearts were filled with joy, and they responded to his words with hearty praises to God.

Not one who looked upon that scene could doubt that this was indeed the promised Deliverer, the hope of Israel. Now was the golden opportunity for the men of Nazareth to accept Christ, and receive the blessings that he came to bring. Angels of

light were in that assembly, watching with intense interest the decision of the hour. Angels of Satan also were on the ground to suggest doubts and arouse prejudice. The people had long indulged pride and unbelief, and the current of their thoughts soon returned to the natural channel. They forgot the power of divine love which had stirred their souls, and turned to consider the lowly birth and humble life of Him who claimed to be their Messiah.

In their pride they had expected a king who should appear in earthly pomp and power; and as they recalled these hopes, they asked themselves, Is not this the son of Joseph and Mary, whose home has been so long among us? Can this be the promised deliverer of Israel? If this man is the Christ, why does he not give some mighty evidence of his power? And blind, unreasoning prejudice followed close on the steps of unbelief.

Jesus gave them a proof of his divine power by reading, as from an open book, the secrets of their hearts: "And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself; whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country."

Jesus continued: "But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian."

In the days of Elijah, Israel had departed from the living God. In vain the Lord by his prophets spoke to that backsliding and rebellious people. In vain he reproved their sins, and threatened them with his judgments. The message which might have been a savor of life unto life, proved to them a savor of death unto death. They would not heed the warning which called them to a life of humility and faith. Instead of leading them to repentance, the prophet's words offended their pride, and aroused their hatred against the messenger of God. Thus they multiplied their sins, and aggravated the guilt which had already brought the judgments of God upon the land. They sought to find and destroy Elijah, as though by silencing him, they would prevent the fulfillment of his

words. But God found among the heathen a hiding-place for his servant.

By this relation of events in the life of a prophet of God, the Saviour met the secret doubts and questionings of those whom he was addressing. The apostasy of Israel in Elijah's day was a vivid picture of their own true condition. The unbelief and self-exaltation of the ancient Jewish nation made it necessary for the Lord to find an asylum for his servant among a heathen people; and, passing by the many widows in Israel, to intrust him to the kindness and liberality of a heathen woman; but the widow who was so highly favored had lived in accordance with all the light she possessed.

God also passed over the many lepers in Israel, because their unbelief closed the door of good to them. A heathen nobleman who had been true to his convictions of right, and who felt his need of help, was in the sight of God more worthy of his blessing than were the afflicted in Israel, who had slighted and despised their God-given privileges. God works for those who appreciate his favors, and respond to the light given them from Heaven.

Jesus stood before the men of Nazareth, calmly revealing their secret thoughts, and pressing home upon them the unpalatable truth of their unrighteousness. His words cut to their hearts, as their ingratitude, their selfishness, their strife for the supremacy, their pride and unbelief, their secret crimes, were all laid before them. They knew that they were in the presence of One who could read their souls. For one brief moment they had been inclined to accept him as the Christ; but they had given place to Satan, and now his power controlled them. And they scorned in their hearts the spirit of tenderness, faith, and reverence which had first inspired them.

From unbelief sprung malice. That a man who had sprung from poverty and a lowly birth should dare to reprove them, filled the hearts of the Nazarenes with hatred amounting to madness. The assembly broke up in confusion. The people laid hands on Jesus, thrusting him from the synagogue and out of their city. They hurried him to the brow of a hill, intending to cast him down headlong, and shouts and maledictions filled the air. Suddenly he disappeared from among them. Angels from Heaven surrounded the world's Redeemer, and conducted him to a place of safety.

The history of Christ's rejection by the men of Nazareth contains an important and solemn lesson for our time. The spirit of enmity which in every age has been

manifested against those who preach the simple, cutting truths of God's word, is seen in a greater degree as we near the close of time.

Our Saviour asks, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" implying that true faith will then be almost extinct. The spirit of doubt and criticism is destroying confidence in the word and work of God. All who desire to doubt or cavil will find occasion; for it is impossible for the carnal mind to understand or appreciate the mind of the Almighty. Those who refuse to obey God till they can see all occasion of doubt removed, will be left in darkness; while those who, in humility of heart, walk in the light as it shines upon them, will receive clearer and clearer light. Their path will be that of the "just, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Basel, Switzerland.

June 23, 1887

No Cloak for Their Sins

"And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."

Had the Pharisees, to whom these words were addressed, been really blind or ignorant through want of capacity to learn or opportunity for instruction, they would have been comparatively free from guilt in their determined opposition to Christ. But they had the most favorable opportunity to obtain an understanding of the Scriptures; and they prided themselves on their knowledge and discernment, while they were willfully closing their eyes to the light Christ declared of them: "Ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God." They had stubbornly refused to receive instruction; therefore all the opportunities which they enjoyed, all the wisdom, ability and knowledge of which they proudly boasted, would only increase their condemnation in the day of final Judgment.

God gives us sufficient evidence to enable us to accept the truth understandingly; but he does not propose to remove all occasion for doubt and unbelief. Should he do this, there would no longer be a necessity for the exercise of faith; for we would be able to walk by sight. All who with a teachable spirit study the word of God, may learn therefrom the way of salvation; yet they may not be able to understand every portion of the Sacred Record. The apostle Peter declares that in the epistles of Paul, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, there are "some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable, wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." Whatever is clearly established by the word of God we should accept, without attempting to meet every doubt which Satan may suggest, or with our finite understanding to fathom the counsels of the infinite One, or to criticise the manifestations of his grace or power.

Those who are continually looking for something to find fault with, something to

strengthen unbelief in the word of God, will soon find themselves so completely under the power of doubt and unbelief that nothing will seem sure to them; they will find no solid foundation anywhere. It is a duty to encourage faith and devotion. If we seek in humility to learn the will of God as revealed in his word, and then obey that will as it is made plain to our understanding, we shall become rooted and grounded in the truth. Said Christ: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine."

The case of Paul shows how one may be blinded by prejudice while thinking that he is doing God service. Paul was a persevering, earnest persecutor of the church of Christ. Yet he was conscientious in it, fully believing it to be his duty to do all he could to exterminate the alarming doctrine that Jesus was the Prince of Life, the long-expected Messiah. Paul verily believed that faith in Jesus made of none effect the law of God, the religious service of sacrificial offerings, and the rite of circumcision, which had in past ages received the full sanction of God.

But Paul was arrested in his mad yet honest career. Jesus, whose name of all others he most hated and despised, revealed himself to Paul, that he might make this most unpromising instrument a chosen vessel to bear the gospel to the Gentiles. As the miraculous revelation of Christ brings light into the darkened chambers of his mind, he sees his mistaken zeal, and that the One against whom he is arrayed is indeed the Christ, the Redeemer of the world.

Paul learns that Jesus, whom in his blindness he considered an impostor, is indeed the author of all true religion, even from the days of Adam. Christ had been regarded as making of none effect the law of God; but when his eyes were open to discern spiritual truth he saw that Christ came into the world for the express purpose of vindicating his Father's law. He learned that Christ was the originator and the foundation of the entire Jewish system of sacrifices, and that in his death type met antitype. He saw in the Man of Calvary the vindicator of truth, the fulfiller of prophecy.

In the light of the law, Paul sees himself a sinner. He finds he has been transgressing that very law which he thought he had been keeping so zealously. He repents and dies to sin; he becomes obedient to the claims of God's law, accepts Christ as his Saviour, is baptized, and preaches Jesus as earnestly and zealously as he once condemned him.

Paul was a learned teacher in Israel, a nation that had been for many generations the true people of God, and the depositaries of his law; but he was blinded by error and prejudice. This is the case with many now. Arguments against the truth, subtle in their influence, affect minds that are not enlightened by the Spirit of God, and have not become fully informed with regard to Bible truth. In many cases, selfishness, dishonesty, and the varied sins that prevail in this degenerate age, blunt the senses so that the truth of God is not discerned. But when, as in Paul's case, there is honesty of purpose, and a desire to do the will of God, the truth will be accepted when it is made plain to the understanding.

Those who are seeking to know the truth, who are faithful to the light already received, and in the performance of every-day duties, will surely know of the doctrine; for they will be guided into all truth. God does not promise, by the masterly arts of his providence, to irresistibly bring men to the knowledge of his truth, when they do not seek for truth, and have no desire to understand it. The Spirit of God is continually convicting, and souls are deciding for or against obedience to God. But men are allowed freedom of action; the power of choosing is left with them. They may be obedient through the name and grace of the Redeemer, or they may be disobedient, and realize the consequences of their course. Man is himself responsible for receiving or rejecting sacred truth.

Our Savior admonished his disciples: "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." A cunning and vigilant foe attends our steps, and employs his skill in trying to turn us out of the right way. He does not come in a visible form; but by his representatives he is ever on our track, and through them he brings his power to bear upon us when we least suspect his presence. He works in darkness, and controls all who will be deceived by his devices. But the grace of God is pledged for us, and the path of obedience is the path of safety. "He that walketh uprightly walketh surely." Walk in the light and "then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy feet shall not stumble."

"If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world; but if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him." Then let us draw nearer and nearer to the pure light of Heaven, remembering that divine illumination will increase according to our onward movements, qualifying us to meet new responsibilities and emergencies. The path of the just is progressive, from strength to strength, from grace to grace, and from glory to glory.

It was through constant conflict and simple faith that Enoch walked with God. We may all do the same. We may be thoroughly converted and transformed, and be indeed children of God, not only enjoying his favor, but, by our example, leading others in the path of humble obedience and consecration. Real godliness is diffusive and communicative. The psalmist says: "I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart. I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation. I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation." This course is just the opposite of that pursued by the blind Pharisees, to whom Jesus said, "Thy sin remaineth." Basel, Switzerland.

June 30, 1887

Our Lord's Estimate of Riches

"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?"

Christ declares: "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." It is impossible to serve God, and at the same time give all our thought and energy to the accumulation of riches. God has entrusted to men means to be used to his glory. He requires them to lose no opportunity to do good, and thus they may be constantly laying up treasure in Heaven. But if, like the man with one talent, they neglect to use the means they have, fearing that God will get that which their talent gains, 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 robbed God, and so have no treasure laid up in Heaven, and they lose their earthly treasure also.

Men of property often say in their hearts, "By my wisdom have I gotten me this wealth." But who gave them the power to get wealth? God has bestowed upon them the ability which they possess; but instead of giving him the glory, they take it to themselves. They do not make to themselves "friends of the mammon of unrighteousness" by using their means to help the needy and to advance the cause of God, and instead of a blessing, they will realize a curse. God will prove them and try them, and will bring their glorying to the dust. He will remove their strength and scatter their possessions. They lose in this earth, and they have no Friend to receive them into the everlasting habitation of the righteous.

But if the wealthy stand the test, and overcome the blemishes upon their character; if as faithful stewards of Christ they render to God the things that are his, it will be said to them, "Well done, 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." For "he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much;" and he will surely be rewarded.

"He that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." Many men have obtained their wealth by advantaging themselves at the expense of their fellow-men, perhaps their poorer brethren; they overreach, and receive more for a thing than it is worth; and these men 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 in their hands.

Those who possess the ability to acquire property need to be constantly on the watch, or they will turn their acquisitiveness to bad account. They are in danger of falling into temptation, and sacrificing generous, benevolent, noble principles for sordid gain. Such persons should consider the force of our Saviour's 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."

Many who profess to be followers of Christ, so love the world and the things that are in the world that the divine has disappeared from their characters, and they have become instruments of unrighteousness. In contrast with these are the industrious, honest poor, who stand ready to help those who need help, who would rather suffer themselves to be disadvantaged by their wealthy brethren than to manifest so close and acquisitive a spirit as they manifest; men who esteem a clear conscience, and right, even in little things, of greater value than riches. If there is a benevolent object to call forth means or labor, they are the first to be interested in it. They are so ready to help others, so willing to do all the good in their power, that they do not amass wealth; their earthly possessions do not increase.

Because these men can boast of but little wealth, they are often counted of no special worth, and are considered deficient in judgment. But these poor wise men are precious in the sight of God. Although they are not increasing their treasure upon earth, they are laying up for themselves an incorruptible treasure in Heaven. In doing this, they manifest a wisdom as far superior to that of the wise, calculating, acquisitive professed Christian as the "everlasting habitations" are to the things of this earth. It is moral worth that God values. A Christian character unblotted with avarice, possessing quietness, meekness, and humility, is more precious in his sight than the most fine gold, even the

golden wedge of Ophir.

Money has power, and sways a mighty influence, while excellence of character and moral worth are often overlooked. But what does God care for money, for property? The cattle upon a thousand hills are his, as are also the world and all that is therein. The inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers before him; men and property are but as the small dust of the balance. He is no respecter of persons.

"The Pharisees, who were covetous," heard the teachings of Christ, and "they derided him." Mark the words of Christ to them: "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men [that is, riches acquired by oppression, deception, or fraud--in any dishonest manner] is abomination in the sight of God."

Christ presents two characters,--that of the rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, and Lazarus, who was in abject poverty and loathsome to the sight, and who begged the few crumbs that the rich man despised. Our Saviour here shows his estimate of the two characters. Although Lazarus was in so deplorable and mean a condition, he had moral worth which God regarded of greater value than the exalted position of the honored and ease-loving rich man. God did not value the riches of this wealthy man, because his character was worthless. His riches did not recommend him to God, nor have any influence to secure divine favor.

By this parable Christ would teach his disciples not to judge or value men by their wealth, or by the honors which they receive of others. Such was the course pursued by the Pharisees, who, while possessing both riches and worldly honor, were valueless in the sight of God. More than this, they were despised and rejected of him,--cast out of his sight as disgusting, because there was no moral worth or soundness in them. Corrupt and sinful, they were abominable in his sight. It was not so with the poor man. Though despised by his fellow-mortals, and disgusting in their sight, he had qualities which prepared him to be introduced into the society of refined, holy angels, to be an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ.

All the riches that the most wealthy ever possessed are not of sufficient value to cover the smallest sin before God; they will not be accepted as a ransom for transgression. An act of wrong or oppression, or deviation from the right way, will no

sooner be tolerated in a man who possesses property than in a man who has none. Nothing less than repentance, confession and forsaking of sin is acceptable to God.

Those who are inclined to become slaves to avarice, and to entangle themselves with the cares of this life, will do well to regard the words of Paul: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy."

July 7, 1887

Fruits Meet for Repentance

When John was preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and the Pharisees and Sadducees came to his baptism, that fearless preacher of righteousness addressed them: "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." In coming to John, these men were not actuated by right motives. They were corrupt in principles and practice; yet they had no sense of their true condition. Filled with pride and ambition, they would not hesitate at any means which would enable them to exalt self and strengthen their influence with the people. And baptism at the hands of this popular young teacher might, they thought, aid them in carrying out these designs more successfully.

Their motives were not hidden from John, and he met them with the searching inquiry, "Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Had they heard the voice of God speaking to their hearts, they would have given evidence of the fact by bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. No such fruit was seen. They had heard the warning as merely the voice of man. They were charmed with the power and boldness with which John spoke; but the Spirit of God did not send conviction to their hearts, and as a sure result the word spoken did not bring forth fruit unto life eternal.

None are farther from the kingdom of Heaven than self-righteous formalists, who are perhaps filled with pride at their own attainments, while they are wholly destitute of the Spirit of Christ, and are controlled by envy, jealousy, and love of praise and popularity. They belong to the class that John addressed as a generation of vipers, children of the wicked one. They serve the cause of Satan more effectively than the vilest profligate; for the latter does not disguise his true character; he appears what he really is.

Nothing short of an amended life,--fruits meet for repentance,--will meet the requirements of God. Without such fruit, our profession of faith is of no value. The Lord is able to raise up true believers among those who have never heard his name. "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."

"And now 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." God is not dependent upon men who are unconverted in heart and life to carry on his work. He will never favor any who practice iniquity.

Those who love and flatter the minister who speaks to them the word of life, while they neglect the works of righteousness, give unmistakable evidence that they are not converted to God. Of such we would inquire, "Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Was it the voice of the Holy Spirit, or merely the voice of man, which you heard in the message sent from God? The fruit borne will testify to the character of the tree.

There is great responsibility resting upon those who are called to preach the word. "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord," is the message to them. There is need of a converted ministry, as well as of a converted church; for the church will rarely take a higher stand than is taken by her ministers. Shepherds who watch for souls as they that must give account, will lead the flock on in ways of holiness. And their success in this work will be in proportion to their own growth in grace and knowledge of the truth. When the teachers are sanctified, soul, body, and spirit, they can impress upon their hearers the importance of a closer walk with God.

The minister of Christ should in an eminent degree possess true humility. Those who have the deepest experience in the things of God, are the farthest removed from pride or self-exaltation. While self is abased, they have the most exalted conceptions of the glory and excellence of Christ, and feel that the lowest place in his service is too honorable for them.

When Moses came down from the mountain, where he had spent forty days in communion with God, he did not know that his face shone with a brightness that was painful and terrifying to those who had not had this exalted privilege. Paul had a very humble opinion of his own advancement in the Christian life. He speaks of himself as the "chief of sinners." And again he says, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." Yet Paul had been highly honored of the Lord. In holy vision he had been shown revelations of divine glory which he could not be permitted to make known.

Our Saviour pronounced John the Baptist to be the greatest of prophets; yet what a contrast there is between the language of this man of God, and that of many who profess to be ministers of the cross. When asked if he was the Christ, John declared himself unworthy even to unloose his Master's sandals. When his disciples came with the complaint that the attention of the people was turned to the new Teacher, John reminded them that he himself had claimed to be only the forerunner of the Promised One. To Christ, as the bridegroom, belongs the first place in the affections of his people. "The friend of the bridegroom, that standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth because of the bridegroom's voice; this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh from above is above all."

Workers with this spirit are needed today. The self-sufficient, the envious and jealous, the critical and fault-finding, can well be spared from the sacred work of God. Our Lord is not straitened for men or means. He calls for laborers in his cause who are true and faithful; for those who have felt their need of the atoning blood of Christ and have experienced in their own hearts the sanctifying grace of his Spirit.

There is no person, no matter what his life may have been, who can be saved in any way except that of God's appointing. He must repent; he must feel his need of a physician, and of the one only remedy for sin, the blood of Christ. This work is yet to be begun by many who profess to be Christians. Like the Pharisees of old, they feel no need of a Saviour. They are self-sufficient, self-exalted. Such have no part in the blood of Christ. That cleansing stream avails only for those who feel their need. Said Christ: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Many believe in the wrath of God, but put forth no earnest efforts to escape it. They believe in Heaven, but make no sacrifice to obtain it. They believe in the value of the soul, and that ere long its redemption ceaseth forever; yet they neglect precious opportunities to make their peace with God. They read the Bible; but its threatenings do not alarm nor its promises win them. They approve things that are excellent; yet they follow the way which God has forbidden them to take. They know a refuge, but do not avail themselves of it. They know a remedy for sin, but do not use it. They know the right, but have no relish for it. They have never tasted, and learned by experience, that the Lord is good; and all their knowledge will but increase their condemnation.

What we need is experimental religion. How shall we know for ourselves the goodness and love of God? The psalmist tells us, It is not to hear and know, to read and know, to believe and know, but, "taste and see that the Lord is good." Instead of relying upon the word of another, taste for yourself.

All that we have is from the exceeding riches of divine grace. God spared not his own Son, but delivered him to death for our offenses, and raised him again for our justification. Through him we may present our petitions to the throne of grace. Through him we may obtain all spiritual blessings. Do we come to him that we may have life? Jesus, the meek and lowly One, asks admittance as our guest, shall we not open the door of our heart, and bid him enter?

In view of the grace of God granted to us, shall not the language of our hearts be, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." Basel, Switzerland.

July 14, 1887

By Their Fruits Ye Shall Know Them

"He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked." "And if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

We are each of us building for ourselves a structure which will one day be scrutinized by the Judge of the whole earth. This structure is our individual character; and every act of our lives, every thought and word, is a stone in the building. The words of inspiration warn us, "Take heed how ye build." See to it that the foundation is sure. If we build on the Rock Christ Jesus, the structure will grow into symmetrical proportions, and will be a fair and holy temple for God.

Our minds are given us; but our characters we make; they are the result of the lives we lead, the thoughts and principles that we cherish. When we see persons firm in principle, faithful in the performance of duty, zealous in the cause of God, yet humble, gentle, and patient toward all, ready to forgive, manifesting love for souls for whom Christ died, we do not need to ask, Are they Christians? They give unmistakable evidence that they are learners in the school of Christ. But when they show the opposite traits of character; when they are proud, vain, frivolous, worldly-minded, avaricious, unkind, censorious, we need not be told whence the spirit comes that they are cherishing. They may not believe in witchcraft; but they are holding communion with an evil spirit, and its influence is poisoning heart and life.

Trifles reveal character. One who is selfish, self-sufficient, and self-caring will be exceedingly unhappy. It is not unreasonable to be suspicious of persons who are always complaining that they are not treated well. It will generally be found that they have exalted ideas of their own merits, and think everybody else should respect them accordingly.

There are some who are ever looking out for slights. In the family, some unfortunate word is said, and they take offense, feeling sure it was designed to hurt and disparage them. They meet a friend who is so occupied with business or other cares that he does not greet them as ardently as they desire, nor have so much time to visit, and

they feel that they are personally insulted. The offender, wholly innocent of any design or thought of hurting them, is astonished to find himself treated with suspicion and coldness, and soon the charge reaches him that his poor, unhappy neighbor feels that he has been neglected and abused. But the unhappiness was in him, waiting for some excuse to show itself.

Life is what we make it. While we are in the world, we shall meet with all kinds of persons; but our life takes its bias and coloring from our own traits of character. It is our privilege to learn daily in the school of Christ meekness and lowliness of heart; and when a selfish, haughty spirit is overcome, and we are willing to be as was our Master, we will make our surroundings pleasant. We will pass over many slights and not see or feel them, because we have the love of Jesus in our hearts, and are trying so hard to be like him that these little matters do not affect us.

Strife and contention cannot exist among those who are controlled by the Spirit of God. A truly Christ-like character cannot be subverted. Envy, jealousy, malice, and persecution may be hurled against those who bear the divine impress; but it only serves to strengthen that which it cannot overthrow.

That which commands respect and wins appreciation is true goodness. Real merit must be won by patient industry and energy, by untiring application and effort. Thousands fail of securing the love and respect that they covet because they desire what they do not merit. They would rather be weak than to put forth the exertion necessary to subdue their wrong traits, and gain strength of character.

Christ is our refuge; and it is only through faith in him that we can form characters that God can accept. We may add knowledge to knowledge, strength to strength, and virtue to virtue, and yet fail in the soul-testing conflict just before us, because we do not make Christ our strength and righteousness. No outward forms can make us clean; they cannot take the place of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. All who have not experienced the regenerating power of the Spirit of God are chaff among the wheat. Our Lord has his fan in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor. In the coming day he will discern "between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not."

The Spirit of Christ will be revealed in all who are born of God. The Lord has not

closed Heaven against his people; but their own course of continual backsliding, of bickering, envying, and strife, has separated them from him. Pride and love of the world live in the heart; and few are alarmed or astonished at their want of spiritual power.

The warnings of God's word, and the influence of his Spirit, have alike been neglected. The sins that destroyed the antediluvians and the cities of the plain exist today--not merely in heathen lands or among avowed unbelievers, but among professors of Christianity. The result is apparent in the deplorable condition of the church. Impurity is widespread, even among those who profess to be the followers of Christ. Many are eagerly participating in worldly, demoralizing amusements which God's word forbids. Thus they sever their connection with God, and rank themselves with the pleasure-lovers of the world. If God should present their sins before them as they appear in his sight, they would be filled with shame and terror.

And what has caused this alarming condition? Many have accepted the theory of religious truth, who have not been converted to its principles. There are few indeed who feel true sorrow for sin; who have deep, pungent convictions of the depravity of the unregenerate nature, and are trying to walk even as Christ walked. The heart of stone is not exchanged for a heart of flesh. Few are willing to fall upon the Rock, and be broken.

What surpassing love and condescension, that when we had no claim on divine mercy, Christ was willing to undertake our redemption! But our great Physician requires of every soul unquestioning obedience. We are never to prescribe for our own case. Christ must have the entire control of our will and action, or he will not undertake in our behalf.

Many are not sensible of their condition and their danger; and there is much in the nature of the Christian religion that is averse to every worldly feeling and principle, and opposed to the pride of the human heart. We may flatter ourselves, as did Nicodemus, that our lives and our moral character have been correct, and think that we need not humble our heart before God, like the common sinner; but we must be content to enter into life in the very same way as the chief of sinners. Self must die. We must not trust to our own righteousness, but depend on the righteousness of Christ. He is our strength and our hope.

Genuine faith is followed by love,--love that is manifested in the home, in

society, and in all the relations of life,--love which smooths away difficulties, and lifts us above the disagreeable trifles that Satan places in our way to annoy us. And love will be followed by obedience. All the powers and the passions of the converted man are brought under the control of Christ. His spirit is a renewing power, transforming to the divine image all who will receive it.

To become a disciple of Christ is to deny self, and follow Jesus through evil as well as through good report. It is to close the door to pride, envy, doubt, and other sins, and thus shut out strife, hatred, and every evil work. It is to welcome into our hearts Jesus, the meek and lowly one, who is seeking admittance as our guest.

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk even as he walked." Jesus is a pattern for humanity, complete, perfect. He proposes to make us like himself,--true in every purpose, feeling, and thought,--true in heart, soul, and life. The man who cherishes the most of the love of Christ in the soul, who reflects the image of Christ most perfectly, is, in the sight of God, the truest, most noble, and most honorable man. But he that has not the Spirit of Christ is "none of his." Basel, Switzerland.

July 21, 1887

Purified Through the Truth

"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. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

We are to know those who have this hope here brought to view by the lives they lead. "By their fruits ye shall know them." This is the test by which we are to distinguish between the genuine and the false, between the true Christian and the pretender. Are they obedient children, walking in the way of God's commandments? If so, the Spirit of God acts upon the spirits of men, and a process of cleansing the soul from the defilement of sin is continually going on.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." It is a high honor to be adopted into the royal family of Heaven. But how shall we know that this honor has been accorded us, and that we are reckoned as sons and daughters of God? By comparing our lives with the great moral standard of righteousness. If any come claiming to be sinless and holy, let us judge them by "the law and the testimony. If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Said Paul: "By the law is the knowledge of sin." John defines sin to be "the transgression of the law." Then when men and women claim great light and an exalted religious experience, while they are knowingly transgressing the law of God, let us not be deceived. When persons will speak lightly of the law, and set their impressions, feelings, and exercises above that divine standard, we may know that they have no light in them. They are repeating the course that was pursued in Eden. The laws and opinions of men are exalted above the law of the Infinite, just as in Eden the deceptive wiles of Satan were credited in preference to the word of God.

In the Judgment, some will present the great light which they have had, and the mighty works which they have done, saying, "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?" But Jesus replies: "I never knew you. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." These words of our Lord contain a lesson that is solemn and of infinite importance. These commandment-breakers may claim to be without sin,--a claim which was never made by Peter, John, Paul, nor any of the other apostles; but the great Detector of sin exposes the falsity of their profession.

We must not trust the claims of men. They may, as Christ represents, profess to work miracles in healing the sick. Is this marvelous, when just behind them stands the great deceiver, the miracle-worker who will yet bring down fire from heaven in the sight of men? Nor can we trust impressions. The voice or spirit that says to a man. You are under no obligation to obey the law of God; you are holy and sinless, while he is trampling on the divine law, is not the voice of Jesus; for he declares: "I have kept my Father's commandments." And John testifies: "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." Then how can these manifestations of great power, and these wonderful impressions, be accounted for, except on the ground that they are given through the influence of that miracle-working spirit that has gone forth to deceive the whole world, and infatuate them with strong delusion that they shall believe a lie? He is pleased when men and women claim to possess great spiritual power, and yet disregard the law of God, because through their disobedience they mislead others, and he can use them as effective agents in his work.

The Spirit and the word agree. The voice of God to the hearts of men does not contradict the utterances proclaimed in awful grandeur from Sinai's mount. God never contradicts himself. He claims obedience. The laws by which he governs the world are not only holy, just, and good, but they are immutable also, and by them the world is soon to be judged. Men may cast aside God's great moral standard of character, and erect a standard to suit their own convenience, and by this imperfect standard they may claim holiness; but God will enforce his own laws on nations, families, and individuals.

Men may say, I would keep the law of God if it was convenient to do so, and did not interfere with my business; but if I should keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, it would break me up; I should become poor. The Lord of glory became poor for our sakes, that we through his poverty might be made rich. Christ paid an infinite price for the redemption of the race, that he might refine and ennoble them, and make them sons and daughters of God. Well might John exclaim: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."

The apostle continues: "And it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." It is not enough to profess to be keeping the law of God, while men are weaving into their lives and characters threads of selfishness and pride. Many who profess to be children of God have good impulses. When everything moves smoothly, they may be very courteous and obliging, and do some good works; but when difficulties arise, and their way is crossed, they show quite another spirit. Then there are heart-burnings, envy, enmity; self seeks the supremacy, and gains it. Can we truthfully call such persons Christians? No; for to be a Christian is to be Christ-like.

The Lord looks upon the intents and purposes of the heart. A Sabbath religion alone will not meet his requirements. Selfishness must not be allowed to crowd out the love of Jesus and love for one another. We need to examine ourselves, whether we are in the faith, and to walk in the light, lest darkness come upon us. If we walk in the light, and open our heart and understanding to the light, we shall have clear day shining about us. We should use the light that we have to bless others. We should be willing to know our whole duty, and then do it. We should learn in the school of Christ his meekness and lowliness, and should test all our actions by the word of God, and the inquiry, How will this look in the Judgment? It is by taking this course that the true Christian will be a light to lighten the world.

This is a day of spiritual declension. Clouds and thick darkness obscure the spiritual vision, unless there is a daily enlightenment of the Spirit of God. Many who have had great light and have enjoyed precious opportunities, have, through their misconception of their true spiritual condition, become stumbling-blocks for saints and sinners. Groping in a dim twilight, attempting to walk by their own spirit, they stumble and make very crooked paths, and the lame are turned out of the way. They think they are entertaining the hope of seeing Jesus as he is, and being like him; but they forget to purify themselves as he is pure.

What are you doing, my fellow-Christians? Are you examining yourselves, whether ye be in the love of God? Are you day by day purifying your own souls, and obtaining a fitness for Heaven? The Bible is full of practical truths that are calculated to work great changes in the human character. And Jesus prayed for his disciples:

"Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." The word of God obeyed is the great sanctifier of hearts. Through its influence we may become pure, "even as He is pure." By forming such a character, we shall secure the truest happiness here; and when Jesus shall appear in the clouds of heaven, we shall be able to say: "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us." "We will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Basel, Switzerland.

July 28, 1887

Christian Devotion and Its Reward

"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." "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."

In these words the Saviour presents before us the importance of laying up for ourselves a treasure in Heaven. Christ understood full well what he was saying. He knew that if men should lay up their treasures here in this world, their interests also would be here; and these worldly interests would shut the love of God out of the heart. If we keep our eye fixed too intently upon things of the world, how can we see those that are heavenly?

God would have the things of this world take a secondary place; but it is Satan's object to make them the most attractive to us. As the great deceiver succeeds in his purpose to draw our minds from God, it is impossible for us to estimate the loss we are sustaining. If we are getting daily views of heavenly things, we shall be constantly hungering and thirsting after righteousness. And if our eye is single to the glory of God, his rich blessing can flow into our hearts and homes. Then why do we not have the glory of God in view in all that we say and do? It is because we invite the world into our hearts, and the love of the world strengthens continually, until it crowds out the work of grace from the heart, and separates us from our Creator.

When in the temple at Jerusalem the water was poured out at the foot of the altar, commemorating the water that flowed from the smitten rock in the wilderness, the voice of Jesus was heard, clear and penetrating, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." He was the Rock that followed them in the wilderness, refreshing his thirsty people. And now he would draw away the mind from that which can never satisfy the thirsting, fainting soul, to the Rock of Ages, from which flow the pure streams of eternal life. From this fountain the nations may drink and drink again, and the supply is fresh,

and inexhaustible, and free to all.

We may drink here and satisfy our thirst. But how many there are, even of those who profess to be the children of God, who while longing to be free from the troubles that beset them on the right hand and on the left, are yet bending all their energies to lay up a treasure on earth.--the very thing which Christ has told them not to do.

Jesus would not have his people worrying and toiling and fretting under a yoke of their own imposing. He invites them: "Take my yoke upon you." The world's yoke is galling, and too heavy to bear; but the gracious words of our Lord are, "Take my yoke upon you," and "ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Oh, how many galling yokes, how many unnecessary burdens, are borne because men will grasp this world and this world's treasures, because they choose things that are of no importance, while things of eternal importance are considered of little or no value! The things of this world are the things that worldlings love and seek for; but should Christians do the same as they? No, they must take an entirely different course. They must seek those things that are above, "where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God."

What will it amount to in the end, if we devote all our time and energies to the poor, selfish life of the worldling? We shall not be the happier here for having our treasure in this earth, and we shall miss the eternal reward. It is of infinitely more consequence to build up a character that God can approve than to carry on the most successful business career. Jesus, our perfect pattern, has shown man the way to form such a character. Day by day, through the help of divine grace, he may be making a record which he will not be ashamed to meet in the Judgment. As the artist prints the face upon the polished plate, so our characters are printed upon the books of Heaven, and it should be our first care to know that the impressions made there are fair and perfect.

It is our duty to render to God the best service possible. There are some who have talents that would enable them to stand in the sacred desk, and speak the word of God to the people. These talents have been intrusted to them to do good with, and they are responsible for the use they make of them; but oh, how many are using these God-given powers for purposes of mere worldly gain! Perhaps they are trying to serve both God and mammon; but while they are serving themselves, they are not serving God.

Christ is the great foundation stone; and we read that some are building on that foundation, wood, hay, and stubble, while others are bringing to it gold, silver, and precious stones. The fires of the great day will test every man's work, and if the material he furnished is consumed, he will suffer loss.

Dear Christian friend, stop and think. You are trading with your Lord's money; and what use are you making of it? You may suffer your mind to be engrossed with business transactions and the cares of this life; but you cannot carry these things with you into the other world. There will be no use for this kind of education there. Then why not use your talents to build up Christ's kingdom? Why not give to the service of God the tact, skill, and energy that have made you successful in business? The works of this world will be destroyed. Would it not be better to put some of your thinking powers into the cause of God, and build where the work will be enduring, and you will not suffer loss?

The constant burden of our hearts should be, What can I do to save souls for whom Christ died? All around me are precious souls lying in wickedness, that must perish unless someone shall work for their salvation. How can I best reach these wandering ones, that I may bring them to the glorious city of God, and present them before the throne, saying, Here am I and the children whom the Lord hath given me?

Some may excuse themselves by saying, I have had no experience in this kind of work; I have used my ability only in the things of this life. Well, it is for you to say whether you will continue to devote your time and strength to worldly interests, or will use them in the cause of God. None of us will be forced into this service. If we choose to concentrate our powers upon worldly matters, there will be nothing to hinder us. But why is it that we persist in laying up treasure here instead of above? Suppose you should change the order of things, and lay up some of your treasure in Heaven, would you not rejoice to receive it again by and by, imperishable?

It takes time and patience to learn the truth, and to become an accomplished workman in the vineyard of the Lord; yet this you may do. Go to the milliner, or dressmaker, and she will tell you how long and hard she toiled before she had a correct knowledge of the business. The architect will tell you how long it took him to understand how to plan and erect a tasteful and commodious building. And so it will be

in all the callings which men follow. They do not expect success without care and diligence in mastering their business. But how few of us who are called to be co-laborers with the Master, have "learned the trade" as Christians. Let these men and women who are so successful in business and so eloquent in talking of worldly things, come into the social meeting, and often when they arise to testify for Christ, they will mumble a few words in a scarcely audible tone, and sit down. Why are they willing to be dwarfs in religious things? Does it not show where their heart is?

Christ has appointed to every man his work. The second death will be the portion of those who labor not, and the dreadful words will be heard, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." But the faithful servants will not lose their reward. They will gain eternal life, and the "Well done, good and faithful servant," will fall as sweetest music on their ears. Soon the books of record will be examined, and the cases of all decided; and it will then appear that the heavenly treasure will repay a life-time of earnest devotion. Basel, Switzerland.

July 28, 1887

Meetings in Norway and Sweden

From a private letter from Mrs. E. G. White, we insert the following brief account of the meetings in Scandinavia:

Our tent-meeting commenced at Stockholm June 25, and closed today. It was with fear and trembling the experiment was entered into of camp-meeting in Moss, Norway, which proved a perfect success, as was also the tent-meeting in Stockholm. There were five meetings each day, and the outside attendance was marvelous to us all. The tent was full from the first and increased numbers flocked to the meeting until not only all the seats were occupied, but also all standing room under the tent, until it was literally packed, and a wall of people surrounding it besides.

There were police ready to do anything free of charge. They would come to see if all was in peace and order and listen to the discourses as if spell-bound. They were not needed, however, for there was order from first to last. Yesterday, Sunday, it was estimated that there were about one thousand people in and around the tent listening with deep interest. These meetings have made Elder Matteson and Brother Olsen so glad that they do not know how to express their grateful thanks to God. The truth and work will stand higher in Sweden than it ever has before. We had in attendance ministers, lawyers, and other men belonging to the best class of people, who have pressed their way to the tent.

The church here has been greatly blessed, and their testimonies show them to have made great advancement since our first visit to the place, which was the last of October, 1885. The Lord has added to their number until the church now numbers one hundred souls. The blessing of the Lord has attended the labors of Elder Matteson the past winter in conducting a school for colporteurs. There were seventeen that have been educated as workers. All came in a body to bid us farewell, and all expressed their gratitude to God for the blessings they had received at this meeting. We bid these dear souls who are preparing to work for the Master farewell, not expecting to meet them again in this life, but hoping to meet them around the throne of God, with the fruit of their labor, sheaves for the heavenly garner.

The tent-meeting has been a wonderful success. All are encouraged. Many have heard the message of truth that probably would not have heard it had it not been for the tent-meeting. The tent remains and meetings will be continued every evening. Brethren Matteson and Johnson will labor in the tent; the colporteurs will work industriously in the city, and we believe many souls will come to a knowledge of the truth. We feel thankful to God to see the work advancing in the kingdoms of Northern Europe.

The 24th of June is their midsummer holiday, when the days are the longest; the sun rises at 3 A.M. and sets at 9:30 P.M. and it is scarcely dark any time during the night. At 11 o'clock one can see to read or write. Somehow one gets puzzled over this state of things and hardly knows when to retire for sleep or when to arise, as it is broad daylight at 2 o'clock in the morning. The midsummer is celebrated about the same here in Europe as the 4th of July in America.

We are now about ready to start for the cars, which leave Stockholm at 6 P.M. and reach Malmo at 9 a.m. tomorrow morning, where we take the boat for Copenhagen. We are of good courage, for we see the work of God advancing some in these countries. Stockholm, Sweden, June 22. Ellen G. White.

August 4, 1887

Christ's Triumph in Our Behalf

When Christ was born at Bethlehem, Satan saw the plains 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 toward men." The prince of darkness saw the amazement that filled the hearts of the shepherds as they witnessed the display of divine glory, and listened to the songs of the angelic host. And well might the shepherds tremble before this exhibition of bewildering glory, which seemed to entrance their very senses. The rebel chief himself trembled at the announcement that was made to them: "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." Satan had been successful in carrying out the plan which he devised for the ruin of men, and success had made him bold and powerful. From the time of Adam he had controlled the minds and the bodies of men; but now he was alarmed, for he felt that both his life and his kingdom were in danger.

Satan knew that the songs of the heavenly messengers celebrating the advent of the Saviour to a fallen world, and the joy expressed at this great event, boded no good to himself. In the infant Christ he recognized a rival,--the coming One who would contest his power, and perhaps overthrow his kingdom; and his mind was filled with dark forebodings. He imbued Herod with the same feelings and fears that disturbed his own mind, by insinuating that his power and his kingdom were to be given to this new king. He thus stirred up the envy and jealousy of Herod to destroy Christ, and this led to the destruction of all the little children that were in Bethlehem.

But a higher power was at work against the plans of the prince of darkness. Angels of God frustrated his designs, and protected the life of the infant Redeemer. In a dream Joseph was warned to flee into Egypt, that in a heathen land he might find an asylum for his precious charge. Satan was thwarted; but he did not give up his efforts to overthrow his hated rival. He followed Jesus from infancy to childhood, and from childhood to manhood, inventing ways and means to allure him from his allegiance to God, and overcome him with his subtle temptation. The unsullied purity of Christ in his childhood, youth, and manhood, which Satan could not taint, annoyed him exceedingly.

All the darts and arrows of temptation which were hurled against the Son of God, fell harmless at his feet. And when he found that he prevailed nothing in moving Christ from the steadfastness of his integrity, or in marring the spotless purity of the youthful Galilean, he looked upon him as an enemy that he must dread and fear.

This prince of evil was chafed and enraged 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, One over whom he could obtain no advantage to separate the soul from God.

There was another whom Satan could not swerve from the right way. 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, were marked with firmness and moral power. When the voice of this prophet was heard in the wilderness, saying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight," Satan feared for the safety of his kingdom. The sinfulness of sin was revealed in such a manner that men trembled and became alarmed. His power over many who had been under his control was broken; and some, by repentance of their sins, found the favor of God, and gained moral power to resist the temptations of the great adversary.

When Christ presented himself to John for baptism, Satan was among the witnesses of that event. He saw the lightnings flash from the cloudless heavens. He heard the majestic voice of Jehovah that resounded through Heaven, and echoed through the earth like peals of thunder, announcing, "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 pointing out with unmistakable assurance the One in that crowd whom he acknowledged as his Son. The circumstances connected with this baptismal scene were of the greatest interest to Satan. He knew then for a certainty that unless he could overcome Christ, from thenceforth there would be a limit to his power. He understood that this communication from the throne of God signified that Heaven was now more directly accessible to man than it had been, and the most intense hatred was aroused in his breast.

When Satan led man to sin, he hoped that God's abhorrence of sin would forever separate him from man, and break the connecting link between Heaven and earth. When from the opening heavens he heard the voice of God addressing his Son, it was to him

as the sound of a death-knell. It told him that now God was about to unite man more closely to himself, and give moral power to overcome temptation, and to escape from the entanglements of Satanic devices. Satan well knew the position which Christ had held in Heaven as the Son of God, the Beloved of the Father; and that Christ should leave the joy and honor of Heaven, and come to this world as a man, filled him with apprehension. He knew that this condescension on the part of the Son of God boded no good to him.

Satan could not comprehend the mystery of this great sacrifice for the benefit of fallen man. His selfish soul could not understand how 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 with the traces of the curse. Satan knew that the value of Heaven far exceeded man's anticipation and appreciation, and that the most costly treasures of the world would not compare with it in worth. He had a knowledge of the inestimable value of eternal riches that man did not possess. He had experienced the pure contentment, the peace, the exalted happiness and unalloyed joys, of the heavenly abode. He had realized, before his rebellion, the satisfaction of the full approval of God. He had had a full appreciation of the glory that enshrouded the Father, and knew that there was no limit to his power.

The loss he had sustained was well known to Satan. And as the riches and glories of Heaven were lost to him through his rebellion, he determined to be revenged by causing as many as he could to share in his fall. He would lead them to undervalue Heaven, and to place their affections upon things of earth.

The time had now come when Satan's empire over the world was to be contested, his right disputed, and he feared that his power would be broken. He knew, through prophecy that a Saviour was predicted, and that his kingdom would not be established in earthly triumph and with worldly honor and display. He knew that the prophecies foretold a kingdom to be established by the Prince of Heaven upon the earth which he claimed as his dominion. This kingdom would embrace all the kingdoms of the world, and then the power and glory of Satan would cease, and he would receive his retribution for the sins he had introduced into the world, and for the misery he had brought upon the human race. He knew that everything which concerned his prosperity was depending upon his success or failure in overcoming Christ with his temptations; and he brought to bear on the Saviour every artifice at his command to allure him from his

integrity.

Man can never know the strength of the temptations to which the Son of God was subjected. All the temptations that seem so afflicting to man in his daily life, so difficult to resist and overcome, were brought to bear upon him in as much greater degree as he is superior in his excellence of character to fallen man.

Our Redeemer was tempted in all points like as we are. As man's representative, he met the strongest force of Satan, his most wily temptations, and conquered in man's behalf. It is impossible for man to be tempted above that he is able to bear while he relies upon Jesus, the infinite Conqueror, whose grace and strength are sufficient for all our needs.

August 11, 1887

Temperance from the Christian Standpoint

The apostle addresses his brethren: "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. 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." Romans 12:1, 2.

Light and spiritual understanding have been given us upon health reform. The truth that has reached the understanding, the light that has shone upon us, should be appreciated and cherished or they will witness against us in the day of God. Truth has been given to save those who would believe and obey. The condemnation of the lost will not be because they did not have the light, but because they had the light and did not walk in it.

God has furnished man with abundance of means for the gratification of natural appetite. He has spread before him, in the products of the earth, a bountiful variety of food that is palatable to the taste and nutritious to the system. Of these, our benevolent heavenly Father says that we "may freely eat." We may enjoy the fruits, the vegetables, the grains, without doing violence to the laws of our being. These articles, prepared in the most simple and natural manner, will nourish the body, and preserve its natural vigor, without the use of brandy, alcohol, wine beer, tea, or coffee.

God created man a little lower than the angels, and bestowed upon him attributes that will, if properly used, make him a blessing to the world, and cause him to reflect the glory to the Giver. But although made in the image of God, man has, through intemperance, violated principle and God's law in his physical nature. Intemperance of any kind benumbs the perceptive organs, and so weakens the brain nerve power that eternal things are not appreciated, but are placed upon a level with common things. The higher powers of the mind, designed for elevated purposes, are brought into slavery to the baser passions. If our physical habits are not right, our mental and moral powers cannot be strong; for great sympathy exists between the physical and moral. The apostle Peter understood this, and raised his voice of warning to his brethren: "Dearly beloved, I

beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul."

There is but little moral power in the professed Christian world. Wrong habits have been indulged, and physical and moral laws have been disregarded, until the general standard of virtue and piety is exceedingly low. Habits which lower the standard of physical health enfeeble mental and moral strength. The indulgence of unnatural appetites and passions has a controlling influence upon the nerves of the brain. The animal organs are strengthened, while the moral and spiritual are depressed. It is impossible for an intemperate man to be a Christian, for his higher powers are brought into slavery to the lower passions.

Those who have had the light upon eating and dressing with simplicity, in obedience to physical and moral laws, and who turn from the light which points out their duty, will shun duty in other things. If they blunt their consciences to avoid the cross which they will have to take up to be in harmony with natural law, they will, in order to shun reproach, violate the ten commandments. There is a decided unwillingness with some to endure the cross and despise the shame. Some will be laughed out of their principles. Conformity to the world's customs and practices will separate the soul from God. There are in the Christian world many who think more of the praise of those who love not God than of the favor of Heaven. These will yield to temptation, and become more firmly wedded year by year to worldly fashions and indulgences of perverted appetite than they are to healthy bodies, sound mind, or sanctified hearts.

God is proving us, as he tested and proved Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, on the point of appetite, to develop what is in our hearts. Are we Christians? then we will eat and drink to the glory of God. Pride, self-indulgence, and love of the world have separated many from God. The principles of truth are by a large class virtually sacrificed, while they profess to love the truth. Christians should wake up and act with determined effort, for their influence is telling upon and moulding the opinions and habits of others. They will bear the weighty responsibility of deciding by their influence the destiny of souls.

The Lord, by close and pointed truths, is cleaving out a people from the world, and purifying them unto himself. Pride and unhealthful fashions, the love of display, the love of approbation,--all must be left with the world, if we would be renewed in

knowledge after the image of him who created us. "For 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."

The indulgence of the appetite, and the effort to keep pace with the fashions of this degenerate age, have brought into the heart of men selfishness, pride, envy, malice, evil-surmising, back-biting, gossiping, until the spirit of God has little to do with them. While some who profess to know God remain in their present state, their prayers are an abomination in his sight. They do not sustain their faith by their works, and it would have been better for some never to have professed the truth than to have dishonored their profession as they have done. While they profess to be servants of Christ, they are servants of the enemy of righteousness; and their works testify of them that they are not acquainted with God, and that their hearts are not in obedience to the will of Christ. They make child's play of religion; they act like pettish children. They serve God at will and let it alone at pleasure.

The children of God the world over are one great brotherhood. Our Saviour has clearly defined the spirit and principles which should govern the actions of those who, by their consistent, holy lives, distinguish themselves from the world. Love for one another, and supreme love to their heavenly Father, should be exemplified in their conversation and works.

That which should excite the greatest alarm is that we do not feel or sense our condition, our low estate, and that we are satisfied to remain as we are. We should flee to the word of God and to prayer, individually seeking the Lord earnestly, that we may find him. We should make this our first business.

The members of the church are responsible for the talents committed to their trust, and it is impossible for Christians to meet their responsibilities unless they occupy that elevated position that is in accordance with the sacred truths which they profess. The light that shines upon our pathway makes us responsible to let that light shine forth to others in such a manner that they will glorify God by good works.

August 18, 1887

The Christian's Privilege

"I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 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 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."

The apostle prayed for the church at Ephesus, that God would grant them "according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man." The spiritual strength here spoken of is something that we may each obtain; but how shall we get it? Perhaps we are in darkness, feeling weak and discouraged and that God does not love us. If so, we are not to give way to feeling; feeling has nothing whatever to do with the matter. We are to take the word of God as it reads, the words of Christ as he has spoken them.

Hear these words of our Saviour: "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock." It is the privilege of every one of us to build upon the Eternal Rock; then we shall not dishonor God, nor by our words and actions scatter away from Christ. There are some who do this, and Jesus is ashamed to call them brethren.

We may come to our Saviour in the hour of trial, and plead: "I am in poverty and need, and I must have thy blessing. I come to thee; for thou hast told me to come. Thou hast invited all who are weary and heavy laden to come unto thee, and thou hast promised them rest. Thou hast said; 'Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.'" And when he has given you rest, do not grieve his Spirit by talking darkness and unbelief. Talk faith; but, above all things, hold daily communion with Jesus.

Satan will tell you that you do not feel any better than you did before you went to Jesus with your troubles. But here the question arises again, What has feeling to do with it? The Lord says: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Again we read: "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" grudgingly pardon. Is that it? No, indeed! This is the way it reads: "For he will abundantly pardon." When you have thrown yourself upon the mercy of God, and taken him at his word, and yet the enemy comes, and suggests your faults and failings, and tells you that you are no better than before you sought the Lord, you can point to Jesus, and repeat his promises, and tell what he has done for you.

The apostle continues: "That Christ 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." While this divine fullness has been placed within our reach, how easily we are satisfied. We have accustomed ourselves to think that it is enough to have a knowledge of the truth without its sanctifying power. Just a little sip at the fountain of life quenches our thirst. We do not come again and again to drink. But this is not in accordance with the mind of God. Our souls should be continually athirst for the water of life. Our hearts should ever go out after Christ, longing for communion with him. It is hungering and thirsting after righteousness that will bring us the full measure of his grace.

Enoch "walked with God;" but how did he gain this sweet intimacy? It was by having thoughts of God continually before him. As he went out and as he came in, his meditations were upon the goodness, the perfection, and the loveliness of the divine character. And as he was thus engaged, he became changed into the glorious image of his Lord; for it is by beholding that we become changed.

We have something more to do than merely to attend church services. Prayers and testimonies in the social meeting will not answer, when we never say a word for Jesus outside the meeting-house. We are to reflect the character of Jesus. Everywhere, whether in the church, at our homes, or in social intercourse with our neighbors, we should let the lovely image of Jesus appear. This we cannot do unless we are filled with his fullness. If we would become better acquainted with Jesus, we should love him for

his goodness and excellence and we should desire to become so assimilated to his divine character that all would know that we had been with Jesus, and learned of him.

It is by carrying out in our lives the pure principles of the gospel of Christ that we honor and glorify our Father who is in Heaven. When we are doing this, we are reflecting Heaven-given light upon the dark world around us. Sinners will be constrained to confess that we are not the children of darkness, but the children of light. How shall they know this? By the fruits we bear. Men may have their names upon the church-book; but that does not make them children of light. They may hold honorable positions and receive the praise of men; but that does not make them children of light. They may shut themselves in monasteries, and clothe themselves in garments of sanctity, and yet not be the children of light. All this will not help them to shun or to overcome temptation. There must be a deep work of grace,--the love of God in the heart, and this love is expressed by obedience.

It is Christ dwelling in the soul that gives us spiritual power, and makes us channels of light. The more light we have, the more we can impart to others around us. The more closely we live to Jesus, the clearer views shall we have of his loveliness. As we behold him in his purity, we discern more clearly our own faults of character. We yearn after him, and for that fullness that is in him, and that shines out in the perfection of his heavenly character; and by beholding we become changed into his image.

How was it with our Saviour? He represented his Father in every act of his life, and in like manner the people of God are expected to represent Christ. Are we representing him in cross-bearing, in self-denial, in patience, and in labor for perishing souls? Let us think soberly and candidly about this matter. If we are not really deceiving ourselves, are we not, by our unbelief, daily depriving ourselves of the riches of his grace?

We should not allow the worldliness all about us to control our actions, but should be steadfast in the faith and strong in the word of God. Every day we are sowing some kind of seed. If we sow the seeds of unbelief, we shall reap unbelief; if we sow pride, we shall reap pride; if we sow stubbornness, we shall reap stubbornness; "for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

We do not want to be covered over with the mildew and slime of the world. We

are to remain in this world but a little while. We are pilgrims and strangers here, and are on our way to a better country, even a heavenly; and we want to become acquainted with that land to which we are going. Our conversation should not be exclusively of the world and worldly things; but our tongues should be trained to talk of the Christian's reward, and our eyes to discern the glory of that better country. It should be our daily work to gain a fitness for those mansions Jesus has gone to prepare for us.

Our hearts may be filled with all the fullness of God; but there is something for us to do. We must not pet our faults and sins, but put them away, and make haste to set our hearts in order. When this is done, let us take the key of faith, and unlock the storehouse of God's rich blessings. Does he want us to entertain doubt and darkness? Does he want us to be destitute of his Spirit? No, indeed. There is an infinite fullness to draw from; and we have the promise of our divine Lord, "According to your faith be it unto you." We may win the crown of life, a place at God's right hand, and as we enter the pearly gates, hear the words, sweeter than any music, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Basel, Switzerland.

August 25, 1887

Christ and the Law; or the Relations of the Jew and Gentile to the Law

At the first advent of Christ into this world, the people were favored with a new and fuller manifestation of the Divine Presence than they had ever enjoyed before. The knowledge of God, and the infinite love and benevolence of his character, were revealed more perfectly; for it pleased the Father that in his well-beloved Son all fullness should dwell. The middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile was broken down, and both were made partakers, not only of the blessings promised under the old covenant, but also the spiritual and heavenly truths revealed through Christ.

The Jewish church, with its rites and ceremonies pointing forward to Christ, was not to be despised. This was a dispensation of glory. In the wilderness, Christ himself, though invisible, was the leader of the armies of Israel; and the power of God was often revealed in a special manner in their behalf. Considering these glorious displays of divine power, Moses thus addresses Israel: "What nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" How many pass over these words of Moses as though they were meaningless, and continue to heap reproach and derision on divine institutions. How many trample on the divine law, the righteous judgments and statutes which were committed to God's ancient people.

In the mount, when the law was given to Moses, the Coming One was shown to him also. He saw Christ's work, and his mission to earth, when the Son of God should take upon himself humanity, and become a teacher and a guide to the world, and at last give himself a ransom for their sins. When the perfect Offering should be made for the sins of men, the sacrificial offerings typifying the work of the Messiah were to cease. With the advent of Christ, the veil of uncertainty was to be lifted, and a flood of light shed upon the darkened understanding of his people.

As Moses saw the day of Christ, and the new and living way of salvation that was to be opened through his blood, he was captivated and entranced. The praise of God was in his heart, and the divine glory that attended the giving of the law was so strikingly

revealed in his countenance when he came down from the mount to walk with Israel, that the brightness was painful. Because of their transgressions, the people were unable to look upon his face, and he wore a veil that he might not terrify them.

It was the light of the glory of the gospel of Christ, who was the foundation of the sacrificial system, that shone in the face of Moses. "But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?" When the reality, the full blaze of midday light, should come, the dim glory which was but an earnest of the latter, should be done away, swallowed up in the greater glory.

"And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished." God was pleased to reveal to Moses the end of the sacrificial offerings at the time of the giving of his law. It was made plain to him that the Angel that stood at the head of the armies of Israel was the great Offering for sin, the foundation of the entire typical system. He saw type reach its antitype. The former was but an earnest of the latter, and in comparison with it was intricate and mysterious, although of great beauty and clearness.

Had the Israelites discerned the gospel light that was opened to Moses, had they been able by faith to look steadfastly to the end of that which was abolished they could have endured the light which was reflected from the countenance of Moses. "But their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which veil is done away in Christ." The Jews as a people did not discern that the Messiah whom they rejected, was the Angel who guided their fathers in their travels in the wilderness. To this day the veil is upon their hearts, and its darkness hides from them the good news of salvation through the merits of a crucified Redeemer.

It is no wonder that transgressors of God's law at the present time will get as far from it as possible; for it condemns them. But those who hold that the ten commandments were abolished at the crucifixion of Christ are in a similar deception to that of the Jews. The position that the law of God is rigorous and unbearable casts contempt upon Him who governs the universe in accordance with its holy precepts. A veil is over the hearts of those who hold this view in reading both the Old and the New

Testament. The penalty for the least transgression of that law is death, and but for Christ, the sinner's Advocate, it would be summarily visited on every offender. Justice and mercy are blended. Christ and the law stand side by side. The law convicts the transgressor, and Christ pleads in the sinner's behalf.

With the first advent of Christ there was ushered in an era of greater light and glory; but it would indeed be sinful ingratitude to despise and ridicule the lesser light because a fuller and more glorious light had dawned. Those who despise the blessings and glory of the Jewish age are not prepared to be benefited by the preaching of the gospel. The brightness of the Father's glory, and the excellence and perfection of his sacred law, are only understood through the atonement made upon Calvary by his dear Son; but even the atonement loses its significance when the law of God is rejected.

The life of Christ was a most perfect and thorough vindication of his Father's law, and his death attested its immutability. Christ did not, by bearing the sinner's guilt, release man from his obligation to obey the law; for if the law could have been changed or abolished, he need not have come to this world to suffer and die. The very fact that Christ died for its transgressions attests the unchanging character of the Father's law.

The Jews had departed from God, and in their teaching had substituted their own traditions for the divine law. The life and teachings of Christ made plain and distinct the principles of this violated law. The heavenly host understood that the object of his mission was to exalt the Father's law and make it honorable, and to justify its claims by paying with his own life the penalty of its transgression. It was thus that he made reconciliation between God and man. As the great blessings brought within the reach of the human race at the first advent of the Saviour were seen by the angelic visitors, they burst into the glad, triumphant anthem: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

The middle wall of partition between the Jew and Gentile was broken down. They were no longer in separate rooms; the unbelieving Gentile has been united with the believing Jew. The Gentile did not crowd the Jews from their original position, but he became a partaker with them of their blessings.

Thus was fulfilled the mission of Christ; and from his own divine lips were heard the words: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come

to destroy, but to fulfill." Basel, Switzerland.

September 1, 1887

The Victory Over Appetite

"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."

Here the battle between self-control and selfish indulgence is set forth. There is work for us to do, stern, earnest work, to decide which shall obtain the mastery. All our habits, tastes, and inclinations should be in accordance with the laws of health and life. By this means we may secure the very best physical conditions, and have mental clearness to discern between the evil and the good.

There are many expensive indulgences that are at the same time very injurious. They derange the digestive organs, and destroy the appetite for simple, wholesome food, and sickness and suffering are the result. With dyspepsia and its attendant evils comes the loss of a sweet disposition. There is irritability, fretfulness, impatience; and harsh, unkind words are spoken, which may result in the loss of a dear friend. Thus the books of Heaven show loss in many ways.

God is not unwilling that we should enjoy the blessings of life. He has placed in our hands abundant means for the gratification of natural appetite. In the products of the earth there is a bountiful variety of food that is both palatable and nutritious, and of these articles we "may freely eat." We may enjoy the fruits, the vegetables, and the grains, which our benevolent heavenly Father has provided for our use, without doing violence to the laws of our being. Such a diet will nourish the body, and preserve its natural vigor, without the use of artificial stimulants and luxuries.

Intemperance commences at the table in the use of unhealthful food. After a time, as the digestive organs become weakened, the food does not satisfy the appetite, and there is a craving for more stimulating food and drinks. Tea, coffee, and flesh-meats produce an immediate effect, and are freely indulged in. Under their influence, the nervous system is excited, and in some cases, for the time being, the intellect seems to be invigorated, and the imagination to be more vivid. But there is always a reaction. The

nervous system, having been unduly excited, borrowed power for present use from its future resources; and all this temporary invigoration of the system is followed by depression. The appetite, educated to crave something stronger, soon calls for tobacco, wines, and liquors.

The more the appetite is indulged, the more imperative are its demands, and the more difficult it is to control. The more debilitated the system becomes, and the less able to do without unnatural stimulants, the more the passion for these things increases, until the will is overborne, and there seems to be no power to deny the unnatural craving.

We are to be temperate in all things. Not only should we be careful to exercise judgment in the selection of proper food, but strict temperance in eating and in drinking is essential to the healthy preservation and vigorous exercise of all functions of the body. But intemperance in eating, even of healthful food, will have an injurious effect upon the system, and will blunt the mental and moral faculties.

Parents are many times responsible in this matter. They educate the taste of their children by indulging them in the use of unhealthful articles. They permit them to eat rich pastries and highly seasoned food, and to drink tea and coffee. They are thus laying the foundation for perverted appetites and ruining the health of their children. They should help them in this respect, and not place temptation in their way.

Frequently mothers permit their children to eat candy and sweetmeats, and the habit thus formed, besides involving an unwise expenditure of money, is ruinous to the health. One mother said to me, as she placed a package of candy in her child's hand, "It is only five cents' worth." It was a very poor quality of candy and highly colored. The child looked in my face with much interest, to see how I regarded the matter. Said I, "The lessons in the selfish indulgence of taste which you are giving your children are setting their feet in an evil path. You, as their guardian and teacher, should be helping them to overcome. You should be teaching them to cease to do evil and to learn to do well."

Besides the injury that is done to the health, these indulgences of taste are in the end expensive. Though but a trifle may be spent at each time, they soon aggregate quite a sum; and this money might be spent for some useful purpose, or be given to the cause

of God. Will you ponder these things my Christian friends, and see if you cannot, by self-denial, and the better health that will come with the better habits, accomplish more with your life than you have done hitherto?

Christian women can do much in the great work for the salvation of others by spreading their tables with only healthful, nourishing food. They can educate the tastes and appetites of their children; they can form in them habits of temperance in all things, and encourage benevolence and self-denial for the good of others. The moral sensibilities of Christians should be aroused upon this subject; that they may help those who are so weak in self-control as to be almost powerless to resist the cravings of appetite. If we could realize that the habits we form in this life will effect our eternal interests, we should be much more careful than we now are; and by our example and personal effort we might be the means of saving many souls from the degradation of intemperance and crime, and the consequent penalty of death.

Here is the battle before us, to subdue self and be temperate in all things if we would secure the incorruptible crown of immortal life. The prize is within our reach, and everyone may win it who will strive lawfully. But how many who have had precious opportunities and great light and privileges seem devoid of reason in regard to the purpose of life, and fail to realize the shame and confusion that will be theirs when they shall receive sentence according as their works have been. They might rise intellectually and morally if they would govern themselves; but this they will not do, for they love self supremely.

The lives of such persons are a shallow pretense. They do not aim at any high standard in personal character; but their attention is taken up with matters of dress, style, personal appearance, equipage, sensuous enjoyment. Reproof and warning are refused or disregarded. They do not like the effort it would require, and so make no exertion to change their course. After looking in the mirror, they forget what manner of characters they found represented there, and pursue their accustomed round of folly, which they call freedom and enjoyment.

They do not understand righteousness. If they would for a time change their course of action, and live a self-denying, godly life, being temperate in all things, they would have wisdom, strength, and power to live a noble, useful life.

To attain to such a life in this self-indulgent, lawless age, we must daily have the Spirit of Christ. But he is willing to bestow it upon those who range themselves under his blood-stained banner, fighting the battles of the Lord. There are precious victories to gain; and the victors in this contest against appetite and every worldly lust will receive a crown of life that fadeth not away, a blessed home in that city whose gates are of pearl and whose foundations are of precious stones. Is not this prize worth striving for? Is it not worth every effort that we can make? Then let us so run that we may obtain. Basel, Switzerland.

September 8, 1887

Obedience and Its Reward

"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. 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." Revelation 22:12-14.

Here is presented before us a period of time when everyone will receive according to the deeds done in the body. If it is so that in the heavenly courts a record is kept of our works and of our words, how important it is that we take heed to our ways. Every character will be tested by the standard of God's holy law. The great God of Heaven, our supreme Ruler, has rules, Statutes, and laws. These laws govern not only the intelligences of Heaven, but they govern every member of the human family; and we read in my text: "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." We should show great want of wisdom were we to make no special preparation to be among the number that shall enter in through the gates into the city.

We should have an intense and earnest desire for eternal things, and put forth efforts proportionate to the value of the object which we are in pursuit of. The exhortations and the warnings which come to us from the prophets and apostles are all to educate us in character building, and to teach us what we must do in order to be saved.

I am so grateful that in this degenerate age we are not left in darkness to pick our way along amid the many voices that are heard to divert us from the path of holiness. We want to hear the one voice that says, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Christ says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Then we inquire, Have we placed ourselves on the side of the Prince of Life? Have we placed ourselves under the banner of Prince Emmanuel? Have we, like Daniel, purposed in our hearts to be obedient to all of God's requirements? It is of the greatest consequence to us that we be found obedient children, walking in the truth. We do not want to be on the side of the great rebel who transgressed God's commandments and was thrust out of Heaven, and is teaching others

to be disloyal to the God of Heaven. If we are not obedient to God in this life, keeping his commandments, how can we expect to have a right to eternal life? God will not take into his kingdom and give eternal life to those who will not come under his laws and statutes in this life.

We are in this world as probationers; we are here to obtain a fitness for the future immortal life, and should we devote the precious golden moments that are now granted us, these precious moments of probation, in finding our own pleasure, in doing our own ways, and seeking our own gratification, we should fail to secure a fitness for immortal life. If we lose Heaven we lose everything, and it would be better for us if we had never been born. But if we gain the precious Heaven of bliss we gain everything, and we may bless the day in which we were born. If we would dwell with the precious Saviour in the kingdom which he has gone to prepare for those that love him, we must seek to be like him here; we must bring him into our life and weave him into our character, and he will be unto us everything that our hearts can desire.

Our minds should be directed to the great source of light, and power, and happiness. Our heavenly Father has, in the gift of his dear Son, given us the greatest blessing that Heaven possessed. And when by living faith we accept this precious Saviour and he abides with us, then all Heaven is at our command; and whatsoever we ask the Father in his name he giveth us. All our troubles, all our perplexities, all our griefs we can bring to our dear Saviour. We need not hug our troubles to our breasts; we need not walk in perplexity, and in darkness, and in doubt; for Christ has said that those who follow him shall not walk in darkness, and every step that we take in following Christ is a step toward clearer light. We must expect to have difficulties, and opposition, and perplexities; all these are God's agents and will make our faith grow stronger. The sinews and muscles of our spirituality will be strengthened in overcoming the obstacles which we meet. By grasping the promises of God by living faith we can move Heaven. All Heaven is pledged to aid the faithful worker. We need not go in gloom complaining by the way of the roughness of the journey; for these light afflictions which are but for a moment are working "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."

What we want is more of Jesus and less of self. And the more we keep the eye fixed upon the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus, the more we shall

press toward the mark. It requires moral courage to be a Christian; but God demands all that there is of man in his service. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself." How many of us are doing this today? How many of us will come short of entering in through the gates into the city? How many of us are devoting our time to the little things of this life, while we are neglecting our eternal interests?

You should bring all of Heaven that it is possible to bring into your present life. "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." If you have any talent or intellect it is the Lord's, give it to him. If you have any power or influence it belongs on the Lord's side. It is your Creator that requires this at your hands. A great and infinite price has been paid for your redemption. For your sake Jesus laid aside his majesty and his glory, became poor that you through his poverty might be made rich. He left all his riches and glory and honor, clothed his divinity with humanity, and came to this world to save man, and yet that Saviour is compelled to say to many, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." He paid a great price to redeem every son and daughter of Adam. He would lift man from the lowest degradation of sin up to purity again, and restore to him his moral image. When the apostle saw the indifference of those whom Christ made such an infinite sacrifice, he inquires, "Who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the truth?" There is a power that takes hold of the senses of men and women that perverts their ideas so that they do not appreciate the love of Christ. You cannot afford to sin. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey?" We must show to the world by our lives and character that Christ has not died for us in vain; and when we place ourselves in right relation to God, then we become living channels of light to the world. Christ has said, "Ye are the light of the world," and if we fail to have a connection with Christ what a lamentable condition are we in! The light of Heaven is not given to us and we cannot give it to others. It is the privilege of every one of us to be children of the light, and light bearers.

September 15, 1887

Obedience and Its Reward

We should understand our obligations to the God of Heaven. We should honor our Creator in this life. We should keep his honor and glory in view every day. We must have an eye single to the glory of God. If all in this congregation who profess to be followers of Christ were to take the position of light-bearers to the world what a flood of light would be reflected from them to this world of darkness. Then why not let your hearts be uplifted to the God of Heaven for his grace that you may be imbued with his Spirit? Why not live as though you were pilgrims and strangers upon earth, looking for that better country and that heavenly city whose builder and maker is God?

That precious city you may gain; but not one of you will go there loaded down with self and the guilt of the transgression of God's law. You cannot take with you into the city of God the pleasures of this life, neither the riches of the world. All who enter that city will enter it as conquerors. If you will sing the song of triumph and victory as overcomers, you must first learn here the art of conquering self and sin. And should you not do what you can in order to obtain the heavenly riches which can never be taken from you? to secure the heavenly land where there is no more poverty, no more sickness, no more pain, and no more death? But we shall not go to that holy Heaven as guilty, shamefaced, condemned criminals, but as joint heirs with Jesus Christ. You should keep Heaven before your eyes, and not allow the glitter and tinsel of this earth to eclipse its glory. The most beautiful places upon earth will soon be shaken down, the richest houses will fall, the gold and silver be cast to the moles and to the bats, but heavenly things will endure forever.

You may look upon the greatest riches and splendor which this earth possesses, you may look at the beauties of nature, which the great Master Artist has spread out before you in rich profusion, and yet we hear a voice saying, "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." You may put your imagination to the highest stretch, and yet you cannot take in the glory of heavenly things. Then shall we not turn our attention to the future immortal life?

There is not one of you that will enter in through the gates into the city alone. If you give back to God in willing service the powers he has given you, not only will you save your own soul, but your influence will be to gather others. Everyone who takes his position steadfastly for the truth is bringing other souls to the same decision and to Heaven. In this work you can show that you love God with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself. We are to feel a burden for the souls that are around us who are out of Christ. We should have a missionary spirit that will move us to try to help other feet to stand upon the platform of eternal truth.

We see that iniquity abounds everywhere, that the law of God is almost universally made void in our land. What insult is this to the God of Heaven that has given righteous laws and wise and merciful statutes to have them disregarded and trampled under foot. Then should not all who name the name of Christ depart from all iniquity, and give all their powers to his service? Should we not stand in defense of the truth, and think much less of our pleasure and our amusement, and a great deal more of Christ? The requirement is, "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." You must come nearer to God by repentance and confession of all your sins. If you are saved you must be found loyal and true subjects of the kingdom of Heaven. You cannot afford to meet the great Lawgiver over his broken law. Let every soul here today inquire, What road am I traveling? Am I in the road which has been at infinite cost cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, or am I in the broad road of Satan? Have I my eye single to the glory of God? Says Christ, "I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Angels of God are watching the development of character, and weighing moral worth. The record is kept in the books of Heaven of all the deeds of men. Your sins though hidden from mortal eyes are open before God. His eyes sees every sin; but if you confess your sins then will he forgive them.

We have a precious loving Saviour. I wish I could present him to you just as he is. Many have Jesus so exalted in their minds that he seems far off and they have no communion with him. But Christ took upon himself human nature and was called the Son of man, because he was to become acquainted with all the trials, with all the sorrows, and with all the sufferings of humanity, that he might know how to succor those who are tempted. To the weeping ones he says, I have wept. I know how to sympathize with you. He is a Saviour that is in sympathy with the woes of man, a

Saviour that is by our side to help, and strengthen, and succor us. You may take all your trials, all your troubles, all your sorrows to Jesus in prayer; you may feel that he is at hand to help you in every emergency, and you can tell him all about it and he will give you just the help you need. He wants us to have joy in him, and in order to do this we must come in close connection with him. We cannot dishonor him more than to distrust him. And we honor him when we believe in him and are obedient to all his commandments.

I have been for more than forty years engaged in labor to save souls for Jesus Christ, and I have had new and precious lessons to learn every day of my life. One of the most precious has been to commit the keeping of my soul to God as unto a faithful creator. If I was knowingly transgressing one of God's commandments because it was convenient for me to do so, then I could not trust God and believe that he would at last bring me into the haven of bliss. But when I seek to overcome to the best of my ability, when my will is swallowed up in the will of God; then it is my privilege to claim his promises and believe that God will do with me according to his loving kindness.

I cannot describe to you this perfect trust. But I present before you a loving Saviour, that Saviour that wants to bring to your hearts joy and peace and love, that is inexpressible. He wants you to be happy and joyful in him. He says, "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink," and he will be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. And if Christ is in you as a well of water, your words and influence will be a blessing to all around you. No one should live to himself; we are accountable to God for the influence we exert. Christ has made an infinite sacrifice, and all our powers should be given to him, and if we are faithful soldiers of the cross of Christ, the precious reward of a life that measures with the life of God will be granted to us.

I see matchless charms in Jesus, and I cannot have my affections placed upon anything that is earthly. My heart is drawn out in love for those out of Christ. I long to see them enter into the service of Christ, that they may have the blessing here and eternal life in the kingdom of God. Will you not take heed to your ways? Will you not compare your character with God's moral law, the ten commandments? And then seek to come into obedience to all of God's requirements. Says Christ, "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." Give me this precious reward, and you may take everything from me here upon earth.

Eternal interests are at stake. Jesus says, "My son give me thine heart;" he has bought it with his own blood. And when the pearly gates shall at last be swung open, and the nations who have kept the truth enter into the joy of their Lord, they will have that crown of glory which by faith Paul saw laid up for him, and not for him only but for all those who love his appearing. The saved will hear the benediction, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Let us think of these things; let us bring the Saviour into our lives every day; let us love him with all our hearts; and if we appreciate the preciousness of Heaven, we shall talk of Jesus, of Heaven, and of the glories to be revealed to the overcomers. Then let us place ourselves under the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel. Let us have a faith that takes right hold of Christ. Let the language of each soul be, He is my Saviour, he died for me, and I hang my helpless soul upon him. He is able to keep that which I have committed to his trust, against that day. This is the precious lesson that I am learning today, to do the very best I can according to the best light that shines upon my pathway, and then trust the rest to Jesus.

May the blessing of God rest upon this dear people. How many that are here present today shall I meet around the great white throne? How many will lift their voices in songs of triumph, and praise, to him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever. God grant that you may be there, saved, eternally saved, in the kingdom of glory.

September 22, 1887

The Great Commission

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

This is the great commission given by Christ to his disciples after his resurrection. God has claims upon the service, not of the ministers merely, but of all who profess his name,—men and women, youth and children; and the earlier they are led out of and away from self, and taught to engage in unselfish labor for others, the nearer will they come to fulfilling this holy commission. Yet notwithstanding the claims that God has upon us, many select a course of life for themselves, without thought or reference to the glory of God; and all the time they profess to be his servants, following his directions, when in fact they are only serving themselves.

When Christ left his exalted position in Heaven, and came to this earth, he was not treated as a sovereign or even as a benefactor. His life was one of continual self-denial and sacrifice for others. His own testimony is, "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 while on earth? All who remain inactive when there is so much to be done, will at last be found guilty before God. Let us adopt the sentiment 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."

In the parable of the marriage supper, our Saviour mentions a class who, with one consent, began to make excuses for the non-performance of duty. One had bought a piece of land, another had purchased a yoke of oxen, another had married a wife; and so none of them could accept the invitation of the king. This parable illustrates the frivolous and vain excuses that are made by many for not giving more attention to matters pertaining to the cause of God. They might have a seat at the marriage supper of the Lamb, they might be workers in the vineyard of the Lord; but they will not, because their temporal affairs are placed above things of eternal interest.

Those who profess to serve God, but feel no burden for the souls of others, will be continually backsliding. The time and strength of the minister will be taxed to keep them from making shipwreck of faith, when they should be laboring to present the way of life and salvation to their friends and neighbors. Many 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 year by year they are becoming narrower and more circumscribed. They do not open their hearts to the grace and love of Christ, and liberalize their nature and ennoble their aims by placing themselves in sympathy with their fellowmen.

The purpose of the true Christian is to do good, not only to his own family and friends, but to all who come within the sphere of his influence. Many ways of usefulness will open before the willing, aspiring, devoted soul, who really desires to labor for the salvation of others. 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 upbuilding of the cause of God. It will be their meat and drink to benefit their fellow-men and glorify their Redeemer.

There are many who need the ministration of loving Christian hearts. Many who have been left to darkness and ruin might have been helped had their brethren--men and women in the common walks of life--come to them with the love of Christ growing in their hearts, and put forth personal efforts for them. Many are waiting to be thus personally addressed. Much could be done with such persons by humble, earnest conversation and prayer. In most cases, when heart is brought close to heart, and the love that warmed the heart of the pitying Son of God is manifested, the effort will be wholly successful.

The question, "How much owest thou unto my Lord?" should come home to every heart. 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 souls for whom Christ died will become intensified, and sinners will be saved as the result of our labor. And what greater or more ennobling work can be engaged in, than seeking to attract souls to

Christ? This work 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. But every worker must depend for wisdom and strength wholly on the grace of Christ.

If every member of the church would work in any place suited to his capacity, much more might be done to carry out the great commission given by our Master. More extensive plans would be devised to reach our fellow-men. Christ is searching the life and character for fruit, and he finds many professed Christians, like the barren fig-tree, bearing nothing but leaves. Some may say, "I do not know of anything that 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. They may gather the 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 "Well done" will be spoken to the faithful.

It is a mystery to me how any can be indifferent and careless in reference to the souls of their fellow-men. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," says the inspired word. Can we do this, and take no interest in his salvation? No, nor can one long retain the divine favor, if he takes no interest in 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, your best course will be to engage at once in personal efforts to save others. The rich promises of God are for the faithful workers. "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." It is to those, and those only, who are engaged in carrying forward the gospel commission that "Well done" will be spoken, and it is upon their brows alone that crowns of immortal glory will be placed. Then 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.

September 29, 1887

How to Meet Temptations

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord."

What greater promises could be given us than are found in these verses? A cunning and cruel foe attends our steps, and is working every moment, with all his strength and skill, to turn us from the right way. Ever since he succeeded in overcoming our first parents in their beautiful Eden home, he has been engaged in this work. More than six thousand years of continual practice has greatly increased his skill to deceive and allure. On the other hand, he who once yields to temptation becomes spiritually weak, and yields more readily the second time. Every repetition of sin blinds his eyes, stifles conviction, and weakens his power of resistance. Thus while the power of the human race to resist temptation is continually decreasing, Satan's skill and power to tempt are continually increasing. This is one great reason why the temptations of the last days will be more severe than those of any other age.

The admonition of the Saviour is, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." If Satan cannot prevent persons from exercising faith, he will try to lead them to presume upon the willingness and power of God, by placing themselves unnecessarily in the way of temptation. Presumption is a most common temptation, and as Satan assails men with this, he obtains the victory nine times out of ten. Those who profess to be followers of Christ, and who claim by their faith to be enlisted in the warfare against all evil in their nature, frequently plunge without thought into temptations from which it would require a miracle to bring them forth unsullied. Meditation and prayer would have preserved them from these temptations, by leading them to shun the critical, dangerous position in which they placed themselves.

Although the promises of God are not to be rashly claimed by us when we recklessly rush into danger, violating the laws of nature, and disregarding prudence, and the judgment with which God has endowed us, we should not lose courage when temptations come upon us. If we do not knowingly place ourselves in the way of temptation, it is our privilege to claim the promise of the inspired word: "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."

Those who have weighty responsibilities to bear in connection with the work of God are the ones that will be beset with the strongest temptations. If Satan can cause them to waver from the right, he not only takes away their own strength, but he destroys their influence for good over others. They lose their confidence in God, and feel that they hardly dare approach him in prayer; for they are under condemnation. Acting upon the principle that Christ presented in his prayer, "I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth," they should take the position that they will be steadfast to God under every circumstance, that they may exert an influence to make others steadfast.

The temptations of Satan are manifold; but those to which our attention is called in the text are unbelief and impatience. "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." Impatience, then, is the result of a lack of faith. "But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." If we do not maintain the grace of patience, we shall never reach a state of perfection. Some of us have nervous temperament, and are naturally as quick as a flash to think and to act; but let no one think that he cannot learn to become patient. Patience is a plant that will make rapid growth if carefully cultivated. By becoming thoroughly acquainted with ourselves, and then combining with the grace of God a firm determination on our part, we may be conquerors, and become perfect in all things, wanting in nothing.

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." It is our privilege in our great weakness to take hold of the strength of the Mighty One. If we think to meet and overcome the enemy in our own strength, we shall be disappointed. It may seem at times that when we pray the most and try the hardest to do right, we have the greatest temptations. This is because Satan is perfectly satisfied with our condition when we are clothed with self-righteousness and do not realize our need of divine aid; but when we see our great need

of help, and begin to draw near to God, he knows that God will draw near to us; therefore he places every possible obstruction in the way so that we shall not come into close connection with the Source of our strength.

The exhortation of the apostle is, "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." It is by engaging in this work, and by exercising living faith in God, that we are to perfect a Christian character. The work of cleansing the soul-temple and preparing for Christ's appearing must be done while we are in this world of temptation. Just as Christ finds us in character when he comes, so we shall remain.

We should make daily advancement in the work of character-building. When we try to separate from us our sinful habits, it may at times seem that we are tearing ourselves all to pieces; but this is the very work that we must do if we would grow up unto the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus, if we would become fit temples for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is not the will of God that we should remain in feebleness and darkness. He would have us put on the whole armor, and fight valiantly the battle against sin and self. And after we have truly repented of our sins, and done all that we can to overcome them, he would have us manifest a calm, unyielding trust in the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour.

If we make an entire surrender to him, leave our life of sin and passion and pride, and cling to Christ and his merits, he will fulfill to us all that he has promised. He says that he will give liberally to all who ask him. Cannot we believe it? I have tested him on this point, and know that he is faithful to fulfill all his promises.

Let not him that wavereth think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. When persons begin to draw nigh to God, Satan is always ready to press in his darkness. As they look back over their past life, he causes every defect to be so exaggerated in their minds that they become discouraged, and begin to doubt the power and willingness of Jesus to save. Their faith wavers, and they say, "I do not believe that Jesus will forgive my sins." Let not such expect to receive anything from the Lord. If they would only exercise true repentance toward God, at the same time possessing a firm faith in Christ, he would cover their sins and pardon their transgressions. But, instead of this, they too often allow themselves to be controlled by impulse and feeling.

When Satan tells you that your sins are such that you need not expect any great victories in God, tell him the Bible teaches that those who love most are those who have been forgiven most. Do not try to lessen your guilt by excusing sin. You cannot come near to God by faith unless you realize your sinfulness. Then you can place yourselves right on the promises, and with unwavering faith can claim a share in the infinite sacrifice that has been made for the human race. Cling closely to Jesus, and his great heart of love will draw you unto himself.

I am so anxious that those who labor in the cause shall have all the strength, and peace, and joy that Christ has for them. I want them to have the consolation of the Holy Spirit. The apostle Paul desired that his brethren should be comforted with "the consolation wherewith he was comforted." The Christian finds constant comfort and strength in Jesus. And when he complains of weakness and darkness, he gives good evidence that he has not a close connection with Jesus.

Brethren, let us have an eye single to the glory of God. Let us not allow anything to interpose between us and him. "If we follow on to know the Lord," we shall know that "his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth." If we are partakers of the divine nature, we shall reflect in life and character the image of our divine Lord. We cannot be indolent in seeking this perfection of character. We cannot yield passively to our surroundings, and think that others will do the work for us. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." We must be workers together with God. Life must become to us a humble, earnest working out of salvation with fear and trembling; and then faith, hope and love will abide in our hearts, giving us an earnest of the reward that awaits the overcomer.

A relentless and determined foe has prepared his wiles for every soul that is not braced for trial, and guarded by constant prayer and living faith. We cannot individually, or as a body, secure ourselves from his constant assaults; but in the strength of Jesus every temptation, every opposing influence, whether open or secret, may be successfully resisted. Remember that "your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." Therefore "be sober, be vigilant."

October 6, 1887

The Light of the World

"Ye are," says Christ, "the light of the world." As the sun goes forth upon its errand of mercy and love, as the golden beams of day flood the canopy of heaven and beautify forest and mountain, awakening the world by dispelling the darkness of night, so the followers of Christ should go forth upon their mission of love. Gathering divine rays of light from the great Light of the world, they should let them shine forth in good works upon those who are in the darkness of error.

Do you, my brethren and sisters, realize that you are the light of the world? Do you, in your words and deportment at home, leave a bright track heavenward? What is it to be the light of the world? It is to have God for your guide, to have the companionship of holy angels, and to reflect to others the light that shines upon you from above. But if you fail to exercise Christian courtesy, forbearance, and love in your families, God and holy angels are grieved away; and instead of being the light of the world, you are bodies of darkness.

It is possible, through the grace of Christ, to have control over yourselves at all times. If a dear friend, one whose good opinion you greatly desired, should come into your home, you would not be found fretting and scolding; but you would control your words and actions, and would seek in every way to so conduct yourselves as to gain his respect and confidence. Shall we take more care in the presence of a comparative stranger than in the presence of those who are dear to us by the ties of nature; or in the presence of Jesus and heavenly angels? God forbid; for by so doing we fail to meet the claims of high Heaven upon us.

It is not the will of God that we should be gloomy or impatient; nor that we should be light and trifling. It is Satan's studied plan to push persons from one extreme to the other. As children of the light, God would have us cultivate a cheerful, happy spirit, that we may show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light. A lady once lived in our family nine years, and during all this time we did not hear an impatient word or a light expression from her lips; and yet she was the most cheerful person I ever saw. Hers was not a life of darkness and gloom, nor of

lightness and frivolity. In this respect our lives should be like hers. God would not have us live under a cloud, but as in the light of his countenance.

Some are naturally of a reticent disposition; a smile is seldom seen upon their faces, and they seem more like statues than human beings. Such should open their hearts to the Sun of righteousness, and gather precious rays of light from Jesus, that they may reflect them to others. God wants you, brethren and sisters, to have this light in your hearts, and then you will be channels of light wherever you are. Like the sunflower, which turns its face constantly toward the sun, you must look continually toward the Source of light, that you may catch every ray possible.

Many who profess to be followers of Christ are as worlds without the sun. If these would leave their darkness and unbelief, and press forward in faith, they would become light in the Lord. Who would think of distrusting a dear friend who promised that if we would follow him he would lead us safely through the darkest forest? Much less ought we to doubt the word of Jesus, who has said, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." He will not leave those who trust in him to fall under the temptations of Satan. This is not his way of dealing with his children. He has promised to lift upon them the light of his countenance.

The law of God is made void in the land, but here is a little company who have come out from the world and are standing in defense of that law. To these Jesus says, "Ye are the light of the world." Now, suppose that you keep your minds dwelling upon self and your darkness; how can you be the light of the world? You keep yourselves in darkness by looking at your own imperfections, instead of the willingness and power of Jesus to save to the uttermost all that come unto him in faith. You hug your darkness so close that there is no chance for the light to get in.

I want to say to those who have been desponding, When Satan comes in to tempt you, and you have no evidence that the Lord accepts you, do not look to see how dark you are, but look up to the light. Begin to praise God for the plan of salvation, and hold every victory gained through Christ. As you repeat the confidence you have in Jesus, Satan will flee; for he cannot bear the name of Jesus. Thus, step by step, you can fight the good fight of faith. Remember that Jesus has borne long with you, and he does not want you to be lost. He says, "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." By this he shows that he wants to take possession of your hearts.

Satan may tell you that you cannot be blessed; but Jesus says that he will come in, if you will open the door of your hearts. Which will you believe? Here is another precious promise that all may claim. It is not addressed to those who are perfect, but to sinners; to those who have wandered away from Christ. "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." Is there one who dares not claim this promise? Is there one who will say, "I am so sinful that this does not mean me"? Put away such thoughts. Christ will accept you, polluted by sin though you may be, if you will come to him with contrition of soul. He invites all to come into the light of his presence. Then why should you remain away?

The word of God says, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." It will require an effort on your part to walk with God. Jesus said to the man with the withered hand, "Stretch forth thine hand." The afflicted man might have said, "Lord, I have not used it for years; heal it first, and then I will stretch it forth." But instead of this, when Jesus commanded him to stretch it forth, he exercised the power of his will, and moved it just as if it were well. The very exercise of the will power was evidence to Jesus that the man believed; and his hand was healed in the act of stretching it forth. God would have you put away your darkness, and show that there is a power in the Christian religion that there is not in the world. He wants to make you all light in him; he wants to fill your hearts with love, and peace, and hope. If, then, you continue to cling to your darkness, you dishonor him; for you do not correctly represent to the world a sin-pardoning Saviour. If you are gloomy, desponding, hopeless, you are a poor representative of the Christian religion. Christ died for all. The sacrifice was complete. It is your privilege and duty to show to the world that you have an entire, all-powerful Saviour. It was the Son of the infinite God who died to purchase a full and free salvation for all that would accept it. Then why not take him as your Saviour? He rebukes your unbelief; he honors your faith. (To be Continued.)

October 20, 1887

The Light of the World

Go into a cellar, and you may well talk of darkness, and say, "I cannot see; I cannot see." But come up into the upper chamber, where the light shines, and you need not be in darkness. Come where Christ is, and you will have light. Talk unbelief, and you will have unbelief; but talk faith, and you will have faith. According to the seed sown will be the harvest. If you talk of Heaven and the eternal reward, your way will become lighter and lighter in the Lord, and your faith will grow, because it is exercised. Fasten your eyes upon Jesus, dear friends, and by beholding you will become assimilated to his image. Do not allow your thoughts to dwell continually upon things of the earth, but place them upon things that are heavenly, and then, wherever you are, you will be a light to the world.

Live the life of faith day by day. Do not become anxious and distressed about the time of trouble, and thus have a time of trouble beforehand. Do not keep thinking, "I am afraid I shall not stand in the great testing day." You are to live for the present, for this day only. Tomorrow is not yours. Today you are to maintain the victory over self. Today you are to live a life of prayer. Today you are to fight the good fight of faith. Today you are to believe that God blesses you. And as you gain the victory over darkness and unbelief, you will meet the requirements of the Master, and will become a blessing to those around you.

From every member of the church a steady light should shine forth before the world, so that they shall not be led to inquire, "What do these people more than others?" 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 gospel. "Freely ye have received, freely give," are the words of the Master. While Christ is dwelling in the heart by his Spirit, it is impossible for the light of his presence to be concealed or to grow dim. On the contrary, it will grow brighter and brighter, as day by day the mists of selfishness and sin that envelop the soul are dispelled by the bright beams of the Sun of righteousness.

Christians may learn a lesson from the faithfulness of the light-house keeper. "A

gentleman once visited a light-house that was placed in a very dangerous position to warn men of the perils that threaten them on the trackless sea. The keeper was boasting of the brilliancy of his light, which could be seen ten leagues out at sea, when the visitor said to him: 'You speak with enthusiasm, sir; and that is well. I like to hear men tell what they are sure they know; but what if one of the lights should go out?'

"'Never, never! absurd! impossible!' replied the sensitive watchman, in consternation at the mere supposition of such a thing. 'Why, sir,' he continued, pointing 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 should go out, within six months would come a letter, perhaps from India, perhaps from Australia, perhaps from a 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 such a point burned low and dim; that the watchman neglected his post, and 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 though the eye of the whole world were looking at my light. Go out? Burn dim? That flame flicker low or fail? No, sir, never!'

"And shall Christians, shining for tempted sinners, allow their light to fail? For, ever 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 great light, and Christians are appointed to reflect that light. The ocean is vast, its dangers are many, and the eyes of far-away voyagers are turned toward the light-house,--the church of Jesus Christ." If the world intervenes between the church and Christ, its light will burn dim, and souls will be lost because of a lack of that light. Shall it not be the language of every heart, What! let the light that is in me go out or burn dim! Never! never!

We are all woven together in the great web of humanity, and God holds us responsible for the influence we exert over others. 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.

God in his providence does not permit us to know the end from the beginning; but

he gives us the light of his word to guide us as we pass along, and bids us to keep our minds stayed upon Jesus. Wherever we are, whatever our employment, our hearts are to be uplifted to God in prayer. This is being instant in prayer. We need not wait until we can bow upon our knees before we pray. On one occasion, when Nehemiah came in before the king, the king asked why he looked so sad, and what request he had to make. But Nehemiah dared not answer at once. Important interests were at stake. The fate of a nation hung upon the impression that should then be made upon the monarch's mind; and Nehemiah darted up a prayer to the God of Heaven, before he dared to answer the king. The result was that he obtained all that he asked or even desired.

This is the course that God would have us pursue under all circumstances. He wants us to be minute-men and women. He wants us to be ready always to give to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is within us with meekness and fear. Why with fear? It is with a fear lest we shall not make a right impression upon the mind of the inquirer; with a fear lest self shall not be out of sight, and the truth not be made to appear as it is in Jesus.

I feel an intense desire that our brethren and sisters shall be correct representatives of Jesus. Do not pierce his wounds afresh, and put him to an open shame, by an inconsistent life. Become thoroughly acquainted with the reasons of our faith, and show by word and act that Christ is dwelling in your hearts by faith. May God help you to walk with Jesus. If you do, you will be the light of the world, and in the time of trouble he will say, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast."

November 3, 1887

The Cross of Christ

Of Jesus it is said that "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." Can it be that this cup of suffering was the choice of our divine Lord? And why was it that he submitted to endure shame, scorn, and reproach? It was that through the merits of his blood, he might save fallen man, and exalt him at last to his own right hand. And shall we who are partakers of the benefits of this great sacrifice,--we who profess to have an interest in this redemption,--shrink from bearing reproach, and scorn, and shame for his name's sake? Shall we shrink from the opposition of a world that is opposed to our Master? Shall we refuse to bear the cross that our Saviour carried for us?

How many virtually say, when the cross of Christ is presented: "Why, it is inconvenient to carry. It seems impossible to bear this cross; I cannot endure the shame and reproach." So thought the young man who inquired what he must do to gain eternal life. Jesus said to him, "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." But the young man's wealth was his god. He thought he could not let his riches go; and he chose this world in preference to that which is eternal. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!"

Every follower of Christ will have a cross to bear; and he will find, when he takes it up resolutely, though in weakness and trembling, that that which he so much dreaded, which seemed so terrible to him, is a source of strength and courage. It will be a staff to help him on his weary pilgrimage through this earth. Then shall the professed follower of Christ drop this cross, and seek to please those who are deriding our Lord? Shall he, for fear that he will not receive honor from men, reject and despise the cross of Christ?

What if you do suffer, dear fellow-Christian? The Master of the house suffered before you. He was exalted and glorious, high Commander in Heaven, before whom the angelic hosts bowed in adoration; yet he condescended to give up the glory that he had with the Father, that he might save the fallen race. And shall we, in our turn, refuse to deny ourselves for his sake and the gospel's? Let the words of Paul be the language of

our souls: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

Man was created upright; but he fell, and was driven from the garden of Eden, with the sentence of death pronounced upon him. The sorrow and anguish that cannot be expressed took possession of his soul. But hope was held out before him through the merits of the promised Messiah. The Son of God, who had so lovingly conversed with Adam and Eve in Eden, volunteered to take upon himself the wrath of the Father, and die in the sinner's stead. He would take from his lips the bitter cup that man was to drink, and give in its place the cup of blessing.

The law of God, the foundation of his government in Heaven and upon earth, had been broken; but could not the life of an angel pay the debt? No. That holy law was as sacred as God himself. Not one precept could be changed to meet man in his fallen condition; but the Son of God, who had had a part in man's creation, could, by giving his own life, make an acceptable offering for its transgression.

Our Redeemer was a "man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." He became poor for our sakes, that we through his poverty might be made rich. "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." But "he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied."

Who of us would not enter through the gates into the city, and hear from the lips of the King the gracious words, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"? And what is the joy of our Lord? It is the joy of seeing souls saved in the kingdom of glory through his sacrifice. The saints are partakers with him in this joy; for there are souls there that have been saved through their instrumentality. "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." Is not this joy enough?

When we consider the suffering, reproach, and indignity that Jesus suffered without murmuring or retaliating, that he might redeem man, and elevate him to his own right hand, how much are we willing to endure and sacrifice, that we may have a part in the work of rescuing perishing souls, and thus enter into the joy of our Lord? "If we

suffer, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us." It is of the greatest consequence that we understand what we are placed in this world for. We are not here to glorify self or to seek our own pleasure, but to glorify our Father which is in Heaven, and to carry on the work begun by the great Teacher of righteousness.

"Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." Many times when Christ and the precious truths of his word are presented to sinners, they turn away; because if they should accept the cross, they would have to be separate from the world. But such a separation does not make one homeless, friendless, and forsaken. If, dear reader, there is a separation of your sympathies from your relatives and friends for the sake of Christ and his truth, do not feel that you are left brotherless, sisterless, motherless, fatherless. Your heavenly Father promises: "I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

How many there are who seek for honor and applause from the great men of the earth! How much they will do, and what sacrifices they will make, that they may associate with such persons, and perhaps win a word of approbation! Who are these persons whose favor is regarded so highly? They are mortals, made of the dust of the earth, and must soon return to their native earth again. But the Lord, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, is the Ruler over all rulers; his dominion is the universe. "The nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance; behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing." He it is that grants you life and all its blessings; he that promises to adopt you into his family, to receive you as sons and daughters. What a relationship is this! What an exalted privilege!

Neither beauty nor worldly honor will secure you this relationship to the heavenly King. But there is something which will recommend us to the divine favor; it is a "meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." This spirit we do not possess by nature. We may have excellent and noble traits of character; yet we need the blood of Christ to cleanse us from sin, the grace of God to bring us to perfection. If we think that we can trample under foot the blood of Christ, and yet climb up to a place at God's right hand, we shall make a great mistake. There is no provision made whereby man can gain eternal life, except by the cross of Christ. Those who reject the atonement made on Calvary are just where Adam and Eve were after the transgression.

The truth of God always involves a cross; but it is of heavenly origin, and elevates the receiver. It has a sanctifying influence on the life, fitting fallen man for the society of angels in the kingdom of glory.

November 10, 1887

The Coming of the Lord

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Jesus is soon coming; and it is for us who believe this solemn truth to give the warning to the world. We should show by our dress, our conversation, and our actions, that our minds are fixed on something better than the business and pleasures of this short life. We are but pilgrims and strangers here, and should give some evidence that we are ready and waiting for the appearing of our divine Lord. Let the world see that you are journeying from this to a better land, dear reader,--to an immortal inheritance that passeth not away; that you cannot afford to devote your life to the things of this world, but that your concern is to prepare for the home that awaits you in the kingdom of God.

How shall we make this preparation? It is by bringing our appetites and passions into subjection to the will of God, and showing in our lives the fruits of holiness. We must deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God. We must let Christ into our hearts and homes. We must cultivate love, sympathy, and true courtesy one to another. Our happiness depends upon our taking this course. The reason that there are so many hard-hearted men and women in the world is that generous affection has been regarded as weakness, and has been discouraged and repressed. If we would have tender hearts, such as Jesus had when he was upon the earth, and sanctified sympathy, such as the angels have for erring mortals, we must cultivate the simple, unaffected affections of childhood. Then we shall be directed by heavenly principles, which are refining and elevating in their tendency.

Our lives should be consecrated to the good and happiness of others, as was our Saviour's. This is the joy of angels, and the work in which they are ever engaged. The spirit of Christ's self-sacrificing love is the spirit that pervades Heaven, and is the source of its blessedness. And it must be our spirit, if we would be fitted to join the society of the angelic host. In proportion as the love of Christ fills our hearts and controls our lives, selfishness and love of ease will be overcome; it will be our pleasure to minister

to others, and to do the will of our Lord, whom we hope soon to see.

The work of testing character is going forward. God could have devised means for accomplishing his work in the earth, and saving the fallen race, without human aid; but he has given man a work to do that will call out self-denial and benevolence. We thus become assimilated to the image of Him who for our sakes became poor. Our Redeemer is watching now to see what characters we will develop, whether we will choose to regard our own selfish interests, or the eternal riches that have been placed within our reach.

For some who read this, death may be very near. Are you ready for your probation to close? Your life may be prolonged; but whether you wake or whether you sleep, you should be in a position to live to the glory of God. He will not accept the homage that consists of just a few moments selfishly devoted to his service; what he requires is your whole life, with your heart's best and holiest affections.

We should do right because it is right, and not to avoid punishment, or for fear of some great calamity that may come upon us. I want to do right for the pleasure I have in righteousness. There is so much happiness to be found in doing good here; so much satisfaction in doing the will of God; so much pleasure in receiving his blessing. Then let us show that we are men and women of sound judgment, choosing our portion not in this world, but in that which is to come. Let us stand at our post, faithful in the discharge of every duty, having our lives hid with Christ in God, that when the chief Shepherd shall appear, we "shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

We have the promise that at Christ's second coming, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; and he will take us home to himself, that where he is there we may be also. Then we shall enjoy with him all the glories of the world to come throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. Why should those who look for this glorious hope be accounted foolish or insane? Is there not sanity and wisdom in entertaining this hope, the most satisfying of any brought to view in the word of God? Surely it is those who reject this hope, and scoff at the humble few that entertain it, who are insane and foolish; for they are devoting all their energies to the things of this short life, when there is offered them a life as enduring as the life of God.

"No sickness, sorrow, pain, or death shall reach that blissful shore:" there is

nothing in the kingdom of God to disturb or annoy. This is the life that is promised to the overcomer,--a life of happiness and peace, a life of love and beauty. This "exceeding great reward" is within our reach, and can be gained simply by a life of obedience. But we have the privilege of choosing for ourselves. We can take this present life, so poor, so marred with sin, so filled with care and perplexity, or we can have eternal life where there is no sin, no distracting care, nothing to mar the peace of the inhabitant. It is strange that the majority, looking only to the pleasures of the world, choose this fleeting life, and fix their hopes here.

Here, then, are two classes: one seeking for the pleasures of this mortal life, the other for the enduring joys of immortality; one class are far from Christ, and satisfied with their condition, the other are seeking for the forgiveness of sins and for the Spirit of God; one class are battling against God and his truth, the other are warring against the lusts of the flesh, the spirit of the world, and Satan. One class are dreading the appearing of Christ, the Son of man, feeling that to them it is an overwhelming calamity; the other are looking for the coming of Christ the second time, without sin unto salvation. The one class will be rejected from the presence of God, and finally suffer the pangs of the second death; the other will have everlasting life at the right hand of God, where are pleasures for evermore.

God grant, dear reader, that when Jesus shall come the second time, you may be found ready and waiting; that you may be of that number who shall sing the song of redemption around the great white throne, casting their crowns at the feet of the redeemer. God grant that, with all the redeemed, you may have the glorious privilege of standing upon the sea of glass and walking the streets of gold. God grant that at that time there may be given to your hand a harp of gold, and that as you sweep its strings all Heaven may resound with your notes of joy and praise.

November 17, 1887

The Choice of Moses

"By faith Moses, when he was come to years, 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 in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward." Hebrews 11:24-26.

Moses was a great character in the world. He was the prospective heir of the throne of the Pharaohs. He had been reared for this position, and was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. He was fitted to take pre-eminence among the great of the earth, and to shine in the courts of its most glorious kingdom, and to sway the scepter of its power. His intellectual greatness distinguishes him above the great men of all ages. As historian, poet, philosopher, general of armies, and legislator, he stands without a peer.

But it was his moral qualities that made him valuable in the estimation of God. His faith, humility, and love are not excelled among the examples of humanity. God could say of him; "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth;" "My servant Moses ... is faithful in all mine house." And when he arrived at manhood, with the world before him, he had moral strength to refuse the flattering prospects of wealth, and greatness, and fame, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season."

The great anxiety of men and women of today is to be held in high esteem by the lordly ones of earth. The religion of Jesus seems to be considered of no special value, and the children of men have set their hearts to seek pleasure rather than to know the will of God. The attainment of wealth is considered by many sufficient reason for sacrificing their hope of Heaven; but Moses had been instructed in regard to the final reward to be given to the humble and obedient servants of God, and worldly gain sank to its proper insignificance in comparison. The magnificent palace of Pharaoh, and the monarch's throne, were held out as an inducement to Moses; but he knew that the sinful pleasures that make men forget God were in its lordly courts. He looked beyond that

gorgeous palace, beyond a monarch's crown, to the high honors that will be bestowed on the saints of the Most High God in a kingdom untainted by sin. He saw by faith an imperishable crown that Christ would place on the brow of the overcomer. This faith led him to turn away from the lordly ones of earth and join the humble, poor, despised nation who had chosen to obey God rather than to serve sin.

Moses felt that it would pay to make this great sacrifice for the right, to be on the side of God and the loyal angels, and to enjoy the eternal reward at last. Even in this life it brought him peace and blessing, and in contemplation of the certain riches of eternity, his sacrifice seemed a trivial one.

Moses was a man of like passions with ourselves, and his character is described that we may learn lessons from his noble example. What God did for Moses, he will do for us, if we are as faithful; and we have not only the same God to go to, the same Mediator to intercede for us, but the same mighty incentives of love to urge us to be obedient to all God's requirements. We have clearer light, and the examples of those who sinned. Their crimes are plainly stated and their punishments depicted. The commendation of God is for the obedient today as then; for God is no respecter of persons, and whoever worketh righteousness is accepted of him in every nation; but if we lack in character, in meekness, in humility, in faith in placing a true estimate upon the eternal riches, and in willingness to suffer reproach for the truth's sake, we shall be left without excuse.

Christ has presented before us the greatest inducement that could be offered to mortals. It is not only the gift of eternal life and everlasting joy, but a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory in the kingdom of God. Those who feel the importance of taking God's word as the rule of their life and conduct, will have respect unto the recompense of reward.

But in order that we may appreciate heavenly things, we must have our minds taken away from the things of earth. We must, like Moses, esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of the world. You must suffer with Christ, if you shall also reign with him. Your talents of ability, and means, and influence are all the Lord's to be used for his glory; but how apt men are to forget their obligations to their Creator, when they are prospered in the things of this world! Moses devoted all his energies to the service of God, and made every earthly consideration subservient to the

advancement and success of his cause. He honored God, and God honored him. God opened before him the plan of salvation, and called him to lead out his chosen people.

Moses felt his great responsibility as visible leader of Israel. He saw the perversity of their natures, and knew that he was unable to impress them and change their hearts. He felt keenly his incapacity for his work, and pleaded with God for his guidance. God assured him, "I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared." A pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night enshrouded the armies of Israel, and Moses had a sense of the greatness of the reward to be given to the sons and daughters of the Most High; but he was not yet content. Every prayer had been answered; but he thirsted for greater tokens of God's favor. "Show me thy glory," pleaded this mighty man of faith. Did God rebuke his astonishing request as presumptuous? No; he responded to his confidence, and favored his soul's desire. He placed him in a cleft of the rock and made His glory pass before him. God would have his people intercede with him, that they may have higher views of his majesty and glory.

How little we know of the mercy and love and greatness of God! Could you see God, as Moses saw him, how quickly would that which delights men be eclipsed! But the thoughts of the world and its pleasures steal away the senses of men and women, so that they care not to think of God and Heaven. It cost an infinite price to redeem man from sin and ruin,--nothing less than the life of the Son of God. Does it not seem that such a sacrifice would awaken every thought and feeling of gratitude, and constrain them to give every power to his service? What more could God do for his creatures? Christ left his majesty for our sakes; he became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich. What greater evidence could he give to men of his love and interest in them?

And what are you willing to do for Jesus? Can you say with Moses that you esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt? What if mortal man scorns and ridicules the religion of Jesus Christ? Should this lead us to be ashamed of him and his truth? It should inspire us to come to the front, to suffer reproach, and to be determined to exalt Jesus before the people. He is the chief among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely. We want to become acquainted with him, to bring him into our families as an honored guest, and teach our children to love him. The end of all things is at hand, and it is time to seek a preparation for the coming of Christ in the

clouds of heaven.

Moses understood that there was to be a Judgment-day, when every man would be judged according to the deeds done in the body. We each have a case pending at the bar of God, and although Noah, Job, and Daniel were in the land, they could not save son or daughter. They could only save their own souls by their righteousness. It is an individual work for you and me. There will be every attraction to draw us away from Christ's righteousness, and the human heart is inclined to selfish gratification. Every soul who seeks righteousness will meet with perplexities; but shrink not at reproach or trial. Jesus was reproached by the sons of men, and can those of his household expect a better portion? There is help for every one who in humble faith seeks it. When you put all your powers to the stretch that you may become acquainted with God, you will have his power added to your weakness. Every soul that enters through the gates into the city will go in as a conqueror. There is no sickness, no sighing, no death, but everlasting joy throughout the cycles of eternity. I want to be there, for my soul is attracted to Jesus. Everything here is of minor consequence.

I would entreat you to "seek 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." Let us, like Moses, by faith leave the treasures and pleasures of earth and sin, and have "respect unto the recompense of the reward."

November 24, 1887

This Do and Thou Shalt Live

"And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, 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. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live."

An important question was addressed to Christ by this lawyer: "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The answer is direct and positive: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." Jesus presented the whole law of God, and said, "This do, and thou shalt live." The first four commandments of the law grow out of our relation to God, and demand the loving loyalty of our whole hearts. The last six grow out of our relation to our fellow-man, and require us to regard his interests as our own. The keeping of these commandments comprises the whole duty of man, and presents the conditions of eternal life. Now the question is, Will man comply with the requirements? Will he love God supremely and his neighbor as himself? There is no possible way for man to do this in his own strength. The divine power of Christ must be added to the effort of humanity: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Repentance toward God for our failure to keep his law, is the first step in the Christian life, while faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ claims the merits of his blood for the remission of sins that are past, and makes us partakers of the divine nature. The carnal heart, that "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be," is made spiritual, and exclaims with Christ, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart."

There are many who say they believe in Christ; but do they? Have they the

spiritual mind, the mind of Christ, that delights in the law of God? They claim to be the children of God, but they do not the works of God. We cannot afford to make any mistakes in this matter, for our eternal interests are at stake. A correct faith will be made manifest in godly works, and will bring the whole life into harmony with the law of God. Faith and works must go hand in hand. Christ referred the lawyer to the law, and inquired, "What saith the law? how readest thou?" And he showed that those righteous statutes require our perfect obedience. When, through the goodness of God, our attention has been called to the demands of God's commandments, and light shines on us from his word, we are to believe and obey from the heart.

Many put their own interpretation upon the words of God; but we cannot depend upon them. We must know for ourselves "what saith the Scriptures." An infinite price has been paid for our redemption, and ought we not to bestir ourselves to search the chart and prove to our souls that we are in the highway cast up for the righteous, and walking in the path of humble obedience? We are warned to "make straight paths for our feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way." We are examples to others, and if we pursue a wrong course, and lead others away from the path of right, we shall be held accountable.

We can see the importance, then, of having true faith, for it is the motive power of the Christian's life and action; but feeling is not faith; emotion is not faith. We must bring our very work and thought and emotions to the test of the word, and true faith will be profoundly impressed by the voice of God, and will act accordingly. If people would only search the Scriptures more diligently, false doctrines and heresies would be fewer. When anyone comes to you with a new doctrine, you should challenge him to prove it by the word of God. The test is written: "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

Forty-five years ago, when I commenced my labors, we met many erroneous doctrines. One and another would say, "I have the truth, because my feelings tell me so." Others declared that they were led of the Spirit; but there are two spirits in the world,--the Spirit of God and the spirit of Satan. We are not left to be guided by the uncertainty of feelings, nor by the deceptive spirit of error. Here is the word of God. Christ declared, "Thy word is truth;" and the Spirit that Christ promised to his disciples, was to lead them into all truth. Then can we not test what spirit we are of? If we are led into harmony with the explicit commands of God, we have the Spirit of truth. These I

have spoken of had gone beyond the need of their Bibles; they had left that for those not so far advanced as themselves. As I endeavored to reason with them, with my Bible in hand, they pushed me away, unwilling that their errors should be tried; "but he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." We want to know "what saith the Scriptures." Let God be true, but every man a liar. He has declared the conditions of eternal life, and we want to know that we are complying with them, and are preparing for the world to come.

Adam and Eve were placed upon probation in the garden of Eden, and they were to prove their loyalty to their Creator by obedience to his law of love; but they fell, through the temptation of a wily foe. A great and infinite sacrifice has been made, that man may have another trial. God provides that man may have another probation, and his efforts to keep the law are made acceptable through Christ. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Christ came to bear the conflict in which man was conquered. The earth was the battle-field. Just before the temptation he bowed on Jordan's bank and offered up a prayer that cleared its way to the throne of his Father. The Heaven opened and the voice of God responded, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" and the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, like burnished gold, descended upon his head.

This is of wonderful significance to us. It tells us of the power of prayer,--how the human voice may reach the ear of God, and man's petitions find access to the courts of Heaven. Though earth was struck off from the continent of Heaven and alienated from its communion, Jesus has connected it again with the sphere of glory. His love has encircled man and reached the highest Heaven; and now the light that fell from the open portals on the bowed head of our Saviour, may fall upon us as we petition our Father for help to meet and conquer temptation.

Christ passed from this scene of joy to meet the cruel temptations of his adversary. He passed step by step over the ground that man had trodden, and was "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." Where man stumbled and fell, Jesus came off more than conqueror. Had he failed on one point, in reference to the law, all would have been lost; he would not have been a perfect offering, nor could he have satisfied the demands of the law; but he conquered where Adam failed, and by loyalty to God, under the severest trials, became a perfect pattern and example for our imitation, and he is able to succor those who are tempted. There is enough in this idea to fill our

hearts with joy and gratitude every day of our lives. He took our nature upon him that he might become acquainted with our trials and sorrows, and, knowing all our experiences, he stands as Mediator and Intercessor before the Father.

Everyone who shall follow Christ will keep the commandments of God. The question will arise. Is this convenient for me? But if you flatter yourself that God does not require you to keep his commandments, because it interferes with your convenience, you make a sad mistake. Another leader is commanding you, instead of the Captain of your salvation. Jesus suffered and withstood the severest temptations, and, finally, yielded his life on Calvary's cross, to demonstrate to every member of the human family that the law of God is immutable, and that not one jot or tittle can be put aside. Satan has deceived the Christian world with the story that when Christ died he abolished the law. It was the cross of Calvary that exalted the law of God, and made it honorable. The cross is a monument of its immutability; and thus it is demonstrated before all worlds, and before the angels, and before all men, that the law cannot cease to exert eternal jurisdiction. It sustains the throne of God, and is the rule of his Government. If God could have changed one iota of his law, Jesus need not have come to our world to suffer and die; but he who was equal with the Father came and suffered even the death of the cross, to give man another probation.

Then if this great and infinite sacrifice has been made in our behalf, let us ask ourselves, What are we doing? Do we say, "Believe, believe on Christ, and that is all"? If we have not the faith that works by love, and purifies the soul from every stain of sin, then we have a spurious faith. Christ is not the minister of sin. And what is sin? The only definition given in God's word is, "Sin is the transgression of the law;" and the apostle Paul declares, "Where no law is, there is no transgression." The law is the great standard that will measure every man's character. The very test that was brought upon Adam in Eden will be applied to every member of the human family. We stand as Adam did, with opportunity for a second trial, to prove our allegiance to the Government of God. If we listen, as Adam did, to the first adversary of God's law, we shall be led to treat the words of God as of little consequence, and transgress the commandment. "The wages of sin is death." The Father loves us, and his love led him to suffer his beloved Son to make an atonement for us, that we might not perish but have everlasting life. To as many as received this precious Jesus, "to them gave he power to become the sons of God." John exclaims: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we

shall see him as he is." It is no cheap faith, that costs nothing and requires nothing, that we are to have. But John continues: "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure."

Believe, believe, believe in Jesus, is the soothing lullaby that is lulling the world to sleep in the cradle of carnal security. Why, the devils believe and tremble. We need to be alarmed. We need to sound the cry, "Depart from all iniquity." When you bring Jesus into your daily life and character, you will not make your feelings the criterion of your religion; you will exalt him in the darkest hour; you will seek to point those around you to the cleansing fountain. You will not cry, "Away with God's commandments; I do not want to hear about them;" but with your Saviour you will "magnify the law and make it honorable."

We are in the perils of the last days, and Jesus has bidden us beware of false teachers. You are to know them by their fruits. Do they teach obedience to God, and yet break his plain words of command? God has given us reasoning faculties, and he wants us to use them. We are to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good." He has given us the revelation of his will, and we shall be without excuse if we do not study the Sacred Word. Hear what the voice of the true Shepherd says to you, and walk in the path of obedience and love. "This do," said Jesus, "and thou shalt live." We cannot afford to lose eternal life. May God grant that we may meet you around the throne of God, to sing with you the song of redemption in the kingdom of glory.

December 1, 1887

"Ye Cannot Serve God and Mammon"

"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."

The interests of God and the interests of mammon have no union or sympathy. The course of one tends exactly opposite to the course of the other. While the world is a master of the thoughts, principles, and actions, the Lord cannot be honored. The current of the world sets in against the soul with such force that it is borne along with the tide of its interests and infatuations. Satan, the angel of evil, the archenemy of truth, the father of lies, having successfully carried out his plan of ruining a holy race, follows up his advantage, and strives by every means to hinder the salvation of man and his reinstatement to the favor of God. He keeps the mind pre-occupied with the plans and ambitions of the world. Heaven and Christ are crowded out of the thoughts and affections.

Satan presents the same temptations today as he presented to Adam and to Jesus, the second Adam, who overcame him and made it possible for man to overcome. He came to our Redeemer in the wilderness and presented to him temptations to gratify the flesh in his sorest need. The very temptation that overwhelmed man in the garden of delight is successfully resisted in a wilderness of desolation.

The indulgence of perverted appetite and passion has held sway over the world since Adam's transgression. God saw that it was impossible for man to overcome in his own strength, with his enfeebled moral powers. He might exercise all the capabilities of his nature, and yet, without divine aid, he could only be conquered; but help has been laid upon One who is mighty to save. Man's efforts and Christ's power will bring him off a conqueror. The moral image of God will be restored in the characters of those who serve him.

The next temptation that assailed Christ was on lust for power. The world is filled with this desire, and the results of its strife show the spirit of the ambition of this world.

How many have been swept to ruin in this torrent of pride! Satan presents all the kingdoms of the world, in all their pomp and majesty, to the Son of God; but he repels the tempter with, "It is written." The word of God marks out the course of his children, and rather than disobey the commandments of God, Christ resigned the treasures of the world.

How many today see the force and beauty of the truth; but they cannot serve God and mammon, and they hold to the world. The truth requires the sacrifice of the world's honor, their position in business, their daily bread; and they falter and fail. They do not consider the promises of God to those who seek first the kingdom of Heaven. They raise the excuse, "I cannot be different from those around me. What will people say?" "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey?" We must not study how to serve ourselves, but how to do the will of God. Christ left his glory, and clothed his divinity with humanity. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. For our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. And yet, after this great manifestation of love on the part of Heaven, we are reluctant to yield our meager treasures, so soon to pass away. The majority of the world sell their souls for a little worldly gain, when Christ has presented to us the eternal riches. Oh, how uncertain are the treasures of earth! A man may be worth his thousands today, and tomorrow failures will sweep them all away.

Did not Jesus entreat, "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 eye is clouded by ambition, avarice, and gain without godliness. The people do not see that they are putting their treasure into a bag with holes. It is cankered and moth-eaten. There is no progress heavenward. The gross attractions of earth hold their affections. The soul starves and becomes dwarfed for want of spiritual food, the fresh manna from Heaven. The world has come in between the soul and God.

The duty we owe to God is revealed in his word in unmistakable clearness. Do you intend to obey God? Do you intend to give earnest heed to the Scriptures? Here the obligation of man is declared so explicitly that the day of Judgment will reveal no excuse for not serving God. God's great moral standard of righteousness is to be met.

His law requires your heart's supreme affection for your Maker. It requires you to do unto others as you would have them do unto you. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth," is a positive declaration; but "Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven," is equally positive. Laying up treasure in Heaven points out the duty of an unselfish use of our means. We are stewards of God's possessions, and shall we prove unfaithful? We shall be called to give an account of our stewardship. It is not ours to use for the gratification of corrupt desires, for selfish indulgences. God has placed his goods in our hands for the purpose of sustaining his cause on earth, for the salvation of the lost, and for his own honor. All Heaven is watching with interest to see what use we are making of God's intrusted talents. If we lay up treasure in Heaven, we shall use the Lord's goods to bless humanity, and all that is so used the Lord will place to our account in the bank that never fails.

Satan's constant aim is to blind the eyes of our understanding to God's claims, through the deceptiveness of riches. If we are conquered, we are conquered for eternity. If we are conquerors, we shall have the crown of glory that fadeth not away.

When the heart loves God supremely, property is no hindrance to advancement in the Christian warfare, because the consecrated man will discern the best investments to make, and will use his wealth to bless the children of God.

The constant employment of the capabilities of man to amass wealth on earth binds the man to earth. He becomes a slave to mammon. His plans and thoughts and aspirations have no wider circle than his farm or mercantile house, and he is engrossed in heaping up his costly but empty stores; but in order to serve God we must find time for calm reflection and serious thought, else all the powers of the soul will be withdrawn from God. When wealth increases, the idolatrous heart becomes forgetful of God, and grows self-secure and satisfied. Religious duties are neglected. There is an impatience manifested under restraint, and the man becomes self-sufficient. All spiritual things are clouded, for the mind's eye is directed earthward. The worldly tendencies, both by nature and practice, have become more fully developed, and the spiritual faculties are paralyzed. Having eyes men see not; having ears they hear not. The gross, earthly mind cannot see the pure, sublime truths of the gospel, but views everything from a worldling's standpoint. The world comes in between the soul and Heaven. His eyes are blinded by the "god of this world," so that he cannot discern or appreciate the value of eternal things.

Spiritual things are spiritually discerned; and when the eye is evil, the whole body is full of darkness. "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."

The attractions of this world must be eclipsed by the glory of the world to come, and our powers severed from its interests, and devoted to the interests of Heaven. Let us contemplate the eternal consequences of rightly employing our talents of influence and money for the purpose of saving souls. We shall store up treasures in Heaven, and receive the commendation of God, and enter into the joy of our Lord, who shall "see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." But how few realize this and use their talents for God with the same energy and perseverance that they have manifested in the service of the world!

Oh, let us contemplate the amazing sacrifice that has been made for us! Let us try to appreciate the labor and energy Heaven is expending to reclaim the lost, and bring them back to the Father's house. Motives stronger, and agencies more powerful, could never be brought into operation,--the enjoyment of Heaven, the exceeding rewards for right-doing, the society of angels, the communion and love of God and his Son, the elevation and extension of all our powers throughout eternal ages; and it hath not "entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Are these not mighty incentives and encouragements to urge us to give our heart's loving service to our Creator and Redeemer?

And on the other hand the judgments of God pronounced against sin, the inevitable retribution, the degradation of our characters, and the final destruction, are presented in his word to warn us against the service of Satan.

Shall we not regard the great mercy of God? What more could he do? Let us place ourselves in right relation to him who has loved us with amazing love, and avail ourselves of the great privilege of becoming instruments in his hands to use all our powers in his service, that we may co-operate with the ministering angels and be co-laborers with God and Christ.

December 8, 1887

Christmas Gifts for Christ

Christmas and New Year's will soon be here, and what plans are we making in reference to them? How shall we employ them so that we may be workers together with God? The people in general celebrate the professed anniversary of the Saviour's birth, by feasting and merriment, and by making gifts to earthly friends. Time, thought, and money are devoted to these things, and Christ and his cause are neglected. The very day chosen to honor Christ is devoted by the many to honoring and pleasing themselves. Appointed to keep the Saviour in remembrance, it is spent in causing him to be forgotten.

The Christian should pursue a course the opposite of this. At these seasons God's grace is brought before us in a special manner. We are bidden not only to recall the manifold blessings of the year, the rich gifts which Providence has so bounteously bestowed, but above all to remember the priceless gift of God's dear Son. Here is an exhaustless theme for thought. The perfection of our Saviour's character awakens the admiration of angels. The brightest and most exalted of the sons of the morning heralded his glory at creation, and with songs of gladness announced his birth. They veil their faces before him as he sits upon his throne; they cast their crowns at his feet, and sing his triumphs as they behold his resplendent glory. Yet this glorious Being loved the poor sinner, and took upon him the form of a servant, that he might suffer and die in man's behalf. Jesus might have remained at the Father's right hand, wearing the 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 anguish of Gethsemane, and the humiliation and agony of Calvary.

Oh, the mysteries of redemption! How dark and selfish is the human heart that can turn away from such incomparable love, and set itself upon the vain things of this world! Our souls are cold and dull because we do not dwell upon the matchless charms of our Redeemer. If we occupy our thoughts in contemplating his love and mercy, we shall reflect the same in our life and character; for by beholding we become changed. Only by exalting Jesus and abasing self can we celebrate aright the birth of the Son of God.

God's purposes of grace toward us are measureless. Rich and glorious beyond our power to express or to conceive are the blessings of redemption. Yet God has not left us to the enjoyment of these without requiring returns on our part. He calls us to become co-laborers with Christ in the great plan of salvation. All who receive his grace are to communicate the precious gift to others. It was by a sacrifice that redemption was purchased for us, and we, in our turn, are to sacrifice, to make known to others the unsearchable riches of Christ.

When selfishness is striving for the victory, let us look to our Exemplar. The cross of Calvary appeals to every follower of Jesus to unite with the Saviour in seeking that which was lost. The wounded hands, the pierced side, the marred feet, plead for the sinner, whose redemption was purchased at such a cost.

If we keep Christmas at all, we should show that we understand its significance. Instead of saying by our actions that we are putting Christ out of our minds and hearts, let us testify to men, to angels, and to God, that we remember our Redeemer, by following his example of self-denial for others' good.

The end of all things is at hand. "The great day of the Lord is near, and hasteth greatly." The people of the world are to be warned. Are we doing what we might and should do to diffuse the precious light of truth? Brethren, you see the truth, you understand the claims of God's law, you know that no willful transgressor can enter into life; and yet you see that law made void in the world. What is your duty? You are not to ask, What is convenient for me? What is agreeable? but, What can I do to save souls?

All around us, on the right hand and on the left, lies our work; everywhere are souls to be won for Jesus. The men and women whom we daily meet are Judgment-bound. They are either to live to offer praise to God and the Lamb through ceaseless ages, or they will perish with the wicked. Christ suffered and died that they might enjoy a blissful eternity. What sacrifice are we willing to make for their salvation?

The people are perishing for lack of knowledge. There are hundreds and thousands in our own country that know nothing of the special truths for this time. In other lands millions are buried in ignorance and superstition. There are those who will be responsible for these souls that have never heard the truth.

Brethren and sisters, I present before you our foreign missions as the object of your Christmas gifts. While we are not to neglect the fields at our own doors, let us at this time remember those that are in still greater darkness and destitution. Few realize the vast extent of the work which God has committed to us in our foreign missions. Europe alone, with an area about the same as ours, has a population of 350,000,000,-- six times that of the United States. And this is made up of many nations and peoples, that differ widely in their habits and customs, and among whose teeming millions more than a score of languages are spoken, with hundreds of dialects.

It is under many difficulties, and only by self-denial and sacrifice, that the missionary work in Europe has been carried forward. There is great poverty among the laboring classes. In Italy the most capable workmen in the factories receive only fifty cents for sixteen hours' work, and those less experienced twenty-five cents, and from this meager pittance some are obliged to support a family of from eight to twelve. In Scandinavia the common laboring man earns about fifty-three cents, with which he pays his house rent and taxes, and supports his family. Those who accept the truth run the risk of being thrown out of employment, besides cutting themselves off from all hope of assistance from other churches or missionary societies. Often starvation stares them in the face. Of course this class can do little toward supporting those who labor among them.

In the Piedmont Valleys it is difficult for the missionary to gain access to the people in summer, as they leave their villages, and ascend the mountains to find pasture for their cattle. Upon returning to their homes at the approach of winter, they take up their abode in the stables, the heat from their animals supplying the lack of fuel. It is here that the colporter must meet them. In many places halls cannot be obtained, and meetings and Bible-readings are held in the stables. Sometimes as many as forty or fifty persons assemble to hear the truth. In some places the worker has walked seven miles, twice a week, to hold an evening meeting, returning home in the darkness--for he could not afford a lantern--across the mountains, and along the edge of precipices where he was obliged to creep on his hands and knees. During our visit in Italy two of the workers walked fifteen miles to an evening service, returning on foot next morning, to save the small sum required for railroad fare. Thus in the midst of poverty and hardship, our brethren across the sea are seeking to spread the light of truth. Can we to whom God has intrusted means, who are enjoying so many of the comforts and even the luxuries of

life, stand by and refuse to lend them a helping hand?

In nearly all parts of Europe the laws are more or less oppressive upon those who observe the Sabbath. But there are few countries in which the difficulties in the way of presenting the truth are greater than in Russia. Proselyting from the State church is forbidden; preaching by dissenters is prohibited; even colportage must be conducted with great caution, or the missionary will render himself liable to imprisonment, or exile to Siberia. Yet notwithstanding all this, and although comparatively little labor has been given to this field, there are two hundred Sabbathkeepers in Russia. This result is due in a great degree to the influence of our publications. All over the wide field these silent messengers are preparing hearts to receive the warning.

What is needed now in all our European missions is means to send out laborers, and to enable our printing-houses to publish books in the different languages. There are colporteurs willing to work if they can have the books. Shall we not supply them?

The banner of truth is to be unfurled in far-distant countries. The great and testing truths which God has committed to us are to be given to all nations, tongues, and peoples. We invite all, men, women, and children, at the coming Christmas to do all that they possibly can do to aid in the accomplishment of this work. Let us throughout our churches unitedly resolve not to make the holidays a time of feasting and selfish gratification. Let us excuse the members of our household from making presents to us. Our time, our money, belongs to God. Every hour, every moment, is precious. Dollars, dimes, and even pennies should be treasured up to aid in bringing souls to Christ and the truth. Shall not every needless ornament, every extravagance, every selfish indulgence, be given up, and all these little outgoes, these tiny streams, flow into the Lord's treasury? Past pledges should now be canceled, as far as possible. Those who have robbed God in tithes and offerings should come before him and make restitution. And to these let us add our free-will gifts.

Let your Christmas tree be dedicated to God, and let its boughs be laden with offerings for Christ. Do not give as though it were a task, doling out your donations with a niggardly hand. Good works are no drudgery. In giving to us his Son, God has poured out to us all Heaven in one gift. Let us with an overflowing heart, with gratitude and joy because of Christ's matchless love, bring him our offerings. Teach your children by your own example the blessedness of doing for Christ. Train them to go on errands

of love for him, and in all their gifts to remember the gracious Giver.

If there are any who are in need of food or comfortable clothing, they should be remembered; we are not to neglect Christ in the person of his saints. But let us be constantly seeking to make God and his cause first in our thoughts and plans.

Many hardly, know as yet what self-denial is, or what it is to suffer for the truth's sake; but none will enter Heaven without making a sacrifice. Yet self-denial will not make us joyless; it will not cast a shadow upon our holidays. It is not what we have, not the abundance of the things of this life, that will make us happy. Our happiness depends upon the relation we sustain to God. An approving conscience, a contented spirit, sweet communion with Jesus, will make us the happiest beings in the world.

God marks and remembers every act of liberality performed by his people. Every effort we make for Christ will be rewarded by him. If the means intrusted to our keeping is employed for his glory, to save souls, he will give more into our hands. Every ray of light shed upon others will be reflected upon our own hearts. Every act performed, every gift bestowed, with an eye single to the glory of God, will result in blessings to the giver. No joy can equal the assurance of being an instrument in the hands of God of saving souls.

I pray God that those who profess to be followers of Christ in truth follow in his steps; that they may be rivals in their missionary efforts; that they may be temperate in all things; that they may run with patience the race for the incorruptible reward; that when the Judgment shall sit and the books shall be opened, all may receive the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give them at that day.

December 15, 1887

The Necessity of Obedience and Faith

One presumptuous act, one deed in disregard of God's expressed will, lost for Adam his beautiful Eden home, and opened the floodgates of iniquity and woe upon our world; and yet men will declare that God is not particular, and does not require perfect obedience to his law. The precepts of Jehovah are as unchangeable as his eternal throne. To excuse sin on the plea that God is lax in his government is dishonoring to the great Governor of the universe, and perilous to man. It is an attempt to belittle his requirements, and to take away the force of law. Those who advocate such doctrine, place themselves in harmony with the first great rebel, and however high their professions of religion, Christ pronounces them "workers of iniquity." They are saying to the sinner, "It shall be well with thee in thy disobedience and transgression," as said the arch-deceiver in the garden of Eden.

God said to Adam, "Thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Satan came, and with specious words presented an enticing temptation. He argued that they were in bondage through the prohibition to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that they should be as gods if they would but eat, and he denied the positive statement of God, that they should surely die if they partook of the fruit. The same arguments are used now by all who trample upon the law of God. "Obedience is bondage," men declare, and disobedience is freedom, such as they could never realize under the restrictions of the law. Men are flattered in their course of sin, to believe that they are rising in the scale of greatness, as Satan flattered Adam and Eve to believe they would be as gods if they would but disregard the commandment of their Creator. How many are reiterating his statements while they profess to be sinless!

We need not be deceived by these high professions of holiness which deny the power thereof by rejecting the law of God. "Sin is the transgression of the law," writes the beloved John; and "he that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." Here is the test of every man's profession. We cannot accord holiness to any man without bringing him to the great measurement of God's only standard for

holiness, in Heaven or in earth. If men feel no weight of the moral law, if they belittle and make light of God's precepts, if they break one of the least of these commandments and teach men so, they shall be of no esteem in the sight of Heaven, and we may know their claims are without foundation. Christ, who died to magnify the law, and to attest its validity and immutability, says of such, "I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity."

God does not change his plans and devise new expedients to save man in different ages or dispensations. With him "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." He does not abolish the law to bring man into harmony with himself. If he had proposed to destroy the jurisdiction of the law over man at any time, he would have done so when Adam's failure to keep its requirements brought him under its terrible condemnation. But God does not provide any such escape in this emergency. He expels the guilty pair from the garden. The law says the penalty of sin is death, and they have brought on themselves, by deliberate choice, the loss of eternal life. The course of God toward the rebellious has not changed. There is no way back to innocence and life except through repentance for having transgressed God's law, and faith in the merits of the divine sacrifice, who has suffered for your transgressions of the past; and you are accepted in the Beloved on condition of obedience to the commandments of your Creator.

God's love and justice have provided one way, and one only, whereby man can be saved from eternal separation from Heaven and alienation from God, and that is by faith in Christ and obedience to his law. The Spirit of God operating upon the human heart never leads men to belittle the law of Jehovah. Enlightened by this divine influence, we will see with awe the majesty of its requirements, the heinousness of sin, and feel the terror of its inevitable penalties upon the transgressor.

"If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," and to this refuge the repentant soul turns to plead the merits of his Saviour's blood. But while the blood of Christ avails for the repenting soul, Christ is not the minister of sin, and there is no peace, no assurance, no genuine hope, for anyone who ignores the claims of God's law and tramples upon its just demands. To trust in man's good purposes or works is seen by the repenting sinner to be utmost folly. To suppose that a few deeds of beneficence or the performance of duty will cancel a life-time of sin, is a blindness that Satan brings over the mind to befog the moral perceptions, and lead men to trust in

themselves.

The sinner may plead he has been doing good in most things, but in order not to be out of harmony with the world, he did not obey the fourth commandment, but kept the day the world observed. He has on the whole obeyed more than he has disregarded the commandments of God. Would this reasoning stand approved before the courts of Jehovah? What would it have availed in the case of Adam and Eve? They might have pleaded that their sin was only one little departure from God. They had obeyed him fully up to that time. They could have found excuses more plausible than men can frame today; but the way God dealt with them should teach the sons and daughters of Adam how he will deal with them if they break one of the least of his requirements.

Suppose a criminal in court, who had violated the law of his State, should make his plea that he had generally obeyed the laws. He had only stolen his neighbor's goods occasionally, and had led an honest life for the most part; would that relieve justice from executing the penalty? Could a just judge and jury bring in a verdict "not guilty"? You can see the absurdity of the case, and yet men of intelligence in all worldly affairs are not wise in matters pertaining to their eternal salvation. They are found seeking to climb up some other way than God has provided, trying to make terms with the infinite One. Many poor souls are leaning on such a broken reed, building on such an insecure foundation, laying hold on ropes of sand, and at last they will awaken to realize that they are lost, lost!

The heart must be cleansed from its impurity; self-will must be exchanged for God's will; God's ways must be chosen before our own ways. Many names are registered on the church books that have no place in the Lamb's book of life. Let the question be asked with deepest concern, "Is my name written there?"

The great gift of salvation is freely offered to us, through Jesus Christ, on condition that we obey the law of God; and individually we are to accept the terms of life with the deepest humiliation and gratitude. None will ever enter the city of God who do not reverence the statutes of its government; and now is the time allotted to us to gain the mastery, through divine grace, over every rebellious thought and action; to work out our own salvation, not with boasting self-confidence, but with fear and trembling. We are not to pander to the prejudices and customs of this world at the expense of our obligations to God. We should live as in the sight of Heaven, with no

other object for our ambition and toil than the glory of our Creator and Redeemer; live, believing that "every one of us shall give account of himself to God." We should ask ourselves, Am I fashioning my character after the Pattern God has given me? Is my eye fixed on Jesus? and are my actions controlled by the influences of Heaven? If our eye be single, our whole body will be full of light, and the world and its sentiments will not sway us from an undeviating progress toward the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. Christ prayed to his Father, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world"--oh, no; they are to be the light of the world--"but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." We are to be in the world but not of it--shining with the reflected light of Jesus. We must not live for self, blending into the darkness of the world; but kept from its evil we must give our lives into an active, earnest service, as faithful soldiers for the Captain of our salvation. This will sanctify the soul. While we seek the salvation and benefit of others, we shall be workers together with God, learning his methods and partaking of his power.

We need not assume an appearance of melancholy, and sigh and groan and mourn to give evidence that we are Christians, especially devoted and sanctified. And it is no test of vital godliness to be talkative, parading our piety and our knowledge of the truth before others. But the real manifestation of Christ dwelling in your heart will be recognized by a well-ordered life and conversation. Your life will shine with the graces of the Spirit; meekness, kindness, tender compassion, the love of Jesus, and genuine lowliness of heart, will characterize your daily walk.

It is not the profession we make, but the fruits we bear that reveal the condition of the heart. Says the inspired apostle, "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." True piety will not stiffen the character in stubborn, set ways and ideas. The Christian will not be unyielding and dictatorial, but will consider himself a learner in Christ's school. He will not be of that class who are fond of lecturing others, sermonizing, condemning, criticising, but will become meek and lowly in heart, representing Jesus, the Light of the world.

There is no need of being offensive in character, officiously taking a position above the brethren to point out their errors. This is the position of the Pharisee. Let the meekness of Jesus appear in words of wisdom that will inspire desires for the heavenly

characteristics. Let the deportment be full of gentle courtesy as becometh the sons and daughters of God.

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." If we are desirous of being saved from the evil there is in the world, we must seek this spirit of meekness; then we shall not be led into presumptuous sins; we shall appreciate the great responsibility we are under to observe the law of God, and feeling our weakness shall plead for the divine assistance, and God promises to dwell with the humble and contrite heart. Heaven is open to everyone who desires access to the Source of strength; and God, who spared not his own Son, will freely with him give us grace for every obligation of his law, and make us meet for an inheritance in light.

December 22, 1887

The Preparation for Heaven

If we would enter Heaven we should strive to bring all that we can of Heaven into our lives on earth. The religion of Christ never degrades the receiver. It exerts a heavenly influence upon the minds and manners of men. When the word of God finds access to the hearts of the rough and coarse, it commences a process of refining upon the character, and those who endure it become humble and teachable, like little children. The mighty cleaver of truth has severed them from the world, and then the work to be accomplished, to mould them after the divine Pattern, is begun. They are to be living stones in the temple of God, and are hewed, and squared, and chiseled, to fit them for God's building. Those who are naturally full of self-esteem become meek and lowly of heart. They have a change of character, and are transformed by the renewing of their minds, and the regeneration of the Holy Spirit.

God said in the beginning, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness;" but sin has almost obliterated the moral image of God in man. This lamentable condition would have known no change or hope if Jesus had not come down to our world to be man's Saviour and Example. In the midst of a world's moral degradation he stands, a beautiful and spotless character, the one model for man's imitation. We must study, and copy, and follow the Lord Jesus Christ; then we shall bring the loveliness of his character into our own life, and weave his beauty into our daily words and actions. Thus we shall stand before God with acceptance, and win back by conflict with the principalities of darkness, the power of self-control, and the love of God that Adam lost in the fall. Through Christ we may possess the spirit of love and obedience to the commands of God. Through his merits it may be restored in our fallen natures; and when the Judgment shall sit and the books be opened, we may be the recipients of God's approval.

John saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem, with its twelve gates of pearl and twelve foundations of precious stones, coming down from God out of Heaven. The streets are of transparent gold, clear as crystal. Everyone who shall enter those gates and walk those streets will here have been changed and purified by the power of the truth; and the crown of immortal glory will adorn the brow of the overcomer.

The nations that have kept the truth shall enter in, and the voice of the Son of God will pronounce the glad welcome, "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."

Then how can we afford to devote our God-given powers to our own pleasure for one moment? We must yield our whole service to our Master. We must wage, continuously, the battle of self-denial and sacrifice. Christ died that we might live, and with the same spirit of love we should seek to win souls as the purchase of his blood. The word of God, through his apostle, declares, "We are laborers together with God." Our work may seem at times very discouraging; but if one soul is turned from the error of his way to righteousness, there is joy in Heaven. The Father and the Son rejoice in the presence of the angels. The song of triumph is sung and echoed and re-echoed through the courts of Heaven. Then why should we not be wise in this life, and work for the salvation of man to the glory of God? "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." Your lives must here be refined, ennobled, elevated; and Christ, the hope of glory, must be formed within you. Your favorite sins will be laid aside; you will fear to offend God, and you will love his law.

For more than forty years I have stood in the desk proclaiming salvation to sinners, and my heart has yearned over them with pitying compassion. I saw before me the purchase of the blood of Christ. There is value in every soul. Said the Lord through his prophet, "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir." It is the truth received in the heart and practiced in the life that makes men so valuable in the sight of God.

John beholds an innumerable company, precious, refined, purified, around the throne of the Majesty of Heaven. The angel inquires of John, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" and John answers, "Sir, thou knowest." Then the angel declares: "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." Now we have the precious opportunity of washing our robes of character in the blood of the Lamb till they are spotless in his purity. To all who shall do this the promise is, "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."

We want you to lift your minds from the things of earth to the heavenly glories. We want you to live for the future, immortal life, and decide, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Now is the accepted time. Now give yourselves, without reserve, to Jesus. Be determined that you will have Christ, even if this requires the loss of everything else. The very obstacles and difficulties of the way are for the purpose of making you mighty in faith and giving you spiritual strength. Every effort you make to lead others in the path of God's commandments is registered in the imperishable records. Let not the enemy deceive you. He has filled the world with heresies; but the word of the Lord endureth forever. Plant your feet on his immutable counsels, then you will be all ready to come under God's rules of government in the kingdom of bliss. If you ever sing the song of triumph and redemption, you must now be learning its notes. Is Jesus abiding in your hearts? If he is there you will talk about him, you will reveal him in life and character. You will sing his praise, making melody in your hearts unto the Lord. The sweet spirit of meekness will be cherished, and self will be crucified. When you come to Christ you will not boast, "I am holy." Let God, alone, say that of you, for you know not your own heart. This boast is a sure evidence that you know not the Scriptures nor the power of God. Let God write in his books, if he will, that you are an obedient child, keeping his statutes with a cheerful heart, and the records will reveal it before angels and men at the day of reward.

I have never dared to say, "I am holy, I am sinless;" but whatever I have thought was the will of God, I have tried to do with all my heart, and I have the sweet peace of God in my soul. I can commit the keeping of my soul to God as unto a faithful Creator, and I know that he will keep that which I have committed to his trust. It is my meat and drink to do my Father's will, to present before a dying world the cross of Calvary, to preach repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, to point the way of the commandments of God, that path that leads to the open gates of the eternal city. If you lose Heaven you lose everything. If I can only see the King in his beauty, it is all I desire. Let me listen to the sweet music of his voice, saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Who of you shall we meet in the congregation of the blessed? We want to see you

crowned in the city of God. When the Judgment is set and the records searched, may your names not be blotted out of the book of life. This life is of great consequence to us, for in it we have the privilege of preparing for an unending life. I beseech you, therefore, see to it that your influence is not against the commandments of God. The law is just as Jehovah wrote it, in the temple of Heaven. Man may trample upon its copy here on earth, but the original is kept in the ark of God in Heaven. Above it is the mercy-seat, and Jesus, our great High Priest, stands before the ark, to mediate in man's behalf. We want you to keep God's commandments and live, and his law as the apple of your eye; for, "whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of Heaven." Seek immortality and the crown of life; then the eternal treasures shall be yours, and an inheritance in the kingdom which God hath promised to those that love him.

December 29, 1887

The Judgment of the Great Day

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

Here is presented before us the great and solemn day when the Judgment is to sit and the books are to be opened, and the dead are to be judged according to the things written in the books. We must all meet the unerring record of our lives written in the books on high. We are probationers, on trial. God is testing us to see what kind of characters we will develop in this life. Angels of God are weighing moral worth. Our heavenly Father has sent us a message warning us of the fast-hastening Judgment, that we may prepare for that day of final reckoning.

I have questioned in my mind as I have seen men and women hurrying to and fro on matters of business or pleasure, whether or not they ever thought of the day of God, that is about to break upon us. We need not be in darkness as to what is coming on the earth. We cannot afford to meet that day without a preparation, and light has been given us from Heaven, that we may understand the requirements of God. "Search the Scriptures" is the command of Christ. "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." There is a witness that follows us in all our actions of life. Our very thoughts and the intents and purposes of our hearts are laid bare to his inspection. As the features are produced upon the polished plate of the artist, so are our characters delineated upon the books of record in Heaven. Are you fitting up in the graces of Christ? Will your robe of character be white and spotless in the day of his appearing? Every interest should be shaped, and every action directed toward this all-important event. We should live daily in great humility before God, seeking the divine strength lest we fail of his grace and prove ourselves unworthy of eternal life. We should be "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."

You cannot afford to be found a transgressor of God's great moral law. You are to be judged by its precepts. If God had no law, there could be no Judgment, and the cases of men and women would not be called into the solemn tribunal, before the righteous Judge. If we have not been found in harmony with God's requirements in this life, we will be no more in harmony with his requirements in the future life. What excuse can we plead for disobedience to the law of God's Government? And what excuse can we render in the day when the motives of the heart will be tried? You may say now, "The whole world is out of harmony with God's precepts, and I cannot be singular," but in that day you will not venture to present this before the God of Heaven and earth. When the books are opened, the character will be revealed, and every mouth will be stopped. You will be convicted of guilt before the revelation of your own life. Everyone unsaved will see where he departed from right, and will realize the influence his life of disobedience exerted to turn others from the way of truth. "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God," and the quick and the dead shall stand before the Judgment-seat of Christ. The secret things will be made known. There was an eye that saw and a hand that registered the hidden deeds.

When Belshazzar had his great sacrilegious feast, there was present in the splendid halls a witness which he did not discern. The revelers were drinking their wine, and partaking of their luxurious feast, and praising the gods of silver and gold, extolling their own wisdom, magnifying their deeds, and dishonoring God, but right over against the wall, facing the king, a bloodless hand was tracing the terrible characters testifying of his true condition: "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting."

The Lord is weighing character in the sanctuary today, and those who are careless and indifferent, rushing on in the paths of iniquity, will not stand the test. God has endowed us with reasoning powers, and he requires us to use them to his glory. He has given us this body, which he wishes us to preserve in perfect health, that we may render the best service to his cause. He has paid an infinite price for our redemption, and yet men and women dependent from day to day upon his mercies, for life, for health, for food, for all the blessings they enjoy, refuse to obey his laws, refuse to accept his Son as their Example and Saviour.

It may seem to you that obedience to God's law requires too much self-denial and sacrifice. Does it require more sacrifice than Jesus has made to save you? He has led the

way, and will you follow? He says, "I have kept my Father's commandments." He left the royal throne of glory. He changed the kingly crown for a crown of thorns. He placed his feet in the blood-stained path which led the way to Calvary, and he has stated to us that those who are partakers with him of his sufferings shall be partakers also with him of his glory. We shall never have to endure the shame, the insult, the mockery, the agony of the crucifixion, and the depth of woe and temptation that the Author of our salvation has endured for our sake; but we should ever keep before us the scenes of his humiliation, and never exalt ourselves in pride and self-sufficiency.

Christ was despised and rejected of men. Those he came to save could not see in him anything desirable. Should he come unto our world today without earthly honor or princely power, who would receive him as the King of glory? How many proud church members would be so ashamed of Jesus and the reproach that would be likely to be attached to them should they accept him, that they would refuse to follow him; but his matchless love led him to endure infinite sorrow and reproach that he might bring many sons and daughters to glory. Who is willing today to be on the Lord's side?

We cannot wait until the Judgment before we consent to deny self and to lift the cross. It will be too late then to form characters for Heaven. It is here and now that we must take sides with the humble, self-denying Redeemer. It is here we must overcome envy, strife, selfishness, love of money, and love of the world. It is here that we must enter the school of Christ and learn the precious lesson of meekness and lowliness of mind; and here it must be our aim and our earnest effort to be loyal to the God of Heaven, by obeying all his commandments.

Our only safety is in constant communion with God. Our petitions should ascend in faith that he will keep us unspotted from the corruptions of the world. Did not Jesus tell us that iniquity would abound in the last days? But his grace will be granted to us according to our day. Those who are open to the influence of the Spirit of God will receive strength to withstand the evils of this degenerate age.

Enoch walked with God three hundred years previous to his translation, and the state of the world was not more favorable for the perfection of Christian character than it is today. How did Enoch walk with God? He educated his mind and heart to ever feel the presence of God, and when in perplexity his prayers would ascend to God to keep him, to teach him his will. "What shall I do to honor thee, my God?" was his

prayer. His will was merged in the will of God, and his feet were constantly directed in the path of God's commandments. Enoch was a representative of those who shall be on the earth when Christ shall come, who will be translated to Heaven and never taste of death. It is fitting that we pray, as did David, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

Many close their eyes, lest they shall see the truth. They do not want to see the defects in their life and character, and it disturbs them if you mention to them anything about God's law. They have discarded God's standard and have chosen a standard of their own. Their hearts are not inclined to keep the way of the Lord, for it runs in an opposite direction from the path they had marked out. But we want to warn you: Be not deceived by the first great adversary of God's law. When the Judgment is set and the books opened, your life and mine will be measured by the law of the Most High. Those who have washed their robes of character and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, will be found keeping the commandments of God; and when every man is judged according to the things written in the books, they will receive the commendation of Heaven and an eternal inheritance.

January 6, 1888

The Wisdom of the People of God

"Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you. Your eyes have seen what the Lord did because of Baal-Peor; for all the men that followed Baal-Peor, the Lord thy God hath destroyed them from among you. But ye that did cleave unto the Lord your God are alive every one of you this day."

The claim has been made that the commandments of God are a yoke of bondage, that it is impossible for man to keep them, and that ancient Israel found them unendurable, and failed to fulfill their righteous obligations; but such a claim is proven to be false by the words we have presented. The commandments were not grievous while the people were firm in their allegiance to God; but when they separated from him and gave their powers to the service of the prince of evil, they became aware of their inability to execute the holy enactments of Heaven. The law that had once been their delight, became an unendurable weight, because they had deprived themselves of the love and power of God, and had taken a willful course to resist the authority of the Most High.

The ancient Israelites had not too much will,--it needs will to be a servant of God,--but when they fixed it on the side of self-indulgence, and in opposition to the direct commands of God, it only wrought for their destruction. They placed their will on the side of the first great rebel, and followed his example in complaining of the precepts of Heaven. All murmuring against the law of God is instigated by the lawless one who first created dissatisfaction in the courts of Jehovah, and incited rebellion among the ranks of the angels.

Satan is ever on the alert for the first word of complaint against God and his service. He takes advantage of a spirit of murmuring, and fills the mind with his dark doubts and suggestions. He is constantly seeking to sow the seeds of dissatisfaction in

the heart, concerning the requirements of God, presenting them as unjust in their restraints, and unreasonable in their demands. It is the work of Satan to belittle the law that condemns him, and all who love sin show the characteristics of their commander. Many of the people of God had fallen under his temptations and left their allegiance to God, but here was a living testimony, presented by the faithful servant of the Most High, setting forth the blessedness of obedience. It was transgression that had brought disaster, and laid the nation under the curse of God. Those who had left their loyal service and turned to idolatry, were smitten with disease and death. In contrast to the fate of the transgressor, Moses points out the prosperity of those who had kept the commandments of the Lord; no harm had befallen them; they were alive every one of them that day.

All who have determined to serve God will seek to know and to do his will, at whatever cost to themselves. The true servants of God will be made manifest by their willing obedience to all the commandments of their Master. They will not be murmuring and finding fault with the law, but will declare by word and action, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." In obeying the law, they are doing that which is well-pleasing in the sight of Heaven, and all the promises of the word of God are pledged to the support of the faithful and obedient. They may hope in his mercy, build on his immutable counsels, obtain the desires of their hearts, because their wills are placed on the side of God's will. It is their meat to do the will of God and to finish his work. The gates of the eternal city shall open for the nation that has kept the truth. The servants of God shall eat of the tree of life, and enjoy the unsearchable riches of eternity.

What astonishing benevolence on the part of God to make conditions for the reinstatement of rebel man to his divine favor! Oh that the mercy of God might not be lightly esteemed! Oh that we might appreciate the forbearance of the great God of the universe, comply with his requirements, and receive the great reward that he has promised to those who love him! Should we not from humble and grateful hearts present our services to him who "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"? We may become the sons of God, the heirs of an eternal inheritance, partakers of the divine nature, kings and priests unto God. The most exalted privileges are offered to the obedient. Shall we turn away in rebellion and unbelief, and propose to go back to Egypt? Never! Our march should be onward, toward the heavenly Canaan. Every step

should be from faith to a greater faith, from obedience to a more perfect obedience, from light to a brighter light; for "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

We are the Israel that God is leading out of the errors of the world in these last days to live by every word that proceedeth out of his mouth. The truth for this time will not fail to sanctify the soul that receives the love of it and obeys it from the heart. It will enable us to overcome every besetting sin, and to surmount every difficulty in our onward march. We can run and not be weary, walk and not faint.

"Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people."

The wisdom and understanding of ancient Israel before all the nations, was their obedience to God's law. This doing of God's commandments worked an elevation of character and life that even the heathen world recognized and commended. Those who have rendered obedience to God in all ages, have been transformed in character, and in these last days, when iniquity abounds on every hand, our wisdom and understanding before all people will consist in our obedience to the standard of righteousness. The servants of God will not be foolish, ignorant, uncourteous, and coarse; but as they conform their lives to the holy laws of Heaven, they become like Jesus Christ, who was a living example of perfect obedience to the statutes of Jehovah. They will become refined, ennobled, elevated, and will manifest that courtesy that forgets the interests of self, that others may be blessed and benefited.

The follower of Jesus will place his will on the side of his Master's will. He will have a consciousness of the nearness of God's presence. Doubts will vanish before the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, as the shadows fly before the morning. The true Christian identifies his interest with the interest of Christ, wears the yoke of his Master, lifts his burden, bears his reproach; but no murmur escapes his lips. No, he rejoices that he is counted worthy to suffer for His sake who suffered for him. You may expect complaint, but you will hear only the language of thanksgiving from Christ's burden-bearers. They do not bear the load alone; for He whom their soul loveth, walks with

them, and the heaviest weight is borne by his loving and mighty heart. Those who come to Christ, weary and heavy-laden, find rest unto their souls. Those who learn of him and take his yoke upon them, find that his yoke is easy, and his burden is light. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever," promises, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Yes, this God is our God forever and ever. Then why should we chafe and fret under the commandments of our God? He who leadeth us and teacheth us to profit, declares, "I have kept my Father's commandments;" and those who follow Christ will do as he has done. Their steps will fall in his foot-prints all along the path of obedience that he has trodden before them as their example. The law of our God "is holy, and just, and good," and it is to our highest interest that we come into perfect harmony with its precepts. It is ordained unto life. The world knows that it is wisdom to serve the God of Heaven. However reluctant men may be to acknowledge it, they look upon the obedient children of God as favored of Heaven.

Moses asks: "For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day? Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons."

Here is the solemn charge that was given to ancient Israel, and it comes echoing down the ages to us, with accumulated force; for we are under greater obligation and increased responsibility, because we have the record of their experiences to teach us to avoid their errors and profit by their mistakes. Their departures from God, their backslidings, their murmuring, their sins "are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." The judgment of God in the destruction of the guilty is marked before us, that we may take heed to the warnings, and escape from the paths of transgression. The rich rewards and blessings bestowed upon the obedient are recorded as encouragements to those who will follow the way of the Lord and delight in his testimonies.

In the commendation of God to the faithful among ancient Israel, is unmistakable evidence that he highly appreciates those who are peculiar in character, because they render perfect obedience to his holy laws. The spiritual excellency of these people is manifested in their words and works. They are branches of the living vine, and partakers

of the divine nature.

Like seeks like. Like appreciates like. Christ recognizes his own Spirit and image in his followers. As they become more like him, they seek a closer association with him. His character shines with new attractions. They see matchless charms in their Redeemer, and he becomes "the chiefest among ten thousand," and the one "altogether lovely." His ways are precious to them, and it is their delight to do his will.

The words of Jesus test the profession we make. He declares: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.... If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings; and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever: even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

The conditions and promises are the same in the Old Testament as they are in the New. The favor of God is promised only to those who obey him. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love," says the Master. If we would claim the rich promises, if we would have the pardon of our sins, and eternal life at last, we must yield a royal service to the God of Heaven. In our faithful performance of his requirements consists our prosperity as a church and as individuals. Not in great talents, not in great possessions, not in grand appearances, but in humble service to our Maker is our strength, wisdom, and understanding.

We must not take a feeble, vacillating course; but with unchangeable purpose, place our wills on the side of God's will, become rich in faith, rich in the knowledge of his word, and rich in the power of his Spirit. If we do those things that are pleasing in the sight of our God, we may hold the keys of the invisible world. We may unlock Heaven's storehouses, and draw upon their inestimable treasures.

Then let none of us entertain the thought that it is of little moment whether we heed the commandments of God, or pass them by with indifference. When the great

books of Judgment are opened, and the motives of every heart are laid bare, there will be no excuse for those who trifle with God's plain words. "The wages of sin is death." This is the awful and inevitable sentence pronounced upon the transgressor. But the righteous shall enter into life. Says the Son of God, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

January 13, 1888

True Religion

What is true religion? It is to love God with all the heart, and our neighbors as ourselves. This is the whole duty of man. To reach this high standard of character should be the absorbing purpose of every soul. How shall I love God with all my heart? What means are provided for fixing my affections on high and heavenly things? Love to God must be cultivated daily, by calling to mind the great love that God has manifested toward us in giving us his well-beloved Son.

We should try to comprehend the wonders of this amazing sacrifice. We should dwell on the marvelous love of our Redeemer till our stony hearts are melted in contrition and gratitude. The love that stirred his bosom enabled him, the spotless Lamb of God, to become an offering for the guilty transgressor of his Father's law. It sustained him in his purpose to save the fallen race, amid their heartless ingratitude and scorn. It strengthened him for temptation, reproach, torture, poverty, shame, and death. Oh, the unfathomable depths of redeeming love! who can sound this mighty deep?

When we make redemption the subject of our meditation, and try to comprehend the vastness of the plan of salvation, and to realize the unutterable love of Him who has died for us, our hearts will be subdued and softened, and we shall yield them wholly to our Saviour. We shall fall at his feet in adoration, exclaiming, "My Lord and my God!" A more than human love is wakened in the soul, through the knowledge of the wonderful love of Christ to one who has rebelled against his rule and grieved him by transgression. The sinner who has felt the power of Christ's cleansing blood, has a deep and abiding sense that he owes his all to that Saviour who has purchased him with his own precious life. All who have this consciousness and appreciation of the love of Christ, will esteem it the highest privilege of their lives to devote every power of their being to his service. The transforming grace of Christ moulds the desires of the heart, and there is a ready willingness to make any sacrifice for the truth's sake.

Those who love their Redeemer will rejoice at every opportunity to share with him in humiliation, shame, and reproach. The love they bear their Lord makes suffering, for his sake, sweet; and they know that if they suffer with him they shall also reign with

him in his glory. This experience of suffering for Christ's sake is absolutely essential to the spiritual life of the Christian. There can be no true, vital godliness without seasons of trial and grief. We are chosen in the furnace of affliction, and the trial of our faith is more precious than gold.

Many claim to love God while they fail to cherish love toward their brethren; but genuine love to God will testify to its real existence by love to our fellow-men. Those who love God will reveal the tender, compassionate spirit of Jesus to all that are around them. They will love their brethren, because they are the members of the body of Christ. They will love the sinner, because he is the purchase of the blood of Christ; and this love, abiding in the heart, will display itself by earnest labor to benefit and bless all with whom they associate. They will yearn for the salvation of men, and will lead others to the fountain that has refreshed their own souls.

The love of Christ will not make us less fit for actual life, but will enable us to adapt ourselves to the wants of others, and will develop highly practical fruit in our daily experience. It is not a weak sentimentalism. It is not of that cheap order that is earthly and sensual, leading to debasement of the soul and defilement of the character. It is not of earthly, but of heavenly origin. This love is elevating in its nature, enduring and ennobling, shedding rays of beneficence upon all within the circle of its influence. God, through his Son, has sent down this heavenly love to unite us with himself. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." Let us ponder this divine love, that we may become changed, and may reflect this precious attribute of the character of our Redeemer. We shall be in less peril of placing our affections on unworthy objects.

The disciple John became a possessor of this divine love. The regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit renewed his heart. He came under the power of the love of Christ, and the knowledge of this love awakened a depth of affection that, by its infusion through his heart, wrought a transformation of character. The warm affection of John was not the cause of Christ's love for him. The Saviour had loved him before this affection had an existence; but the unmerited kindness of his Lord had kindled love in the breast of the disciple.

John's natural character was marked with imperfections. He was impetuous, and resentful under injuries. When the Samaritans refused to entertain his Lord because they

thought he favored the Jews more than he did them, John wanted the insult to receive immediate retribution. His spirit was stirred with revenge, and he said to his Master, "Wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?" Jesus looked upon John, and said, "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."

Revengeful thoughts and words are contrary to the spirit of the meek and lowly Jesus. It is not always easy to bring our feelings under control. The human heart needs to be guarded continually, that we may not cherish a spirit unlike that of our divine Lord. It will be impossible for us to bear insult and harshness with loving forbearance and patience unless we drink of the spirit of Him "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again." It is natural for us to think when we are falsely accused that we must retaliate and show our contempt of the traducers, but this is foreign to the meekness of our Redeemer. We must not allow one revengeful thought to arise. Sorrow and indignation may fill our hearts for a season, because souls are deceived and misled by these falsehoods; but it will not help matters to cherish unholy anger, and it will not be cherished where the forgiving love of Christ has imbued the soul.

The prevalent opinion that John was naturally of a meek and yielding character is proved, by a study of his life, to be erroneous. He had high ambitions to be first in the kingdom of Christ. He had decidedly rebuked one who was casting out devils in the name of Jesus, because he was not in their company. He had strong traits of character, not weak and vacillating, but self-assertive and ambitious for honor. Jesus taught the needed lessons of humility and patience. He manifested in contrast to John's violent spirit, calm consideration and forbearance. John was a learner in the school of Christ. As the character of the divine One was manifested to him, he saw his own deficiency and was humbled by the knowledge. The strength and the patience, the power and tenderness, the majesty and the meekness, that he beheld in the daily life of the Son of God, filled his soul with admiration and love; but he was not simply an admirer; he showed his appreciation by imitating the divine characteristics of his Lord. His revengeful, ambitious temper he yielded to the moulding power of the Spirit of Christ. He set his soul to copy the lovely Pattern and become like Him who is meek and lowly of heart.

This is the sure result of association with Jesus. As we meditate upon his character our hearts are drawn out in love, desire awakens to become like him whom we

love, and, by beholding, we become changed. When Christ abides in the heart, the whole nature is transformed. Everything that defileth is banished from the soul's temple. Lust, base passions, impure thoughts, pride, inordinate affections, revenge, retaliation, covetousness, envy, all these are prohibited; and what we once loved, now we hate; for we become new creatures in Christ Jesus. Christ's Spirit, Christ's love, softens the heart, subdues the soul, and raise the thoughts and desires toward God and Heaven.

The truth we claim to believe should make us better men and women in our home life, in our church relations, in our business, and in our intercourse with our friends and neighbors. Unless this result is manifested, we should examine ourselves to see what is hindering the sanctifying influence of the truth from accomplishing its work of purification in our lives. "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." Our characters must be moulded after the divine model, that we may have an elevating influence on all with whom we associate. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

Had Peter practiced the lessons that Christ presented during his ministry, he would never have apostatized and denied his Lord; but we thank God that, although in his weakness he did forsake his Master, he thoroughly repented and was forgiven. The lessons which he had failed to take to heart were learned and made practical in his life, and at last he who had deserted his Lord counted it too great an honor that he was permitted to suffer shame and death for his sake.

How different it was with Judas. He had been in the society of the great Teacher. The same privileges were granted to him as were bestowed on Peter and John; but how did he respond to the light? Like many of this day, he professed to be a follower of Christ, but failed to identify his interests with the cause of his Lord. He listened to the lessons of Christ, but he made no change in his character. He did not seek to rid himself of his selfish penuriousness by sacrificing for the advancement of the cause he claimed to espouse. He cultivated a spirit of greed, till the desirableness of Christ and Heaven was eclipsed. This plague-spot in his soul spread, like a destroying leprosy, till the whole man was corrupted. Noble liberty was left to wither. Every unselfish purpose was darkened, until the hope of obtaining a few paltry dollars led him to betray his Saviour.

How many are repeating these mistakes, because they do not profit by the example of those who have followed this course in the past! They are not doers of the

words of Christ. They do not conform their lives to his divine instruction. Those who have the greatest deformities of character, may have the greatest grace. The highest seat will be awarded to those who, through appropriating the promises of God to themselves, attain the greatest likeness to Christ.

A longing, hungering desire takes possession of the soul that is conforming to the divine standard. Oh, to be filled with the knowledge of the will of God! Oh, that heavenly light may illumine the pathway! Oh, for deeper draughts of the well of salvation! This is the constant cry of the heart to God, and the promise is that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled.

It is the love of Jesus in the soul that enables the Christian to count all things as loss, to endure toil, to rejoice in sacrifice, and to suffer reproach for the truth. Love for Jesus is the motive power of the life-work, and the sustaining strength for every duty.

While the love of God makes its possessor meek and lowly of spirit, and eradicates all hatred and revenge, and all that is unholy, it will not leave the Christian without power to oppose wrong and rebuke sin. If dangerous errors threaten the faith, through the efforts of deceived church-members or false shepherds, they will be met and opposed with decision. The soldiers of Christ must be like sentinels on guard, watching on the walls of Zion. They must defend the faith once delivered to the saints, and press back the powers of moral darkness with determined energy and will.

The disciple John, while he has written many chapters on the subject of love, speaks very decidedly to his brethren on the duty of rebuking error. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God," is his decision; and he instructs them not to receive such a one into their houses or bid him Godspeed.

We must arm ourselves with the Spirit of Christ, stand in defense of the truth, and yet do this whole work of honoring God and resisting evil without having a spirit of retaliation arise in our hearts. Every warning in the word of God is to be heeded, every instruction followed, that we may keep our souls in the love of God. We must oppose error for Christ's sake and for the sake of the purchase of his blood, that God may be honored, his ways vindicated, and souls saved from the fast-hastening ruin that is to overwhelm the world. Christ is our example in all things. We must consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we be weary and faint in our

minds. We must go forward, exemplifying in our lives the principles of true religion, that we may be living epistles, "known and read of all men;" that we may love God with all our heart, and our neighbors as ourselves.

January 20, 1888

Know the Reason of Your Hope

"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."

This exhortation is addressed to the children of God. The Scriptures are they which testify of our hope, and it is necessary for us to search them diligently, that we may be ready to give an intelligent and well-grounded reason for our faith. This is the duty enjoined upon us by Him who gave his life to redeem man.

After the crucifixion of Christ two disciples were journeying toward Emmaus. Their hearts were burdened with grief and doubt. Their way lay over a bleak, barren plain, broken by rugged ridges dangerous steeps. The ground was cracked and parched, and loose stones strewed the path.

As they ascended the ridge a stranger joined them; but they were so engrossed in reviewing the mournful events of the passover week that they did not notice his presence. The stranger gently accosted them; but their eyes were holden, and they did not recognize their divine Master. And he asked, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them. What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people; and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel. And beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulcher; and when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.... Then he said unto 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 enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto

them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."

Had not the disciples heard this very exposition of these scriptures from their Master's lips while he was with them? But how little had they comprehended them! How forcible is their meaning now! How startling their fulfillment! The truths they had but dimly discerned now stand revealed in a blaze of light. The very things he had told them have been accomplished. Faith begins to revive. Their hearts beat with a strong and renewed hope as they listen eagerly to the plain, simple words of their unknown fellow-traveler. They are surprised to find their burdened hearts becoming light; and as they think of Jesus, of all he was to them, of all he suffered, their tears flow freely. Their confidence had not been misplaced. He was all and even more than they had believed.

If these men had no reason of their hope within them, their hearts would not have responded to the world's Redeemer as he strove to fasten their trembling faith upon the testimony of the prophets concerning himself. As it was, the evidences of the truth needed only to be revived in their minds. The very clouds that darkened their faith grew luminous with assurance as they saw the harmony of prophecy and its fulfillment. As the mists began to lift, the betrayal, trial, and crucifixion stood like great waymarks promising the fulfillment of the word of God, witnessing to his providences, and telling the story of the unutterable love and truth of their Saviour. Again their feet stood firm on the sure foundation.

There will be chapters of a similar character in the experience of every follower of Christ. Faith will be tested, and for a time its brightness will be dimmed; but those who sincerely love God will not be left to be overwhelmed. Jesus comes to their side. He speaks to them. He encourages them. It may be through some humble agent; but he surely ministers unto them.

The divine Son of God, the resurrected Saviour, who walked with the sorrowing disciples up and down the steeps that intercepted the journey to Emmaus, is our compassionate Saviour. He knows whose hearts are burdened with sorrows and disappointed hopes. He is at our right hand to interest himself in all our sorrows and to soothe our griefs. He presses close to the believing mourner who yearns for his presence; but he never forces his company upon any.

These two disciples saw in Jesus not only a stranger but one who had been

acquainted with their beloved Master, and as such he was endeared to them. The sun sinks behind the hills and they near their destination. They cannot endure the thought of separation. As the stranger seems about to leave them they urge the request, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent."

The three weary travelers had walked together. The Son of God was one with them. He had labored up the toilsome steeps; he had moved with equal caution down the precipitous path, and there was nothing in his dress or his manner to lead the disciples to suspect that he was any other than one of the many pilgrims returning from the great feast.

He enters the lowly home, and is seated before the humble board. While the meal is preparing, words that stir and warm the heart flow from his lips. He puts forth his hands to bless the bread. The eyes of the disciples are riveted on them. They see the print of the nails. They recognize his voice. The words, the tone, the manner, are all familiar. It is the Master himself. He whom they had placed in Joseph's new tomb lives before them. They had walked with their risen Saviour from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Oh! why had they not known him? Their unbelief had hidden Jesus from their view. They rise in great haste and fall at his feet to express their joy; but he is gone.

The disciples had thought themselves weary; but now their vigor is renewed. Discouragement is gone. They stop not for food, nor feel they the need of it, but hasten to retrace their steps over the rough path so lately trodden with Jesus. They have a message of joy to carry to their mourning brethren. They have seen and talked with Jesus. He has risen from the dead. Their hearts are all light, and joy, and peace.

They urge their way through the darkened streets, and climb to the upper chamber. All is silent within; but finally, to their continued knocking, they hear the slipping of the bolts. The door is cautiously opened, and carefully barred after them. Scarcely had they finished relating the marvelous story of the walk to Emmaus to the incredulous disciples, when they behold with amazement another in their midst. It is Jesus. The bars and bolts have not been withdrawn. They have heard no footstep, and they are terrified. Their amazement deepens as they hear his voice, saying, "Peace be unto you," and continuing to reassure the terrified disciples: "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." "And

while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things."

The duty of the disciple of Christ is revealed in these words. To preach to all nations repentance and remission of sins; to present Jesus as the sin-pardoning Redeemer. The hearts of sinners must be melted into contrition, before God will hear their prayer. When the soul is emptied of its defilement, Jesus will take possession, and pardon and peace that floweth like a river will be enjoyed.

The followers of Christ will have trials and conflicts while on earth, but we have a sure refuge in every storm. Jesus has told us, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." The forces of Satan are marshaled against us. He is a diligent foe, but in following the warning of Christ we shall find safety. "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." There are foes to be resisted and overcome, but Jesus is by our side, ready to strengthen for every effort and brace for duty.

We have a great work to do to be witnesses to the fulfillment of God's word; and to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us," will require a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. We need in these times of peace to become familiar with the prophecies that foretell the events to take place in our time, that, like the disciples, our minds will need only to be refreshed to become encouraged, and that the very trial which seems to confuse us may become a tower of strength, and an evidence that God is fulfilling the sure word of prophecy.

January 27, 1888

"I Will Come Again"

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

The time of Jesus' betrayal, suffering, and crucifixion, was drawing near; and as the disciples gathered around him, the Lord unfolded to them the mournful events that were about to take place, and their hearts were filled with sorrow. To comfort them he spoke these tender words: "Let not your heart be troubled.... I will come again, and receive you unto myself." He directed their minds away from the scenes of sorrow, to the mansions of Heaven and the time of reunion in the kingdom of God. "I go to prepare a place for you." Though he must go from them and ascend to his Father, his work for those he loved would not be at an end. He was to prepare homes for those who, for his sake, were to be pilgrims and strangers on the earth.

After his resurrection "he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into Heaven." And as he went up, two shining angels asked the disciples, "Why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into Heaven." Do you imagine as they went back to Jerusalem that they said to one another, "Well, the Lord has left us. What is now the use of trying to gain followers to Jesus? Let us return to our nets. Let us take up our old employment. What can we do against the opposition of the world?" There is no record of any such conversation. Not a line is written or a hint given that they had a thought of leaving the service of their ascended Lord, for the service of self and the world. The Saviour's hand had been outstretched in blessing his disciples he had left behind as he ascended. They had seen his glory. He had gone to prepare mansions for them. Their salvation had been provided for, and if they were faithful in complying with the conditions, they would assuredly follow him to the world of unending joy. Their hearts were filled with songs of rejoicing and praise.

We all have the same cause for thanksgiving. The resurrection and ascension of our Lord is a sure evidence of the triumph of the saints of God over death and the grave, and a pledge that Heaven is open to those who wash their robes of character and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. Jesus ascended to the Father as a representative of the human race, and God will bring those who reflect his image to behold and share with him his glory.

Though the disciples had gazed far into the Heaven until their Lord had vanished from their sight, they did not behold the angels that gathered around their beloved commander. Jesus led a multitude of captives who had risen from the grave at his resurrection. As the glorious company approach the gates of the eternal city the angels sing. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the king of glory shall come in." And the angels guarding the gates respond, "Who is this king of glory?" The attendant angels reply, "The Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory." As the glorious train passes in, the angels are about to bow in adoration before the Lord of glory; but he waves them back. Before he will permit their homage he must know that his sacrifice for the fallen race has been accepted of the Father. He must know whether the price paid for the redemption of the lost has been sufficient to ransom them from the power of sin and the grave. This is the absorbing thought in the breast of the Saviour. Amid the splendor of the courts of glory, amid ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands waiting to cast their crowns at his feet, he does not forget those that he has left on earth to bear opposition, reproach, and scorn. After the Father has assured him that the ransom paid is accepted, still he has a request to offer for those who believe in him and follow in his footsteps: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." He requested that his disciples might enter into his joy and share his glory; and at last the faithful servant of the Lord will hear the glad words, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

When he had finished preferring his requests, the Father gave the command, "Let all the angels of God worship him," Then the song of joy and love swells through the heavenly courts, "Worthy, worthy, worthy, is the Lamb that was slain, and lives again, a triumphant conqueror." And this same Jesus, whom unnumbered hosts of angels delight to adore, is coming again to fulfill his promise and receive those who love him unto himself. Have we not great reason to rejoice? "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." The consummation of our hope is

at hand; the faithful will soon enter into the joy of their Lord.

A little time is given that the inhabitants of the world may hear the warning, and that those who will may prepare for the coming of the great king. We must not be like the foolish virgins. They did not provide oil for their lamps, and at the very time when the cry was raised, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh," their lights burned dim and went out. Are there not many who are pursuing the same unwise course? They profess to be followers of Jesus, but they are making no preparation for his glorious appearing and kingdom. They go on, taken up with the affairs of this world, and have no realization of the great events about to come to pass.

Christ warned us in view of this very time that we should not be engrossed in the cares of the world, to the neglect of eternal interests; but how many of us allow the things of this life to interpose between our souls and the great gift of Heaven. How few are living for the glory of God and the good of humanity. How few are telling their children of the love of Christ, of the mansions of Heaven, of the necessity of faith and obedience. How few are warning their friends and neighbors of the fast-hastening Judgment. My heart is pained with the thought of the ingratitude of man to his Maker, and the indifference of souls to their dearly-purchased salvation. We are warned that if we do not watch and pray, the day of final reckoning will overtake us as a thief in the night, and our portion will be appointed with the hypocrites and unbelievers. "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." There is every provision made that we may have the light, and there will be no excuse in the day of God if we are overtaken in our sins. Sorrow and woe await those who do not heed the instructions of the word of life; but what joy is in store for those who have made preparation for the coming of their Lord! They will be changed from mortality to immortality. They will see the King in his beauty, and reflect his image. They will be caught up to be forever with the Lord.

Let us go forward together to reach the great reward and join the song of the redeemed. If we ever sing the praises of God in Heaven, we must first sing them here. Out of grateful hearts the notes of thanksgiving should spring continually, and our lips should tell of the goodness of the Lord, and magnify his holy name. All complaint and murmuring should cease among the children of the Most High. We ought to be the happiest people on the earth, because we have a mighty Saviour in the sanctuary above, who has died that we might live. It might be inferred from our sad countenances and

words of complaint that Jesus was still in Joseph's tomb, with a great stone rolled before the door; but I declare to you that Jesus is risen, that he loves you, that he represents you in the courts of his glory, making intercession for you. We should rejoice and praise God with songs of unfeigned thankfulness. Let us determine that if it costs everything we will have Heaven and become partakers of the divine nature.

We may have a right to enter into the city, to eat of the tree of life, and to share in the unending joy of the redeemed. We may listen to the voice of Jesus, sweeter than any music that ever fell on mortal ear, as he welcomes his children to their eternal home. Those who have chosen his service will hear him say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." And oh, what a kingdom! There will be no night in the city of gold. God and the Lamb will be its light. There are homes for the pilgrims of earth. There are robes for the righteous--crowns of glory, palms of victory. All that perplexed us in the providences of God, will then be made plain. The things hard to be understood will then find an explanation. The mysteries of grace will unfold before us. Where our finite minds discovered only confusion and broken purposes we shall see the most perfect and beautiful harmony. We shall know that infinite love ordered these experiences that seemed the most trying and hard to bear. As we realize the tender care of Him who makes all things work together for our good, we shall rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Pain cannot exist in the atmosphere of Heaven. There will be no more tears, no funeral trains, no badges of mourning. "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." One rich tide of happiness will flow and deepen as eternity rolls on.

Think of this, children of suffering and sorrow, and rejoice in hope. Strive with all your God-given powers to enter into the kingdom of Heaven; for "many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Jesus has promised, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself." "But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth?" This is the question we should put to our souls. It becomes us, as rational beings, to consider whether we are prepared to meet our Lord, or placing our affections upon the things of earth. When we think how many are given to selfishness and pleasure-seeking, our hearts are troubled. The careless and indifferent, whose chief care is for their personal and earthly interests, will be left in outer darkness, but those who are waiting for their Lord, with their lamps trimmed and burning, will go in with

the heavenly Bridegroom to the wedding.

February 3, 1888

"Serve the Lord with Gladness"

"Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? Ye have said, It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered. 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."

There are times when under adversity and sorrow, the servants of God become discouraged and despondent. They brood over their circumstances, and, contrasting their condition with the prosperity of those who have no thought or care for eternal things, they feel aggrieved. They manifest a spirit of reproach, and murmur and repine at their lot. They seem to consider that God is under special obligation to bless them and prosper their undertakings, and therefore, as they are placed in situations of trial, they grow rebellious, and look with envy on the wicked who flourish in their iniquity. They seem to regard the condition of the transgressor as preferable to their own. These bitter thoughts are suggested to the mind by the deceiver of mankind. It is his delight to stir up rebellion in the breasts of the children of God. He knows it causes them weakness, and is a source of dishonor to their God. He desires us to think that it is a vain thing to serve God, and that those who are unmindful of the claims of Heaven are more favored than those who strive to obey the commandments of God.

The psalmist David had this experience. When he looked upon the flourishing condition of the wicked he was envious of their success, and said, "Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued." But when he went into the sanctuary, and communed with the Lord, he no longer desired the portion of the wicked; for then he understood their end. He saw that their way led to destruction at last, and their pleasure was but for a season. Envy had no

more a place in his heart. His rebellious spirit bowed in humble submission to his God, and he declared, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." He saw that the guidance of the Lord was of infinitely more value than all the temporal prosperity of the world; for the way of the Lord kept the feet in the paths of righteousness that lead to eternal glory.

The true servant of God will take the suggestions and temptations of Satan to the throne of grace, where peace and submission will flow into the soul. When he enters into the sanctuary he will know the end of those who have not the fear of the Lord before their eyes. The Lord has heard our murmuring. He says, "Ye have said, It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance?" This question will present itself, with more or less force, to the minds of the people of God; but before you answer it think of the exalted honor that the God of Heaven has conferred upon you. Think how he has given his only begotten Son, that a way of salvation might be opened for you. Think how he has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light, called you to be the children of the Most High, called you to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Is this no compensation? no encouragement?

In these last days there is a call from Heaven inviting you to keep the statutes and ordinances of the Lord. The world has set at naught the law of Jehovah; but God will not be left without a witness to his righteousness, or without a people in the earth to proclaim his truth. The door of the heavenly sanctuary has been opened, and no man can shut it, and the light of the Holy of Holies is shining into the world. The people of God have had their attention called to the ark of the testimony, and the law within it has been revealed with its unalterable precepts. In holy vision, John saw the remnant church on the earth, in an age of lawlessness, and he points them out in unmistakable language: "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." They are in harmony with that law that rests in the ark in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. The whole duty of man is summed up in its sacred precepts. In the heart of the law is the commandment enjoining upon man the observance of the Sabbath of Jehovah, which the world and the church have trodden under their feet. For centuries men have walked in blindness concerning the true Sabbath, and the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now is the day of reformation, and he calls upon men everywhere to repent. When the light of God's disregarded commandment shone upon the path of those who sincerely loved God, they delayed not to keep his statutes. They realized that they must come out from the world

and be separate, and touch not the unclean, that they might claim the promise, "I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." They became the repairers of the breach that has been made in the law of God, because they turned away their feet from the Sabbath, from doing their pleasure on God's holy day, and called the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable, and did honor him, not speaking their own words or finding their own pleasure.

Now the question is, Will we ally ourselves with those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus? Will we cease to trample upon the Sabbath of the Lord our God? We want to be sure that we are the children of light; that we are following in the footsteps of our Redeemer and Example. The cross lies in our pathway, but shall we not take it up and bear it for his sake who bore the cross for us? All who are seeking to serve God will have trials; but shall we say, What does it profit to come out from the world and be separate? Shall we call the proud happy? Shall we say that those who work wickedness are set up? that those who tempt God are even delivered, and we are left unaided in the midst of sorrows?

This is the evil that will prevail in the hearts of many. They will grow despondent in their service, because they are not prospered as the wicked are. Some are acting on the suggestions of the enemy today, and are distrusting their best friend. But we want you to understand that if you rely on God in your trial, with living faith, not one of his gracious promises will fail. The Lord is acquainted with all our sorrows and self-denials. Those who have embraced the truth in all ages have had to suffer for its sake, and shall we be exempt? Let the mind dwell upon the sufferings of our precious Saviour. "For 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." He made himself of "no reputation," took upon him the "form of a servant," and humbled himself "even to the death of the cross." "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." "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."

There must be a coming up, lest Satan divert the mind from the contemplation of the spiritual and eternal, to the earthly and temporal. God is willing to give you grace

and strength for every time of need, if you seek for it with a sincere heart.

We read that "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." When the people that are engaged in the service of God come together, they are to speak words that will encourage and comfort and upbuild their brethren in the faith. They are not to find fault with their lot, and question the dealing and work of God. They are not to murmur against each other, and magnify their trials and sacrifices, thus leaving the impression that it is unprofitable to serve God. Let them remember the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, and the multitude of his tender mercies, and, out of hearts melted with gratitude and love, let them praise his name and inquire, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?" Angels record the words of your lips in the books of remembrance. God hearkens and hears the utterances of his servants; and those who appreciate his mercy and love his name "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."

Do not say it is a vain thing to serve God. Have respect unto the recompense of the reward. Even in this life you are to cast all your care upon him; for he careth for you. His promise is, that if you seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all necessary things shall be added unto you. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without his notice, and the hairs of your head are all numbered.

The glory of the eternal world has been opened before me, and I want to tell you that Heaven is worth your winning. An infinite price has been paid that you might share in its indescribable glories, and enjoy its exalted privileges. The God of Heaven did not spare even his only Son, that rebel man might be restored to the favor of Heaven; and shall we hesitate to yield to him grateful and whole-hearted service? Oh, that no word of murmuring might ever escape the lips of those who have tasted of the heavenly gift! This is no time to ask, What does it profit to keep the ordinances of our God? The celestial city is just before us. If you could get one glimpse into the glories of that place, you would not count any loss too great if you might only walk its streets of transparent gold, and sing the song of triumph with the white-robed company of Heaven. You would not wish for the prosperity of earth, or be envious of the wicked.

There are traces, even amid the havoc that sin has wrought, of what God has done

to make the earth beautiful. I enjoy these prospects of loveliness in nature. My mind is carried up through nature to nature's God, and I adore him who has created such scenes of beauty; but I know that if I love God and keep his commandments there is "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" awaiting me in the kingdom of Heaven. Beautiful as are the landscapes of earth, "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." God designs that we should contemplate heavenly things, and that we should dwell upon the attributes of his character, till we see matchless charms in our God, and become changed into the same image. When we are renewed in the spirit of our minds, we shall have no disposition to murmur at our lot; the praise of God will be welling up in our hearts continually. The solemn responsibilities that God has laid upon us for the salvation of souls will absorb our whole heart and mind, and we shall have no time to talk of our trials and sacrifices. Oh! we must wash our robes of character from every stain, in the blood of the Lamb, and prepare for the great day of God. We must not wait till the Lord comes in the clouds of heaven before we make our calling and election sure.

Enoch walked with God three hundred years before his translation to Heaven. He had the daily testimony that his ways pleased God. Why should not every Christian follow Christ as did this faithful servant? Do you love Jesus a great way off? Do the tidings of his coming seem a message of joy to your heart? Do you find his service a profitable service? How can you win others to the truth, if your own heart is not in the work, and you do not see matchless charms in your Redeemer? The prayer of Christ was, that he might be glorified in those he had left upon earth to carry on his work, and we do not glorify our Redeemer when we complain of the difficulties of the way, and murmur at the providences of God.

Jesus is soon coming in power and great glory, and we are not to sit down in idle expectation of this event. We are to show our faith by our works. He has committed to every man his work. A great truth has been given to us, and the world must be warned of the fast-approaching judgments. Every talent must be given out to the exchangers, that it may be used for the good of man and the glory of God. And those who are faithful to the small trusts of earth, will be made rulers of many things in the eternal world. Now we have the precious privileges of probation. We have the opportunity of laboring in the greatest cause that ever engaged the attention of the servants of God. Let us not spend these valuable moments in discontent at our lot. Let us praise God, and

speake often one to another and to all that we meet, of his marvelous truth. The Lord will count such among his jewels, and will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

February 10, 1888

Be Diligent

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

The day of the Lord is at hand, when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and all the cities of the earth shall be destroyed. Christ, escorted by ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of angels, shall come in the clouds of heaven. The righteous dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and rise from their graves to immortal life, and we that are alive and remain shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air and so be forever with the Lord. In view of these great and solemn events we are exhorted to be diligent that we may be "found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

There are attractions on every hand to draw the mind away from the contemplation of the coming of our Lord and Saviour; but it is absolutely necessary to bear in remembrance that "the great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly." The God of Heaven has multiplied warnings, entreaties, and instructions, that we may be prepared to stand in the time of the overwhelming destruction. We are not left in darkness. Those who meditate and act upon the instructions that God has given will cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit. They will keep in mind the command to "be diligent," to be holy in all their conversation and life. An infinite price has been paid for our redemption that we might have an opportunity to turn to God and perfect characters that will meet the approbation of Heaven. And we should inquire as did the lawyer, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Christ answered, "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" The lawyer replied, "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." And Jesus said unto him,

"Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live."

Christ presented the great moral standard of righteousness to the lawyer. Every man's life must meet this test in the Judgment. Now you are invited to look into the law of God. Take the ten commandments, that grow out of the principles of love to God and love to man, and see if you are in harmony with their requirements. If you are not breaking any one of them, you may ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you; for you are in the favor of God. The only way that you can determine whether you are righteous or not is by examining your heart with the light of the law and the Spirit of God. As the looking-glass reveals the defects in your appearance, so the moral mirror of the law will make plain the imperfections of your character, and the true condition of your heart. Those who are looking into the perfect law of liberty, and seeking a fitness for Heaven, will realize their need of divine help and will often be found before God in prayer.

Only those who are sanctified through the truth will be accepted as heirs of eternal life. The sanctification that God intends his children should have, is not of that character which leads men to boast of their holiness and reject the law of God, which is "holy, and just, and good." Bible sanctification is implicit obedience to the requirements of God. Christ did not die to save anyone in the pollution of sin. He came to "save his people from their sins," that "the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled" in his followers. The death of the Son of God on the cross demonstrates the immutable character of the precepts of Jehovah. Then how grieved should we be for every transgression and disobedience. The precious Saviour was bruised for our iniquity. There is enmity against the commandments of God in the hearts of those who claim sanctification and refuse to acknowledge the binding obligation of the law. Hatred arises in their hearts as soon as the law is mentioned. They profess to believe that the law is abolished. But if the law is abolished, what is the standard by which we shall be judged before the judgment-seat of Christ? This work of belittling the law is the work of the great deceiver. If Satan can persuade men that the God of the universe has no law by which he governs them, then he can set up a standard of his own, and turn men into the path of transgression and destruction.

Sanctification is not the work of an hour, it is the result of the constant effort of a lifetime. We must fight the good fight of faith, struggle against the powers of darkness, resist evil, subdue the natural tendencies to sin, and by the grace of God perfect

holiness, and work out our own salvation. The nearer we come to Jesus and behold the purity and greatness of his character, the less we shall feel like exalting self. The contrast between our character and his will lead to humiliation of soul and deep heart-searching. We shall not desire to boast of our holiness; but the more we love Jesus, the more will self be forgotten and humbled. When our souls are filled with self-esteem and pride we cannot realize the need of divine power; but when we are aware of our own insufficiency our hearts cry out, "Other refuge have I none," and we hang our helpless souls upon Him who is mighty to save.

Our precious Saviour gave his life that fallen man might be saved. It was impossible for those who had once weakened themselves by transgression to fulfill the requirements of God; the consequence and penalty of sin was upon the race; but the Lamb of God paid the penalty of the past transgressions, and will impart to those who believe on him power to become the sons of God, power to obey the commandments of the law. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we may be conquerors in the battle with "the world, the flesh, and the devil." Jesus says, "Without me ye can do nothing;" we are dependent upon him for divine grace and help from day to day. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." But let no one think that because Christ has died for us we are released from all personal responsibility, that we need not be particular to obey his will, to glorify God or to honor the rule of his government. "Sin is the transgression of the law," and sin is very offensive in his sight. We must put it away if we would enter the city wherein is nothing that defileth.

A true appreciation of the plan of salvation will fill us with wonder and love. Our hearts will be so melted with the love that Jesus has manifested toward us, that we cannot be taken up with the affairs of this world. When Christ is abiding in the heart and we have a true conception of the sacrifice that he has made, we shall talk about it. We shall understand something of the perfection of the law that he came to magnify and make honorable. The privilege of obedience will seem precious and gracious to our souls. We shall take no delight in the teaching of those who seek to make of no effect the law of God. We want that intelligent faith that has the word of God as its foundation, that leads in the path of righteousness, and makes every step a step Heavenward. Everything that God could do has been done that we might obtain salvation from sin and destruction. Now it depends upon us whether or not we will accept of the conditions of his mercy and co-operate with his divine aid, and gain

eternal life.

"What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" The books of Heaven register everything just as it is. The angels make no mistakes. You cannot afford to speak evil of your brethren; this is not holy conversation. Whenever you are tempted to criticise and condemn others, close your lips, and lift up your heart in prayer to God that you may have power to resist and overcome. We have a great work to do to remove every defect of character and be a constant light to those around us, reflecting the character of Jesus, the light of the world. Those who are heads of families should do as did faithful Abraham. They should erect an altar to the Lord in their homes, and command their households after them, bringing up their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord. I have been very careful in the education of my children that there should be no element of unbelief woven into their early teaching. They have never heard one word of questioning or doubt in regard to the word of God, the plan of salvation, or the truth for this time. I have kept the Saviour before them. I have repeated the story of his life, pictured the scenes of his suffering, humiliation, crucifixion, and death. I have sought to impress them with the importance of faith and obedience. I have presented before them the mansions of Heaven, and the future immortal life. We should seek to make these themes attractive to our little ones.

You are to be holy in your conversation. Your homes should not be darkened by faultfinding and criticism. You must manifest love and kindness to those who are dependent upon you. You should not hold up the peculiarities of your neighbors and indulge in jealousies, evil surmisings, and evil-speaking. All your bitter speeches are registered in the books of Heaven, and you will have to meet them again, if you do not repent and put away the evil of your doings.

Christ identifies his interests with the interests of his brethren on the earth. He said to those on the left hand, "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." And they answered, "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?" And Christ declares, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." The persons that our Lord condemned were not aware that they had dealt unjustly with their brethren. Satan had so blinded their perceptions that they did not conceive what they owed to their brethren. They might

have understood their duty; the word of God was full of instruction on this very point; but instead of searching the Scriptures and doing according to the words of God, they were simply neglectful hearers. When you are tempted to find fault with your brethren, take your Bible and read what that says; for right in the church you are dealing with Christ in the person of his saints. You do not want to be among those who are blinded to the grievousness of their sin, and who when they are rebuked ask, "When saw we thee, thus?" They do not comprehend how they have mistreated their Lord. On the other hand, those who have fulfilled their obligations to their fellow-men are received into the favor of Heaven. Every word of love, every act of kindness--even the cup of cold water that has been given in the name of Christ--is recognized and rewarded.

Now let us seek Christ for ourselves, and find him precious to our souls. Let us minister to our brethren both in and out of the church. It is our privilege to be constantly strengthening those around us, and shedding an influence that will bless and elevate. Do not sow the seeds of envy, strife, and doubt. Let your conversation be holy before God. Seek in every way that you may grow up into a fit temple for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. You must be living stones, reflecting and emitting the light of Heaven. The truth of God has quarried you out of the world to be squared and hewed and fitted for the heavenly building. The robe of your character must be washed till it is spotless, in the fountain opened for all uncleanness. Your moral worth will be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, and if you are found wanting, you will be at an eternal loss. All the coarseness, all the roughness, must be removed from your character before Jesus comes; for when he comes, the preparation for every soul is ended. If you have not laid aside your envy, your jealousies, your hatred one against another, you cannot enter into the kingdom of God. You would only carry the same disposition with you; but there will be nothing of this character in the world to come. Nothing will exist there but love and joy and harmony. Some will have brighter crowns than others, but there will be no jealous thoughts in any heart among the redeemed. Each one will be perfectly satisfied, for all will be rewarded according to their work; for "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." Everyone will know that those who have been instrumental in winning souls to Jesus have engaged in the greatest work that ever employed the powers of man. Oh! shall we not bend every energy to this great and noble work, not seeking to destroy and tear down, but by every word and act, with all the tact and influence at our command, seek to save and build up others in the most holy faith?

"He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." We are approaching the time when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and we must make haste to depart from all iniquity, that our calling and election may be made sure. We are looking for new heavens and a new earth wherein the righteous shall dwell throughout eternity. "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

February 17, 1888

"Your Reasonable Service"

"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. 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."

In the time of ancient Israel the priests critically examined every offering that was brought as a sacrifice. If any defect was discovered in the animal presented for the service of the sanctuary, it was refused, for the Lord had commanded that the offering should be "without blemish." We are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God; and should we not seek to make the offering as perfect as possible? God has given us every instruction necessary for our physical, mental, and moral well-being, and it is the duty of every one of us to bring our habits of life into conformity with the divine standard, in every particular. Will the Lord be pleased with anything less than the best we can offer? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." If you do love him with all your heart, you will desire to give him the best service of your life, and you will be constantly seeking to bring every power of your being into harmony with the laws that will promote your ability to do his will. You will not feel satisfied to present to your merciful heavenly Father an offering enfeebled by indulgence of appetite and passion. You will plead for divine help and healing. And the grace of Christ will enable you to overcome your perverted appetites, and begin a work of reformation in your life. You are not to follow the customs of the world. "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."

Every faculty of our being was given us that we might render acceptable service to our Maker. When, through sin, we perverted the gifts of God, and sold our powers to the prince of darkness, Christ paid a ransom for us, even his own precious blood. "He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them." And shall we waste the energies that he has ransomed at such infinite cost, by disregarding the laws of life and morality?

Look at the world today. Misery and pain exist on every side; and the heart grows

sick, beholding the untold suffering of humanity. The dead and the dying are continually before our eyes; but we cannot charge this to our heavenly Father. Man has brought this upon himself through sinful disregard of the laws of God. The most reckless habits are formed and practiced by the world, in regard to eating, drinking, and dressing. Suffering, disease, and premature death follow in the train of lawless, inconsiderate customs. In these matters of vital importance, men and women follow their impulses, without consulting reason, or considering the experiences of others. What a perverted appetite may crave, that they must have. Whatever the fashion may be, that they must follow, no matter how disastrous the result; but God would have us live in accordance with law, so that, whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, we may glorify God and benefit our fellow-men.

If we are the servants of Christ, we must fight against the evils of this degenerate age. While lawlessness of all kinds is sweeping over our world like a flood, we must take a decided stand on the requirements of the Bible, or we shall be swept away into moral and physical ruin. We must have moral strength to place ourselves, with firm determination, in opposition to the iniquity that abounds, or we shall be overcome. It is our privilege to understand the laws of this wonderful structure, the human habitation, that God has given us. Mind and body should be preserved in the best possible state of health that we may take up our work in the world. I know that much can be done toward building up a good condition of health. I have had five shocks of paralysis, and God, in his mercy, has raised me up, to take my place in the work he has given me to do, and to try to benefit others by my experience. Light was given me, and I saw the reason for my feeble health. I was astonished that I had so long remained in ignorance in regard to the laws of life. My habits were out of harmony with the conditions that are necessary to health. My food had not been of a proper kind to give vitality and strength to the system. It was highly seasoned, and stimulating rather than nutritious. The physicians said that I might die at any time, and I resolved that if I died, I would die in attempting to correct my injurious habits of life. I resolved to place myself on a platform of strictest temperance. I did not use tea or coffee or any kind of intoxicating wine or liquor, so I did not have these habits to overcome; but I had used flesh and spices, eating hearty meals three times a day. I had to educate myself to enjoy the simple, healthful grains and fruits that God has provided for the wants of man. But I found that all the sacrifice I had to make was doubly repaid in renewed health of body and mind. I had used pepper and mustard in my diet; but these should not be put into the human stomach. The delicate membrane becomes inflamed, the healthy tone of the stomach is lowered, and

the appetite is perverted, the taste loses its discernment, and the delicious flavors of grains, vegetables, and fruits become insipid and unpalatable.

I see that in this country wine and beer, as well as tea and coffee, are placed upon your tables. Could you realize the injurious effects of these things, you would banish them from your board. Luxurious living and the use of wine and beer corrupt the blood, inflame the passions, produce disease, and hasten you to your graves. The faculties are benumbed. The moral perception is blunted, and the mind becomes incapable of distinguishing between right and wrong; the animal passions are strengthened, and gain supremacy over the intellectual and spiritual nature.

This fact is illustrated in the case of Nadab and Abihu. The Lord had kindled a sacred fire, from which the priests were to take coals, for the burning of incense before the Lord. They were not to use strange fire in the services of the sanctuary; but, under the effects of strong drink, the sons of Aaron lost all sense of sacred things. They kindled their incense from common fire, and disregarded the commandment of God. The Lord did not excuse their sin because they had unfitted themselves for their sacred duties by indulgence in drink. They were cut off from the congregation of Israel. God's dealing with these transgressors should be a warning to the children of men today. You are to offer to God a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable. As these intoxicants are used, the same effects will follow as in the case of these priests of Israel. The conscience will lose its sensibility to sin, and a process of hardening to iniquity will most certainly take place, till the common and the sacred will lose all difference of significance.

I have been invited here and there to come and take tea with certain families. I was glad to have an opportunity to talk with these friends; but I could not countenance their hurtful practice of tea-drinking, I could not partake of this beverage with them, or give my influence to encourage this unnecessary and injurious habit. After freely partaking, the effects of tea-drinking may be discovered. The face becomes flushed, the eyes brighten, a new vigor is manifested, and the mind seems unnaturally active. Tea is a stimulant, and its exhilarating effects are neither lasting nor beneficial. The same is true of coffee. I have heard people declare that they could not live without their coffee. They were languid and dispirited, and were unfit to take up the tasks of the day, but after they had had their coffee they felt revived and encouraged; but this feeling of strength was only due to the stimulant they had taken. They were, in reality, just as unfit for their tasks as before and had only spurred up their flagging energies. When the

influence of coffee had passed away, they were left as much in need of another cup as before they had taken the first cup.

We want a work of reformation in our land. There are thousands who can testify to the benefits of discarding these luxuries, and drinking from nature's pure fountain. Why should we go to China and Japan for the products of a backward civilization? Why not banish the narcotic bean and the poisonous herb, and come into harmony with the sanitary laws of the Bible? If we are pursuing a course of action that brings weakness upon us, how can we present to God a holy offering, a living sacrifice? We are required to love God with all our hearts and our neighbor as ourselves; but we are failing of this high requirement, if we are unfitting ourselves by hurtful habits for rendering acceptable service to our Maker and to our fellow-men. How can we think deeply and seriously on the plan of salvation, if our minds are clouded, our nerves unstrung, and our bodies full of pain and disease? If we are knowingly transgressing the laws of health, God cannot sustain and comfort us with his grace. This would only encourage us in wrong-doing. We must put our feet in the path of righteousness, and make all the efforts we can to walk uprightly, and then we may appropriate the rich promises, and we shall realize that we are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

We must be fitting up for the society of Heaven. We want to have a right to the tree of life. We want to enter that city where nothing that defileth shall ever come. Our characters must reach the standard of holiness. Every thought and habit must be brought into harmony with the will of God. Jesus came to our world to be our Saviour and example, and it is in his name alone, that we may gain the victory over perverted nature. He overcame in man's behalf, and through his grace we may become "partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." He "suffered, being tempted" for forty days, in the lonely wilderness, he endured fasting and temptation that man might have help to overcome the cravings of appetite, and live, not by bread alone, "but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He stood in his integrity, a conqueror, and through him the sons of Adam may also be overcomers. Those who put their energies against the sinful indulgence of appetite, will have his divine aid and sympathy, and "he that endureth unto the end shall be saved."

February 24, 1888

"The Light of Life"

The world's Redeemer said, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Those who will walk in the footsteps of the meek and lowly Jesus will be sensible that the light of life is illuminating their pathway. Said the prophet, "Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee." While the world is lying under the gross shadow of error, ignorance, superstition, and death, the follower of Jesus walks in an atmosphere radiant with spiritual light. As he draws away from the traditions and customs of the world, and lifts the cross, and enters the way of truth, he finds that "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Every step of faith and obedience brings him into closer connection with the light of the world, in whom "is no darkness at all."

The believer in Jesus has a right to expect a rich and abundant experience. It is his privilege, if he has complied with the conditions, to plead and claim the promises of God, and if he does this he will receive according to his faith. Paul writes of his desire that the brethren at Ephesus might come to understand the height of the Christian's privilege. He says, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in Heaven and earth is named, 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 5/dwell in your heart 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."

The apostle Paul had been greatly blessed. He had been caught up to the third Heaven, and had heard things not lawful for man to utter. He had been shown what abundance of blessing the Lord is willing to bestow upon those who love his service and keep his commandments. He knew what exalted privileges belong to the obedient children of God, and he earnestly desired that they might have the glorious promises

fulfilled in their experience. Amid the darkness of error, the delusions of Satan, the opposition of enemies, the trial and the conflict with principalities and powers, they were to be children of light. He opens before them in the most comprehensive language, the marvelous knowledge and power that they might possess as sons and daughters of the Most High. It was theirs to "be strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man," to be "rooted and grounded in love," to "comprehend what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge;" but the prayer of the apostle reaches the climax of privilege, when he prays that "ye might be filled with all the fullness of God."

Let us dwell upon this wonderful prayer, recorded that we may understand what heights of attainment we may reach, through faith in the promises of our heavenly Father, when we fulfill his requirements. Through the merits of Christ we have access to the throne of infinite power. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" The Father gave the Spirit without measure to his Son, and we also may partake of its fullness. Jesus says, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." The prayer of the apostle only reaches the exaltation of the promise.

How marvelous that humanity, an earthen vessel, can receive the treasure of the light and power of God; can be filled with the fullness of his grace! Jesus was anointed "with the Holy Ghost and with power," and he "went about doing good." This is the result of receiving the anointing of Heaven. If you are filled with the Holy Spirit you will work the works of Christ, you will seek the salvation of those around you, and "let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

Before his ascension, Jesus had promised the disciples that the Comforter should come. He said, "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." And on the day of Pentecost, "they were all with one accord in one place; and suddenly there came a sound from Heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." The baptism of the Holy Spirit

was essential for the success of the ministry in the early gospel age; but it is no less necessary in this age when "darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people." And the Lord has promised the same quickening spiritual power to his servants in these days. "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams."

Let us purify our souls by obeying the truth, lifting up "holy hands, without wrath and doubting," that we may obtain this heavenly gift, and realize, by a blessed experience, what is the meaning of the words of the apostle: "filled with all the fullness of God." There will be no question then but that you will "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." You will "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," knowing that "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." You must come closer to Jesus. There is a great work to be done in the world, and your influence is as far-reaching as eternity. You must be rooted and grounded in the truth. If Christ, the hope of glory, is in you, the light of Heaven will shine from you into the moral darkness of the world, and souls will be guided to the light of life. You will be a chosen vessel, through which God will make manifest the riches of his saving power. Christ will be in you "a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." You will be daily refreshed by the streams of his salvation, and you will be a source of refreshment to those around you, for from you will "flow rivers of living water." The beauty of holiness will be seen in your life, for the comeliness of Christ will be put upon you. You will be a light-bearer in the world. Nothing short of this will be consistent with your holy faith and exalted calling. Your example and influence must be wholly on the Lord's side. Our Master has said that "he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."

A formal religion, a feeble faith, does not correspond to the truth we profess. It demands living energy and fervency of spirit. It must be heart-felt with us, if we would urge it to the hearts of others. It must be cherished with intense love, if we would have others feel the sacredness and preciousness of its claims. All who would engage in the work of saving souls, must feel their dependence on God. The gifted and eloquent, if their talents are wholly devoted to God, may be used in the greatest work that ever engaged the powers of man; but those of less ability, if they are clothed with humility,

may become men of faith, and mighty in the Scriptures. He who is meek in spirit, who is purest and most child-like, will be made strong for the battle. He will "be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man." He who feels his weakness and wrestles with God, as did Jacob, and like this servant of old cries, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me," will go forth with the fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit. The atmosphere of Heaven will surround him. He will go about doing good. His influence will be a positive force acting upon others. He will be a living epistle, known and read of all men. He will know that the Captain of his salvation expects him to do his very best, and he will do it with cheerfulness.

There is no excuse for anyone growing weak, inefficient, and faithless. The promise is to us: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering." Are there not some of us too much like the man who came to the minister, complaining that he had not been blessed, that he felt no joy; God did not answer his prayers although he had prayed again and again for a blessing. "Well," said the minister, "let us kneel right down here and tell the Lord just how the matter stands." After both had prayed, the minister asked him if he felt better. The man answered, "I feel no better than I did before I prayed. I did not expect to be blessed, and I am not blessed." He had made a mockery of prayer. He did not believe the Lord would answer him, and he received just what his faith had claimed. Is it any wonder that such prayers are not answered? "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Do you consider this, when you offer up your faithless petitions? Do you stop to consider how you are dishonoring God, and impoverishing your own soul? If you could but realize the wrong you are doing, you would cease to make mockery by meaningless devotions.

Come to God in faith and humility. Plead with him till the break of day, if necessary, till your soul is brought into such close relationship with Jesus, that you can lay your burden at his feet, and say, "I know whom I have believed." The Lord is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Our cold, faithless hearts may be quickened into sensibility and life, till we can pray in faith, preach in faith, and say, "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God." Let us seek for the fullness of the salvation of Christ. Follow in the footsteps of the Son of God, for his promise is, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

March 2, 1888

An Immortal Name

The devoted children of God are not appreciated or valued by the world. The world did not value their divine Master. The beloved disciple writes, "Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." The Son of God made himself of no reputation. He was despised and rejected of men; and the servant is not greater than his lord. But while the world casts out the names of the sons of God, if they are humbly doing their appointed work they are winning an immortal name. They are not writing on sand, as are children of this world; but their names are traced in the Lamb's Book of Life for eternal remembrance.

The anxiety of the children of God is not that they may be highly esteemed by those around them, to have titles of honor and the praise of men; but that they may stand approved before Heaven, and be well pleasing to the Father and the Son. Their desire is to crowd all the good works possible, into their lives, to be a savor of Christ, to represent his character to the world, and thus honor and glorify the God of Heaven.

They are not unhappy because they are called upon to deny self and to work the works of Christ. They realize that the less of selfishness there is in the life, the more the joy of Heaven flows in. The Saviour prayed that his joy might be fulfilled in his disciples. The love of Jesus, expressed in every act of our lives, while it subdues self, will not fail to bring peace and songs of praise into our hearts. The meekness, forbearance, gentleness, and goodness of the true Christian sheds a radiance over all with whom he associates.

Those who come into sacred relation with the God of Heaven are not left to the natural weakness and infirmity of their natures. They are invited by the Saviour: "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me." The righteousness of Christ is imputed unto them, and he gives them power to become sons of God. The world loses all attraction for them; for they seek a better country, an eternal reward, a life that is to continue through never-ending ages. This is the theme of their thought and conversation. The word of God becomes exceedingly precious. They discern spiritual things. They rejoice in "that blessed hope, and the

glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." They long to see the King in his beauty, the angels that have never fallen, and the land of unfading bloom.

In the pathway of all who seek the crown, is the cross. If we would become partakers with Christ of his glory, we must be willing to share with him in his sufferings. If we would reflect his glorious image, we must be submissive to the divine moulding, we must follow in the footsteps of the Man of Calvary. God has claims upon every one of us. He created us, he redeemed us with an infinite sacrifice. He has promised the overcomer the great rewards of eternity. Why do we cling to anything that is offensive to him? Why not separate from every sin, and perfect holiness before him? The only reward for sin is unutterable woe and death; but the righteous shall be at his right hand in fullness of joy, in his presence where are pleasures forevermore.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." What a promise is this, that we may share in the glory of our Redeemer! The bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness shine upon the servants of God, and they are to reflect his rays. As the stars tell us that there is a great light in Heaven, with whose glory they are made bright, so Christians are to make it manifest that there is a God on the throne of the universe whose character is worthy of praise and imitation. As Christ is pure in his sphere, so man may be pure in his sphere. Those who have, by beholding, become changed into the moral image of Christ, will put on immortality and incorruption at his appearing, and will be caught up to be forever with the Lord.

All Heaven is interested in our salvation. The angels of God are walking up and down the streets of these cities, and marking the deeds of men. They record in the books of God's remembrance the words of faith, the acts of love, the humility of spirit; and in the day when every man's work shall be tried of what sort it is, the work of the humble follower of Christ will stand the test, and will receive the commendation of Heaven. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

We are too faithless. We do not take the promises of God, and drink in their rich meaning. We let doubt shut out the consolation of the assurances of God. Suppose that a man in this kingdom were condemned to death, but before the sentence was executed, a noble, who was able to free him, had compassion upon him, and he said, "I will die in his stead," and the fetters were removed, the prisoner went free, while the noble died.

What gratitude would awaken in the doomed man's heart! He would never forget his deliverer. The deed of the noble would be heralded to all parts of the world. This is what Jesus, the prince of Heaven, has done for us. When we were under the condemnation of death he came to rescue us, to set us free from the bondage of Satan, and to deliver us from everlasting death. With his own precious blood he paid the penalty of our transgression. Does not gratitude awaken in your hearts for this wonderful love? Is it not your determination to yield all you have and are to the service of such a Saviour? Will you not become a laborer together with God, seeking the salvation of those for whom Christ died?

You will lose nothing by connecting with the King of the universe. He "is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." He will welcome you to the home of the blest. There you will see that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "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." What greater evidence could we ask of the love of God than he has given? Let us dwell upon his rich promises, till our hearts are melted into tenderness and devotion.

Jesus invites you, in words that touch the heart with their compassionate love and pity. He says, "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." Have you experienced this blessed rest, or do you slight this invitation to make a confidant of Jesus? Do you pour out your trials and grievances into human ears? Do you go for help to those who cannot give you rest, and neglect the loving call of the mighty Saviour? Have faith in God. Believe in the precious promises. Go to Jesus in child-like simplicity, and say: "Lord, I have borne these burdens as long as I can, and now I lay them upon the Burden-bearer." Do not gather them up again, but leave them all with Jesus. Go away free, for Jesus has set you free. He said, "I will give you rest." Take him at his word. Instead of your own galling yoke of care, wear the yoke of Christ. He says, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Learn of him; for he is "meek and lowly of heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Fix your eyes upon Jesus. He is the light of the world, and he declares, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

You can show to the world that there is power in the religion of Christ. Jesus will help those who seek him with all their hearts, to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil. When you follow the light, walking in the path of truth, you will reflect the rays of glory, and be like a city set upon a hill that cannot be hid. When the books of remembrance are opened, your words, your deeds of love, will be acceptable before God; your robes, washed in the blood of the Lamb, will be spotless; the righteousness of Christ will be put upon you, and you will be given a new, an immortal name.

March 9, 1888

The Need of Humility

"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."

We are not charged with the task of exalting ourselves. We need not labor for the highest place in the estimation of others, or seek supremacy for our opinions in the counsels of our brethren. The task that God points out to us is that of self-humiliation. We are to "do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly" before God. We are not to encourage self-esteem and personal pride, nor to cherish the thought that we are not appreciated, and that our ability is under-estimated. It is our work to take up our duties, however lowly, and perform them with fidelity and courage, doing all things "heartily, as to the Lord."

We are the property of God; and shall we not be willing to stand in the lot that he assigns us, trusting his judgment, and gratefully accepting the privilege of becoming co-laborers with him in any part of his vineyard? If we are capable of a larger service, a more important work, the Lord knows all about it, and it is his work to lift us up. How thankful we should be that we are not burdened with the responsibility of estimating our own ability, and choosing our own place and position. It is our duty to exercise the talents that God has given us, and to study to show ourselves approved unto God, "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." Every duty should be done with faithfulness and care, and the smile of God will rest upon him who is "faithful in that which is least." Let the humble service be devoted to God, and in due time you will be made "ruler over many things." Give yourselves unreservedly to God, and trust in his love and wisdom to dispose of all your interests and affairs.

Says the apostle, "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." Oh that everyone who professes the name of Christ among us would heed the admonition and humble himself, take up every duty, and co-operate with Christ in the work of salvation. If this were done, we would not be complaining at the lack of

spirituality, for the showers of God's blessing would fall upon his church. All murmuring at the hardships of the way would be changed into songs of thanksgiving and praise to God; for he would lift you up according to his promise.

Cultivate the precious grace of humility. This will make you valuable in the sight of Heaven, for "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." Those who esteem themselves more highly than they should, make themselves a center of thought. They neglect their duty to their fellow-beings, for they do not cultivate that tender, caretaking spirit which should characterize the servant of Christ. All their care is spent upon the interests of self; but God would have us show thoughtful courtesy to others. We are not to set up our individual opinions as infallible. We are to respect the opinions of others. God would have us counsel together. We should be tractable, teachable, kind to each other, not striving which shall be esteemed as the greatest and have the highest honors.

Paul writes, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." It should be the constant effort of every disciple of the meek and lowly Jesus, to keep "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." It is the desire for the exaltation of self that brings discord and dissension among brethren. If all were "kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another," the peace of Christ would abide in our midst, and rule in our hearts.

Jesus, the precious Saviour, was the majesty of Heaven; but he came to our world and walked among the children of men, not as a king demanding homage, but as one whose work was to serve others. He estimated man by the price he paid for his redemption. He said, "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." His constant anxiety and care was not how he could obtain the services of men, but how he could aid and bless humanity. His heart had been touched with compassion for a fallen world, and he left the heavenly courts, clothed his divinity with humanity, made himself of no reputation, "took upon him the form of a servant," and "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," that we might be cleansed from sin, and share in his eternal glory. The cross of Christ puts to shame our selfish desires and ambitions, our strife for position and the honor of men. Jesus was "despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and

acquainted with grief;" and shall his followers expect to be exalted and favored? Christ is our example, and he says to every one of us, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." Have we learned this precious lesson in the school of Christ? If we have not, let it be our first work to seek the lowly spirit of Jesus; for we are unfit to become teachers of the truth until we have learned this first great principle of true religion: "Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all."

God forbid that any of us should be deceived. We must study the life of Christ, for by beholding we are to become changed. We must be like Christ or we shall never see him as he is. We must constantly abide in the Vine if we bring forth the fruits of righteousness. With living faith we must present our petitions to the compassionate Saviour, for "without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." We may lay hold on the arm of infinite strength, and draw from the source of infinite power. We must individually have more of the grace of Christ. We want to be settled, rooted and grounded in the faith. We are called upon to be bold, faithful soldiers of Jesus. We need not be weak and inefficient in the work of God. Every need has been provided for in the great gift of Heaven. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

There is need of elevating our thoughts to dwell upon the promises of God. There is need of encouraging our faith and hope by exercise. Lay your soul before your heavenly Father in all its weakness and want, and repeat the assurances of his word, and claim their fulfillment, not because you are worthy, but because Christ has died for you. Plead the merits of his blood and take the Lord at his word. We must learn the simple art of perfect trust; and we shall be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." Let nothing interpose between your soul and Christ. Let no darling sin be cherished. Present to God your whole body, soul, and spirit, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable.

When you are tempted to give expression to doubt, restrain your words. Educate your lips to speak the praise of your Creator and Redeemer. Praise belongeth unto God, for he is full of loving-kindness and tender mercy. Let not coldness and ingratitude bind your souls and keep you away from Christ, who is your only hope.

We must not allow self so much time and attention. We do not study the life of

our Example as we should. His life was one of continual self-denial, sacrifice, and cross-bearing, and shall we, the subjects of his grace, the objects of his great love, be found depressed and discouraged, because we have trials to meet, and sacrifices to make? Shall we go mourning and complaining because the road that leads to Heaven and eternal life, is strait and narrow? Jesus trod every step of the way before us, and shall we not gladly take up the cross, and say, "I will follow thee, my Saviour, wheresoe'er thou leadest me"?

If we were all walking in the footsteps of the Man of Calvary, our proud hearts would be subdued by the grace of Christ. There would be no contention existing among the brethren, but in lowliness of mind each would esteem others better than himself. Your love for one another would be expressed in words and acts of tenderness, and this cold hard-heartedness would be melted away by the love of Jesus. You would obey the injunction of the apostle, when he says, "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."

We are to be growing Christians, growing up in "the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." We are to be living stones in the temple of God; and now we must endure the hewing, the chiseling, the squaring of the Master-builder, until all roughness is removed, and our characters are polished and perfected for the heavenly building. There are many who claim to believe the truth, who are content with their defects of character. They do not make efforts to reform, or seek earnestly for a fitness to stand before God; but everyone who enters Heaven will enter as a conqueror, and will wave the palm branch of victory. There is no need of deficiency. Christ is a perfect Saviour, and those who seek him with their whole heart, will find that where sin abounded, grace shall much more abound. There is no reason why we should not be overcomers. God has "given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." We are not to live like the world. We must show that the grace of Christ has a sanctifying influence upon our lives. Our natural appetites and passions must be brought under the control of the Holy Spirit. We must reveal Christ in our daily words and actions. He bore reproach, insult, shame, mockery. He was rejected, maligned, crucified, that we might reflect his image, and be made perfect in his righteousness. When we fail to meditate upon the example of Christ, we do not comprehend its meaning, and we become sensitive, and

unwilling to endure hardness. We shrink from becoming partakers of his sufferings. We lose sight of the cross of Calvary, while self attracts our attention, and claims our care and affection.

Let us change our course of action. God's standard must be our standard, or we shall fail of everlasting life. We are still in the precious hours of probation, "and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins." He worked out the wonderful plan of redemption, and united fallen and finite man with the holy and infinite God. The world that Satan had claimed and ruled over with cruel tyranny, the Son of God, by one vast achievement, encircled in his love, and connected again with the throne of Jehovah. Cherubim and seraphim, and the unnumbered hosts of Heaven, sang anthems of praise to God and to the Lamb, when this triumph was assured. The worlds rejoiced that the way of salvation had been opened for rebellious man, and that earth would be redeemed from the curse of sin; and shall we, who are the objects of his unmerited favor, be unappreciative of the love of God? How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?

We are invited to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." We have an advocate with the Father, who pleads in our behalf with prevailing power. Christ's intercession is that of a pierced and broken body. It is the intercession of a spotless and victorious life, the pleading of all the wounds of Calvary. It is the intercession of our great High Priest, who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, who was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Let us then put away all self-exaltation. As long as the cross of Calvary stands as a monument of the cost of our salvation, as a reminder of the amazing love and humiliation of the King of glory, let us walk in its shadow, and seek to reflect the character of our Redeemer. Go to him as a perfect Saviour, for he has said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." There is no reason why we should seek to exalt ourselves, for we are full of weakness. As you realize this, trust in him whose grace is sufficient for you, for "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." Therefore "humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up;" for "whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted." Let self and self-interest be lost in the

great themes of redemption. "Show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." The Lord says, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God."

March 16, 1888

Acceptable Confession

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

The conditions of obtaining mercy of God are simple and just and reasonable. The Lord does not require us to do some grievous thing, in order that we may have the forgiveness of sin. We need not take long and wearisome pilgrimages, or perform painful penances to commend our souls to the God of Heaven, or to expiate our transgression; but he that confesseth and forsaketh his sin shall have mercy. This is a precious promise given to fallen man to encourage him to trust in the God of love, and to seek for eternal life in his kingdom.

We read that Daniel, the prophet of God, was a man "greatly beloved" of Heaven. He held a high position in the courts of Babylon, and served and honored God alike in prosperity or trial; and yet he humbled himself and confessed his sin, and the sin of his people. With deep sorrow of heart he acknowledged: "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. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee."

Daniel did not seek to excuse himself or his people before God; but in humility and contrition of soul he confessed the full extent and demerit of their transgressions, and vindicated God's dealings as just toward a nation that had set at naught his requirements and would not profit by his entreaties.

There is great need today of just such sincere heart-felt repentance and confession. Those who have not humbled their souls before God in acknowledging their guilt, have not yet fulfilled the first condition of acceptance. If we have not experienced

that repentance not to be repented of, and have not confessed our sin with true humiliation of soul and brokenness of spirit, abhorring our iniquity, we have never sought truly for the forgiveness of sin; and if we have never sought, we have never found the peace of God. The only reason why we may not have remission of sins that are past, is that we are not willing to humble our proud hearts, and comply with the conditions of the word of truth. There is explicit instruction given concerning this matter. Confession of sin, whether public or private, should be heart-felt and freely expressed. It is not to be urged from the sinner. It is not to be made in a flippant and careless way, or forced from those who have no realizing sense of the abhorrent character of sin. The confession that is mingled with tears and sorrow, that is the outpouring of the inmost soul, finds its way to the God of infinite pity. Says the psalmist, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."

There are too many confessions like Pharaoh when he was suffering the judgments of God. He acknowledged his sin, to escape further punishment, but returned to his defiance of Heaven as soon as the plagues were stayed. Balaam's confession was of a similar character. Terrified by the angel standing in his pathway with drawn sword, he acknowledged his guilt, lest he should lose his life. There was no genuine repentance for sin, no contrition, no conversion of purpose, no abhorrence of evil, and no worth or virtue in his confession. Judas Iscariot, after betraying his Lord, returned to the priests, exclaiming, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." But his confession was not of such a character as would commend him to the mercy of God. It was forced from his guilty soul by an awful sense of condemnation, and a fearful looking for of judgment. The consequences that were to result to him, drew forth this acknowledgement of his great sin. There was no deep, heart-breaking grief in his soul that he had delivered the Son of God to be mocked, scourged, and crucified, that he had betrayed the holy One of Israel into the hands of wicked and unscrupulous men. His confession was only prompted by a selfish and darkened heart.

After Adam and Eve had partaken of the forbidden fruit, they were filled with a sense of shame and terror. At first their only thought was, how to excuse their sin before God, and escape the dreaded sentence of death. When the Lord inquired concerning their sin, Adam replied, laying the guilt partly upon God, and partly upon his companion: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." The woman put the blame upon the serpent, saying, "The serpent beguiled

me, and I did eat." Why did you make the serpent? Why did you suffer him to come into Eden? These were the questions implied in her excuse for her sin, thus charging God with the responsibility of their fall. The spirit of self-justification originated in the father of lies, and has been exhibited by all the sons and daughters of Adam. Confessions of this order are not inspired by the divine Spirit, and will not be acceptable before Heaven. True repentance will lead men to bear their guilt themselves, and acknowledge it without deception or hypocrisy. Like the poor publican, not lifting up so much as their eyes unto heaven, they will smite upon their breast and cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and those who do acknowledge their guilt, will be justified; for Jesus will plead his blood in behalf of the repentant soul.

It is no degradation for man to bow down before his Maker and confess his sins and plead for forgiveness through the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour. It is noble to acknowledge your wrong before Him whom you have wounded by transgression and rebellion. It lifts you up before men and angels, for "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." But he who kneels before fallen man, and opens in confession the secret thoughts and imaginations of his heart, is dishonoring himself by debasing his manhood, and degrading every noble instinct of his soul. In unfolding the sins of his life to a priest corrupted with wine and licentiousness, his standard of character is lowered, and he is defiled in consequence. His thought of God is degraded to the likeness of sinful humanity; for the priest stands as a representative of God. It is this degrading confession of man to fallen man, that accounts for much of the increasing evil which is defiling the world, and fitting it for the final destruction.

There are confessions that the Lord has bidden us to make to one another, but they are of an entirely different order. If you have wronged your brother by word or deed, you are to "first be reconciled to thy brother," before your worship will be acceptable to Heaven. Says the apostle: "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." This scripture has been interpreted to sustain the practice of going to the priest for absolution, but it has no such application. Confess your sins to God who only can forgive them, and your faults one to another. If you have given offense to your friend or neighbor, you are to acknowledge your wrong, and it is his duty to freely forgive you. Then you are to seek the forgiveness of God, because the brother whom you wounded is the property of God, and in injuring him you sinned against his Creator and Redeemer. The case is not brought before the priest at all, but before the only true mediator, our great High Priest, who "was in all points tempted like

as we are, yet without sin," and who is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and is able to cleanse from every stain of iniquity.

When David sinned against Uriah and his wife, he pleaded before God for forgiveness. He declares: "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." All wrong done to others reaches back from the injured one to God. Therefore David seeks for pardon, not from a priest, but from the Creator of man. He prays: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions."

True confession is always of a specific character, and acknowledges particular sins. They may be of such a nature as only to be brought before God; they may be wrongs that should be confessed before individuals who have suffered injury through them; or they may be of a general kind that should be made known in the congregation of the people. But all confession should be definite, and to the point, acknowledging the very sins of which you have been reproved by the Spirit of God.

When Israel was oppressed by the Ammonites, the chosen people made a plea before God that illustrates the definite character of true confession: "And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim. And the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines? ... Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods; wherefore I will deliver you no more. Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation. And the children of Israel said, ... We have sinned; do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day." Then they began to act in harmony with their confessions and prayers. "They put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord." And the Lord's great heart of love was grieved, "was grieved for the misery of Israel."

Confession will not be acceptable to God without sincere repentance and reformation. There must be decided changes in the life; everything offensive to God must be put away. This will be the result of genuine sorrow for sin. Says Paul, speaking of the work of repentance: "Ye sorrowed after a goodly [godly] sort; what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have

approved yourselves to be clear in this matter."

In the days of Samuel, the Israelites wandered from God. They were suffering the consequences of sin, for they had lost their faith in God, lost their discernment of his power and wisdom to rule the nation, lost their confidence in his ability to defend and vindicate his cause. They turned from the great Ruler of the universe, and desired to be governed as were the nations around them. Before they found peace they made this definite confession: "We have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king." The very sin of which they were convicted, had to be confessed. Their ingratitude pressed their souls and severed them from God.

When sin has deadened the moral perceptions, the wrong-doer does not discern the defects of his character, nor realize the enormity of the evil he has committed; and unless he yields to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, he remains in partial blindness to his sin. His confessions are not sincere and in earnest. To every acknowledgment of his guilt, he adds an apology in excuse of his course, declaring that, if it had not been for certain circumstances, he would not have done this or that, for which he is reprovved. But the examples in God's word of genuine repentance and humiliation reveal a spirit of confession in which there is no excuse for sin, nor attempts at self-justification.

Paul did not seek to shield himself; he paints his sin in the darkest shades, aggravating rather than lessening his guilt. He said: "Many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities." He did not hesitate to declare that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

The humble and broken heart, subdued by genuine repentance, will appreciate something of the love of God, and the cost of Calvary; and as a son confesses to a loving father, so will the truly penitent bring all his sins before God. And it is written, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

March 23, 1888

"Abide in Me"

The apostle Paul wrote: "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me;" and Jesus, instructing his disciples, said: "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."

It is impossible for any of us to have a practical knowledge of this union with Christ, without the constant exercise of faith. Faith binds our souls to him, and makes us partakers of the divine nature. Our spiritual growth, our peace, our steadfastness, our constant obedience to the words of Christ, all depend upon the degree of faith we have in God. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him;" for we are powerless to do anything from acceptable motives, except through the grace of Christ, and this grace can be supplied only through the channel of faith, that opens the way of direct communication between our souls and God. In accordance with our faith, we are enabled to overcome principalities, and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. Selfishness will not be permitted to flourish in the heart that is exercising living faith. Sin will not be indulged where faith beholds God and angels watching the development of character, and weighing moral worth. Eternal life, the gift of God through Jesus Christ, is a precious reality, and sin becomes exceeding sinful and abhorrent. Faith beholds "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," and realizes something of the cost of Calvary.

Jesus came into the world to save sinners, not in their sins but from their sins, and to sanctify them through the truth; and in order that he may become a perfect Saviour to us, we must enter into union with him by a personal act of faith. Christ has chosen us, we have chosen him, and by this choice we become united to him, and are to live from henceforth, not unto ourselves, but unto him who has died for us. But this union can only be preserved by constant watchfulness, lest we fall into temptation, and make a different choice; for we are free always to take another master if we so desire. Union with Christ means an unflinching preference for him in every act and thought of our lives. In every part of the work there must be harmony between the Saviour and the one to be saved. Faith will see love in every requirement of God, and will submit to the will of

Heaven, knowing that "all things work together for good to them that love God." We must have this perfect trust, if we become united with Christ, and share at last with him in his glory.

Christ will be constantly laboring for your salvation. Angels will be commissioned to guard you from the devices of the adversary, and to minister to all your needs. And the object of all this abundant solicitude must, on his part, depart from all iniquity, and perfect holiness in the fear of God. He must watch and pray. He must fight the good fight of faith, resist the devil that he may flee from him, and endure hardness as a good soldier of the cross of Christ. He has to wage a constant conflict with unseen foes, and only through Christ can he come off victorious. He must cultivate courage to surmount the difficulties obstructing his pathway, and build up a character of integrity and virtue, representing to the world the character of his Redeemer.

"Abide in me," are words of great significance. Abiding in Christ means a living, earnest, refreshing faith that works by love and purifies the soul. It means a constant receiving of the Spirit of Christ, a life of unreserved surrender to his service. Where this union exists good works will appear. The life of the vine will manifest itself in fragrant fruit on the branches. The continual supply of the grace of Christ will bless you and make you a blessing, till you can say with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

The sacred union with Christ will unite the brethren in the most endearing bonds of Christian fellowship. Their hearts will be touched with divine compassion one for another. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him." Coldness, variance, strife, is entirely out of place among the disciples of Christ. They have accepted the one faith. They have joined to serve the one Lord, to endure in the same warfare, to strive for the same object, and to triumph in the same cause. They have been bought with the same precious blood, and have gone forth to preach the same message of salvation; and how out of harmony with these facts is disunion and contention among brethren. "This is my commandment," said Jesus, "that ye love one another, as I have loved you."

Those who are constantly drawing strength from Christ will possess his Spirit. They will not be careless in word or deportment. An abiding sense of how much their

salvation has cost in the sacrifice of the beloved Son of God, will rest upon their souls. Like a fresh and vivid transaction, the scenes of Calvary will present themselves to their minds, and their hearts will be subdued and made tender by this wonderful manifestation of the love of Christ to them. They will look upon others as the purchase of his precious blood, and those who are united with him will seem noble, and elevated, and sacred, because of this connection. The death of Christ on Calvary should lead us to estimate souls as he did. His love has magnified the value of every man, woman, and child. And if "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life," should we be indifferent to others, and despise those whom God has valued at such an infinite price? Without the endowment of the holy Spirit of God, we are not fitted to engage in the great and solemn work for this time. When we have the love for souls that Christ had, we shall go forth with weeping, we shall become laborers together with God, we shall gather with Christ, and bear precious fruit unto everlasting life. When we consider that all Heaven is interested in the work of salvation, should we not seek by meditation and prayer to appreciate more intelligently the sacred character of our trusts? How can we, poor, fallible, fallen creatures, undertake this work without the special help and enlightenment of the Spirit of God?

Let God be your counselor. Let the heart in humility and meekness ascend to God in fervent, effectual prayer for spiritual discernment, for breadth of mind, and singleness of purpose to glorify God and save man. Let prayer constantly go forth from unfeigned lips for the presence of Christ, for the illumination of his Spirit, that the atmosphere of Heaven may surround you, and that self and selfish purposes may not have their way in your life. The Lord will draw nigh to those who sincerely desire to draw nigh to him.

We are living in a solemn day, and we are exhorted to "be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." Let every soul remember that he is in the presence of the Judge of all the earth, and that "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." Our words, our plans, our meditations, the motives of our hearts, are read as an open book. The case of every individual worker is registered in Heaven. Let us consider this. Do we want our light and frivolous remarks heard in the presence of angels and before God? Do we want the words of pride, that exhibit self, left on the books to condemn us in the Judgment? Do we want

our plans for self-exaltation written in the unerring records? Let us ever remember that the Lord, who gave his life for us, is watching with intense interest our course of life, and that angels are witnessing our ways. Seek that singleness of purpose that will lead us to glorify God, and not self. Oh, that each might say when tempted, as did our Lord, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." We want to uproot from our hearts every plant that our heavenly Father has not planted, that we may not be led to utter selfish and perverse things. Oh, for more of Christ, and less of self! Oh, that the workers might be clothed with the armor of his righteousness, that they might be constantly drawing from the well of salvation, partaking of the divine nature, that they might go forth spiritual laborers, with self lost in our divine Lord.

Our standard is altogether too low. We must put away these cheap ideas of what is essential to make us laborers in the cause of Christ. We must have altogether higher views of the elevated character of our work. We want to work in the spirit in which Christ labored. We want to represent him to the world. We need to greatly humble our souls before God by confessing and forsaking our sins.

When Jesus was teaching his disciples, as they gathered closely about him, there was a moment's interruption, and one said unto him: "Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." Here is the relationship that exists between Christ and his followers. We occupy this exalted position, if we are indeed doing the will of God. We are to consider ourselves as constituting the family of Christ, and we are to follow him as dear children. Adopted into the household of God, shall we not honor our Father and our kindred? We have no excuse to plead, for through Jesus we may command all power in Heaven and earth that we may walk worthy of our high calling.

Satan will be constantly seeking to belittle our conception or our privileges and responsibilities. He would have us regard the work of Christ as a commonplace work, and do it listlessly and negligently. He would keep us indifferent to the exalted and sacred positions to be attained in Christian life and character; but we must bruise him under our feet. We must establish an unyielding enmity between our souls and our foe; but we must open our hearts to the power and influence of the Holy Spirit. We want

Satan's darkness to be shut out, and the light of Heaven to flow in. We want to become so sensitive to holy influences, that the lightest whisper of Jesus will move our souls, till he is in us, and we in him, living by the faith of the Son of God.

We need to be refined, cleansed from all earthliness, till we reflect the image of our Saviour, and become "partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." Then we shall delight to do the will of God, and Christ can own us before the Father and before the holy angels as those who abide in him, and he will not be ashamed to call us brethren. But we shall not boast of our holiness. As we have clearer views of Christ's spotless and infinite purity, we shall feel as did Daniel, when he beheld the glory of the Lord, and said, "My comeliness was turned in me into corruption." We cannot say, "I am sinless," till this vile body is changed and fashioned like unto His glorious body. But if we constantly seek to follow Jesus, the blessed hope is ours of standing before the throne of God without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; complete in Christ, robed in his righteousness and perfection.

March 30, 1888

Faith and Works

The tendency of the popular religious teaching of the day is to make the Christian's pathway as easy and attractive as possible. There is a great deal said concerning faith, but the necessity of performing the sacred obligations set forth in the word of God, the necessity of living consistent, godly lives, of being workers together with God, of denying self, of coming out from the world and separating from its fashions and follies, is not presented as it should be presented, from the pulpits of the land. "Believe, only believe," is the burden of the instruction from the sacred desk. Repentance, confession, and thorough reformation in life and character are not dwelt on, or required from those who would take part in the privileges of church-fellowship. The line of distinction between the church and the world has become less positive, because the great standard of righteousness has not been the standard by which the faith of men and women was tested and proven. "Only believe" is echoed by thousands who catch up the words parrot-fashion, and repeat them with no sense of their importance or significance. Says the prophet, "They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace."

Many of these religious teachers have developed characters in harmony with their shallow appreciation of divine truth. It has been agreeable to their carnal hearts to be released from all responsibility and obligation. They did not desire the inconvenience of denying self, of taking up the warfare against besetting sins, and of correcting the defects that marred their characters. They have persuaded themselves that Christ has relieved them from the duty of purifying themselves even as he is pure. They declare that Christ has done all, that men have nothing to do but to believe, that good works are impossible and unnecessary. Such souls are deceived themselves and are agents used of Satan to deceive others. They do not believe in Jesus. If they had a connection with him, they would know that he is not the minister of sin. Those who have faith in the Son of God make manifest what is the character of his mission, by lives of devotion, integrity, and self-sacrifice, and prove to the world that he came, not to save men in their sins, but from their sins. He "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

The apostle Paul realized what his words meant when he said, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." He knew it meant the surrender of every power of his being to the service of God. It meant an entire renouncing of the world, the flesh, and the devil. It meant that he must follow in the blood-stained path of the Man of Calvary, and walk even as he walked.

How different is the faith that is presented to the world today as essential to salvation. It has no vitality, no reality. It does not unite the believers as branches to the living Vine. It is not the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. It is a formal, nominal acceptance of a popular story, and has about as much efficacy as the faith that accepted Abraham Lincoln as a good administrator of governmental affairs. Genuine faith will show definite results in the character, and will exert a controlling influence over the thoughts of the heart, and the affairs of the life. It will lead its possessor to practice the principles of his belief. Says Jesus, "Not everyone 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." "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock." Says the apostle, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." It is the doing of the words and works of Christ that testifies to the saving qualities of your faith.

The law of God is the great standard of righteousness, and it will measure every man's profession and progress. It is a mirror which discovers the defects of our characters, and shows us the requirements of God. It is holy and just and good. Says the wise man, "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." When Jesus was asked by the lawyer, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? he said unto him, What saith the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, 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. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live."

The law of God condemns all selfishness, all pride of heart, every species of dishonesty, every secret or open transgression. The natural heart is not inclined to love its precepts, or obey its requirements. "It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." But genuine faith in Christ converts the heart, works a change in its attitude to

the law, until it delights in the law of God. The man who manifests enmity to the law has not submitted to the converting power of God. It is the keeping of the commandments that proves the sincerity of our professions of love. Says John, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." Satan is engaged in leading men to pervert the plain meaning of God's word. He desires that the world should have no clear idea in regard to the plan of salvation. He well knows that the object of Christ's life of obedience, the object of his suffering, trial, and death upon the cross, was to magnify the divine law, to become a substitute for guilty man, that he might have remission for sins that are past, and grace for future obedience; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in him--and he be transformed and fitted for the heavenly courts. Satan knows that no transgressor of the divine law will ever enter the kingdom of Heaven, and to rob God of the devotion and service of man, to thwart the plan of salvation, and work the ruin of those for whom Christ died, is the motive that actuates his warfare against the law of Heaven. He caused the fall of the holy pair in Eden by leading them to lightly esteem the commandment of God, to think his requirements unjust, and unreasonable, that they were not binding, and that their transgression would not be visited, as God had said, with death.

The law of God is the foundation of his Government in Heaven and in earth, and as long as the follower of Jesus imitates his Lord by exalting the divine precepts in word and life, Satan has no power to deceive or mislead his soul.

The fatal deception of the religious world is the old disregard for the claims of the law of God. The desire for an easy religion that requires no striving, no self-denial, no divorce from the follies of the world, has made the doctrine of faith, and faith only, a popular doctrine; but we must sound a note of warning. What saith the word of God? Says the apostle James, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? ... Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well; the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."

The testimony of the word of God is against this ensnaring doctrine of faith without works. It is not faith that claims the favor of Heaven without complying with the conditions upon which mercy is to be granted; it is presumption; for genuine faith has its foundation in the promises and provisions of the Scriptures.

The Jews had faith of a similar character to that of many professed Christians today. They believed the prophecies predicting the advent of Messiah; but their faith was not of that spiritual nature which discerned in the Son of God the Saviour of their expectations. They could not accept the work of God for their time, and they rejected the truth because their faith did not see the relation of the shadow to the substance. They clung tenaciously to the offering of their sacrifices, to the rites of the church and the traditions of the fathers; but they refused the Lamb of God, the great antitype of all the services of the past. They were very zealous for the observance of form, and claimed to trust in Moses and the prophets; but he who had inspired the words of the Scriptures, and whose life was the fulfillment of their prophecies, was a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense. He did not meet their ideal of what the coming One should be. They had imagined a Messiah whose power and majesty would gratify the pride of their carnal hearts, and exalt them to a position of supreme power among the nations. When Jesus unfolded to them the character of his kingdom, and what his disciples must possess in order to be elect, and favored of God, they said, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?"

The Saviour was invested with the credentials of Heaven. The word of God sustained his claims. His miracles, his holy character, his power over men and devils, all spoke conviction to the hearts of his hearers; but they refused him. He came in accordance with the prophecies they professed to believe, but he was "despised and rejected of men," as the prophets had foretold he would be.

The Jews could not give up their dreams of a great Prince who would rule all nations. They could not relinquish their hopes of temporal power and glory to take up with the Man of Sorrows, to follow in his steps of self-denial and purity. They loved darkness rather than light and the errors they loved wrought out their destruction.

There is no need of any soul being deceived. The teaching of priest and rabbi cannot make the word of God of no authority. It is the duty of each man to know what the Scriptures teach and to take his position in harmony with the truth. The Lord has

commanded us to "search the Scriptures." We are instructed to "prove all things," to "hold fast that which is good." God has given us an unfailing test to apply to every man's life and doctrine. Says the prophet, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." We are not to live by the doctrines of men, not by a fragment, or a perversion of the truth; but by "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Genuine faith will lead men to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. They will not follow the course of this world. The Spirit and works of Christ will be manifested in their lives and the word of God will be made the rule of their action. They will do and teach the commandments of God, and will walk humbly before men and angels. They will discern the work of God in the earth, and prejudice will not be permitted to close their hearts against the truth for their time. They will strive to enter in at the strait gate, they will take the narrow way and follow the Redeemer of the world.

Those who are not "doers of the word" may boast of their empty faith. They may boast of their holiness, while trampling on the law of God; but Jesus says to them, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" and the final sentence will come, "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." For "faith without works is dead."

April 6, 1888

The Sin of Eli

Eli was priest and judge in Israel. He held the highest and most responsible positions among the people of God. He had been appointed to govern the nation, and to minister in their behalf before God. As a man divinely chosen for the sacred duties of the priesthood, and set over the land as the highest judicial authority, he was looked up to as an example, and he wielded a great influence over the tribes of Israel. But although Eli was appointed to govern the people, he did not control his own family, or rule his own household. Eli was an indulgent father. Loving peace and ease, he did not exercise his authority to correct the evil habits and passions of his children. Rather than contend with them or punish them, he would submit to their will, and give them their own way. Instead of regarding the education of his sons as one of the most important of his responsibilities, he treated the matter as of little consequence. The development of their character was of the greatest importance, and God held Eli accountable for the way in which he allowed his sons to exercise the evil propensities of their nature. The priest and judge of Israel had not been left in darkness as to the duty of the father to restrain and govern the children that God had given to his care. But Eli shrank from this duty, because it involved crossing the will of his sons, and would make it necessary to punish and deny them. Without weighing the terrible consequences that would follow his course, Eli indulged his children in whatever they desired, and neglected the solemn and sacred work of fitting them for the service of God, and the duties of life.

The course of Abraham is a complete contrast to that of Eli. "I know him," said the Searcher of hearts, "that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." There would be no betraying of his sacred trust; no sinful neglect to restrain the evil propensities of his children; no weak, unwise, indulgent favoritism; no yielding of his conviction of duty to the clamors of affection. Abraham's love for his children would lead him to correct his household, at whatever cost, for the good of their souls, and the honor of God. He was diligent in the cultivation of home religion, for he well knew that the blessing of Heaven rested on the habitation of the righteous. He determined that the law of God should be kept in his household, and he was called the "friend of God" and honored by God as the "father of the faithful."

Had Eli but followed his example, great and disastrous evils would have been avoided, and the blessing of God would have rested upon him and his house forever. God had said of Abraham, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him" "to do justice and judgment." But Eli allowed his children to control him. The family government was reversed. The father became subject to the children. There is no greater curse upon households than to allow the youth to have their own way. When parents regard every wish of their offspring, and indulge them in what they know is not for their good, the children soon lose all respect for their parents, all regard for the authority of God or man, and they are led captive at the will of Satan. Many an indulgent father or mother has reaped a harvest of sorrow from their own loose and careless government of their households, and they have regretted, too late, that they did not restrain their children in their youth.

Eli failed where many are failing today. He neglected to honor God in his family life, to teach his sons to reverence and obey God; and the consequence of this neglect was apparent throughout all the life of his sons. When the work of disciplining and training the children is not properly done, it testifies against the parents in the defective character of their sons and daughters, and will produce evil results, not only in their lives, but in the lives of others. The influence of an ill-regulated family is widespread and disastrous to all society. It accumulates in a tide of evil that affects families, communities, and governments.

Because of Eli's position, his influence was more extended than if he had been an ordinary man. His family life was imitated throughout Israel. The baneful results of his negligent, ease-loving ways were seen in the families that surrounded him. His evil ways were reflected in thousands of homes that were moulded by his example. If children are indulged in evil practices, while the parents make a profession of religion, the truth of God is brought into reproach. The character formed under the influence of the home is the best testimony to its Christianity. Actions speak louder than the most positive profession of godliness. If professors of religion, instead of putting forth earnest, persistent, and painstaking effort to bring up a well-ordered household as a witness to the benefits of faith in God, are lax in their government, sparing of themselves, and indulgent to the evil desires of their children, they are doing as did Eli, and are bringing disgrace on the cause of Christ, and ruin upon themselves and their households.

Eli did not manage his household according to God's rules for family government. He followed his own judgment. He allowed Satan to take the reins in his own hands; and Eli found, when too late, that his children had been hurried to destruction. The favor of God was removed from his house and the curse of transgression was apparent in the corruption and evil that marked the course of his sons. They had no proper appreciation of the character of God or of the sacredness of his law. His service was to them a common thing. From childhood they had been accustomed to the sanctuary and its service, but instead of growing in reverence, they had lost all sense of its holiness and significance. The course of Eli in bringing up his children had resulted in this state of mind in his sons. The father had not corrected the irreverence for his authority, had not checked their disrespect for the solemn services of the sanctuary; and when they reached manhood, they were full of the deadly fruits of skepticism and rebellion.

Though wholly unfit for the office, they were placed as priests in the sanctuary to minister before God. The Lord had given the most specific directions in regard to offering sacrifices; but these wicked men had carried their disregard of authority into the service of God, and they did not give attention to the law of the offerings, which were to be made in the most solemn manner. The sins of the people were transferred by figure to the sacrifice, which represented Christ, the Lamb of God that was to die for the sins of the world. The priests were commanded to eat in the tabernacle of certain portions of the peace-offering. By partaking of the sacrifice, and bearing their sins before God, they represented the work that Christ would do for us in the heavenly sanctuary, by bearing our sins in his own body. The sons of Eli, instead of feeling the great solemnity of this service, only thought how they could gratify appetite, and they demanded of the people whatever part they desired, even taking by violence the portion that was to be consumed upon the altar of sacrifice as a type of the great sacrifice of the Son of God on Calvary. This irreverence on the part of the priests soon robbed the offerings of their holy and solemn significance, and the people "abhorred the offering of the Lord." The great antitypical sacrifice to which they were to look forward, was no longer a thing of meaning to them, "wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord."

Eli made a great mistake in permitting his sons to minister in holy office. By excusing their course, on one pretext and another, he became blinded to their sins, but at

last they reached a pass when he could no longer hide his eyes from the crimes of his sons. The people complained of their violent deeds, and he was grieved and perplexed. The indulgent father had never decidedly commanded their obedience, and as they grew up, they cast off all restraint. They had been brought up to think of no one but themselves, and now they cared for no one else. They saw the grief of their father, but their hard hearts were not touched. They heard his mild admonitions, but they were not impressed, nor would they change their evil course though warned of the consequences of their sin.

The child Samuel had been brought to Eli by the godly Hannah. He was to be devoted to the services of the sanctuary, and the responsibility of his education must now rest upon the aged priest. The sons of Eli, who should have been the instructors of the pious child, were wholly unfit for such a privilege. He had to be separated from their company, lest their evil influence should pollute his mind. But although Eli feared for their influence over Samuel, yet as a judge of Israel, he still sustained his wicked sons in the most sacred positions of trust. He permitted them to mingle their corruption with the holy service of God, and to inflict injury on the cause of truth, that years could not efface. Eli's sons were called the sons of Belial, for they knew not God. They were wholly devoted to the service of Satan; and yet because they were his sons, Eli did not deal with them as transgressors, but permitted them to dishonor God, and injure his people. But when the judge of Israel neglected his work, God took the matter in hand.

"And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house? and did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? and did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel? Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded in my habitation; and honorest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people? Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me forever; but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed... And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind; and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed forever."

God held Eli responsible for the actions of his sons, and charged him with honoring his sons above the Lord. Eli had permitted the offering appointed of God, as a blessing to Israel, to be made a thing of abhorrence, rather than bring his sons to shame for their impious and abominable practices. Those who follow their own inclination in blind affection for their children, indulging them in the gratifications of their selfish desires, and do not bring to bear the authority of God to rebuke sin and correct evil, which is corrupting other souls, make it manifest that they are honoring their wicked children more than they honor God. They are more anxious to shield their reputation than to glorify God; more desirous to please their children than to please God and to keep his service from every appearance of evil.

The promise had been made that the house of Aaron should walk before God forever; but these promises had been made on condition that they devoted themselves to the work of the sanctuary with singleness of heart, and honored God in all their ways, not serving self, or following their own perverse inclinations. Eli and his sons had been tested, and the Lord found them wholly unworthy of the exalted position of priests in his service. And God declared, "Be it far from me." He could not carry out the good that he had meant to do them, because they failed to do their part. Long had God borne with the perverse ways of the house of Eli. He had given them space to repent, but they repented not, and the delayed sentence was finally executed. They were made contemptible before the people they had oppressed, and in one day, Eli and his sons died before the Lord; and the priesthood was taken from the family of Eli.

The only way to be truly great is to be truly good. Those who are worthy will be trusted with important work, and will be placed in important positions. "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." Had Eli been a wise and faithful father, he would have been a wise and faithful judge and priest. If he had restrained his sons at home, he would have restrained their evil practices in the sanctuary; and Israel would not have been corrupted by their abominations. If the sons of Eli had been dutiful sons they would have honored God and his service, and lived before him; but they dishonored their father, and brought contempt upon the service of God, and they suffered the reward of their evil; for God had said, "Them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

April 13, 1888

Sanctification

There are many souls who are building their hopes for eternity upon the sands of error. The word of God, "which liveth and abideth forever," is not made the rock of their salvation; but the words of man, theories that exalt humanity and please the carnal heart, are chosen instead of the doctrines of the Bible. It is a design of Satan to allure men from the truth, by leading them to accept its counterfeit; and in the doctrine of sanctification, so prevalent among those who reject the law of God, he has accomplished his work of deception in a most delusive and enchanting way.

Jesus prayed that his disciples might be sanctified through the truth; and he added, "Thy word is truth." The agent in the sanctification which our Lord desired for his followers, was the word of God. But the sanctification so popular today is independent of the truth; for men refuse to employ the word of God where it does not support their opinions and experience. Those who profess this sanctification have clothed themselves in an impregnable armor, whereby they ward off every arrow of truth that would wound their self-righteousness, and make them feel the need of a physician to heal them.

In the town of L. special efforts were made to arouse men to a realizing sense of the claims of the law of God. With open Bibles, the people examined the Scriptures for themselves, searching for the truth as for hid treasures. In reading the plain "thus saith the Lord," many became interested as never before in the word of God. They saw wondrous things out of the law, and some were taking their stand to be "doers of the word." But at this time a minister who professed sanctification, became alarmed lest some of the members of his church should see the claims of the truth, and he strove to make of none effect the commandment of God. He boastingly declared that he was sanctified, sinless, holy; and further stated that he could not sin. Says John, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law;" but this man openly avowed that no one could keep the law, and that obedience to it was not required of those who believed in Jesus. Did this sanctification stand the test of the word of truth?

Paul had faith in Jesus, but he did not claim that faith made the law of none effect. He says, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." When this man was invited to examine the Scripture evidences as to the requirements of God, he refused to read or to reason on the matter; but the more vehemently urged his claim to holiness and inspiration.

This sanctification we have no hesitancy to declare unscriptural, unsound, and presumptuous. A profession of holiness, while the law of Heaven is derided and transgressed, shows that a false standard of righteousness has taken the place of the holy precepts of God. Many who profess so great attainments in the Christian life, grow impatient and angry when the claims of God are presented, and they refuse to hear the word of truth. Says the word of God, "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." If the minister at L. had had a genuine experience in the things of God, he would have manifested the meek and lowly spirit of Christ; he would have acknowledged his finite and fallible nature, and would have humbly tested his experience by the word of God. His positive utterances against the truth did much toward quieting the aroused consciences of those who were hesitating in regard to the commandment of God, and, through his influence, many souls turned back into the paths of transgression and darkness. Men are greatly influenced by what their minister says; but should we not prove the truth of their assertions by the test that God has given for this very purpose? Says the Lord: "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Our Saviour warned his followers to "beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits." We are not bidden to prove them by their fair speeches and exalted professions. They are to be judged by the word of God. The true disciples of Christ will bear the divine impress. Their teaching will be in harmony with the teaching of the Son of God. Their character will be moulded after the great pattern. What message do they bring? Does it lead you to reverence and fear God? Does it lead you to manifest your love for him by loyalty to his commandments? If they tell you that they are not concerned about teaching or observing the law, be afraid of them, even though they heal the sick and cast out devils. They are doing the very work that originated with the prince of darkness, the enemy of God. The beginning of all the sin and woe and death that have deluged our earth, was this very disregard for the plain commandment of God.

This doctrine of sanctification in which the law of God has no part, is not of

Heaven but of Satan, who was a liar from the beginning and "abode not in the truth." It is Satan's policy to appear before the world in the garments of an angel of light. It is he who weaves these deceptive doctrines that our Saviour represents as "sheep's clothing."

Those who are used as agents of Satan have an appearance of sanctity; and nothing but the law of God, which is a discerner of the thoughts of the heart, can discover of what spirit they are, and in whose cause they are engaged; but why not employ this unfailing test in proving every man's teaching and spirit. There is no need of being deceived, for the word of God is truth, and God has promised to give to those who desire truth, the Spirit of truth, that they may be guided into all truth. Let us seek earnestly for wisdom, and divine enlightenment, that we may know the truth, and be instrumental in God's hands of rescuing men and women from the snares of the evil one.

In the day of God's wrath many will discover, too late, that while professing holiness they were led into forbidden paths by not humbly obeying the commandments of Jehovah. Says Jesus: "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." And the working of iniquity is the transgression of the law. John, the beloved disciple, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, has given repeated tests to prove the truth of our experiences. He says: "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 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." Jesus plainly declared, "I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love." John continues: "Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning."

There are many today who seek to prove that the law of God was abolished at the cross with the abolishment of the sacrificial services of the Jewish dispensation; but the words of John, penned many years this side of the crucifixion, show that the commandments of God were not done away, but are the standard of Christian character by which we are to be judged, and by which we are to fashion our lives if we would enter into the kingdom of Heaven.

The bitterness of spirit manifested against the law of God, by many of those who claim to be sanctified, makes it manifest that they are disloyal to God, and corrupters of the doctrine of Christ. When the binding claims of the fourth commandment are presented, they bend their utmost efforts to make of none effect the requirement of God's law. They hold to their own tradition and opinion, no matter what may be the conclusion of the word of God. Jesus declares of this class, "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."

If we reject the word of the Bible, there is no power or manifestation that will induce us to accept the message that rebukes our sins, and would correct our cherished errors. The fault is in the rebellious heart. Said the Son of God, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." There are those who reject the testimony of Moses and the prophets, declaring that the New Testament is all that we need in this dispensation; but did not Jesus bid his disciples to "search the Scriptures"? Was it not he who declared, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them"?

Christ was the invisible leader of the Hebrew host in their journeyings through the wilderness. He was the founder and supporter of the Jewish rites and observances, and his words by the mouth of Moses are no less important than his words by the mouth of the beloved disciple in the last book of the New Testament. The Old Testament is a witness to the truth of Christ and the plan of salvation, and it was "written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come." Those who cast contempt upon the Old Testament by ignoring its study, are casting contempt on the words and teaching of Christ, and are wise above what is written.

We are living in the most solemn period of the world's history. The coming of the Lord is at the doors, and the perils of the last days are all around us. Said Jesus, speaking of this very time, "There shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." And if we are wise we shall give earnest heed to this warning, and try every man's words by the great standard of truth. Our lives must be brought into harmony with the law of God, if we would be truly sanctified. This law is to govern all intelligences in Heaven and upon earth. And when we can say from the heart, as did our divine Lord, "I

delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart," then we are sanctified through the truth. We have the mind that was in Christ, and by faith we have drawn vital force from the source of infinite power and purity.

The word of God must be interwoven with the living character of those who believe it. The only vital faith is that faith which receives and assimilates the truth till it is a part of the being, and the motive power of the life and action. Jesus is called the word of God. He accepted his Father's law, wrought out its principles in his life, manifested its spirit, and showed its beneficent power in the heart. Says John, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." The followers of Christ must be partakers of his experience. They must assimilate the word of God. They must be changed into its likeness by the power of Christ, and reflect the divine attributes. They must eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God, or there is no life in them. The spirit and work of Christ must become the spirit and work of his disciples. This is genuine sanctification.

Men hear the words of Christ, but they are not doers of his words. The progressive character of the life of godliness is not agreeable to their ease-loving, selfish habits and desires. They do not partake of the broken body and shed blood of the Saviour of men. They are not willing to "crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts," that they may be renewed in true holiness, after the image of the Son of God. The word of God that tries the hearts of men, proves them wanting. They have no part in the Saviour's grace, no foundation for hope in his salvation. Says Jesus, "He that is of God heareth God's words." Those who receive the law and the testimony, and assimilate the truth of God, are partaking of the divine nature, growing up unto the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus, and the word of truth is working their sanctification. Though they make no boasting profession of holiness, but manifest a meek and quiet spirit, working the works of Christ, they will stand before the throne of God, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. They will be sanctified and glorified through obedience to the commandments of God, wrought by divine power, through the faith of the Son of God.

April 20, 1888

Visit to Lemoore

In company with my son, W. C. White, and Miss Cecilie Dahl, I left Healdsburg, March 9, for Oakland. From Oakland we took the train for Lemoore. At Goshen Junction we parted with W. C. White, who was en route for Los Angeles. We arrived at Lemoore about eight o'clock in the evening. Brother and Sister Daniels and Brother Gray were waiting to receive us at the depot. Brother Gray conducted us to his home, where we were heartily welcomed and kindly entertained.

Elder Daniels has been laboring at Lemoore, and his earnest effort to preach the truth of God has been followed by most encouraging results. A good interest has been awakened in the town and vicinity to hear the reasons of our faith. The Lord has been moving upon hearts, and we rejoice that a goodly number have had the moral courage to come out and identify themselves with those who "keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Twenty-nine persons have taken a decided stand for the truth and have signed the covenant. I became acquainted with several of these who have recently come to the knowledge and belief of the truth, and I feel sure that they have embraced the faith after careful and candid investigation, and through solemn and thorough conviction of its divine origin and nature. I believe they will teach others the things which they have learned.

If all who accept the light of truth will let their light shine by precept and example, their influence will be as far-reaching as eternity. By humbly seeking to know and do the will of God, they may be constant learners in the school of Christ, and may be continually educating others in the principles and practices of the truth. If those who espouse the cause of God will manifest the meekness and lowliness of Christ, they may bear a testimony to unbelievers that will have more weight than either sermons or arguments in its favor. The most convincing witness to the world of the worth of our faith is the exemplary conduct and character of its advocates.

On Sabbath morning, March 10, as we approached the house of worship we found it surrounded by the carriages of those who had come to hear the word of God. There was quite a large attendance of those who were interested in our views, and I had

much freedom in speaking from Colossians 1:9-14. After the discourse we had a social meeting. Many testimonies were borne, and a good spirit characterized all that was said. A number witnessed for the first time to their belief in the present truth.

I spoke five times at Lemoore, to good audiences. Many who were unacquainted with the positions we hold, seemed much interested. There were in the congregation some infidels and saloon-keepers, who gave most earnest and respectful attention, and we know not but that the seeds of truth may take root and bear fruit to the glory of God in the lives of these men. It is my sincere hope and prayer that this may be so. Christ has said, "Joy shall be in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." Those who feel perfectly satisfied with their spiritual condition are not the ones who excite the joy of the angels. The Jews claimed to respect the law of God, but they did not keep it. Said Jesus, "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law?" He said of the self-righteous Pharisees, "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men;" and in this day, those who profess to be Christians and yet bear no fruit to the glory of God, denying in their works the faith they profess, are among that class who feel no want in themselves, who see no necessity of repentance, confession, or reformation in their lives. They seem in their own eyes to be righteous, and they are satisfied with their own attainments. They do not come to the great Physician, because they do not realize their need of healing. But those who come repenting of their sins, believing that Jesus is able, through the merits of his blood, to cleanse them, and make them whole, cause the angels of God to rejoice in his presence.

On Sabbath there was a decided movement made toward seeking God, by those who desired to draw near to him. The instruction for our day is, "Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness." This valuable treasure of righteousness and meekness will not come without sincere and earnest seeking. It is not something that will develop naturally in the human heart. There must be most diligent and persevering efforts put forth by every individual to obtain the meekness and righteousness of Christ. Says the prophet, "Seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." We sought the Lord by earnest supplication, and his Holy Spirit witnessed to the presence of God in our midst. Those who seek the Lord from the heart will certainly find him, for he is a present help in every time of need.

On Sunday, both morning and afternoon, I spoke to a full house. The Spirit and power of God was in the midst of us, impressing hearts with the truth. We knew that Jesus was inviting the weary and the heavy-laden to come unto him and find rest to their souls. If they would but comply with the conditions, and take his yoke, and bear his burden, and learn of him who was meek and lowly of heart, they would find his service sweet, and his paths the paths of peace. I felt anxious that all present might take the yoke of Christ, and find the peace and rest that the word can neither give nor take away. When those who have by transgressing the law forfeited all right to the favor of God, return to allegiance and keep the commandments, what but blessing and peace and rest can come to them from him who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, whose love is graciously and freely bestowed to all who turn to him to serve him with a sincere heart.

Before me was a class of men possessing no inferior talent; there were those who had no knowledge of God, and no faith in his Son, but I knew that Jesus was willing to receive these men, waiting to pardon their transgressions, to take their feet from the miry clay, and to place them upon the Rock of Ages. I felt an intense desire to present the truth of God's word in such a way that they might be constrained by the love that Jesus had manifested for them to come to him in all their sinfulness and pollution, that they might be cleansed by the blood of the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. The most sinful may be made fit for the mansions that Jesus has gone to prepare for those who love him and keep his commandments. They may be cleansed by faith in his blood, sanctified through obedience to the truth, and glorified by the power of God to shine in his everlasting kingdom.

I had very solemn thoughts as I looked upon that assembly. I wondered how many present will hail with joy the glorious appearing of the Lord and Saviour. How many will receive the crown of life? How many will lift up their voices in glad hosannas, singing the song of Moses and the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints"? How anxious I felt for these souls, as I thought, Jesus loves them better than I do. His love is without a parallel; and if I feel grief of heart to see these souls employing their intrusted talents in dishonoring God, how must the pitying Saviour feel, who died that they might live?

Oh, that everyone might feel that Jesus has something in store for him vastly

better than what he is choosing for himself! Would that all might realize the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the blessedness of righteousness! Would that all might see how powerless is all effort to contend against omnipotence! Man is doing the greatest injury and injustice to his own soul when he thinks and acts contrary to the mind and will of God. He is sowing to the flesh, and will of the flesh reap corruption. No real joy can be found in the path forbidden by the God who knows what is best, and who plans for the good of his creatures. The path of transgression is a path of misery and destruction, and he who walks therein is exposed to the wrath of God and the Lamb.

The cross of Calvary, with its suffering Victim who bore the curse for us, testifies to the love of God for the sinner; and the voice of God calls to the disobedient, "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?" There is a fountain opened to cleanse the guilty souls of men. The merits of Jesus plead for the repentant sinner; and to all that receive the Saviour he will give power to enable them to walk in the paths of righteousness and peace.

The word of God is the directory to Heaven. If man will follow in the path marked out in the sacred word, he will reach the eternal city and the realms of glory. The very God of truth presents his promises to encourage man to seek for eternal life, and an inheritance incorruptible and that fadeth not away. Let the repenting sinner believe the word of God, and come to Jesus the Saviour of men, take his yoke upon him, bear his burden, and he shall find rest unto his soul.

May 4, 1888

Home Missionary Work

Home missionaries are greatly needed. The work of winning souls to Jesus, and of training them to become workers for others, should begin in the home circle. God has claims upon the services of all,--men, women, 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 they will come to fulfilling their holy commission. Of all our training-schools, the family should stand first. Fathers and mothers should feel that they are placed at the head of a mission. They have a work to do which no other can do for them, in forming the characters of their children for usefulness in this life, and for the future, immortal life. God has called them to this work, and it is a sin to neglect it.

Yet this work is strangely neglected. The failure in duty on the part of parents is revealed in the deformed, one-sided characters of the children. The loose, unchristian manner in which so many bring up their children is the cause of the terrible impiety and wickedness of the youth of this age. The great burden in regard to temporal matters, which many carry who claim to be sons and daughters of God, causes them to lose sight of eternal interests. Their absorbing care for worldly things misleads their children. The sacred and the common are confused in their minds. Eternal and temporal things stand on a par. A lack of home religion leads to stumbling, to perplexing entanglements, all the way in the Christian experience, both for parents and children. The family life takes a low level. The conversation is trifling and frivolous, or even worse. There is gossip and tale-bearing, there are threats, scolding, jangling, and tantalizing. Angels see it all. Jesus, who gave his life to redeem them, beholds it. What a scene for Heaven to look upon! Will such a family be welcomed through the gates into the city of God? Never, unless they become transformed by the grace of Christ. They would carry into Heaven the same characters, the same spirit they manifest here. Thousands upon thousands will be lost because of this terrible neglect on the part of parents.

I would urge upon fathers and mothers the importance of their home missionary work. The precious hours of probation are fast passing. Parents must be changed, children must be changed, in heart and character here in this life, or they will never be permitted to enter Heaven. It should be your very first burden to see that your own souls

are right before God, and to labor for the salvation of your children. Every member of the family should be the subject of special, wisely-directed effort, that the enemy of Christ 5/not have possession of the heart, and control the character.

Parents who give heed to God's word will not, for any consideration, neglect the work which he has committed to them. They will not take a course in any respect which will lead their children away from him. Night and day they will feel the burden to draw them away from the world's customs, its fashions, and its pride, to Jesus. They will make religion the vital question of life, and will teach their children that every worldly consideration should be made second to their eternal interests. They will make a hedge about them by prayer, pleading in faith that God will abide with them, and that holy angels will guard them from Satan's cruel power. Every day they will give them such instruction as shall lead them to become better acquainted with the claims of God, to revere his law, and to form habits of life in accordance with it.

Children will learn to love that which the parents love, and will talk of the subjects upon which they talk. If we would have the word of God the most precious of books to our children, our own lives must testify that it is precious to us. If we desire them to love and reverence God, we must make him the theme of our meditations; we must speak of his goodness, his majesty, and his power. If we would have them love and imitate the character of Christ, we must ourselves represent Christ in our homes. It is by cultivating meekness and lowliness, by performing kindly, thoughtful acts for others when no human eye can see, or human praise stimulate, by hiding self in Jesus, and letting his gentleness appear in the home life, by exercising patience when provoked, giving a soft answer when tempted to be harsh, overbearing, and vindictive, that we leave the unmistakable impression upon the minds of our children that father and mother are Christians.

Do not neglect your children while they are young. The sons and daughters of Christian parents should be educated to realize their responsibility to God in childhood and youth. There is earnest work to be done in this age, and they must be educated to share in it. We cannot estimate the possibilities of usefulness that lie undeveloped in hand, and brain, and heart. You should instruct the children in the duties of practical life. Teach them to regard the humble round of everyday duties as the course marked out for them by the Lord; as a school in which they are to be trained to render faithful and efficient service. All their powers are to be educated and disciplined to do service

for God. He requires that the first, the best, and the most useful talents shall be employed to carry forward his work. The same zeal and energy, tact and order, which are exercised in counting-rooms and shops, and in the fine arts, are to be brought into the work of God. Teach them now to cultivate firmness and integrity. It was this careful training in his earlier years that enabled Joseph, when suddenly exalted from his dungeon to the throne, to fill his position with wisdom and honor. So the youth and children of our time are to be gaining solidity of character, that they may be prepared to be used as instruments of God in the missionary work.

Children should not be treated with harshness. 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. Yet while exercising tenderness and loving sympathy, you should be firm and decided to command obedience; like Abraham, requiring your children to keep the way of the Lord.

They should be allowed to form no foolish habits of self-indulgence. Teach them that Jesus loves them, that he died to redeem them, and they are to live to glorify him. His life is the pattern which they are to copy. They should be taught to waste nothing on show; to shun all display in dress. Let a spirit of sacrifice be cherished. Teach the children to contribute something which they have earned themselves as an offering to God, who has given them all Heaven in the gift of his dear Son. I am glad that they are taking a part in the missionary work in the Rivulet Societies, and by their contributions in the Sabbath-school. These are precious lessons which they are learning, of the blessedness of giving. If we desire to encourage in their hearts a love for the truth and the cause of God, we must teach them to sacrifice for it. That which costs us nothing we value lightly; but the enterprise in which our means is invested we feel an interest in, and we labor for its success.

Do not expect a change to be wrought in your children without patient, earnest labor, mingled with fervent prayer. To study and understand their varied characters, and day by day to mould them after the divine Model, is a work demanding great diligence and perseverance, and much prayer, with an abiding faith in God's promises. Make it a careful study how to discharge your duties. Counsel with those of experience. Seek counsel of God in his word; work and pray, pray and work, from the earliest hour of your children's lives, and believe that God will co-operate with you in every effort to

follow the light and instruction he has given. The infinite sacrifice of Christ for our redemption places a high value upon the soul. After giving such evidence of his love he will not withhold his grace, his special help, from parents and children who seek to do his will. He will not refuse to hear the parents' earnest prayer, that is seconded by persevering labor, that their children may be blessed of him, and become faithful workers in his cause. When parents do their duty in God's appointed way, they may be sure that their requests for his help in their home work will be granted.

If fathers and mothers love the Bible, and talk of the lessons Christ has given; if they love Jesus, and make him the theme of conversation, a heavenly atmosphere will pervade the home. As the wax receives the impress of the seal, so the soul will receive and retain the moral image of God. By beholding, we become changed. If we allow the mind to dwell upon the imperfections and moral deformities of others, we ourselves shall become depraved in character, and mentally one-sided and unbalanced. But if the mind dwells upon the perfect life of Christ, and the thoughts and conversation are centered upon him, we shall be changed to the same image.

Life will become to both parents and children a humble, earnest working out of their own salvation with fear and trembling, while God is working in them to will and to do of his own good pleasure. The gates of Heaven are upon earth. Parents and children are striving together to press upward, heavenward, in the narrow way, the path of holiness, all acting their part in the family below in such a manner as to become members of the royal family above.

The teaching of the home--the mould here given to the character--extends its influence beyond the family into the church, and outside the church to the world. A well-regulated family, loving God and his living oracles, will have a fresh, living testimony to bear. Their influence will build up the church, and will win souls to Christ and the truth. In giving to the world a well-disciplined family, parents are presenting one of the strongest evidences in favor of the truth. And the parents whose wise, God-fearing labor has accomplished so much for their own family, will be able to accomplish a similar work for others.

If the home missionary work had been done in accordance with the directions God has given in his word, there would now be an army of youth to enter missionary fields. The apostle Paul, in his dying charge to Timothy, says: "The things that thou hast

heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." When the lessons that parents learn in the school of Christ are taught to their children; when the Saviour's meekness and love, his self-denial and humility, are brought into the life and made a part of the daily experience, and the children learn and practice these precious lessons, they in their turn will be able, by their influence and example, to teach the same to others. And who can measure the final results? How many a humble Christian, unseen and uncared for by the world, has set in motion a train of influences which have brought a blessing to hundreds and thousands of souls. Where is the missionary who has accomplished a greater work than the mother of John Wesley? Who can measure the value of those hours when Zwingle's grandmother lovingly repeated to the eager boy at her side the few precious Bible stories which she had gleaned from amid the legends and traditions of the church?

The day of God will reveal how much the world owes to the holy influences of the home for men who have been unflinching advocates of truth and reform. When the Judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened, when the "Well done" of the great Judge is pronounced, what joy unspeakable will fill our hearts, if, as we gather around the great white throne, we shall see our children, 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 that those whom we have won for Christ have saved others, and these still others,--a large assembly all brought into the haven of rest as the result of our labors, there to lay their crowns at Jesus's feet, and to praise him through the endless cycles of eternity?

May 11, 1888

The Presumption of Saul

After Saul had been anointed king of Israel, Samuel the prophet gave him minute directions as to what course he should pursue. He prophesied that the Lord would work a change in his heart to prepare him for the solemn responsibilities of his new office. He declared to the king, "Thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before them; and they shall prophesy; and the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man.... And thou shalt go down before me to Gilgal; and, behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt-offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace-offerings. Seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come to thee, and show thee what thou shalt do." As Saul journeyed on his way, the change of which the prophet had spoken was wrought in him, and God gave him another heart; and all that Samuel had said came to pass. The heart of Saul was turned to the Lord, his mind was enlarged, and he had the blessing of spiritual understanding. He felt that the strength of Israel was the Lord God, even Jehovah, and in him he could have courage, fortitude, and resolution to govern wisely. It now depended upon Saul to work out the salvation that God had wrought within him.

It was not until the second year of his reign that the presence of Saul was required at Gilgal. At that time the Philistines were encamped against the Israelites. Saul and his followers could see the vast host that were arrayed against them, and the Israelites were appalled at the sight of the mighty forces they would have to encounter in battle. They were not prepared to meet the enemy, for they were undisciplined and poorly armed. Their forces were far inferior both as to numbers and equipment, for "there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people." As Saul's army comprehended the situation they were filled with alarm, and many were so terrified that they dared not come to the test of an encounter. Some crossed the Jordan, others hid themselves in caves and pits, and amid the rocks that abounded in that region. The affairs of the army were becoming alarming. The nearer the time for an encounter approached, the more deserters increased, and those who did not withdraw from the ranks were filled with foreboding and terror. What a change would have been wrought if they had but trusted in the Lord, if they had but humbled their hearts and confessed their backsliding and

iniquity.

Saul tarried day after day without making decided efforts toward encouraging the people and inspiring confidence in God. The time appointed by the prophet was not fully expired; but he became impatient at his delay, and discouraged at the trying circumstances that surrounded him. Instead of faithfully seeking to prepare the people for the solemn service that Samuel was coming to perform, he indulged in unbelief and impatience. This work of seeking God by sacrifice was a most solemn and important work, and God required that his people should search their hearts and repent of their sins, that the offering might be made with acceptance before him, and that his blessing might be bestowed upon their efforts to resist and conquer the enemy. But Saul had grown restless. The people were looking to him as the king whom they had chosen to lead and direct them. They had become dissatisfied with the guidance of the King of kings, and had desired to be like the nations around them, and God had granted their request for a ruler from among their brethren. The Lord still cared for them, and did not give them up to the disasters that would have come upon them if the frail arm of flesh had become their only support. He brought them into close places, that they might be convicted of the folly of depending on man, and that they might turn to him as their only help. The time for the proving of Saul had come. The opportunity had arrived when he was to show whether or not he would depend on God, and patiently wait according to his command, and reveal himself as one whom God could trust in trying places as the ruler of his people, or whether he would be vacillating and weak, and unworthy of the sacred responsibilities that had devolved upon him. Would Saul heed the injunctions given him of the Lord? Would he show himself willing to be led and controlled? Would he turn the attention of his faint-hearted soldiers to the One in whom is everlasting strength and deliverance.

With growing impatience he waited the arrival of Samuel, and attributed the confusion and distress and desertion of his army to the absence of the prophet. But what more favorable moment could be given to the representative man of Israel to assert his manhood and manifest his faith in God? Was not this the very occasion when he should have believed the word of the prophet, and the commands and assurances of the Lord? But Saul made it evident that he did not discern sacred things, that he was not conscientiously careful to go according to the word of the Lord's explicit command. The priest of God was the only one authorized to present sacrifices before God; and yet Saul commanded, "Bring hither a burnt-offering," and he offered the sacrifice. In this he took

upon himself the responsibilities of the priesthood. He placed himself in a position for which he was not prepared or qualified by the Lord. He presumed upon his exaltation to the throne of Israel, and acted as a priest before the people. The time for the arrival of Samuel was just at hand, but Saul, through lack of faith, had been led to take his own course, and he made it evident that he could not be trusted as the head of Israel; for under pressure of circumstances he would depart from the commandment of God.

"And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt-offering, behold, Samuel came, and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him." Samuel saw at once that Saul had gone contrary to the express directions that had been given him. He had not waited till the seven days had expired. He had not humbly fulfilled the word of the Lord, nor regarded the law of the offerings. He had been charged to wait for Samuel, who was chosen of the Lord, and fitted for the very service that Saul had performed with unsanctified hands. The work that he had done was out of harmony with the plan of God, and could not be acceptable before Heaven. The sacrifice was to be offered in the most solemn manner. The people were to be impressed by the weight of its significance, and the Lord had spoken by his prophet that at this time he would communicate through his delegated servant what Israel must do at this critical time. Saul was so well satisfied with himself and his work, that he went out to meet the prophet as one who should be commended rather than disapproved. Samuel's countenance was full of anxiety and trouble; but to his inquiry, "What hast thou done?" Saul offered excuses for his presumptuous act. He said: "I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash; therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the Lord; I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt-offering. And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly; thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee; for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever. But now thy kingdom shall not continue; the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people."

Saul had proved himself unfit to govern Israel, through lack of faith and obedience to the plain command of the Lord, and God could not establish his rule over his people. The services of religion he had performed were not acceptable to the God of Heaven. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

There is no safety for the people of God except in implicit obedience to his word. All his promises are made upon conditions of faith and obedience, and failure to comply with the expressed commands necessitates the failure of your experiencing the fulfillment of the rich provisions of the Scriptures. Saul might have made his supplication to God in an acceptable manner and still he might have waited for the servant of God to perform his appointed work. There was no need of forcing himself to offer a burnt-offering before the Lord. The command to wait till the arrival of Samuel was given to test his loyalty to the God who had so abundantly blessed him. If the king had only shown a regard for the requirements of God in this time of trial, then God could have worked his will through him, even when his inclination and natural desire might have clamored for a different course of action. His failure now proved him unfit to be vicegerent of God to his people. He would mislead Israel. His will would be the controlling power instead of the will of God. He had been weighed in the balances and had been found wanting. Angels of God had been grieved over his unbelief and disobedience, and his failure in this small test decided the most important question of his reign. If he had been faithful, his kingdom would have been established forever; but since he had failed, the purposes of God must be accomplished by another who would be true to the word of his commandment. The great interests of Israel must be committed to one who would rule the people according to the will of Heaven.

We should be warned by the example of Saul. We do not know what great interests may be at stake in the proving of God. The work committed to our hands should be performed with fidelity. We should be true to the definite commandments of the Lord. The word of God is the only safe guide for our feet. We should not follow impulse, we should not rely on the judgment of men, but look to the revealed will of God, and walk according to the commandment, no matter what circumstances may surround us. God will take care of the results, and by faithfulness to God's word in time of trial you will prove before men and angels that the Lord can trust you in difficult places to carry out his will, honor his name, and bless his people.

May 18, 1888

The Relation of Christians to Christ and the Church

The apostle Paul, speaking of the church of Christ, likens it to the human body and its members. The unity existing between the members of the body represents the unity that should exist between the members of the church. The mutual dependence of the followers of Christ is illustrated by the dependence of the members of the body one upon the other. "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." "And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it." This figure, as representing the church, is full of the most tender significance to God's people, both as to their relation to Christ, and to one another. As in the natural body the suffering of one member is recognized by every part of the being, so in the church the weakness or sorrow of one member reaches all others with its influence; and the strength of one is the gain of all. Christ, the head of the church, is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities."

Contemplating the intimacy of the relation between the followers of Christ, Paul writes: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you." "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." "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; 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."

We have been brought from the world to become members of the church, the body of Christ. We are to come into perfect harmony of feeling, and unity of faith. "Speaking the truth in love," we are to "grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." The natural defects of our characters must not be allowed to create disunion. We must surrender our wills to God, till every thought is brought into obedience to Christ. There is a work for us to do before we shall be able to work as harmoniously together as is represented by the union of the body.

Those who profess to be members of God's family, and who expect to stand one day around his throne, should be careful to cultivate here the spirit that will prevail in Heaven. "Love is the fulfilling of the law," and the love of Jesus in the heart will bind his church together in bonds of Christian fellowship, like that fellowship which will exist in the courts above. We have no need to err; for we possess a perfect pattern in the life of Jesus by which to fashion our life-actions, and the fact that we represent him so poorly should make us humble, and should lead us to exercise love and forbearance toward others who may err. Unless we do cultivate humility in view of our own deficiencies, there will be developed in us an element of hard-heartedness akin to that in the character of Satan. Criticism and coldness and disunion in the church will undo the work of the Holy Spirit of God.

We need a work wrought in our characters such as will fit us for the great responsibilities that Christ has laid upon us. There are souls to be saved on every side, and we need to love others as Christ has loved us, if we fulfill our obligations to our fellow-men. Those who indulge a spirit of jealousy, who are constantly inclined to think evil, and to judge the motives of others, are not possessors of the love of Christ, nor fitted for his holy service.

When a brother is in error, how many turn away and leave him to himself to pursue his wrong course, to depart from Christ and the truth! And not only do they treat him with neglect, but their unwise words and indifferent behavior hasten him on in the downward way. Is this the compassionate Spirit of Christ? When one is falling away, shall we push him into greater darkness? Did not Jesus, the Son of God, come to seek and to save that which was lost? "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ

Jesus." Was not our Saviour tender and pitiful toward all? Did he not weep over the rejecters of his mercy, and stretch out his hands all day long to a rebellious people? We ought to be compassionate to our fellow-men; for they are the purchase of the blood of Christ. We are not as sympathetic as we should be. This self-esteem must be rooted out, this spirit of pharisaical importance must be subdued. We are not placed here to please or glorify self, but to glorify God by living for the good of men.

Every Christian should exercise the same pity toward the erring that he would have manifested toward himself; but in many cases, the very ones who are themselves the most sensitive under reproof, are most unfeeling toward those whom they condemn. If a brother errs, how easy it is to tell others of his fault before a word is said to him. Such a course is not in accordance with the Bible rule. God does not want us to expose the defects of others before the unbelieving world, or even before the brethren in the church, except as it may be necessary in carrying out the Bible direction.

God wants us to come into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and then we shall do from the heart deeds of kindness that will bless others; then everyone will know that the truth of God has done something for the character and life of those who profess to believe it, that Christ dwells in the heart by faith, and that religion is a living reality.

Christ is grieved with our hardness of heart, with our lack of love and contrition. God wants us to have love; far better to have too much than too little. God himself is love; we should be like him. Christ is full of compassion; we should daily learn of him, and put in practice his lessons of love, by showing the tender spirit that he manifested. It will cost us no more effort to speak words of comfort and kindness than of harshness and jealousy. We should seek to bind up the broken heart and to heal the wounded spirit. We shall have no desire to bring others down in humiliation before us if we are actuated by the love of Christ. Our whole desire will be to lift up the thoughts and elevate the minds of those around us, to exalt the truth and draw men to the Saviour of the world.

There are those all around us who are dying for want of the love of Jesus expressed in the life of his followers. When the lifeless hands have been folded over the silent breast, how many have wished they had been more gentle, more tender. You cannot make confession in the ears of the dead, but you can exercise love and

forbearance toward the living. Oh, that all might appreciate the privilege now given to sweeten the existence of those around them by the loving sympathy that so cheers and encourages the sad and lonely heart!

Men and women who occupy responsible positions should deal very carefully with those under their care, blending love with firmness, encouragement with discipline, and comfort with correction. Why should you not exercise as much tenderness and skill in healing the sin-sick soul as in treating the diseased body? When you see one wandering away from the fold, go to him, and try to turn him back. With a meek and loving spirit, show him that you are his true friend, and that in telling him of his errors you are actuated by love for his soul. Work diligently, brethren; for these souls, if saved, will be our companions around the throne of God.

Christ requires us to love one another. How much, the cross of Calvary will answer. He loved us even unto death, and he bids us to "love one another as I have loved you." "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." And when this mutual forbearance and tenderness is a reality among us we shall appreciate the significance of the figure employed by the apostle to represent the church of Christ. "Ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." You will then bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

May 25, 1888

The Testing of Character

Saul made an appearance of great conscientiousness and devotion, as he stood before the army of Israel, offering up a sacrifice to God. He represented himself before the people as one who was unwilling to engage in battle with the Philistines, without seeking the help of Heaven, but his heart was filled with distrust, and his apparent piety was, in reality, only unbelief and disobedience. He had been directed by the prophet of God that when he was brought into just such circumstances of trial he should wait until seven days had expired, and that at the termination of the days appointed, Samuel would come unto him, and offer the sacrifice, and tell him what he should do to honor God and save Israel, but Saul had failed to bear the test that God had permitted to come upon him, and he resolved to offer the sacrifice himself, and wait no longer for the priest ordained of God to perform the sacred service. The king beheld the Philistines arrayed for battle. He saw his own soldiers filled with alarm, and his ranks thinning with frequent desertions, and, instead of trusting in the word of God, and waiting patiently for his salvation, he became faithless and discouraged. In the hope of again rallying his scattered troops, he was willing to violate the direction of God, and offer an offering before the Lord, that he might have the approval of the people, and gather them to his side to war against the enemy.

The prophet had declared that the Lord would reveal what course the king should pursue when the seven days were ended; but he did not wait for the arrival of the man of God, but took the matter into his own hands. If he had but waited in faith and patience and rested in the promise of God, what lessons of trust might have come down to inspire us as the result of his life and experience! What a help he might have been to Israel, if he had but stood the test in that hour of trial! He might have revealed the work of the Spirit of God in his heart. Through him might have been manifested the power and willingness of Jehovah to bless his waiting people. If he had fulfilled the conditions upon which the help was promised, the Lord would have wrought a marvelous deliverance for Israel, with the few who were loyal to the king. But the religious service, performed in unbelief and in direct opposition to the commandment of God, only served to weaken his hands, and to place him beyond the help that God was so willing to grant him.

There are many who are pursuing this very course today. They refuse to believe and obey the commandment of the Lord, and yet they persevere in offering up to God their formal services of religion; but there is no response from the Spirit of God to such a service. There is no inward work upon the heart, no reformation in the life, no transformation in the character. Outward ordinances must not be considered of value, unless they are in accordance with the expressed will of God. The Lord cannot manifest his power to deliver, no matter how zealous men may be in their observance of religious ceremonies, if they persist in willful disobedience to his commandments.

Those who are placed in positions of trust, will be subjected to different tests, that their loyalty and trustworthiness may be proved by their course of action. The test will be a simple one, but it will be sufficient to decide whether or not the man's spirit is under the control of the Spirit of God. It will be made manifest whether or not he will choose to carry out his own will and his own ideas, or the will of God as the supreme guide of his actions. All our actions are weighed. Their moral worth is estimated. It is known whether or not we are loyal to God, whether or not we are leading those connected with us to love and fear God, or through the natural defects of our characters, unaided by the grace of God, we are leading those who look to us for an example into crooked paths, away from the fear of God, away from the counsel he gives through his appointed servants. If we are indifferent to the instruction given through the agencies of God, our hearts will become hardened, the light ordained for our correction will appear as darkness, and we will become agents in leading others into unbelief and rebellion.

Adam was tested in a very simple matter, but his failure to endure the test opened the flood-gates of woe upon our world, and with every disobedience to God are involved consequences of fearful import and disaster. The action of the king before Israel lessened the significance of the sacrificial service, and robbed the priesthood of its sacredness before their eyes. If the king could, with unconsecrated hands, perform this holy rite, why could not the people do the same? If he thought best to perform this service, it must be the right thing to do, and they felt perfectly safe in following the example of one so exalted as the king. Those who occupy positions of honor and responsibility, should be exceedingly careful to walk circumspectly and humbly before the Lord, that they may not become stumbling-blocks to those who are influenced by their life and example.

The greatest trials that have come upon the church have been brought about through the agency of those who were its professed friends, and who had been placed in positions of trust and sacred responsibility. Our most sanguine expectations have been frequently disappointed. We have followed our best judgment in selecting men for places of trust, and they have failed time and again, when the test was brought to bear on their characters. They have exhibited weaknesses of which they gave no previous indication. They are not what they appeared to be before they were placed in the position. How often have we finite beings been led to repent that we have used our influence toward promoting men who afterwards have given no evidence of their devotion to God's word and work. We have often inquired, What has made this great change in these men? What was it that led Saul to presume upon his exaltation to dishonor God by unbelief and disobedience? It was self-sufficiency and an evil heart of unbelief. It was when Saul was little in his own sight that God chose him to be ruler over Israel, but when he lost his spirit of simplicity and humility, he was not the man for the place, and his authority was taken from him. Those who turn from their humility and begin to exalt self, are filled with the most unaccountable infatuation and self-deception in regard to their own qualifications. Like Saul, they begin to assume responsibilities that their position in nowise warrants, and for which God has not ordained them.

When circumstances are so shaped that character is tested and developed, you should seek fervently for the help of God that you may be delivered from evil. If you walk humbly before God, you will not follow your own will, but will have a teachable spirit, and will submit to instruction and correction. If you steadfastly adhere to the word of God and follow in his way, you will not imperil others nor in the least degree seek to turn their minds away from the warnings, reproofs, and instructions which God sends through his servants; but if you fail to obey the word of God, even in the most perplexing circumstances, you make it manifest that you cannot be trusted in times of peril. Like Saul, you will follow your own judgment. You will not humble your soul before God, and make supplication, and lead those connected with you to look to God with all their hearts for the help he has promised to give in times of need.

The Lord will work for those who put their trust in him. Precious victories will be gained by the faithful. Precious lessons will be learned. Precious experiences will be realized that will be of the greatest advantage in times of trial and temptation. Those who will give all the glory to God, not taking credit to themselves, will be trusted with more and more of the blessing of God. The Lord will be magnified by those who honor

him in the midst of the people. The trial that has been borne with patience, the test that has been met with faithfulness, will prove them worthy of responsibility, and God will make them agents to carry out his will. They will be made stewards of his grace, as honored servants of God.

The conflicts of earth, in the providence of God, furnish the very training necessary to develop characters fit for the courts of Heaven. We are to become members of the royal family, the sons of God, and "all things work together for good to those who love God," and submit themselves to his will. Our God is an ever-present help in every time of need. He is perfectly acquainted with the most secret thoughts of our heart, with all the intents and purposes of our souls. When we are in perplexity, even before we open to him our distress, he is making arrangements for our deliverance. Our sorrow is not unnoticed. He always knows much better than we do, just what is necessary for the good of his children, and he leads us as we would choose to be led if we could discern our own hearts and see our necessities and perils, as God sees them. But finite beings seldom know themselves. They do not understand their own weaknesses, and when reproof comes, and cautions are given, when they are rebuked, or even advised, they think that they are misjudged and unjustly treated. God knows them better than they know themselves, and he understands how to lead them. But when he undertakes to guide them in ways which seem mysterious to them, because of their blindness and lack of faith, they rebel, and bring upon themselves unnecessary grief and trouble. They have prayed to the Lord for light and guidance, and the Lord answered them as he did Jacob, and, like Jacob, they do not discern that it is the hand of the Lord leading them in a way contrary to their own choosing. If we will trust him, and commit our ways to him, he will direct our steps in the very path that will result in our obtaining the victory over every evil passion, and every trait of character that is unlike the character of our divine Pattern.

June 1, 1888

The Rejection of Saul

The relation between Samuel and Saul was one of peculiar tenderness. Samuel loved Saul as his own son, while Saul, bold and ardent of temper, held the prophet in great reverence, and bestowed upon him the warmth of his affection and regard. Thus the prophet of the living God, an old man whose mission was nearly finished, and the youthful king, whose work was before him, were bound together by the ties of friendship and respect. All through his perverse course, the king clung to the prophet as if he alone could save him from himself.

When Saul was proclaimed as king, Samuel had assured the people that the danger of the future would be that of forgetting the covenant of the Lord, and of failing to acknowledge God as the supreme Ruler of their nation. Israel had sought and obtained a monarchy after their own heart, yet Samuel had told them that the Lord in his infinite mercy was willing to forgive them, and to help them, if they would only fear him, and serve him in truth. The question of the conversion of Israel into the royalty of the kingdom of God, was to be decided. Would the Israel of God, with their king at their head, obey God explicitly, or would they not? Either Israel must cease to be the people of God, or the principles upon which the monarchy was founded must become spiritual, and the nation must be governed by a divine power. If Israel would be wholly the Lord's, then the Lord would constitute a kingdom in which the will of the human and earthly would be in subjection to the will of God, and, by this means, the covenant relationship that constituted God the Ruler of Israel, would be preserved. The question may seem of little consequence to our finite minds; but it was far from this. Would the king whom Israel had chosen listen to the Ruler of all kings? Would he surrender his will, and do the will of the Father which is in Heaven? No monarchy in Israel that did not acknowledge in all its ways the supreme authority of God, could prosper. As long as the people of Israel would conduct themselves as subordinate to God, so long would he be their protection and defense.

The prophet Samuel had been rejected as ruler of Israel, and Saul had been chosen to fill this responsible position. Samuel was not envious and jealous of the chosen king. "God forbid," said the prophet, "that I should sin against God in ceasing to

pray for you." The Lord identifies his interest with the people, and although Israel had greatly displeased the Lord, and sorely grieved Samuel, yet the prophet did not divorce his interest from Israel; but he uttered a decided warning, "If ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king."

Saul had failed to bear the test of his faith in the trying situation at Gilgal, and had brought dishonor upon the service of God; but his errors were not yet irretrievable, and the Lord granted to him another opportunity to learn the lesson of implicit faith in his word, and unqualified obedience to his commands. If the Lord had separated himself entirely from Saul, he would not have spoken to him again through his prophet, and intrusted him with a definite work to perform, that he might correct the mistake of the past.

Let us mark this. When anyone who claims to be a child of God, becomes careless in doing the express will of God, and through his deviation from the path of rectitude, many are influenced to become irreverent and unmindful of the injunctions of God, and if he then accepts reproof and has true contrition of soul, if he will discern his error, and no longer entertain lofty opinions of his ability, and will trust in God, who alone is able to save him, his past failure may be turned into victory, because he will become conscious of his inefficiency to do what God requires, without divine strength and wisdom.

The apostle Paul went directly contrary to the will of God before his conversion. His powers were employed in the cause and work of the enemy of God and man; but when light from Heaven shone about him, and the voice of Jesus was heard saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," he inquired, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Love for Jesus became the ruling power in his life, and when there was work to be done for the Lord, no danger could intimidate him, no opposition hinder, no threats appall, no difficulties dishearten, no power cause him to swerve from the path appointed of God.

Before Paul experienced genuine conversion to God, selfishness controlled his mind and soul. His estimate of everything was a wrong estimate, for self-aggrandizement and selfishness had an influence upon his entire life and character. He praised his own zeal. He was carrying a mirror with him, not a mirror in which to discover the defects of his character, but a mirror in which he might admire himself.

Everything was turned into self-glorification; but after Jesus was revealed to him, his lofty opinion of himself was gone. He saw nothing in which to glory, save the cross of Christ. The Lord brought Paul over a path that was difficult to travel, but the apostle saw in it precious opportunities to prove his fidelity to Jesus, whom he had persecuted in the person of his saints.

When Samuel was called upon to deliver a most painful message of condemnation to him whom he loved as a son, Saul saw no great sin in the course of transgression which he had pursued. When reprov'd he manifested no repentance or contrition of soul. He was not grieved for his disobedience. He did not surrender his will to God, but began to vindicate his actions, and to offer excuses for his error. After the announcement that, because of his transgression, his kingdom should not continue, Saul became sullen and despondent. He thought he had been treated unjustly and went to great extremes in his management of affairs in the kingdom.

At one time he pronounced a curse upon anyone who should taste of food throughout a certain day of battle. This prohibition was not required by the Lord. It originated with Saul himself, and nearly cost him the life of his son Jonathan. It created a will of decided opposition to his authority in his army, and resulted in leading the people to transgress the command of God. They had engaged in warfare all day, and were fainting for want of food, and, as soon as the hours of restriction were over, they eagerly fell upon the spoil, and greedily devoured the flesh with the blood, thus violating the law that prohibited such an act; for the Lord had said, "Thou shalt not eat the blood thereof." God had given them rules which should have been respected; because the Lord knows what is for the good of man, and he should be obeyed. But there are many who will lightly regard the tests which God has given, and will assume the responsibility of creating tests and prohibitions, as did Saul, which bring dishonor to God and evil to men.

The Lord sent a last message to Saul. By obedience, he might still prove his fidelity to God, and his worthiness to walk before Israel. Samuel came to the king and delivered the word of the Lord. Said the prophet, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, I remember that which Amalek did to Israel, how he laid wait for him in the way, when he came up from Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." And the record states that "Saul smote the Amalekites from

Havilah until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt. And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them; but everything that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly."

This victory over the Amalekites was the most brilliant victory that Saul had ever gained, and it served to rekindle the pride of heart that was his greatest peril. The divine edict devoting the enemies of God to utter destruction, was but partially fulfilled. Ambitious to heighten the honor of his triumphal return by the presence of a royal captive, Saul ventured to imitate the customs of the nations around him, and he spared Agag, the fierce and warlike king of the Amalekites. The people, influenced by his example, reserved for themselves the finest of the flocks, herds, and beast of burden.

Here Saul was subjected to the final test. His presumptuous disregard of the will of God, showing his determination to rule as an independent monarch, proved that he could not be trusted with royal power as the vicegerent of the Lord. While Saul and his army were marching home in the flush of victory, there was deep anguish in the home of Samuel, the prophet. He had received a message from the Lord, denouncing the course of the king. "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king; for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments." The prophet was deeply grieved over the course of the rebellious king, and he wept and prayed all night for a reversal of the terrible sentence.

God's repentance is not like man's repentance. "The Strength of Israel will not lie, nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent." Man's repentance brings about a change of mind. God's repentance implies a change of circumstances and relations. Man may change his relation to God by complying with the conditions upon which he may be brought into the divine favor, and he may, by his own action, place himself outside the favoring condition; but the Lord is the same "yesterday, today, and forever." The Saul whom God made king was a humble man, little in his own eyes, and not the Saul whom God repented to have exalted to the throne of Israel. Saul's disobedience changed the condition of his relationship to God; but the conditions of acceptance with God were unaltered,--God's requirements were still the same; for with him "there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

With an aching heart the prophet set forth the next morning to meet the erring king. Samuel cherished a hope that, upon reflection, Saul might become conscious of his sin, and by repentance and humiliation before God, be again restored to the divine favor. But when the first step is taken in the path of transgression, the way becomes easy. Satan leads on, and Saul, debased by his disobedience, came to meet Samuel with a lie upon his lips. He exclaimed, "Blessed be thou of the Lord; I have performed the commandment of the Lord."

The sounds that fell on the prophet's ears disproved the statement of the disobedient king. To the pointed question, "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Saul made answer, "They have brought them from the Amalekites; for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed."

The message of Saul's rejection brought unspeakable grief to the heart of Samuel. It had to be delivered before the whole army of Israel, when they were filled with pride and triumphal rejoicing over a victory that was accredited to the valor and generalship of their king, for Saul had not associated God with the success of Israel in this conflict; but when he saw the evidence of Saul's rebellion, he was greatly stirred with indignation, that he, who had been so highly favored of God, should transgress the commandment of Heaven, and lead Israel into sin. Samuel was not deceived by the subterfuge of the king. With mingled grief and indignation he declares, "Stay, and I will tell thee what the Lord hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on. And Samuel said, When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel." He repeats the command of the Lord concerning Amalek, and demands the reason of the king's disobedience.

Saul persists in self-justification: "Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal."

In stern and solemn words, the prophet sweeps away the refuge of lies, and pronounces the irrevocable sentence. "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings

and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king."

June 8, 1888

The Anointing of David

Six miles south of Jerusalem, "the city of the great King," was Bethlehem, where David was born more than a thousand years before the infant Jesus was cradled in the manger, and worshipped by the wise men from the East. Centuries before the advent of the Saviour of the world, David, in the freshness of boyhood, had kept watch of his flocks as they grazed on the open fields of Bethlehem. The simple shepherd boy sang the songs of his own composing, and the music of his harp made a sweet accompaniment to the melody of his fresh young voice. The Lord had chosen David, and had ordered his life that he might have an opportunity to train his voice, and cultivate his talent for music and poetry. The Lord was preparing him in his solitary life with his flocks, for the work he designed to commit to his trust in afteryears.

While David was thus living in the retirement of his humble shepherd's life, the Lord God was speaking about him to the prophet Samuel. "And the Lord said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.... Take a heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice to the Lord. And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show thee what thou shalt do; and thou shalt anoint unto me him whom I name unto thee. And Samuel did that which the Lord spake, and came to Bethlehem. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, and said, Comest thou peaceably? And he said, Peaceably." The elders accepted an invitation to the sacred feast, and Samuel called them to the sacrifice, and sanctified Jesse and his sons. The altar was built, and the sacrifice was ready. All the household of Jesse were present, with the exception of David, the youngest son, who had been left to guard the sheep, for it was not safe to leave the flocks unprotected.

When the sacrifice was ended, Samuel commenced his prophetic scrutiny of the noble-appearing sons of Jesse. Eliab was the eldest, and more nearly resembled Saul for stature and beauty than the others. His comely features and finely developed form attracted the attention of the prophet. As he looked upon his princely bearing, he thought, This is indeed the man whom God has chosen as successor to Saul, and he waited for the divine sanction that he might anoint him. But Jehovah did not look upon

the outward appearance. The Lord's word to Samuel was, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance; but the Lord looketh on the heart."

What a lesson was given in these words, not only to the prophet, but to the men and women of every generation. No outward beauty of appearance can recommend the soul to God. The wisdom and excellence revealed in the character and deportment, express the true beauty of the man; and it is the inner worth of the heart that determines our acceptance with the Lord of hosts. How deeply should we feel this great and solemn truth in the judgment of ourselves and others. We may learn from the mistake of Samuel, how vain is the estimation that rests on the beauty of the face or the nobility of the stature. We may see how incapable is man's wisdom of understanding the secrets of the heart, or of comprehending the counsels of God without special enlightenment from Heaven. The thoughts and ways of God in relation to his creatures are above our finite minds; but we may be assured that his children will be brought to fill the very place for which they are qualified, and will be enabled to accomplish the very work committed to their hands if they will submit their wills to God, that his beneficent plans may not be frustrated by the perversity of man. Man should stand back and let the Lord do with his own as it seems good, according to his infinite wisdom and mercy.

Eliab passed from the inspection of Samuel, and the six brothers who were in attendance at the service, followed in succession to be observed by the prophet, while all present beheld the scene with the deepest interest; but the Lord did not signify his choice of any of the seven sons of Jesse who stood before the man of God. With painful suspense Samuel had looked upon the last of the young men; the prophet was perplexed and bewildered. Turning to Jesse he inquired, "Are here all thy children?" and he answered, "There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep." Samuel was relieved at once, for he knew that it was one of the sons of Jesse that had been selected by the Lord as the successor of Saul. In decided tones he commanded, "Send and fetch him; for we will not sit down till he come hither."

The lonely shepherd on the hills of Bethlehem was startled by the hasty summons of the messenger who announced that the prophet had come to his father's house, and had sent for him. With surprise he questioned the reason that the prophet and judge of Israel should desire to see him; but without delay, he hastened to the altar. "Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to." As Samuel beheld

with pleasure the handsome, manly, modest shepherd boy, the voice of the Lord spoke to him, saying, "Arise, anoint him; for this is he. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren, and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward." The prophet had accomplished his appointed work, and with a relieved heart he returned to Ramah.

The great honor conferred upon David did not serve to elate him. As humble and modest as before his anointing, the shepherd boy went back to the hills of Bethlehem, and watched and guarded his flocks as tenderly as ever. But with new inspiration he composed his melodies, and played upon his harp. Before him spread a landscape of rich and varied beauty. The vines, with their clustering fruit, brightened in the sunshine. The forest trees, with their green foliage, swayed in the breeze. He beheld the bright luminary of day flooding the heavens with light, coming forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber and rejoicing as a strong man to run a race. The bold summits of the hills reached toward the sky, and in the far-away distance rose the barren cliffs, and the blue heavens garnished by day with the splendid glory of the sun, and by night with the silvery radiance of the stars. And beyond was God. He could not see him, but his works were full of his praise, and daily revelations of the character and majesty of his Creator filled the young poet's heart with adoration and rejoicing. In contemplation of God and his works, the faculties of David's heart and mind were enlarging and strengthening for the work of his after-life.

The light of day, gilding forest and mountain, meadow and stream, carried the mind up to behold the Deity, the Father of lights, the Author of every good and perfect gift. What an enlargement of mind such contemplations brought to the simple shepherd. He was daily coming into a more intimate communion with God. His mind was constantly penetrating into new depths, for fresh themes to inspire his song, and to wake the music of his harp. He poured out the rich melody of his voice upon the air, and it echoed from the hills as if responsive to the rejoicing of the angels' songs in Heaven.

David, in the beauty and might of his young manhood, was taking a high position with the noblest of the earth. His talents, as precious gifts from God, were employed to extol the glory of the divine Giver. His opportunities of contemplation and meditation served to enrich him with that wisdom and piety that made him beloved of God and angels. As he contemplated the perfections of his Creator, richer discoveries of God opened before his soul. As his admiration increased more and more, his heart thrilled

with more fervent adoration and ecstasy. As obscure thoughts were illuminated, as difficulties were made plain, as contradictions were reconciled, as perplexities were harmonized, fresh songs of melody and praise were offered before God. Each ray of new light brought forth fresh bursts of rapture, and sweeter anthems of devotion, to the glory of God and the Redeemer. The love that moved him, the sorrows which beset him, the triumphs that attended him, were all themes for his active thought, and, as he beheld the love of God in all the providences of his life, his heart beat with more fervent adoration and gratitude, his voice rang out in a richer melody, his harp was swept with more exultant joy; and the shepherd boy proceeded from strength to strength, from knowledge to knowledge; for the Spirit of the Lord was upon him.

June 15, 1888

The Coronation of David

When David was assured of the death of Saul and Jonathan, he mourned with sincere sorrow for the king and prince of Israel. When the days of mourning were ended, after calm and earnest reflection he decided that he ought to take some immediate action in behalf of the imperiled and defeated nation. By divine appointment he had been anointed as the king of Israel, and it was fitting that he should take measures for the prosperity of the kingdom. He inquired of the Lord, "Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? And the Lord said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up? And he said, Unto Hebron."

Hebron was twenty miles south of Jerusalem. It was originally called Kirjath-arba, the city of Arba, the father of Anak. Later it was called Mamre, and here was the burial-place of the patriarchs, "the cave of Machpelah." The city lies in a deep valley surrounded by fertile hill country and fruitful lands. The most beautiful vineyards of Palestine we found on its borders, together with numerous plantations of olive and other fruit trees, and excellent pasturage.

David consulted with his faithful followers, and told them what the Lord, who was mighty in counsel, had revealed to him. In accordance with the instruction of the Lord, they prepared to follow the directions given, and were soon in marching order. The armed men came first, then their wives and children, and in the rear followed the flocks and herds. As the caravan approached the city, the men of Judah were waiting to welcome David as the future leader and king of Israel. On his arrival they made immediate preparations for his coronation.

The Philistines did not oppose the action of Judah in making David king, for they thought it would work for their own interest in the end, if they quietly accepted the situation. They expected that David's power would extend, and that he would become a mighty sovereign. But although the nations around him did not interfere with his plans, David's throne and kingly reign were not to be secure from trouble. His coronation by the men of Judah was scarcely accomplished before Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, through the influence of Abner was proclaimed king, and set upon a rival throne in Israel. The

dark work of conspiracy had begun. Abner had been commander-in-chief of Saul's army, and he was well qualified for the position. He was the most distinguished man in the ranks of the people of Israel. He knew that David was appointed by the Lord as the successor of Saul to the throne, but he who had marshaled every army, who had hunted and pursued David while Saul was still living, was not willing that the anointed of the Lord should be established in the kingdom over which Saul had reigned.

The circumstances under which Abner was placed, served to develop his real character, and he revealed himself as a man who was controlled by ambition, unprincipled at heart, and only desirous of exaltation to a high position before men. He acted against David without the least reverence for God's expressed command, or the slightest regard for the dictates of an enlightened conscience. Abner had a decided hatred of David. He had been intimately associated with Saul, and had been influenced by the spirit of the king to despise the man whom God had chosen to reign on the throne of Israel. Once having placed himself on the wrong side, he brought all his power and influence to bear against the servant of God. His hatred had been increased by the cutting rebuke that David had given him at the time when the cruse of water and the spear of the king had been taken from the side of Saul, as he slept in the cave. He remembered how David had reminded him of his fault before the king and the people of Israel, and had cried in their hearing, "Art not thou a valiant man? and who is like to thee in Israel? wherefore then hast thou not kept thy lord the king? for there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy lord. This thing is not good that thou hast done. As the Lord liveth, ye are worthy to die, because ye have not kept your master, the Lord's anointed. And now see where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his bolster." This reproof had rankled in his breast, and he determined to carry out his revengeful purposes, and create division in Israel, whereby he himself might be exalted. To this end he employed the representative of departed royalty to advance his own selfish ambitions and purposes. He knew that the people loved Jonathan. His memory was cherished, and Saul's first successful campaigns were not forgotten by the army. With determination worthy a better cause, the rebel chieftain went forward to carry out his plans. At Mahanaim he secured the coronation of Ishbosheth, and the tribes of Israel proclaimed him their king, but Judah still acknowledged David as their sovereign. For two years the son of Saul enjoyed his honors in his secluded capital.

"There was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David," for Abner was determined to gain his desire at any cost. The question may be asked, "What

shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Success, in such a case, is a terrible disaster. Far better is humility, and the loss of high-sounding titles, than to run any risk of the loss of the soul. Better far the cross and the disappointment, better far shattered hopes, and the world's neglect, than to sit with princes and forfeit Heaven. Abner had desired honor, and he was determined to have it at any cost. David had rebuked him before Israel, and his proud spirit chafed under the words of reproof. His malice and hate were directed toward him who had discovered and pointed out the weakness of his character; and those whom God leads and guides in these last days will experience trials of a similar nature to those that came upon David, the servant of God. There is a decided hatred of reproof in the hearts of men. Cautions and warnings are not thankfully received, and, as with Abner, so those who cherish pride, will manifest a spirit of malice toward those who administer reproof. Satan seems to take possession of those who wish to rank among the highest, and yet have not those true principles that would place them in positions of trust and responsibility. They would rather be exalted by the enemies of the truth, and be poor and miserable and wretched in the high estimate of Heaven, than to submit to humiliation in the ranks of the servants of God. Such men go out from the body of the believers, denying the faith they once proclaimed; they deliberately set aside one of the simplest and most unequivocal commandments of God, that they may exalt themselves, and follow the way of the world; but those who humbly wait on the Lord, fulfilling his requirements, will be exalted in due time.

The Scriptures declare that the house of "David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker." And the time came that the enemies of David were slain. After the death of Ishbosheth, there was a general desire among the leading men of Israel that David should be proclaimed as the king of all the tribes of Israel. "Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron, and spake, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh." There seemed to be an awakening among the people to acknowledge God's ways, and to yield up their own ways. They understood the purpose of the Lord concerning David, but they had worked contrary to their light and knowledge. They dare not longer hold themselves as enemies to the Lord's appointed ruler. They acknowledged now what they would have acknowledged long before if they had followed the convictions of their own hearts, and had not yielded their reason to deception and delusion. They declare of David, "Thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel; and the Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel." When they were leavened with the spirit of Saul and

Abner, they did not care to be the friend of David. They regarded him as an enemy, and treated him as such, thus acting the part of traitors, because they were deceived and blinded, and were working in darkness, contrary to the will of God. Now as their eyes begin to be opened to the real nature of the course which they have pursued, they desire to be at peace with David.

"So all the elders of Israel came to the King to Hebron; and King David made a league with them in Hebron before the Lord." They assured the king that they recognized his divine appointment to the kingdom of Israel, and David was greatly pleased, for he knew that their hearts had been touched by the Spirit of the Lord, and their eyes had been enlightened to see light in God's light. He knew that the promises of God to him and to Israel would be fulfilled if they walked according to the counsel of the Lord. It was evident to his mind that the dealings of the Lord with him had prepared him for the duties and responsibilities of his office. Through the providence of God, the way had been opened for him to come to the throne of Israel. He had no personal ambition to gratify, for he had not sought the honor to which he had been brought.

More than eight thousand of the descendants of Aaron, and of the Levites, waited upon David. The great change in the sentiments of the people was marked and decisive. The revolution was quiet and dignified, befitting the great work they were doing. Nearly half a million souls, the former subjects of Saul, thronged Hebron. The very hills and valleys were alive with the multitudes. The hour for the coronation was appointed, and the man who had been expelled from the courts of Saul, who had fled to preserve his life to the mountains and hills, and to the caves of the earth, was about to receive the highest honor that can be conferred upon man by his brother man. David, the hero of the hour, was arrayed in the royal robe, while around him was a most imposing company. Priests and elders clothed in the garments of their sacred office, officers and soldiers with glittering spear and helmet, and strangers from long distances, stood to witness the coronation of the chosen king. The sacred oil was put upon the brow of David by the high priest, for the anointing by Samuel was a prophetic ceremony of what would take place at the inauguration of the king. The time had come, and David, by solemn rite, is consecrated by the nation to his office as God's appointed vicegerent. The scepter, a signal of royalty and power, is placed in his hands. The covenant is written of his righteous sovereignty, and the people give their pledges of loyalty. The diadem is placed upon his brow, and the coronation ceremony is over. Israel has a king by the appointment of God.

Saul had been after the heart of Israel, but David is a man after God's own heart. And now the procession moves toward the gate of the city with the highest enthusiasm, crying, "Long live king David." The musicians express the gladness of the hour by notes of joy with voice and instrument. When David is seated upon his throne, his subjects congratulate him that God has established him as the ruler of Israel, and they declare their joy in having such a king to reign over them. The ceremonies of the day were over, and he who had waited patiently on the Lord beheld the promise of God fulfilled. "And David went on, and grew great, and the Lord God of hosts was with him."

June 22, 1888

David's Throne Established at Jerusalem

As soon as David was established on the throne of Israel, he began to plan for a more appropriate position for the capital of his realm. Twenty miles from Hebron a place was selected as the future metropolis of the kingdom. Before Joshua had led the armies of Israel over Jordan to the promised possession, it had been called Salem. Near this place Abraham had proved his loyalty to God. He had prepared an altar, and had laid upon it his only son Isaac, in obedience to the command of the Lord. Here had been the home of Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God, nearly nine hundred years before the coronation of David. It held a central and elevated position in the country, and it was barricaded by an environment of hills. On the north rose Lebanon, with its snow-crowned summits.

Away to the south stretched the Arabian desert, with its moving sands. To the west were the waters of the Mediterranean, and to the east were the Dead Sea and the river Jordan.

In order to secure this much-desired location, the Hebrews must dispossess a remnant of the old Canaanites. King David called for men to besiege and take the city of Jebus from their heathen enemies. A large force gathered at the command of the King, and David left his throne, and his armies surrounded and took the city, and the capital of Israel was moved to Jebus. This heathen name was changed to the City of David, and it was afterward called Jerusalem, and Mount Zion. "And David went on, and grew great, and the Lord God of hosts was with him."

Tyre was a rich city on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, and Hiram, king of Tyre, sought the friendship of Israel, and rendered them assistance in various undertakings. Hiram "sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons; and they built David a house. And David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake."

When the Philistines heard that David had been anointed king over all the tribes

of Israel, they "came up to seek David; and David heard of it, and went down to the hold." The Philistines marshaled an immense force, hoping again to bring Israel into subjection. They spread themselves in the valley of Rephaim. "David inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into my hand?" And the Lord bade David go up, and promised to deliver the Philistines into his hand.

King David asked counsel of the Lord in his extremity, and the Lord hearkened and heard, and answered his servant, and Israel was victorious. But the Philistines made a more decided display, that they might intimidate Israel. Their numbers were very great. Again David sought the Lord, and the great I AM became the general of the armies of Israel. God himself laid the plan of the attack. He instructed David, saying, "Thou shalt not go up; but fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees. And let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going in the top of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself; for then shall the Lord go out before thee, to smite the host of the Philistines."

If David had chosen his own way, as did Saul, success would not have attended his warfare. But David did as the Lord had commanded, and he "smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gazer." Saul had been honored of God to occupy a high position of trust. He was tested and proven of the Lord, but he did not obey the voice of God. He had become tired of his simplicity, and he chose to follow his own finite judgment, and departed from the Lord. Saul had been a man of striking personal attractions, and at the beginning of his reign the Spirit of the Lord had been upon him. After his coronation he had been a changed man; but pride came into his heart, and he became lifted up in his own estimation. He thought, as some success had attended his plans and his generalship, that his prosperity was due to the wise movements he had made. The people praised him, and gave glory to him, and did not acknowledge the Lord as the prime mover in all their successes. Through his appointed agents, God had given definite instruction; but those who were self-sufficient, and puffed up with pride,--the poor, finite beings whom God had given position, and endowed with honor,--had concluded that they understood the situation of things far better than did the Lord, and they determined to follow their own way, and have their own will carried out, and unite with the godless.

The Maker of mind possesses in himself alone the principles of life and action that must regulate and govern inferior minds. The natural, selfish mind, as it exists in its

carnal state, acts without reference to God, and is evil, and only evil, continually. The soul cannot be in a state of peace or safety unless it is waiting upon God and receiving instruction from him. Saul's heart was estranged from God; and when he was reproved by Samuel, he stubbornly refused to admit that he had disobeyed God, although the lowing of the oxen, and the bleating of the sheep, sounded in the ears of the king and the prophet, and the king of the Amalekites, who, with all his nation and their possessions, was devoted to utter destruction, was preserved alive in the camp of Israel. While Saul persisted in self-justification, he knew in his heart that he had decidedly transgressed the commandment of the Lord. He was displeased that the Lord did not recognize his judgment, and approve of the victory he had gained, which was the most brilliant of his successes. But the Lord does not look upon successes as men do. Obedience to his word is counted as of more value than the most brilliant conquest that is gained in opposition to his will. In heart and act, Saul was decidedly opposed to the will of God. He flattered himself that in sparing Agag he was manifesting more mercy than the Judge of all the earth. And he told the prophet that the sheep and oxen, which God had ordered to be slain, were to be presented before him as sacrifices in Gilgal.

We have often been grieved to meet this same spirit of self-justification in those who profess in this day to be doing the will of God, while they are living in transgression of his holy law. Those who depart from God's way to follow their own way, refuse to acknowledge their perversity and sin when reproved by the servants of God. As did Saul, so do these stubbornly fortify themselves in their rebellion, that they may hold fast to their errors and defects. God's voice is heard, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it;" but they have wandered on forbidden ground, and in place of making full and free confession they do everything that is possible to make it appear that they are rebuked without cause, and are innocent of the charges brought against them. In this way they make God out a liar. The displeasure of the Lord is kindled against them; and unless they repent, and turn to him, his wrath will certainly fall upon them. "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."

Those whose deeds are evil, will not come to the light, lest their deeds should be reproved and their real characters revealed. If they continue in the path of transgression, and sever themselves entirely from the Redeemer, stubbornness, and sullenness, and a spirit of revenge will take possession of them, and they will say to their own souls, Peace, peace, when there is every reason that they should be alarmed, for their steps are directed toward destruction. As Saul resisted the reproofs of the servant of the Lord, this

spirit took possession of him. He defied the Lord, he defied his servant, and his enmity toward David was the outworking of the murderous spirit that comes into the heart of those who justify themselves in the face of their guilt.

David had sought and obtained divine instruction, and he obeyed the voice of the Lord, and gave the glory of his success to the Lord, who had delivered the enemies of Israel into his hands. Oh that the people of God, at all times and in every extremity, would seek the Lord, who is the sovereign ruler of all worlds, and the general of all the armies of those who honor and serve him. We need to pray more, and to trust less in our own power. When sincere prayer is offered, and our souls are humbled in deep contrition before God, and are not lifted up in self-importance, the Lord will bless his people. The promise is given, that those who commit their way unto the Lord, shall be directed in the path of righteousness. Those who truly seek and obtain God's favor and help, and preserve their union with Heaven, will not glorify themselves, but they will glorify God for his great power and majesty that has wrought in their behalf.

June 29, 1888

Praise the Lord

The lovers of the truth of God should be the happiest people in the earth, because "he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Holiness is happiness, because holiness is a part of Heaven. How can we be unhappy when we see so many evidences of the love of God to us, expressed in his created works? How many look with indifference upon the tokens of God's regard for their happiness! When I look upon the lofty trees, and contemplate the loving heavenly Father who has planted them for us, my heart is drawn out in praise and thanksgiving. We should seek to see the relation of natural things to the spiritual truths of God; then, in looking upon the works of nature, the mind will be instinctively drawn to the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

The glorious things of nature seem to have been designed for the very purpose of illustrating Bible truth. It is evident that the Author of nature is the Author of the Bible. God is a lover of the beautiful, and he has given unmistakable evidences of his love for man, in the beauties of the material world. He has garnished the Heavens with matchless and wonderful splendor. He has clothed the earth with a carpet of velvet-like green, and given to the flowers their beautiful and varied tints. Everywhere we look we see reasons for praising the God of Heaven.

Suppose that a benevolent person should provide a beautiful home, and surround it with everything to be desired, and then present it to a poor man who had nothing to give in exchange for it but a grateful heart. The benevolent man has no other motive in this act than to make the poor man happy, and give him an evidence of his love for him, and his interest in his welfare. Suppose that the recipient of these gifts should regard them with indifference, and even manifest dissatisfaction, by pointing out defects in the beautiful arrangements, would you not disapprove of this course? Would you not say this man is not worthy of such blessings, for he has no grateful remembrance of the loving giver?

Well, what are we doing with the gifts that God has so richly bestowed upon us? Do we not overlook the most precious things in nature? Do we not fail to appreciate the

things that are lovely and charming to the senses, and manifest no gratitude, and have no thankfulness to return to God, who has provided these very things as an expression of his love toward us? Do we closely investigate these treasures in various ways, that we may take in all the depth of his love in providing them for our comfort and delight? Do the glories of earth, and sea, and sky, kindle in our hearts grateful, happy thoughts of God? Do you read in the lofty trees, in the waving grass, in the flowers of the field, the lesson that is taught there,--that God loves you?

I listen to the happy songsters caroling forth their hymns of praise to God above, and joy kindles in my own heart. But how does our heavenly Father regard the indifference with which men receive the tokens of his love to them? How can he look upon those who never give to him the glory that is due unto his great name? He is described in his created works, and nature teaches you of his character and majesty.

Said Jesus, "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." And shall we be inconsiderate of the flowers of God? Shall we regard with indifference these tokens of the wonderful love of God toward fallen man? In contemplating the works of his hand, our imaginations are to be put to the stretch. We are to look up to the royal gifts that await the faithful and obedient child of Heaven. The apostle declares, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him."

We see the varied gifts of God in nature, but we see but the faintest gleaming of his glory. Our hearts should be filled with praise to him who will ever act in harmony with his own greatness; and in looking upon the works of God, by faith we may contemplate what we shall behold if we are fitted for the mansions that Jesus has gone to prepare for those who love him. Then let us not go through the world neglecting to see and to appreciate the wonderful things with which God has surrounded us. Let us not forget to talk of the compassion of our heavenly Father, who hath provided all things richly to enjoy. Let us not begin to grumble, because we see thistles and thorns. God did not tell you to look upon these. He did not bid you grasp the thorns, that would wound and bruise your flesh, and grieve your spirit. Turn your eyes away from these things to the attractive loveliness of that which is beautiful. Think on these things, talk of the wonderful works of your Creator and Redeemer. Talk of the price that was given to win these things for you. Dwell upon the theme of salvation. Talk of the tender love

of God, who gave his only begotten Son to die on Calvary, that we might come into possession of eternal riches.

Oh, what value we may see every day in the unspeakable gifts of God! Shall we not rid the heart of the base thing that has taken possession of it, which makes us incapable of appreciating the matchless love of our heavenly Father? Shall we not now tune our hearts to praise God from whom all blessings flow? Let us stop every breath of complaint, and shape our words into songs of joy and thankfulness for the gift of his dear Son to save a perishing world. If we would be among those who will praise God in the world to come, we must begin to praise him here, and now. We must tune our hearts to the music of Heaven, which is praise to God and to the Lamb forever and ever. Let Christians show that they are Christ-like, that they are breathing in the atmosphere of Heaven.

Jesus says, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." If Christians would manifest the joy that Christ is willing to give them, they would represent the religion of the Bible much better than they now do. We are to be in the world, but we are not to be of it. We are to see and appreciate all the beauties in nature, and we are to let the favors of God lift up our minds to the bountiful Giver. We are to express, by precept and example, that we are the possessors of peace, and trust, and fullness of joy. We are to cultivate gratitude and love and praise in our hearts, that through his promises, richer than precious pearls, we may discern the purposes of God toward us. As the flowers gather for themselves the hidden properties of earth and air, and develop into things of beauty to delight our senses, so Christians are privileged to gather from the garden of God's promises, faith and hope, peace, joy, and support. They are to give out again to others a life fragrant with good works.

In the promises, God withdraws the veil from Heaven, and bids us look into the glory prepared for those who love him. Why do we so constantly take our gaze away from these things of unsurpassed loveliness in the inheritance of the saints in light, and fix our eyes upon the things that are dark and forbidding? Why do we gather up the clouds of unbelief about our souls, and enshroud ourselves in an atmosphere that is only discouraging, and will bring death to our spirituality? God would have us learn lessons from the lily that opens its pure white blossoms upon the bosom of the lake. The flower

reposes in spotless loveliness, while all around it, on the surface of the water, are unseemly and obnoxious things. The lily strikes its stem deeper and still deeper into the pure waters and sands, far beneath the surface of the lake, and refuses everything that would taint and pollute its purity. It only draws to itself those properties that will aid its development into a spotless lily.

Shall we not learn lessons from this lily? Although we are in a world teeming with moral corruption, we have no need to gather to our souls the disgusting pollutions of earth. We may refuse the evil. We may choose the good. We may gather to our souls the precious, the pure, the heavenly; we may put into our character-building solid timber, that will make a fit temple for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. On the other hand we may gather to our souls evil suggestions, and doubts and impurities. We may communicate with the prince of darkness, and refuse the Prince of light. We may put unworthy, unsound timbers into our character-building; and our thoughts, our words, our influence, will lead others into darkness. Our words and works will not be a savor of life unto life, but of death unto death. While we claim to be Christians, if we do not gather with Christ we shall be agents of Satan, to beguile souls away into the paths of destruction. God forbid that this should be the case. Let your life be a continual testimony that you belong to Christ. Represent your Lord in kindness, in forbearance, in long-suffering, in patience, in thinking no evil, in cheerfulness, in fullness of joy. You will do this, if you let your faith penetrate every cloud. Draw to yourself the graces of the Spirit, weave them into a character that will develop itself in good works. Let men see that because you have become a partaker of the divine nature, you have escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

In the work of overcoming sinful habits, special grace will be given to all that sincerely desire it. We may come to the divine Helper, who is able to succor those who are in the midst of temptation and evil. The loving kindness of God is not all reserved for the future, eternal reward, but it is abundant for the present needs of his people. All the changes of life, all the hard places in the way to Heaven, will be blessed by the grace that is sufficient for every trial. We have assuring promises of protection and help. The everlasting arms will be beneath us to encourage, sustain, and uphold. Poverty or wealth, sickness or health, simplicity or wisdom, all are provided for in the promises of his grace. There is light for the intellect, love for the heart, and vigor for every faculty. If we will not lay hold on the blessings God has provided for us, if we will only grasp hold of the thorns and the thistles, to wound and bruise ourselves, we have no right to

complain of God's dealings with us.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections 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." Praise God, brethren and sisters. Praise him with heart, and soul, and voice, and thus you will be learning to sing the songs of Heaven.

July 6, 1888

Steps in Conversion

He who desires salvation should fix his mind upon the cross of Calvary. It is there that the sinner may behold what sin has done. There he can see the infinite sacrifice that has been made to redeem him from the penalty of the broken law of God. As the transgressor realizes his lost condition, he sees in Christ his only hope of salvation. From the cross he learns precious lessons of the life, the self-denial, the self-sacrifice, the goodness, the mercy and love of the Son of God, who gave himself for us. Calvary portrays the matchless attributes of the divine character. As he looks to the cross, he will hate sin; for he will understand that it was sin that rejected, reproached, denied, scourged, and crucified the Majesty of Heaven. He will love the Father, who gave all Heaven to men in the gift of his only begotten Son. His heart will be filled with an eager desire for the knowledge of God, and for an understanding of the plan of salvation. He who has had a vivid view of the cross, will hate sin, and love righteousness. His doubts will vanish in the clear light reflected from the cross of Calvary.

The plain statements of the word of God declare that "sin is the transgression of the law;" and as the sinner realizes his attitude toward God, if he is truly repentant he will hasten to leave the black banner of the prince of rebellion, and will take his stand under the blood-stained banner of the Prince Emmanuel. He will receive the divine illumination, and will approve the things that are excellent. He will see that Christ is the propitiation for his sin; not that sin might become a virtue, but that it might become exceedingly sinful. He will cease to transgress the divine law, and will take his stand with those who are loyal to the God of Heaven.

The word of God will be read with a humble and teachable spirit by him who is seeking for its hidden treasures of wisdom and truth. As men seek to come into harmony with God, they will find that the offense of the cross has not ceased. As the sinner yields obedience to all the requirements of God, he will find that principalities, and powers, and wicked spirits in high places, are arrayed against him. But the follower of Christ cannot avoid shame and reproach. He cannot go with the multitude of them that do evil, who make void the law of God by their tradition. His eyes must be fixed upon the cross where Jesus died that humanity might be elevated and ennobled, and re-

instated in the favor of the heavenly Father. He must follow Him whose righteousness shall be imputed unto all that are faithful and obedient.

Through the perfect obedience of the Son of God, through the merits of his blood, and the power of his intercession, man may become a partaker of the divine nature, and escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust. He may again be brought into the favor of God,--not while in willful transgression, not while trampling upon the great moral standard of righteousness, but by obedience to the precepts of God's law, through faith in his Son.

The cross of Calvary tells how Christ has magnified the law and made it honorable. It required the infinite merits of his blood to make an atonement for those who receive his love, and follow in his footsteps. Man may obtain pardon and peace only through Him who has loved us, and who will wash us from our sins in his own blood. Those who have been convinced of sin before the law, and have exercised repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, cease to make void the law of God. Although the whole world were arrayed against them, they could but vindicate its righteousness, and fulfill its obligations.

We could never have known the value of Christ, except through an understanding of the exalted claims of the law of Jehovah. We could never have appreciated the depth of the pit from which Christ has rescued us, except through a comprehension of the excellence of the precepts of truth. Never could we have understood the depth of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, unless we could have beheld the marvelous character of the law of Heaven and earth. In the light of that holy law, the sinner sees the Redeemer as he is,--full of mercy, compassion, goodness, and love; and by looking to Jesus, and by contemplating his matchless love to such a sinner as himself, his heart is filled with gratitude and heavenly peace.

As the sinner grasps the promises of God by faith, a blessed confidence comes into his soul, and he receives the illumination of the Spirit of God. A contemplation of the cross of Christ on Calvary, enables the mind to form correct ideas of the plan of redemption. Those who do this will have a better appreciation of what the sinner must become in character and life if he would be accounted worthy of eternal life. The law of God will stand out in clear distinctness before the mind's eye.

Although the law of God is of a holy and unchangeable character, the adversary of God and man, the first great rebel who transgressed its precepts in Heaven, has led men in all ages to war against God. Through all manner of deceptions he has gathered them under the black banner of rebellion. But Jesus came to our world to bring to men moral power to resist the devices of Satan, and to become loyal subjects to the God of Heaven. As the sinner sees that sin is the transgression of the law, and that the law is the foundation of God's government in Heaven and in earth, he makes haste to place his feet in the path of righteousness, that he may be without offense till the day of Christ.

Those who seek, by every effort possible, to make void the law of God, act contrary to their convictions, and use arguments that have no force, because "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." But the humble, honest, sincere soul will approve the things that are excellent, notwithstanding the fact that by so doing he will have to become a partaker with Christ of his sufferings. Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, the obedient child of God will manifest to the world that he is vitally connected with Christ, the living vine.

The word of truth declares that "by their fruits ye shall know them." In order to test the character of every man's fruits, it is necessary to have a standard. God has provided that standard for us in the precepts of his law, and there is nothing else by which to try men's characters and doctrines. Says the prophet, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." The world has been following the prince of darkness; but those who desire to follow Christ, will have to come out from the world, and be separate from its follies and fashions. "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."

Nothing in the line of fables can satisfy a soul that is longing for Bible truth, and who feels that eternal interests are at stake. A plausible supposition will not do, nor can an assertion be found sufficient to quiet an aroused conscience. The earnest seeker for truth must have a plain "Thus saith the Lord." He does not want to approve of unrighteousness, but of things that are excellent. He is determined not to rest his hope of salvation on anything that is of a doubtful nature. He must have the assurance of the word of God as to whether he is a rebel to his law, or loyal to his rules of government. Ingenious, fine-spun theories, and arguments, that seek to prove that God's law is of no further force, do not satisfy a soul tortured with conviction of sin. He cannot rest in

suspense. He thinks, "Suppose that the law of God does hold its claims upon every human being as it did upon Adam in Eden, and I should receive these ingenious theories, and be found on the side of the great rebel at last. Then I would be a lost soul, and would justly share the fate of the transgressor." Groaning under the load of sin, he cries out, "Am I God's friend, or his foe? As he contemplates the cross of Calvary, the true light shines to him. He sees, in the plan of salvation, that the death of Christ is an unanswerable argument as to the immutable character of the law. The law of God is as unchangeable as its author; and because not one precept could be changed or altered to meet man in his fallen condition, the Son of God had to die, the just for the unjust. He bore the penalty of man's disobedience, that man might be re-instated in the favor of God, and by a life of humble obedience might form such a character as would be accounted worthy of a place in the kingdom of God.

As these truths flash upon the mind of the sinner, a moral revolution takes place. He realizes that the testimony of the word and the Spirit agree; and doubt is swept away. He can rejoice in Christ as his living Saviour, his substitute, his surety, his strength and righteousness. The day-star has arisen in his heart. Christ is formed within, the hope of glory; and with John, the language of the soul is, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." He has a foundation for his faith. It is Christ, the Rock of Ages. He dares to love him, for the light reflected from the cross of Calvary reveals his Saviour to his soul, as "the chiefest among ten thousand," and the one "altogether lovely."

July 13, 1888

The Christian's Work

The true Christian will be meek, gentle, willing to learn, teachable, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits. Those who are truly religious will not become stubborn, set in their way, and unyielding in their opinions. They will be ready to prove all things, and to hold fast that which is good. They will consider themselves as learners in the school of Christ. They will not be of that class who are ever ready to lecture others to condemn and criticise, and to impugn the motives of their friends and neighbors. The Christian is to represent Jesus, who is the light of the world. To take a position as above the brethren, is to take the position of the Pharisee. Let the meekness of Jesus appear in words of wisdom, and in an irreproachable conduct that will recommend your faith to those with whom you associate.

Heaven is open to us. Everyone may find access to the source of strength. From the gates ajar, the light of the better world is shining into the path of the just. Mothers may come to Jesus with their worries and perplexities. They may find grace sufficient to support them, and to aid them in the management of their children. They may be enabled to conduct their household affairs in a manner that will glorify God. Let them study less how to make the outward appearance attractive, and devote more time to the education and training of their children, that they may meet the approval of God. He who is high and lifted up, esteems a meek and quiet spirit as of great price. Its possessor is of more value in his eyes than the gold of Ophir. If, then, this spirit makes character so acceptable to God, how earnestly should mothers pray and labor, that their households may be adorned with this precious ornament. If the many hours that are devoted to improving the outward appearance, were devoted by mothers to prayer, and to the study of the Scriptures, in order to learn how to mould the characters of their charges, what a difference would be seen in the society of the church which is composed of these families.

The lesson which we have individually to learn in the school of Christ, is how we can use our God-given influence and ability in a manner which Christ will accept, and in a way that will make us the light of the world. You are not to study how you can please the world, or how you can enjoy the world, but how you may exert an influence

that will bless man, and lead souls to Christ. Dedicate yourselves to Christ. Commit the keeping of your souls to God, as unto a faithful Creator. Take hold of his strength, and he will work with your efforts. You cannot afford to waste or misuse your God-given powers or opportunities. The time is now yours to perfect your own characters and those of your children, that you may be useful in this life, and fitted for the eternal life that is to come. A life devoted to God in works of faithfulness, is a witness to men of the power of godliness.

There are many who forsake the fountain of living waters, and hew out for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water; but Christ, the Rock of Ages, invites the weary and the wandering to come unto him and find rest for their souls, to come and obtain peace and salvation. Many are walking apart from Christ, not obeying his words or working his works, and yet they are pretending to be holy; but this claim will not stand the test of the Judgment. It is true that our works will not save us, and yet no one will be saved without good works. A pure life, a holy character, must be attained by everyone who would enter the portals of the city of God. The moralist, trusting in his own goodness, will be found wanting. Like Cain, he presents a sacrifice which does not recognize the blood of Jesus as essential to cleanse from the defilement of sin. Every sinner must have virtue that is not possessed by himself. Our door-post must be marked by the atoning blood, thus acknowledging our own inefficiency, and the merits of the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world; for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.

Fathers and mothers, you should feel the necessity of saying, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Then the world would not hesitate to place you with Christians. Men will not be acquainted with the motives that actuate you, or know the principles that move you; but they will see your determination to move in the fear of God. You will not join them in the chase after pleasure, nor in following the fashions and customs of the world. You will not be in harmony with their tastes, their plans, and conversations. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

As Christ is pure in his sphere, man may be pure in his. We have a work to do for ourselves which no one can do for us, and we must appreciate the time and the opportunities that are given to us, that we may prepare for the eternal world. Fathers and

mothers, it is your privilege to be sanctified to God, and to bring your children to Jesus, by earnest prayer, by living faith, by constant, untiring effort. Never was Jesus more willing to prove to you that he is the Rock of Ages than he is today. Never before have the people of God had greater encouragement to trust in Jesus than they have today. It will be very hard for us to excuse our neglect, or to bring reasons why we should not believe in our Saviour, and sing,

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in thee."

The life of the true-hearted Christian will be as the light of the world. The spiritual life will not be manifested by proud boasting. It has its seat in a heart that displays the working of the Spirit of Christ in the character and thought. There will be manifested meekness, humility, tender compassion, love, faith, and hope. Teach your children to seek meekness, quietness, and purity. These are the ornaments that can be worn with the approval of God. Parents, let your adorning not be the outward adorning, but the inward adorning of the heart, in that which is not corruptible. The ornaments that God would have the Christian wear are of an immortal character.

Parents should seek to become thoroughly acquainted with their children. Oh, may the Lord impress them with the necessity of laboring for them, in order to bring them to Jesus! Oh that they might realize the far-reaching influence of the impressions of early life! These impressions are either for good or for evil, and they leave their traces in the character, which is developing day by day. Parents will be held responsible for the influence they exert, and for the development of their children. In the day of Judgment they will have to meet the record of their work.

No higher work was ever committed to mortals than the shaping of character. Children are not only to be educated, but trained as well; and who can tell the future of a growing child, or youth? Let the greatest care be bestowed upon the culture of your children. One child, properly disciplined in the principles of truth, who has the love and fear of God woven through the character, will possess a power for good in the world that cannot be estimated. The work of wise parents will never be appreciated by the world, but when the Judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened, their work will appear as God views it, and will be rewarded before men and angels. It will be seen that one child who has been brought up in a faithful way, has been a light in the world. It cost tears and anxiety and sleepless nights to oversee the character-building of this

child, but the work was done wisely, and the parents hear the "Well done" of the Master.

Mothers, you can find no greater missionary field wherein to exercise your talents, than in the home, where your children are to be reared in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. You are not merely to dress them, feed them, and send them to school; but you are to patiently instruct them, giving them line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little. You are to restrain the evil tendencies, and to encourage the good. Day by day you are to seek the help of God by earnest importuning and supplication. To be at ease, to suffer them to go on in a wrong course, indifferent to the results, is a neglect of your God-given duties, and will reveal the worst effects for time and for eternity. Satan is at hand to crowd in evil thoughts, to lead them into evil ways. He will possess the heart that is not given to Jesus that he may impress it, and wash it, and cleanse it, and sanctify it for the courts of Heaven.

The mother should not be off guard for a moment. She is doing a work that will tell in time and in eternity. She should learn to depend upon God with implicit confidence. Children, when they become of age, will prize the parent who labored faithfully, and would not permit them to cherish wrong feelings or indulge in evil habits. Parents, you may find your children impatient of restraint, at first. They may rebel, but you should insist upon obedience. Children trained to obey their parents will be in a condition to love God, and to yield to the claims of his law.

July 20, 1888

The Need of Earnestness

We must not take the word of any man as authoritative on matters that concern our eternal interests. We must go to the Scriptures for ourselves. We must search for truth as for hidden treasures. No man can pay a redemption price for our souls; and those who stand condemned at the bar of God because they believed the testimony of man rather than the testimony of God, will appreciate the worth of the word of God. Those who deceived them cannot save their souls, nor the souls that they were instrumental in leading into error, away from Christ and the truth. God's word was given to lead men into truth, but many did not search its pages for themselves, and thus they were separated from him by wicked works.

The time in which we live is full of peril. Although Noah, and Job, and Daniel were in the land, they could not save son or daughter. They could only deliver their own souls by their righteousness. We must individually stand or fall for ourselves, as we shall be judged by the great moral standard of God's holy law. We must watch. We must pray. We must search the Scriptures. We must know that we have a foundation for our faith. The cross of Calvary reveals the fact that if sin is found upon us, we shall hear the word, "Depart, ye workers of iniquity." We want to dig deep, and lay a sure foundation. We should be in earnest to obtain a living experience for ourselves. We must be partakers of the divine nature, if we would not be found warring against the divine law. We want our sins blotted out, and our names written in the Lamb's book of life. We must be joined to Christ, grow up in him, and become like him in character and spirit. If we are thus united to Christ, we shall feel our constant dependence upon him. We shall see that there is nothing in us to make us self-sufficient, nothing in us in which we can trust; therefore we shall be clothed with humility.

I would that our eyes could be opened to see and to realize our danger of departing from the principles of God's law. Jesus, the world's Redeemer, the adorable Son of God, agonized with the Father, with strong crying and tears. This was not on his own account; but because we feel so little our need of fervent, earnest prayer; because we see so little our danger. He wept because we have no tears to shed. Our hearts are in danger of becoming hard and unimpressible.

We should seek more and more for the light and knowledge that we so much need. We want the grace of God abundantly bestowed upon us, that we may flourish as the palm-tree. We are in danger of losing our souls, because of confidence in self. We want to see our great need of a daily connection with Christ. We want to see that he alone can cleanse us from all unrighteousness. He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Why are our hearts so cold? Why is our service so lifeless?

Let us arise in faith, and press closer to Jesus. Let us rejoice in his love. We may obtain the most precious victories. There is help for us in God. Let us grasp the promises, and look to Calvary. Jesus died to save us from sin; then let us cease to sin, and open the heart wide, that he may come in and abide with us.

The loveliness of the character of Christ, must be seen in his followers. It was his delight to do the will of God. Zeal for the glory of God was the controlling power in his mind. His unlikeness to the world provoked the bitter hostility of those who hated truth and righteousness. Because he would give no license for the exercise of the evil passions of our nature, he aroused the fiercest opposition and enmity.

The spotless Son of God was derided and mocked because of his unswerving obedience to the principle of God's holy law. So it will be with all who live godly in Christ Jesus.

Let no one talk of an easy religion. Let no one imagine that the path to Heaven is smooth and pleasant, that there is nothing to do but to believe. We are to be workers together with God; and through diligent and painstaking effort alone, can the conditions of the promises be met. The words of inspiration declare that "faith without works is dead, being alone." We are exhorted to "fight the good fight of faith." We are to wrestle with unseen foes, to labor, to watch, to strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many will be content with simple seeking, and will fail of an entrance. "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat;" but "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

We are enjoined to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, "for it is

God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." We are required to take upon our necks the yoke of Christ, because every good impulse comes from the Spirit of God, and we are quickened to earnest effort for a higher life. We are to strive to repress every word that implies a doubt; for doubt spoken, is a seed sown in the minds of others, and eternity alone will reveal the result. Here is the conflict, to keep back words that we are inclined to speak against God and each other; for "by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Our words are influences that impress the minds of others, and they are reflected in every direction. Shall we cast suspicion upon others? Shall we start the root of bitterness whereby many shall be defiled? Religion is a principle to be carried out in practical life, and developed in character and actions. We are ever to represent Jesus. We are to comfort, uphold, and encourage our brethren. We are to strengthen those who are weak in moral power. Oh! be sure that you do not misrepresent the character of your divine Lord by claiming to be sons and daughters of God, while speaking and acting like the children of the wicked one. Do not leave a false impression upon the minds of unbelievers, that Christians are a gloomy, unhappy people. Why should we be unhappy? If our feet are in the royal path cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, what is there that can make us unhappy and restless?

Have not some of you mistaken the way, and taken the wrong path? Shall we not search carefully, and see whether or not we have real Bible religion? Let us ponder the warnings, instructions, and promises of God, until our souls burn within us, and our whole desire is to stand by the side of Jesus, and wear his yoke, and bear his burden, and find rest unto our souls.

July 27, 1888

A Vital Connection with Christ

He who has genuine faith in Christ will have a knowledge of Christ. He will have a growing sense of the power and preciousness of redeeming love and grace, because Christ has been brought into his daily life. He believes in Christ as his Saviour, and hopes in the mercy of God. Although he knows that he is a sinner, and deserves the wrath of God, yet he looks to Calvary and sees the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. He knows that Christ has died for him, and that in Christ it is possible to keep the commandments of God. He has the witness in his own soul of the virtue and the love of Jesus, which his faith grasps, and appropriates to himself.

His faith is not of that fraudulent character which refuses to lift the cross, and follow Christ by yielding obedience to all the precepts of Jehovah. It is not of that presumptuous nature that lays claim to the promises of God without complying with the conditions upon which they are to be granted. His is a faith that understands what the Saviour meant when he said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." True faith takes the word of God and weaves it into the life and character. Faith lives by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Christ explained to his disciples the meaning of eating his flesh and drinking his blood. He said, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

Faith is that mysterious and mighty principle that attracts the soul of man to God. As the sapless branch is united to the living vine, so we must be connected with Christ. There are two kinds of connection between the branches and the vine stock. One is visible, but superficial. The other is invisible and vital. So there is an apparent union, a membership with the church, and a profession of religion, which, though in itself good, is too often unaccompanied by saving faith in Jesus or living obedience to the commandments of God. The branches that are connected with Christ, the living vine, will make it manifest by bearing much fruit in good works to the glory of God. But the branches which have nothing but an apparent union, will be fruitless. As the branch cannot possibly bring forth fruit without a vital connection with the parent stock, so the

Christian can be fruitful in good works only as union with Christ is made and preserved. The ruin of those who are not connected with Christ, is as complete as though they had no name to live; for they are dead. Christ compares them to lifeless branches that are gathered and burned in the fire. "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."

There can be no actual connection with Christ if the person who claims it has no practical knowledge of the sufficiency of the grace of God that is potent to elevate, ennoble, refine, and fit the Christian for the courts of Heaven. Those who know Christ, will make manifest the desirableness of his love and peace. Every genuine believer will taste, and see that the Lord is good, and will show forth the praises of him who called us out of darkness into the marvelous light of the children of God. The true believer not only has faith, but he has a knowledge of the efficacy of the blood of Christ to cleanse from the defilement of sin. Christ crucified is the subject of his thought and meditation. The word of God to him is not a cunningly devised fable. Christ crucified, though unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness, is to him the power and wisdom of God. When assailed by skeptics, his living experience in the things of God will furnish him with arguments that cannot be gainsaid, and will enable him to resist every dart of the wicked one, so that even the uneducated believer may have simple and genuine proofs of his position, that cannot be overborne by the doubts and cavils of infidels. He can relate that which he has himself experienced. He can say, "I know whom I have believed."

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

It is the very knowledge that we gain daily, in our conflicts with Satan, that will be valuable to us in the future. It is the experience that we acquire in the things that Jesus is doing for us, in guarding our souls and bodies from the cruel power of our enemy, that will increase our hope and add to our power to fight our way through. In Paul's experience of suffering for his Lord, he realized the consolation and support of his Redeemer. His trials did not dishearten him, for the rich grace of God nerved him for the conflict, and with fortitude and courage, he gloried in tribulation.

What are we doing with the light God has given to us? In temporal matters, many give thought and attention, and close application of mind, in order to make a business success. Should we not give our very best talent to the service of God? Should we not seek to gain a greater knowledge, and a more intelligent manner of doing the work of the Lord? Are we content to exalt the temporal above the eternal interests?

As the apostle prayed for the Philippian brethren, so pray for yourselves, and for each other, "that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." We should not be satisfied with our present spiritual attainments. If the Lord should open before us our condition as it really is, and we should see the danger there is of losing our souls, even those who now profess to be Christians would fall upon their knees, and pray earnestly, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner." The astonishing indifference and carelessness which many now feel, is because they are separated in their thoughts from God, and really ignorant of their own peril. If the truth does not have a sanctifying influence upon your life and character, you will be like the foolish virgins, whose lamps were gone out at the very time when the bridegroom came to go in to the marriage. A theory of the truth is not enough. There is a high standard for us to reach. Our conflict is a continual conflict with the powers of darkness, and we must put on the whole armor of God, fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life. But how few are willing to urge their way heavenward against every opposing force of evil in the world!

The apostle prayed that love might abound more and more. There must be a living faith, before there can be a living experience. There are many who have a certain formal knowledge of Christ, and an indefinite faith that does not have an active

influence upon the life and character. This faith is not a saving faith. Our love for Jesus must commence here, if we expect to love him through the ages of eternity. All who love Christ will talk of him. How shall the world know of the blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of your Lord and Saviour, unless you make it the theme of your thought and conversation? If our hearts are rejoicing in the hope of beholding our coming Saviour, shall we not speak of it to others? "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." We shall have the Spirit of Christ, if we are in union with him; and with the same untiring love and patience, we shall seek that which is lost. One soul is worth the world. It is the purchase of the blood of Christ, and those who really love Christ will feel the value of the souls for whom he shed his precious blood.

The glory of the eternal world is just before us. Are you forwarding your treasure from this perishing earth to the land of safety? What care is taken to secure proper titles to your worldly possessions. Has your thought been exercised in regard to securing a title to the heavenly possessions? Your worldly estates will soon pass away, notwithstanding all your anxiety and toil. You must leave them all sometime. You may die before the coming of Jesus, or you may live till his appearing; however it is, the thoughts and ambitions of earth must be relinquished; but if your treasure is laid up on high, your riches will be incorruptible, undefiled, and will never pass away.

Make friendship with Christ today. Put your case in the hands of the great Advocate. He will plead your cause before the Father. Though you have transgressed the law, and must plead guilty before God, Christ will present his precious blood in your behalf; and through faith and obedience, and a vital union with Christ, you may stand acquitted before the Judge of all the earth, and he will be your friend when the final trump shall sound, and the scenes of earth shall be no more.

August 3, 1888

The Valor and Humility of David

After the rejection of Saul as king of Israel, David was anointed by the prophet as the future ruler of the people of God. But although he was aware of the high position which he was to occupy, he continued his employment as a simple shepherd, content to await the development of the Lord's plans in his own appointed time and way.

When King Saul realized that he had been rejected of God, and when he felt the force of the words of denunciation that had been addressed to him by the prophet, he was filled with bitter rebellion and despair. His health was affected by the mental worry in which he indulged, and at times he was almost insane with the thought of coming disaster to himself and his household. His counselors advised him to seek for the services of a skillful musician, in the hope that the soothing notes of a sweet instrument might calm his troubled spirit, and turn his thoughts away from his grief.

In the providence of God, David, as a skillful performer upon the harp, was brought before the king. The shepherd boy was employed to play before the ruler of Israel, and, if possible, to charm away the brooding melancholy which had settled, like a dark cloud, over the mind of Saul. The king was ever occupied in anticipating the ruin that had been brought upon his house by his own course of disobedience and rebellion. It was not true repentance that had bowed the proud head of Saul. He had no perception of the offensive character of his sin in the sight of God, and he did not arouse to reform his life and character. His heart was not humbled because he had disregarded the express injunctions and commands of the Ruler of the universe; therefore he did not return to his allegiance to the Head of all kingdoms, but brooded over what he thought was the injustice of God in depriving him of the throne of Israel, and in taking the succession to its privileges away from his posterity. He felt that the valor which he had displayed in encountering his enemies, should offset his sin of disobedience. He did not accept with meekness the chastisement of God; but his proud spirit became desperate, until he was on the verge of losing his reason.

David came before Saul, and played with all the skill that his long practice had given him; and his lofty and Heaven-inspired strains had the desired effect. The evil

spirit seemed to be driven away, and the king was restored to his usual calmness. As David stood, for the first time, in the presence of Saul, there were many thoughts that filled the mind of the young musician, and served to fasten this scene upon his memory with an indelible impression. When his services were not required at the court of Saul, David returned to his flocks on the hills, and continued to maintain his simplicity of spirit and demeanor. Whenever it was necessary, he was recalled to minister before the king, to soothe the mind of the troubled monarch till the evil spirit departed from him. But although Saul expressed the greatest delight in David and his music, the young shepherd went from the king's house to the fields and hills of his pasture, with a sense of relief and gladness, to care for his flocks with a tender and faithful care.

David was growing in favor with God and man. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he now set his heart more thoroughly to do the will of God than ever before. He had new themes for thought. He had been in the court of the king, and had seen the responsibilities of royalty. He had discovered some of the temptations that beset the soul of Saul, and had found out some of the mysteries in the character and dealing of Israel's first king. He had seen the glory of royalty shadowed with a dark cloud of sorrow, and he knew that the household of Saul in their private life were far from happy. All these things served to bring serious thoughts to him who had been anointed to be king over Israel. While he was absorbed in deep meditation, and harassed by thoughts of anxiety, he turned to his harp, and called forth strains that elevated his mind to the Author of every good, and the dark clouds which seemed to arise in the horizon of the future were dispelled and dispersed.

On one occasion, as the evening shadows gathered, and he laid aside his harp, he saw a dark form moving stealthily upon his flock. It was a bear, fierce with hunger, that sprang upon the sheep of his care; but David did not flee for his life. He felt that it was the very hour when his charges needed his protection. He lifted his heart to God in prayer for wisdom and help, that he might do his duty in this time of peril. With his strong arm he laid the bear in death at his feet. At another time he discovered a lion with a bleeding lamb between his jaws. Without hesitation the youthful shepherd engaged in a desperate encounter. His arm, nerved by the living God, forced the beast to release its bleeding victim, and as it turned, mad with disappointment, upon David, he buried his hand in its mane and killed the fierce invader. His experience in these matters proved the heart of David, and developed in him courage, and fortitude, and faith. God was teaching David lessons of trust. As Moses was trained for his work, so the Lord was

fitting the son of Jesse to become the leader and guide of his chosen people. In his watch-care for his flocks, he was gaining an appreciation of the care that the great Shepherd has for the sheep of his pasture.

When war was declared between Israel and the Philistines, three of the sons of Jesse went to follow Saul in the army of Israel; but David remained at home. On one occasion his father sent him with a message to visit the camp of Saul, and to learn whether or not his elder brothers were still in safety and health. Jesse sent with his son a present to his absent ones, which was to be divided among their companions in the camp.

As David drew near to the army, he heard the sound of commotion, as if an engagement was about to begin. He felt his spirit stirred within him, and he hastened on his way. And "the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle." Israel and the Philistines were drawn up in array, army against army. David ran unto the army, and came and saluted his brothers. While he was talking with them, Goliath, the bold champion of the Philistines, came forth, and with insulting language, defied Israel, and challenged them to provide a man from their ranks who would meet him in single combat. He repeated his blasphemous challenge, and David heard him, and when he saw that all Israel was afraid of him, and would do nothing, and that his defiance was hurled in their faces day after day, without arousing anyone to go forth and silence the voice of the boaster, his spirit was stirred within him. He was fired with zeal to preserve the honor of the living God, and the credit of the children of Israel. He could not endure to see this bold idolater permitted day after day to mock the chosen of the Lord, without making an effort to overthrow his proud vaunting and derision.

The armies of Israel were becoming depressed and discouraged. They said one to another, "Have ye seen this man that is come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up; and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel." To be sure that he understood them, David inquired of the men that stood nearest to him, "What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?"

Eliab, David's eldest brother, when he heard these words, knew well the feelings

that were stirring the young man's soul. Even as a shepherd of the flocks of Bethlehem he had manifested daring, courage, and strength not easily accounted for; and the mysterious visit of Samuel to their father's house, and his silent departure, had awakened in the minds of the brothers suspicions of the real object of his visit. David was not regarded with the respect and love due to his integrity and brotherly tenderness. He was looked upon as merely a stripling shepherd, and now the question which he asked was regarded by Eliab as a reflection cast upon his own cowardice in not silencing the giant of the Philistines. In passionate language the elder brother exclaimed, "Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle." The answer of David was decided and respectful: "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?"

Someone carried the words of David to the king, and the youth was sent for, to appear in the royal presence. Saul listened with astonishment to the words of the shepherd, as he said, "Let no man's heart fail because of him; thy servant will go and fight with this Philistine." Saul strove earnestly to turn David from his purpose, saying, "Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for thou art but a youth, and he is a man of war from his youth." The young man was not to be turned from his desire. He remained firm, courageous, and determined, only waiting for the permission of the king. He replied in a simple, unassuming way, relating his experiences while tending the sheep. "And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock; and I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth; and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. David said moreover, The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine. And Saul said unto David, Go, and the Lord be with thee."

August 10, 1888

The Slaying of Goliath

For forty days the host of Israel had trembled before the haughty challenge of Goliath, the Philistine giant. Their hearts failed within them as they looked upon his massive form, measuring six cubits and a span, or ten and a half feet, in height. Upon his head was a helmet of brass, he was clothed with a coat of mail that weighed five thousand shekels, or about a hundred and fifty-seven pounds, and he had greaves of brass upon his legs. The coat was made of plates of brass that overlaid one another, like the scales of a fish, and they were so closely joined that no dart or arrow could possibly penetrate the armor. At his back the giant bore a huge javelin, or lance, also of brass. "The staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron; and one bearing a shield went before him."

For forty days, morning and evening, Goliath had approached the camp of Israel, saying with a loud voice, "Why are ye come out to set your battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? Choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants; but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together. When Saul and all Israel heard those words of the Philistine, they were dismayed, and greatly afraid." No one had dared to go against this boaster, until David, stirred with indignation at the proud words of the idolater, offered himself to Saul, as one who was willing to fight for the glory of God and the honor of Israel.

Saul decided to permit the shepherd to make the venture; but he had small hope that David would be successful in his courageous undertaking. Command was given to clothe the youth in the king's own armor. The heavy helmet of brass was put upon his head, and the coat of mail was placed upon his body, while he was girded with the monarch's sword. Thus equipped, he started upon his errand; but ere long he turned back, and began to retrace his steps. What was the trouble? Was he afraid? The first thought in the minds of the anxious spectators was that David had decided not to risk his life in meeting an antagonist in so unequal an encounter. But this was far from the thought of the brave young man.

When he returned to Saul, he begged permission to lay aside the heavy armor, and he said, "I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them." He laid off the king's armor, and in its stead took only his staff in his hand, with his shepherd's scrip, and a simple sling. Choosing five smooth stones out of the brook, he put them in his bag, and, with his sling in his hand, he drew near to the Philistine. The champion strode boldly and proudly forward, expecting to meet with the mightiest of the warriors of Israel. His armor-bearer walked before him, and he looked as if nothing could stand before him. As he came nearer to David, he saw but a stripling, called a boy because of his youth. His countenance was ruddy with health; and his slender form, unprotected by armor, displayed all its youthful outline in marked contrast to the massive proportions of the Philistine.

Goliath was filled with amazement and anger. His indignation burst forth in words that were calculated to terrify and overwhelm the daring youth before him. "Am I a dog," exclaimed the giant, "that thou comest to me with staves?" Then the Philistine poured upon David the most terrible curses by all the gods of his knowledge. He cried in derision, "Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field." This haughty threat only served to inspire the youth with loftier courage, and to kindle in his breast a greater zeal to silence the enemy of his people. He did not weaken before the champion of the Philistines. He knew that he was about to fight for the honor of his God and the deliverance of Israel, and his heart was full of calm faith and hope.

David stepped forward, and addressed his antagonist in language that was both modest and eloquent. And he said to the Philistine, "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear; for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands."

What an inspiration of courage and lofty faith was displayed by the simple shepherd before the armies of the Israelites and the Philistines. There was a ring of

fearlessness in his tone, a look of triumph and rejoicing upon his fair countenance. This speech, given in a clear, musical voice, rang out on the air, and was distinctly heard by the listening thousands encamped for war. As David's rich voice uttered the words of trust and triumph, the anger of Goliath was roused to the very highest heat. In his rage, he pushed up the helmet that protected his forehead, and rushed with determined hatred to wreak vengeance upon his opponent. The son of Jesse was preparing for his foe. Both armies were watching with the most intense interest. "And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth."

Amazement spread along the lines of the two armies. They had been confident that David would be slain; but when the stone went whizzing through the air, straight to the mark, they saw the mighty warrior tremble, and reach forth his hands, as if he were struck with sudden blindness. The giant reeled, and staggered, and fell prostrate to the ground. David did not wait an instant. He knew not that life was extinct. He sprang upon the prostrate form of the Philistine, and with both hands he laid hold of Goliath's heavy sword. A moment before the giant had flourished it before the face of David with the boast that he would sever the youth's head from his shoulders, and give his body to the fowls of the air. Now it served to work the will of the servant of God. It was lifted in the air, and then the head of the boaster rolled from his trunk, and a shout of exultation went up from the camp of Israel.

The Philistines were smitten with terror. They knew that the day was lost. In horror and confusion they began an irregular retreat. The shout of the triumphant Hebrews echoed along the summits of the mountains, as they rushed after their retreating enemies, and they "pursued the Philistines, until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron. And the wounded of the Philistines fell down by the way to Shaaraim, even unto Gath, and unto Ekron. And the children of Israel returned from chasing after the Philistines, and they spoiled their tents. And David took the head of the Philistine, and brought it to Jerusalem; but he put his armor in his tent."

August 17, 1888

The Character and Effects of Envy

After the slaying of Goliath David was brought before King Saul, and the king inquired concerning his parentage and life. "And it came to pass, when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." Saul kept David with him, and would not permit him to return to his father's house. Jonathan and David made a covenant to be united as brethren, and the king's son "stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle." David was intrusted with important responsibilities, yet he preserved his modesty, and everyone loved him. But there was no one so dear to him as Jonathan, because he possessed a pure and noble spirit.

"David went out whithersoever Saul sent him, and behaved himself wisely. And Saul set him over the men of war." But when Saul and David were returning from the slaughter of the Philistines, "the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of music." One company sang, "Saul hath slain his thousands," while another company took up the strain and responded, "And David his ten thousands." The demon of jealousy entered the heart of the king. He was angry because David was exalted above himself in the song of the women of Israel. In place of controlling these envious feelings, and manifesting a noble spirit, he displayed the great weakness of his character, and exclaimed, "They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands; and what can he have more but the kingdom?"

The one great defect in the character of Saul was his love of approbation. This trait had had such a controlling influence over his actions and thoughts that everything was marked by his desire for praise and self-exaltation. He permitted this evil desire to develop unchecked, and it became an instrument in his ruin. His standard of right and wrong was the low standard of popular applause. No man is safe who lives that he may please men, and does not seek first for the approbation of God. It was the ambition of Saul to be first in the estimation of men; and when this song of praise was sung, a settled conviction entered the heart of the king that David would obtain the hearts of the

people, and reign in his stead.

Notwithstanding the lessons which Saul had had from the prophet Samuel, instructing him that God would accomplish whatsoever he chose, and that no one could hinder it; yet the king made it evident that he had no true knowledge of the plans or power of God. He showed that he had no true repentance for his course of rebellion and disobedience. He opened his heart to the spirit of envy and jealousy by which his soul was poisoned. He loved to hear David play upon his harp, and the evil spirit seemed to be charmed away for the time being; but one day when the youth was ministering before him, and bringing sweet music from his instrument, accompanying his voice as he sang the praises of God, Saul suddenly threw the spear which he held in his hand at the musician, for the purpose of putting an end to his life. David was preserved by the interposition of God, and he fled without injury from the rage of the maddened king.

The people were not slow to see that David was a competent person, and that the affairs intrusted to his hands were managed with wisdom and skill. Thus he was promoted from one position of trust to another. The counsels of the young man seemed to be always of a wise and discreet character, and proved to be safe to follow, while the advice of Saul was at times unreliable, and his decisions and judgments were ill-advised. As Saul's hatred of David increased, he became more and more watchful to find an opportunity to take his life, and rid himself of one so obnoxious to him. But none of his plans against the anointed of the Lord were successful. He had taken Satan as his counselor; but David trusted himself in the hand of Him who is mighty in counsel, and strong to deliver. Saul gave himself up to the control of the wicked spirit that ruled over him, while David followed the Lord, and obtained the confidence of the people. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and David's prayer was continually directed to God. His trust was in God, and he walked before him in a perfect way.

Although the king was his enemy, the servant of the Lord grew in favor with the people; and Saul, though ever on the alert, seeking an opportunity to take his life, feared David, for he was convinced that the Lord was with him. It was envy that made Saul miserable, and put the humble subject of his throne into jeopardy. Envy is one of the most despicable traits of Satanic character. It is constantly seeking the lifting up of self, by casting slurs upon others. A man who is envious will belittle his neighbor, thinking to exalt himself. The sound of praise is grateful to him who has approbation highly

developed, and he hates to hear the praises of another. Oh, what untold mischief has this evil trait of character worked in our world! The same enmity existed in the heart of Saul that stirred the heart of Cain against his brother Abel, because Abel's works were righteous, and God honored him, and his own works were evil, and the Lord could not bless him.

Envy is the offspring of pride, and, if it is entertained in the heart, it will lead to cruel deeds, to hatred, revenge, and murder. The great controversy between Christ and the prince of darkness, is carried on in everyday, practical life. David had now become the object of the king's hatred. How little did the darkened soul of Saul understand of the providences and purposes of God! If he had any comprehension of the character of the great "I AM," he would have known that he could not thwart the purposes of the Almighty.

Saul made David feel that there was no place of security for him. He finally removed him from his position of responsibility as leader of the army of Israel, and placed him in charge of only a thousand men. David made no complaint, but bore all with patience. The love of the people was with him, but Saul was determined that he should not live. He kept a strict watch upon David, longing and hoping to find some occasion of indiscretion or rashness which might serve as an excuse to bring him into disgrace before the people. He felt that he could not be satisfied until he could take the young man's life, and still be justified before the nation for his evil act.

Saul laid a snare for the feet of David, promising to give him Michal, his daughter, to wife, if he would slay one hundred Philistines. David killed two hundred, and returned in safety to the court of the king. Saul was still more assured that this was the man whom the Lord had said was better than he, and who should reign on the throne of Israel in his place. He began to discover that the Lord was with David. He began to discern that the young man was walking circumspectly before God, and that his character was worthy of respect, being truly noble and elevated. Saul became more determined in his purpose. He threw off all disguise. He would not be disappointed. David must die. He issued a command to Jonathan and to his servants to take the life of the one he hated; for he had determined that he should not live.

Jonathan revealed his father's intention to David, and bade him conceal himself, while he would go and plead with his father to spare the life of the deliverer of Israel.

Jonathan succeeded in turning away the wrath of his father for the time. He presented before the king what David had done to preserve the honor and the very life of the nation, and what terrible guilt would come upon his soul who should slay the one whom God had used to scatter their enemies. He urged that his crime would not be excused should he take the life of an innocent man. The conscience of the king was touched, and his heart was softened. "And Saul sware, As the Lord liveth, he shall not be slain." And David was brought to Saul, and he ministered in his presence, as he had in the past.

August 24, 1888

Saul's Persecution of David

After Jonathan had pleaded successfully for the life of his friend, Saul's wrath against David seemed to be allayed. The young man went in before the king as formerly, and was in the favor of Saul and his court. But again war was declared between the Israelites and the Philistines, and David led the army against their enemies. Under his wise management, a great victory was gained by the Hebrews, and the people of the realm praised his valor, and wisdom, and heroism. This served to stir up the former bitterness and hatred of Saul against him. While the young man was playing before the king, filling the palace with sweet harmony, Saul's passion overcame him, and he hurled a javelin at David, thinking to pin the musician to the wall; but the angel of the Lord turned aside the deadly weapon. David escaped, and fled to his own house. Saul sent spies that they might take him as he should come out in the morning, and put an end to his life.

Michal, the daughter of Saul, was David's wife, and she loved him, and informed him of the purpose of her father. She urged him to escape for his life, and let him down from the window, and David fled to Samuel at Naioth. The king sent his men to the chamber of David, but they found nothing but an effigy which his wife had placed in the bed. The king was very angry with his daughter, and, enraged with disappointment, he determined that his hated subject should not escape. The same spirit which had actuated Satan, filled the heart of Saul. Like the first great apostate, he was moved by unholy ambition and murderous rage. And this was the first chosen king of Israel! Since the day when the holy anointing oil had been poured upon his head by the prophet of God, how terrible had been his fall!

David found Samuel at Ramah, and told him what Saul had done. The prophet, fearless of the king's displeasure, welcomed the fugitive, and Samuel and David dwelt together at Naioth. This refuge was a peaceful place in contrast with the royal palace. It was here, amid the hills, that the honored prophet of the Lord continued his work, even when the shadows of age were gathering about him. A company of seers was with him, and they studied closely the will of God, and listened reverently to the words of instruction that fell from the lips of Samuel. The closing work of the servant of God was

to instruct the seers in the school of the prophets; precious were the lessons that David learned from the teacher of Israel.

David recalled the anointing which he had received at Bethlehem, when Samuel had blessed him in his father's house. He knew that he needed divine instruction, and he believed that the troops of Saul would not be called upon to invade this sacred place. But no place seemed to be sacred to the darkened mind of the desperate, despairing king. When he learned where David was, he sent officers to drag him from his secluded hiding-place, and bring him to Gilgal, where he intended to carry out his murderous designs.

The monarch of Israel was determinedly opposing his will to the will of the infinite God. The will of God is the sole law to which the sun, moon, and stars in the firmament of heaven, yield obedience. At the mandate of Jehovah, they move in perfect order; and yet finite man will set up his will against the will of the omniscient One, and enter into conflict with him who rules the universe. Saul had not learned, while ruling the kingdom of Israel, that he should rule his own spirit. He allowed his impulses to control his judgment, until he was plunged into a fury of passion. He had paroxysms of rage and madness, when he was ready to take the life of any that dared oppose his will. From this frenzy he would pass into a state of despondency and self-contempt, and remorse would take possession of his soul. Satan displayed his own character in inciting the fury of Saul against the humble subject of his court. Saul had the sympathy and support of all the reprobate host of evil; for it was David's blameless character and noble fidelity that had aroused the wrath of the king; and he deemed that the very life and presence of David cast a reproach upon him, and presented him in unflattering contrast before the people.

The messengers of Saul went on their way to Ramah, intent upon taking David's life. But a greater than Saul controlled their spirit, and directed their actions. They were met by unseen angels, as was Balaam when he was on his way to curse Israel. For a time the officers of Saul became imbued by the atmosphere that pervaded the sacred spot where Samuel and the prophets were studying under the inspiration of the Spirit of God. They began to utter prophetic sayings of what would occur in the future, and proclaimed the glory and majesty of Jehovah. It was in this way that God overruled the wrath of man, and manifested his power to restrain evil, while he walled his servant in by a guard of angels.

The tidings reached Saul as he waited in impatience to have David in his cruel power; but instead of feeling the rebuke from God, he was exasperated still more, and sent other messengers. These also were overpowered by the Spirit of God, and united with the first in prophesying. The third embassy was sent by the king, but when they came into the company of the prophets, the divine influence fell upon them also, and they prophesied. Saul then decided that he himself would go, for his fierce enmity had become uncontrollable. Evil angels conspired with wicked men to destroy the anointed of the Lord. He was determined to wait for no second chance to kill David. As soon as he should come within reach of him, he intended with his own hand to slay him, whatever might be the consequences.

He came to Ramah, and halted at a great well in Sechu. The people were coming together to draw water, and he inquired where Samuel and David were staying. When he was told that they were at Naioth, he made haste to reach that place. But the angel of God met him on the way and controlled him. The Spirit of God held him in its power, and he went on his way uttering prayers to God, interspersed with predictions and sacred melodies. He prophesied of the coming of Messiah as the world's Redeemer. When he came to Naioth in Ramah, he laid aside his outer garments that betokened his station, and all day, and all night, he lay before Samuel and his pupils, under the influence of the divine Spirit. Multitudes had been drawn together to witness this strange and wonderful thing, and the new experience of the king was reported far and wide. Thus again, near the close of his reign, it became a proverb in Israel that Saul also was among the prophets.

The persecutor was again defeated in his purpose. He assured David that he was at peace with him; but David had little confidence in the king's repentance and reformation. He took this opportunity to escape, lest the mood of the king might change, as formerly. David had been driven from place to place, and the king's emissaries had hunted his life as though he were a wild beast. His heart was wounded within him, and he longed to see his friend Jonathan once more. With a burdened heart, and conscious of his innocence, he sought the king's son, and made a most touching appeal. "What have I done?" he asked, "what is mine iniquity? and what is my sin before thy father, that he seeketh my life?" Jonathan thought that his father had changed his purpose, and no longer intended to take the life of David. And Jonathan said unto him, "God forbid; thou shalt not die; behold, my father will do nothing either great or small, but that he will

show it me; and why should my father hide this thing from me? it is not so."

After the remarkable exhibition of the power of God, Jonathan could not believe that his father would still harm David, for that would be manifest rebellion against God. But notwithstanding the oft-repeated and confident assurances of his friend, David was not convinced. He declared that Saul knew of their attachment for each other, and that this would be a sufficient reason why the king would not make his purposes known to his son. With intense earnestness he rehearsed how he had been driven from place to place, and now he assured Jonathan, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death."

August 31, 1888

David's Distrust

At the time of the new moon, a sacred festival was celebrated in Israel. This festival recurred upon the day following the sad interview between David and Jonathan concerning the certain death that seemed to wait the son of Jesse. It was expected that both the young men would be at the feast. David feared to be present, and an arrangement was made that he should visit his brothers, and on his return, he should hide himself in the field not far from the banqueting hall, and for three days he should absent himself from the presence of the king, and Jonathan would note the effect upon Saul. If inquiry was made as to the whereabouts of the son of Jesse, Jonathan was to say that he had gone home to attend the yearly sacrifice offered at his father's house. If no angry demonstrations were made by the king, but he should answer, "It is well," then it would be safe for David to return to the court. But if he should become enraged at his absence, it would decide the matter of David's flight.

David was to hide himself in a place appointed before, and after his return from the feast at his father's house, Jonathan, who was skilled in archery, was to go with an attendant to the field, near the hiding-place of David, and shoot a certain number of arrows that would be a sign to him of the temper of the king, and would decide his course of action. If Jonathan should say to the young man who gathered up the arrows, "Behold, the arrows are on this side of thee," David would have nothing to fear, but might come to the palace, and the presence of the king. But if he should say to his attendant, "Behold, the arrows are beyond thee," then David was to take his departure, for it would not be safe for him to come to the court.

On the first day of the feast, the king made no inquiry concerning the absence of David; but when his place was vacant the second day, he asked his son the reason of the non-appearance of his friend. He questioned, "Wherefore cometh not the son of Jesse to meat, neither yesterday, nor today? And Jonathan answered Saul, David earnestly asked leave of me to go to Bethlehem; and he said, Let me go, I pray thee; for our family hath a sacrifice in the city; and my brother, he hath commanded me to be there; and now, if I have found favor in thine eyes, let me go away, I pray thee, and see my brethren. Therefore he cometh not unto the king's table." When Saul heard these words, his anger

was ungovernable. He abused his son, and cursed David. He declared that as long as David lived, Jonathan could not come to the throne of Israel, and he demanded that David should be sent for immediately, for he had determined that he should die. Jonathan again made intercession for his friend, pleading, "Wherefore shall he be slain? what hath he done?" This appeal to the king for the reason of his wrath against an innocent man, only made him more Satanic in his fury, and he hurled the javelin, which he had intended for David, at his own son.

The prince was grieved and indignant, and leaving the royal presence, he was no more a guest at the feast. His soul was bowed down with sorrow, as he repaired, at the appointed time, to the spot where David was to learn the king's intentions toward him. Jonathan shot the arrow, and as the lad ran to find it, exclaimed, "Is not the arrow beyond thee?" David understood the sign, and knew that he must flee for his life. When Jonathan had sent the lad home with his bow and arrows, he sought his beloved friend. They fell upon each other's neck and wept bitterly. Their united hearts were sorely grieved at the necessity of separation. The dark passion of the king cast its shadow upon the lives of the young men, and their grief was too intense for expression. Jonathan's last words fell upon the ear of David as they separated to pursue their different paths, "Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the Lord, saying, The Lord be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed forever."

Jonathan watched the form of his friend until he was lost from sight, lest he should be observed by spies, and taken to the presence of his enemy. Then the king's son returned to Gibeah, and David hastened to reach Nob, a city some ten miles distant, belonging to the tribe of Benjamin. The tabernacle had been taken to this place from Shiloh, and here Ahimelech, the high priest, ministered. David knew not where to fly for refuge, except to the servant of God. The high priest looked upon him with astonishment, as he came unattended, with a countenance marked by anxiety, care, and sorrow. He inquired what had brought him to the place without an attendant. The young man was in constant fear of discovery, and was perplexed as to how he should reply. In his extremity he resorted to deception. Here David manifested a want of faith in God, and his sin resulted in causing the high priest to be put to death. Had the facts been plainly stated, Ahimelech would have known what course to pursue to preserve his life. God requires that truthfulness shall mark his people, even in times of peril. David told the priest that he had been sent by the king to accomplish some secret business which required that he should go alone. He asked the priest for five loaves of bread. There was

nothing but hallowed bread in the possession of the man of God; David succeeded, however, in removing his scruples, and obtained the bread to satisfy his hunger.

But a new difficulty now presented itself, which caused fresh anxiety to David. He saw Doeg, the chief of Saul's herdsmen, who had professed the faith of the Hebrews, and who was now paying his vows in the place of worship. The sight of this man decided David to make haste to secure another place of refuge, and to obtain some weapon with which to defend himself if it should become necessary. He knew that Doeg was acquainted with the purpose of Saul in regard to himself. He was aware that orders had been issued to the king's servants to take the life of David if they should find him, and he feared that this man might attempt it before he could make good his escape.

He asked Ahimelech for a sword, and was told that he had none except the sword of Goliath, which had been kept as a relic in the tabernacle. David replied, "There is none like that; give it me." His courage revived as he grasped the sword that he had once used so valiantly to destroy the champion of the Philistines. David fled to Achish, the king of Gath, for he felt that there was more safety in the midst of the enemies of his people than with his own brethren. He decided to throw himself upon the mercies of national foes, rather than stay in the dominions of Saul.

But it was reported to Achish that David was the very man who had slain the champion of the Philistines years before, and now he who had sought refuge with the foes of Israel, found himself in the greatest peril. He feigned to be mad, and his enemies were deceived, and deemed him unworthy of their notice. Thus he made his escape.

The first error of David was his manifest distrust of God at Nob, and his second mistake was his deception before Achish. In his friendship and love for Jonathan, David had displayed noble traits of character, and his moral worth had won him favor with the people; but as the trial and test came upon him, his faith was shaken, and human weakness appeared. He saw in every man a spy and a betrayer. But his experience was serving to teach David wisdom, for he had a realization of his weakness and frailty, and of the necessity of constant dependence upon God. While in these trying scenes, he composed some of the psalms.

We see the weakness of even noble men when they are brought into trying circumstances. This man, when in a great emergency, had looked up to God with the

steady eye of faith, and had met the proud, boasting Philistine. He believed in God, he went in his name. He trusted in his power to do the work of defeating the armies of the Lord's enemies. But as he had been hunted and persecuted, perplexity and distress had nearly hidden his heavenly Father from his sight. He seemed to think that he was left alone, to fight his own battles. He was confused, and knew not which way to turn. We may learn a lesson from the experience of David. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." All need the help which God alone can give. Oh, how priceless is the sweet influence of the Spirit of God as it comes to depressed, despairing souls, encouraging the faint-hearted, strengthening the feeble, and imparting courage and help to the tried servants of the Lord! Oh, what a God is ours, who deals gently with the erring, and manifests his patience and tenderness when we are in adversity, and when we are overwhelmed with some great sorrow!

David ought not to have distrusted God for one moment. Wherever the children of God make a failure, it is due to their lack of faith. When shadows encompass the soul, when we want light and guidance, we must look up; there is light beyond the darkness. We must learn to trust our heavenly Father, and not allow the soul to be defiled with the sin of unbelief. In trying to save ourselves, we do not commit the keeping of our souls to God, as unto a faithful Creator. We do not expect him to work for us, but frantically beat about in our own finite strength to break through some wall of difficulty which God alone can remove for us. Man is nothing without God. The example of the good and noble men of sacred history, is to be imitated by us only where they followed the footsteps of the Lord. When man relies implicitly upon God, he will be true to himself; and he can hope and rejoice in the God of his salvation, though every friend of earth becomes a foe.

David had reason to trust God. He was the Lord's anointed. He had been protected in the midst of danger by the angels of God. He had been armed with valor and courage to do wonderful things, and if he had but removed his mind from the distressing situation in which he was placed, and thought of God's wonderful power and majesty, he would have been at peace even in the midst of the shadows of death, and could with confidence have repeated the promise of the Lord, "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee."

September 7, 1888

In the Cave of Adullam

David sought refuge in the strongholds of the mountains from the determined pursuit of Saul. He made good his escape to the cave of Adullam, a place that could be defended against a large army by a small force. "And when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him." The family of David could not feel secure, knowing that at any time the unreasonable suspicions of Saul might be directed against them on account of their relation to David. They concluded that they would be safer with him whom the prophet Samuel had anointed to be king of Israel, even though he was a fugitive in a lonely cave, than exposed to the insane madness of a jealous king. They believed the Lord would protect David from the persecuting enmity of Saul, and they determined to leave their unguarded home, and unite their fortunes with their kinsman in his lonely retreat. It was a sad leave-taking of home and flocks, as the family procession moved on toward the valley of Judah.

In the cave of Adullam, the family were at last united in sympathy and affection. The son of Jesse could make melody with voice and harp as he sang, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" He had tasted the bitterness of suspicion and distrust from his brethren; and the harmony that had taken the place of discord, brought joy and comfort to the exile's heart. It was here that David composed the fifty-seventh psalm.

It was not long before they were joined by others who desired to escape the exactions of the king. There were many who had lost their confidence in the ruler of Israel, for he no longer seemed to be guided by the Spirit of the Lord. "And everyone that was in distress, and everyone that was in debt, and everyone that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them; and there were with them about four hundred men." Here David had a little kingdom of his own, over which he ruled, and he enforced perfect order and discipline. But even in his retreat in the mountains, he was far from feeling secure; for he received continual evidence that the king had not relinquished his murderous purpose. The spirit of evil was upon Saul. He felt that his doom had been sealed by the solemn message of his rejection from the throne of Israel. His departure from the plain requirements of God was bringing its sure

results. He did not turn, and repent, and humble his heart before God, but opened it to receive every suggestion of the enemy. He listened to every false witness, eagerly receiving anything that was detrimental to the character of David, hoping that he might find an excuse for manifesting his increasing envy and hatred of him who had been anointed to the throne of Israel. Every rumor was credited, no matter how inconsistent and irreconcilable it was with the former character and custom of David.

Every evidence that the protecting care of God was over David seemed to embitter and deepen his one engrossing and determined purpose. The failure to accomplish his own designs appeared in marked contrast to the success of the fugitive in eluding his search, but it only made the determination of the king the more unrelenting and firm. He was not careful to conceal his designs toward David, nor scrupulous as to what means should be employed in accomplishing his purpose.

It was not the man David, who had done him no harm, against whom the king was contending. He was in controversy with the King of Heaven; for when Satan is permitted to control the mind that will not be ruled by Jehovah, he will lead it according to his will, until the man who is thus in his power becomes an efficient agent to carry out his designs. So bitter is the enmity of the great originator of sin against the purposes of God, so terrible is his power for evil, that when men disconnect from God, Satan influences them, and their minds are brought more and more into subjection, until they cast off the fear of God, and the respect of men, and become bold and avowed enemies of God and of his people.

What an example was Saul giving to the subjects of his kingdom in his desperate, unprovoked persecution of David! What a record he was making to be placed upon the pages of history for future generations! He sought to turn the full tide of the power of his kingdom into the channel of his own hatred in hunting down an innocent man. All this had a demoralizing influence upon Israel. And while Saul was giving loose reign to his passion, Satan was weaving a snare to compass his ruin, and the ruin of his kingdom. While the king and his councilors were planning for the capture of David, the affairs of the nation were being mismanaged and neglected. While imaginary foes were constantly presented before the minds of the people, the real enemies were strengthening themselves without arousing suspicion or alarm. By following the dictates of Satan, Saul was himself hastening the very result which, with unsanctified ability, he was endeavoring to avert.

The counsel of the Lord has been disregarded again and again by the rebellious king, and the Lord had given him up to the folly of his own wisdom. The influences of the Spirit of God would have restrained him from the course of evil which he had chosen, that eventually worked out his ruin. God hates all sin, and when man persistently refuses all the counsel of Heaven, he is left to the deceptions of the enemy, to be drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed.

The Lord had brought his servant David to the court of the king, that Saul might be benefited by association with the sweet singer of Israel. The king was a lover of music, and an opportunity was granted to him of becoming impressed and subdued by the same spirit that was the life and inspiration of David's melodies. But the subtle suggestions of Satan were insinuated into his mind, until David became an object of suspicion and jealousy. On two occasions, as David ministered before the king, he had only escaped with his life by gliding away from before the javelin that the king had hurled at him with murderous purpose. But Saul was not moved to relent because of the evidences of God's protection of the son of Jesse.

David and his friends were far from feeling secure in the cave where they had sought refuge. The determined pursuit of Saul assured David that the king would not relinquish his plans, until he had accomplished his destruction. As far as appearances were concerned, the struggle on the part of David seemed to be hopeless; for the armies of Israel were urged on by the enmity of Saul to hunt the fugitive, nor give up the pursuit until he should become their captive.

David's anxiety was not all for himself, although he realized his peril. He thought of his father and mother, and he concluded that he must seek another refuge for them. He went to the king of Moab, and the Lord put it into the heart of the monarch to courteously grant to the beloved parents of David an asylum in Mizpeh, and they were not disturbed, even in the midst of the enemies of Israel. From this history, we may all learn precious lessons of filial love. The Bible plainly condemns the unfaithfulness of parents to their children, and the disobedience of children to their parents. Religion in the home is of priceless value.

Almost as soon as the safety of his parents was assured, a prophet of the Lord came to David, saying, "Abide not in the hold; depart, and get thee into the land of

Judah." Pursued from place to place, and persecuted without cause, David's soul at times was full of bitterness and discouragement. It seemed certain to him that he must, at last, fall into the hands of his pursuer and persecutor. But could his eyes have been opened, he would have seen the angels of the Lord encamped round about him and his followers. The sentinels of Heaven were waiting to warn them of impending danger, and to conduct them to a place of refuge when their peril demanded it. God could protect David and his followers; for they were not a band in rebellion against Saul. David had repeatedly proved his allegiance to the king.

The experience through which he was passing was not unnecessary and vain. God was giving him a course of discipline to fit him to become a wise general, as well as a just and merciful king. This little band of fugitives were being qualified to take up the work that Saul was becoming wholly unfitted to do, because of his murderous passion and blind indiscretion. Men cannot depart from the counsel of God, and retain their peace and restfulness of soul. There is no insanity so dreadful, so hopeless, as that of following human wisdom, unguided by the wisdom of God.

David and Saul stand before us in this history as men widely different in character. The course of David makes manifest the fact that he regarded the fear of the Lord as the beginning of wisdom. But Saul was shorn of his strength, because he failed to make obedience to God's commandments the rule of his life. It is a fearful thing for a man to set his will against the will of God, as revealed in his specified requirements. All the honor that a man could receive on the throne of a kingdom, would be a poor compensation for the loss of the favor of God through an act of disloyalty to Heaven. Disobedience to the commandments of God can only bring disaster and dishonor, at last. God has given to every man his work, just as truly as he appointed to Saul the government of Israel; and the practical and important lesson to us is to accomplish our appointed work in such a manner that we may meet our life-records with joy, and not with grief.

September 14, 1888

The Council at Gibeah

Saul was greatly disappointed and enraged when it was discovered that David had left his place of refuge in the cave of Adullam. The king had made all possible preparation to come upon him as a vulture would come upon its prey, when lo! the intelligence was received that the object of his search had escaped from under his hand. His well-laid plans had been in vain, and he had again failed to accomplish his purpose of capturing David.

The flight of David was a matter of mystery to the king. He could account for it only by the belief that there had been traitors in the camp, who had informed the son of Jesse of his proximity and design. But the all-seeing eye was upon Saul; God, who was acquainted with all his thoughts and purposes, sent his prophet to warn his servant to escape from the hold, and flee into the land of Judah. David had heeded the message, and had found refuge in the forest of Hareth before Saul could come upon him. The fact that David was preserved, and that he escaped from time to time from his hand, while his own plottings had never met with success at any time, was a mystery to the king.

The monarch determined to take some decided action that would insure the ruin of David, and a royal council was held under a favorite tree on a hill-side of Gibeah. Saul held his spear and scepter in hand, while around him were gathered his councilors, among whom was Doeg the Edomite, the chief of Saul's herdsmen. With his mind filled with jealous suspicions, Saul addressed his officers of State, saying, "Hear now, ye Benjamites; will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields and vineyards, and make you all captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds; that all of you have conspired against me, and there is none that showeth me that my son hath made a league with the son of Jesse, and there is none of you that is sorry for me, or showeth unto me that my son hath stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?"

Saul appealed to the selfish nature of his men. He presented before them the advantages to be gained by serving him, in contrast with the disadvantages of the service of the poverty-stricken David, who was obliged to find his home in the caves and dens of the mountains. Satan and his evil angels were in that assembly, prepared to

act a prominent part, and the power of these evil influences was working upon the mind of the willful and disobedient king. He had so long yielded himself to the control of evil angels that he did not discern that he was following their leading when he eagerly took advantage of circumstances to hold up to contempt the condition of David and his servants. How much this appeal to the selfish desires of his men, savors of the temptation of Christ in the wilderness. "And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, showed 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. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

Jesus repulsed the tempter with, "It is written;" but the evil one has better success when he approaches man with his bribes and inducements. The question that each one of us will have to answer in his individual life is, Shall right triumph over wrong, no matter what shall be the cost? Every soul will have to venture much, as Satan plies his specious temptations; but the voice of duty must be obeyed, if you would be an overcomer. Many other voices will urge a course in harmony with the selfish desires and inclinations of the carnal heart. To every soul will come the time of trial, and it will need divine wisdom to distinguish the voice of the adversary from the voice of God. It is impossible to tell how much may be lost by once neglecting to comply with the requirements of the word of God. It points out the path of obedience as the only safe path for man to walk in. Nothing will help us more in these strait places than to consider that we are standing in the presence of God, and that we do not want to do anything that will offend him.

The Benjamites and those in the council of Saul, when they heard the words of the king, accusing them of sympathizing with those whom he regarded as his enemies, only saw before them an exasperated, human monarch, who had it in his power to enrich and advance them or to punish and degrade them, as their course should be approved or disapproved before him. But could the veil have been swept aside, they would have beheld the Sovereign whose empire is the universe, and who holds in his hands the destinies of time and of eternity. If they had felt that they were the servants of God, that they were to be obedient to the King of kings, how different would have been the result and record of that day which was filled with deeds of darkness and atrocity.

The presence of the Infinite One was not felt; but he who is not only an accuser of the brethren, but a liar and a murderer from the beginning, manifested his presence and power through his human agents, Saul the king of Israel, and Doeg the chief of his herdsmen.

Saul had received as truth every lying report concerning the motives and movements of David, and, in his disappointment at the escape of his supposed enemy, Saul began to suspect everyone around him of being a conspirator and traitor. He declared, "All of you have conspired against me, and there is none that showeth me that my son hath made a league with the son of Jesse. "Then he appealed for their sympathy. "There is none of you that is sorry for me, or showeth unto me that my son hath stirred up my servant against me, to lie in wait, as at this day."

Saul represented David as one who was his deadly enemy, and accused Jonathan, his dutiful, and God-fearing son, of urging on the rebellion, because he would not join in the pursuit of his friend. This was an entirely false accusation. It was not David and Jonathan only who were accused, but the king's own tribe, and the people of his realm were all included in his suspicions as traitors and conspirators. He declared that they were all blind to their own best interests, and were destitute of compassion for him, the king of Israel. He had been informed by spies of the interview between David and Jonathan, of how they had entered into a covenant of eternal friendship; and, as Saul knew nothing of the particulars, he was filled with evil surmising as to their loyalty, and deemed that they were plotting against himself and his kingdom. At one time when Saul had furiously condemned David to death, and Jonathan had asked, "Wherefore shall he be slain? what hath he done?" the king, in a moment of intense anger, had hurled a javelin at his own son, as he had previously thrown one at David. Jonathan had lost all confidence in his father. He was afraid of him, and could not be free and confidential with him; for he saw with sorrow that God had departed from him, and that another spirit had taken possession of him.

That a conspiracy had been formed against him, Saul affirmed to his councilors as a settled fact, and he had arrived at the conclusion that it must be one that was thoroughly organized, or the chief conspirator would not have been so successful in eluding his search. From this he argued that the people must be involved in it, or its success would not be so evident. He put darkness for light, and light for darkness. His reasoning and its conclusions were all erroneous. The plotting was all on the side of

Saul himself. Because he had changed his position from time to time, and had thought to have secured his prey long before, and had been defeated time and again, he could understand his failure only by attributing evil motives and actions to his people. Those who had been in communication with him, and had known of his plans, must, he thought, have informed David of his movements.

Saul had become so blinded through the deceitfulness of sin, that he could not discern spiritual things. He did not recognize the fact that God was present at all his councils, and that he was in communication with his servant David. God did not intend that the murderous designs of Saul should prove successful to accomplish their ends. The evil of the king's heart was to be manifested before Israel, that they might see to what terrible lengths a soul would go, after breaking away from the restraining influence of the Spirit of God. The king had had sufficient evidence to prove to him, beyond a doubt, that David had no evil intention toward him. He had had opportunity to take the life of his enemy, if he had desired to do so, but the son of Jesse would not lift up his hand against the Lord's anointed. But all this went for nothing, for it was in the heart of Saul to accredit evil purposes to David, and he did according to all that was in his heart.

There was a Watcher who was marking the motives, the words, and the actions of King Saul. The Lord was an unseen witness to every secret design, every open plan, and every murderous movement. When Nebuchadnezzar took his proud survey of the works of his hands, and boasted of his power and glory, saying, "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 Watcher's voice came to the king, saying, "O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken: The kingdom is departed from thee." When Belshazzar lifted himself up against the God of Heaven, and made a great feast, and, in his intoxication and pleasure, deemed nothing too sacred for his use, making merriment against the living and the true God, a bloodless hand traced upon the wall in living characters, "Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting." At the sacrilegious feast of Belshazzar, there was a Watcher whom he had not invited, and whose presence he had not discerned or welcomed. The doom of his kingdom was written in an unchangeable decree, "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it."

The eye of the Lord is upon every scene. His eye beholds every transaction in business. He hears every word that is spoken. He is a silent witness to every slanderous statement, and every falsehood is faithfully recorded in the books of Heaven. We have

an attendant in public and private life. We have a companion in our private chamber. To every word and action of our lives, the holy, sin-hating God stands as a witness. We cannot escape our accountability to him, for God is everywhere. Why should we not live in such a manner that we may render up our account with joy, and not with grief. God has given us our appointed work, and we are to do it under his direction. If we place our powers under the control of Satan, we are rebels against God, and there will be found in our life-records, as there was found in Belshazzar's, a fatal deficiency when the accounts are balanced.

September 21, 1888

Doeg the Edomite

When Doeg the Edomite heard the words of Saul offering as a bribe the gift of vineyards, and the position of captain over thousands and hundreds, his ambition was stirred, and he determined to turn informer. He had been at Nob and had witnessed the action of the priest when he provided David with bread, and gave him the sword of Goliath. He cherished hatred toward the man in holy office, because he had reproved him for his sins; and now a favorable opportunity presented itself, not only to gain riches and position, but to be avenged on the priest.

Doeg responded to the words of Saul as one who would prove himself the friend of the distressed monarch. He said, "I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub. And he inquired of the Lord for him, and gave him victuals, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine." Doeg knew well that the action of the priest toward David did not proceed from any malice toward the king. The priest thought that in doing a kindness to an ambassador of his court, he was showing respect to the king. He was altogether innocent of any evil intention toward Saul or his realm. David had not taken a straightforward course before the priest, he had dissimulated, and on this account he had brought the whole family of the priesthood into peril.

But Doeg was a slanderer, and Saul had such a spirit of envy and hatred and murder, that he desired the report to be true. The partial and exaggerated statement of the chief of the herdsmen, was suited for the use of the adversary of God and man. It was presented to the mind of Saul in such a light that the king lost all control of himself, and acted like a madman. If he had but calmly waited until he could have heard the whole story, and had exercised his reasoning faculties, how different would have been the terrible record of that day's doings!

How Satan exults when he is enabled to set the soul into a white heat of anger! A glance, a gesture, an intonation, may be seized upon and used, as the arrow of Satan, to wound and poison the heart that is open to receive it. If the Spirit of Christ possesses us wholly, and we have been transformed by his grace, there will be no disposition to

speaking evil, or to bear reports freighted with falsehood. The falsifier, the accuser of the brethren, is a chosen agent of the great deceiver. Ahimelech was not present on this occasion to vindicate himself, and to state the facts as they existed; but Doeg cared not for this. Like Satan his father, he read the mind of Saul, and improved the opportunity of increasing the misery of the king by the words of his mischievous tongue, which was set on fire of hell. He stirred up the very worst passions of the human heart. All tenderness, pity, and humanity were extinguished from the breast of Saul.

Like his master the devil, Doeg did not hesitate to accuse even the priest of the most high God. It was believed that there was a conspiracy between David and the priest, and that the priest had taken a leading part in helping the escape of the enemy of Saul, and in aiding him by giving him provisions, and by arming him with the sword of Goliath. Saul was beside himself with rage. When he had been brought under the influence of the Spirit of God, as David played rich and sacred melodies, he seemed to catch the inspiration, and would break forth in impulsive and earnest expressions of praise and adoration. But when the influence was withdrawn, he would manifest the most opposite spirit. He seemed to be desperate, and was ready to do the most rash acts of daring and cruelty. The spirit of jealousy, which proceeded only from Satan, took possession of his heart. Good and evil seemed for a time to alternate in their control of the king. But on this day so dark a register was made in the books of Heaven by the divine Watcher, that the influence of good seemed to grow less and less perceptible in the life of Israel's monarch. He determined to pursue with the utmost fury the object of his hate and jealousy; for he thought that he now had an occasion for giving full vent to the worst passions of his heart.

He sent for Ahimelech and all his father's house, and they presented themselves before him in their priestly robes of office that they might do him honor. And Saul said to Ahimelech, "Why have ye conspired against me, thou and the son of Jesse, in that thou hast given him bread, and a sword, and hast inquired of God for him, that he should rise against me, to lie in wait, as at this day?" The priest then presented the matter in its true light to the king. "Then Ahimelech answered the king, and said, And who is so faithful among all thy servants as David, which is the king's son-in-law, and goeth at thy bidding, and is honorable in thine house? Did I then begin to inquire of God for him? be it far from me; let not the king impute anything unto his servant, nor to all the house of my father; for thy servant knew nothing of this, less or more."

It was evident that Saul was in one of his worst moods; but the priest and his household did not for a moment realize the danger that threatened them. They trembled when Saul set aside the testimony of Ahimelech. The king was so blinded with passion that the words of reason had no influence whatever upon him. He was so filled with Satanic frenzy that all regard for sacred things was lost. In his language he not only accused the priest of deception, but virtually charged God with counseling a traitor through his high priest.

The action of Saul made manifest what a despot a king may become who has forsaken his God, and has given himself up to the control of the evil one. The explanation of the facts in the case of David and the priest was treated with contempt; the truth only served to infuriate the king, for it took away his excuse for following the dictates of his own evil heart. Saul preferred to believe the words of a wicked man, rather than the words of the servant of God. Thus it has always been and always will be in our world with those who serve the cause of the great adversary. "Justice standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter.... And he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey." When we understand how perseveringly Satan works to gain control of the hearts of men, we shall know why men have acted with such Satanic fury and determined hate toward the servants of God in every age.

In tracing down the history of the church from the fall of Adam to our own time, we see that the righteous have been the objects of the assaults of evil angels and evil men. It is a settled plan of the enemy to seek for the corruption of the souls of those who would vindicate the honor of God; and when he could not accomplish this, he has caused them to be put to death. Satan has manifested the greatest activity in order that the true worshipers of God might be swept from the earth; but he has not fully carried out his designs, for God has put a limit to his power. There have been tares sown with the wheat, but the wheat has been preserved. Faithful men have passed through fire and sword, heresy and delusion, and have come forth from great tribulation with their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. Thousands have fallen at the stake, but others have arisen to take their places. Staunch advocates of truth have stood the conflict of battle, and the controversy has been brought down to our own day. The light of truth has shone upon us, that we may reflect it upon others.

The world's Redeemer knows all about the warfare that must be waged between good and evil. He has felt the malice of Satan to a greater extent than have any of his

followers. As Saul refused the words of a priest and took the testimony of a sinner, so the statements of false witnesses were received against Jesus, and his own testimony was thrust aside. When Jesus was presented by Pilate to the people, and Barabbas was presented with him, and the ruler asked, "Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you?" the multitude, under the control of Satan, cried out like madmen, "Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas"! "Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him. And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, and said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands." And the demon-like cry arose, "Crucify him, crucify him!" This was the man in whom no fault was found when he was brought to trial; and yet a robber and a murderer was preferred before him.

Satan takes advantage of circumstances. At times evil men seem to triumph without hindrance. They do their dark deeds and there is no interposition of Heaven. When men separate from God by transgression, Satan has no further conflict to wage with them, and they have no more opposition to offer to the adversary of God and man. Had there been no interference on the part of God. Satan and man would have united in an unbroken alliance against Heaven. There can be no enmity between fallen men and fallen angels. Both are evil, and both have become so by apostasy; and evil always leagues with evil against God and in opposition to those who keep his commandments. They have refused to fulfill the requirement of Heaven, and they are at enmity with those who love and obey God.

We shall yet find that the same spirit of opposition to God and his people that existed in ages past exists in this day of boasted light and privilege. Satan is engaged in doing his own work. His angels will conspire with evil men today, and the combined energies of apostasy will gather together their forces to tear down that which they once built up, and to destroy the influence of those who are champions of the truth.

The warning which Samuel had given Israel when they clamored for a king was beginning to be understood. They saw the prophet's statement demonstrated in the despotism of Saul. After he had heard the calm, truthful words of the priest, instead of acknowledging his error of imputing evil to the servant of God, he shouted like a madman, "Thou shalt surely die, Ahimelech, thou, and all thy father's house."

The inconsistency of jealousy was shown in this verdict. Without proving the

guilt of any one of the priests, the king commanded that all the line of Eli should be slain. He had determined upon this course of action before he had sent for them or heard their side of the case. And no amount of proof could undo his malignant purpose. To vent his wrath upon one man seemed too small a matter to satisfy the fury of his revenge.

"And the king said unto the footmen that stood about him, Turn, and slay the priests of the Lord; because their hand also is with David, and because they knew when he fled, and did not show it to me. But the servants of the king would not put forth their hand to fall upon the priests of the Lord." The footmen had looked upon the priests of the Lord with the greatest reverence. They were convinced of the innocence of Ahimelech, and they could not consent to do this inhuman deed, although by refusal they placed their own lives in peril.

If anything could have aroused the conscience of the king, it would have been the refusal of his servants to fulfill so barbarous a command. But jealousy is cruel as the grave; and the heart of Saul was blinded because he had gone away from the light which God had given him; and "if therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!"

Satan is never at a loss to find allies in his work. The most blood-thirsty tyrants have found instruments by which to carry out their hell-born designs. Saul's rage was not appeased by the noble stand of his footmen, and he turned to the man whom he had connected with himself as a friend, because he had reported against the priests. Thus this Edomite, who was as base a character as was Barabbas, slew with his own hand eighty-five priests of the Lord in one day; and he and Saul, and he who was a murderer from the beginning, gloried over the massacre of the servants of the Lord. Like savage beasts who have tasted of blood, so were Saul and Doeg. The king, not yet satisfied with his horrible cruelty, "said to Doeg, Turn thou, and fall upon the priests. And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod." And men, women, children, and cattle were all slain by this cruel Edomite.

This is what Saul could do under the control of Satan. He could go to any lengths of barbarity. When God had said that the iniquity of the Amalekites was full, and had commanded him to destroy them utterly, he was too compassionate to carry out the

order of the Lord, and spared that which was devoted to destruction; but now, without any command from God, under the guidance of Satan he could put an end to the priests of the Lord, and bring ruin upon the inhabitants of Nob. Thus is shown the perversity of the human heart that has refused the guidance of God.

This deed filled all Israel with horror. It was the king whom they had chosen who had committed this outrage; and he had only done after the manner of the kings of other nations that feared not God. The ark was with them; but the priests of whom they had inquired were slain with the edge of the sword. What would come next?

October 5, 1888

David's Flight from Keilah

After the slaughter of the priests, "one of the sons of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped, and fled after David. And Abiathar showed David that Saul had slain the Lord's priests. And David said unto Abiathar, I knew it that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul; I have occasioned the death of all the persons of thy father's house. Abide thou with me, fear not; for he that seeketh my life seeketh thy life; but with me thou shalt be in safeguard."

Saul had cut himself off from every means whereby the Lord could work in his behalf to save him from himself. In the facts of sacred history, there are lessons showing what a dangerous thing it is to cherish a jealous, revengeful spirit. It is impossible to determine to what length this spirit will lead its possessor if it is not overcome. When an evil report is circulated concerning the character of those who are striving to serve God, a power from beneath seems to move the minds of those who cherish enmity. He who has prided himself on possessing a high sense of honor, by taking this path of enmity will often fall into error, and will say and do things of which he deemed himself incapable. If a prophet of God should portray before him the course he would be led to pursue by cherishing such a spirit, he would indignantly inquire as did Hazeal, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" But let him turn from the straight path of right, and follow where the promptings of Satan would lead him, and he will manifest the spirit of his captain until truth, honor, and justice are sacrificed through the lusts of passion.

Christ declared to the Pharisees, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." When men take the first step after the suggestion of Satan, they do not think that they will take another and another; but it will become easier and easier to follow, and finally they break away from all the bounds of honor and conscience, and do the work of the enemy, under a pretense of doing the work of righteousness. The plainest evidences of the truth and purity of the character of him who they wish to defame, are misconstrued. The most positive assurances of his faithfulness and nobility have no weight or power to control their slanderous reports. The most innocent works of conscience and charity are looked upon as actuated by selfish motives and unholy

desires. The only safety for him who is thus assailed is to trust fully in God, not seeking to vindicate his own cause, but when falsely accused to his face to state only the plain facts of the case, and then leave the result with God. The Judge of all the earth will do right. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

While David was in his refuge in the forests of Hareth, he was informed that the Philistines were warring against the men of Keilah, and that the people were in great distress, for their enemies were robbing the threshing-floors. "Therefore David inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the Lord said unto David, Go, and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah. And David's men said unto him, Behold, we be afraid here in Judah; how much more then if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines." The men who had cast in their lot with David, looked at their small force,--only a few hundred men,--and they were filled with dread at the thought of an encounter with the superior numbers of their enemies. They were also afraid that Saul would attack them, and that between the two armies they would be overwhelmed.

David again sought the Lord. It was the manifest fear and reluctance of his men that led him again to inquire of the Lord. He had been anointed as king, and he thought that some measure of responsibility rested upon him for the protection of his people. If he could but have the positive assurance that he was moving in the path of duty, he would start out with his limited forces, and stand faithfully at his post whatever might be the consequences. David was well aware that while Saul was occupied almost entirely with planning and with executing his plans for his discovery and capture, he could not be strengthening his kingdom, or promoting the good of his subjects.

The people of Keilah were being grievously oppressed, for, while their enemies were encamped without their walls, they were being robbed of the necessities of life. In answer to the inquiry of David, the Lord said, "Arise, go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the Philistines into thine hand. So David and his men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and brought away their cattle, and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah."

"And it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah." When the king heard the part that the son of Jesse had acted in the siege of Keilah, instead of being grateful that a champion had been raised up to defeat the enemies of Israel he was filled with a more

determined enmity toward David. He thought that the action of David brought his own inaction into an unfavorable light before the people, and placed him in the discreditable position of one who was negligent of his duty as the ruler and protector of Israel. He could not but see that this was the truth of the matter; but he was angry with David because his works were righteous and his own were evil. The additional evidence that God was favoring David, in the fact that he had with only a handful of men gained a complete victory over a large force, served to make him the more furious. If his heart had not been poisoned with envy and jealousy, the manifestation of God's favor to David would have had a convincing power upon his mind, and would have led him to change his course.

The king anticipated the speedy destruction of him whom he hated. He intended to inclose the city with his troops, and demand that the inhabitants of Keilah give up the son of Jesse as his captive and prey. Saul was elated with the thought of successfully achieving his plans in securing David. He was so blinded by the great deceiver that he exclaimed, "God hath delivered him into mine hand; for he is shut in, by entering into a town that hath gates and bars. And Saul called all the people together to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men."

Although a great deliverance had been wrought for Keilah, and the men of the city were very grateful to David and his men for the preservation of their lives, yet so fiendish had become the soul of the God-forsaken Saul, that he could demand from the men of Keilah that they yield up their deliverer to certain and unmerited death. Saul had determined that if they should offer any resistance they would suffer the bitter consequences of opposing the command of their king. The long-desired opportunity seemed to have come, and he determined to leave nothing undone in securing the arrest of his rival.

After the defeat of the Philistines, David felt that at last he had found a place in which he could be secure from danger without seeking to the caves and dens of the earth. If the people who appeared to be so grateful for their deliverance, would but be true to him and his interest, they could hold the city against Saul and his army. But he remembered the destruction of Nob and the massacre of the priests because one of them had shown him favor, and he became alarmed for himself and for the inhabitants of Keilah, lest they should all suffer in a similar manner. He dared not confide in their earnest assurances of fidelity, fearing that when driven by circumstances they would

purchase peace and safety for themselves by delivering him over to his enemies. He could no longer feel secure in a city inclosed by gates and bars.

David went to the Lord for counsel. He made his supplication before God, saying, "O Lord God of Israel, thy servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Keilah, to destroy the city for my sake. Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O Lord God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. And the Lord said, He will come down. Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the Lord said, They will deliver thee up."

David could feel no sense of security in remaining at Keilah, even in the midst of the people who owed their lives to his efforts in their behalf. The inhabitants of the city did not for a moment think themselves capable of such an act of ingratitude and treachery; but David knew, from the light that God had given him, that they could not be trusted, that in the hour of need they would fail.

"Then David and his men, which were about six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah; and he forbore to go forth. And David abode in the wilderness in strongholds, and remained in a mountain in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into his hand."

October 12, 1888

David and Saul at En-gedi

"And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life; and David was in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood." Satan was constantly at work to destroy the anointed of the Lord; but the Lord worked to disappoint the enemy, and to preserve David and his men. And now, when bright and cheering spots were few in the experience of the son of Jesse, he was surprised and rejoiced to receive a visit from Jonathan, who had learned the place of his refuge. How precious were the moments that these two friends passed in each other's society. They related their varied experiences, and Jonathan strengthened the heart and confidence of David, saying, "Fear not; for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth." As they talked of the wonderful dealings of God toward David, the oppressed and hunted fugitive was greatly encouraged. "And they two made a covenant before the Lord; and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house."

After the visit of Jonathan, David encouraged his soul with songs of praise, accompanying his voice with his harp as he sang, "In the Lord put I my trust; how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain? for, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart. If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? The Lord is in his holy temple, the Lord's throne is in Heaven; his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men. The Lord trieth the righteous; but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth."

The Ziphites, into whose wild regions David went from Keilah, sent word to Saul in Gibeah that they knew where David was hiding, and that they would guide the king to his retreat. "Now therefore, O king, come down according to all the desire of thy soul to come down; and our part shall be to deliver him into the king's hand." Saul, who had recently been uttering blasphemous curses, now said, "Blessed be ye of the Lord; for ye have compassion on me." The king pronounced a blessing upon the wicked betrayers of David; but of what advantage were praise and flattery from such lips?

A new company was prepared and sent out to hunt for the Lord's anointed, and Saul gave a special charge to the wicked Ziphites: "Go, I pray you, prepare yet, and know and see his place where his haunt is, and who hath seen him there; for it is told me that he dealeth very subtilly. See therefore, and take knowledge of all the lurking places where he hideth himself, and come ye again to me with the certainty, and I will go with you; and it shall come to pass, if he be in the land, that I will search him out throughout all the thousands of Judah."

The citizens of Keilah, who should have repaid the interest and zeal of David in delivering them from the hands of the Philistines, would have given him up because of their fear of Saul rather than to have suffered a siege for his sake. But the men of Ziph would do worse; they would betray David into the hands of his enemy, not because of their loyalty to the king, but because of their hatred of David. Their interest for the king was only a pretense. They were of their own accord acting the part of hypocrites when they offered to assist in the capture of David. It was upon these false-hearted betrayers that Saul invoked the blessing of the Lord. He praised their Satanic spirit in betraying an innocent man, as the spirit and act of virtue in showing compassion to himself. Apparently David was in greater danger than he had ever been before. Upon learning the perils to which he was exposed, he changed his position, seeking refuge in the mountains between Maon and the Dead Sea.

Saul and his men had planned well, and they felt that success was already assured. But when the enemies of David flattered themselves that there could be no escape, there came a messenger unto Saul, saying, "Haste thee, and come; for the Philistines have invaded the land. Wherefore Saul returned from pursuing after David, and went against the Philistines."

The disappointed king was in a frenzy of anger to be thus cheated of his prey; but he feared the dissatisfaction of the nation; for, if the Philistines should ravage the country while he was destroying its defender, a reaction would be likely to take place, and he would become the object of the people's hate. So he relinquished his pursuit of David, and went against the Philistines, and this gave David an opportunity to escape to the stronghold of En-gedi.

As soon as the encounter with the Philistines was over, word was again sent to Saul, "Behold, David is in the wilderness of En-gedi. Then Saul took three thousand

chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats." David had only six hundred men in his company, while Saul advanced against him with an army of three thousand. In a secluded cave the son of Jesse and his men waited for the guidance of God as to what should be done. As Saul was pressing his way up the mountains, he turned aside, and lay down to rest in the entrance of the very cavern where David and his company were hidden. When his men saw this, they urged their leader to kill Saul as he slept. The fact that the king was now in their power, was interpreted by them as a certain evidence that God himself had delivered the enemy into their hand that they might destroy this relentless foe, who without cause was continually seeking the life of David. David was tempted to take this view of the matter; but the voice of conscience spoke to him, saying, "Touch not the anointed of the Lord," and he could but yield obedience. His men were impatient that David hesitated to grant the permission they so much desired; but he firmly restrained them from doing any harm to Saul.

The course of David made it manifest that he had a Ruler whom he obeyed. He could not permit his natural passions to gain the victory over him; for he knew that he that ruleth his own spirit, is greater than he who taketh a city. If he had been led and controlled by human feelings, he would have reasoned that the Lord had brought his enemy under his power in order that he might slay him, and take the government of Israel upon himself. Saul's mind was in such a condition that his authority was not respected, and the people were becoming irreligious and demoralized. Yet the fact that Saul had been divinely chosen king of Israel kept him in safety, for David conscientiously served God, and he would not in any wise harm the anointed of the Lord.

David's men could scarcely consent to leave Saul in peace, and they said to their commander, "Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily." But his tender conscience smote him afterward, because he had marred the garment of the king.

Saul rose up and went out of the cave to continue his search after David. But a voice fell upon his startled ears, saying, "My lord the king." He turned to see who was addressing him, and lo! it was the son of Jesse, the man whom he had so long desired to have in his power that he might kill him. David bowed himself to the king,

acknowledging him as his master. David addressed Saul in these words: "Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt? Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord had delivered thee today into mine hand in the cave; and some bade me kill thee; but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the Lord's anointed. Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand; for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it. The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee; but mine hand shall not be upon thee."

Saul was both astonished and humbled as he heard the statements of David, and admitted their truthfulness. His feelings were greatly stirred as he realized that he had been so fully in the power of the man whom he had injured. He saw David standing before him in conscious innocence, and yet he had charged him with plotting against his life, and had pursued him with relentless hate to destroy him. He was deeply agitated as David presented the skirt of his robe as unmistakable evidence to the king that his accusations had been without foundation. Here was proof that David was not seeking the life of the king. Then David presented the course of Saul in its true, undignified, and ungenerous light, and Saul exclaimed with trembling lip and softened spirit, "Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept." Then he declared to David. "Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil.... For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? wherefore the Lord reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day. And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand." And David made a covenant with Saul that when this should take place he would favorably regard the house of Saul, and not cut off his name.

David had no reason to put confidence in the assurances of Saul, or to deem that his penitent condition would be permanent: He knew that his feelings would change, and that the king would be more thoroughly intent than ever upon taking his life. So when Saul returned to his home, David remained in the strongholds of the mountains.

The enmity that is cherished toward the servants of God by those who have yielded to the power of Satan, changes at times to a feeling of favor and approbation;

but this is not always an evidence that the change is a lasting one. The enemies of righteousness have been moved by a power from beneath to accuse and stigmatize those whom God has chosen to do his work. False impressions have been made through false statements; but after evil-minded men have engaged in doing and saying many wicked things, the conviction that they have been in the wrong takes deep hold upon their minds. The Spirit of the Lord strives with them, and they humble their hearts before God, and before those whose influence they have sought to destroy, and they change their course toward them. But as they again open the door to the suggestions of the evil one, the old doubts are revived. The old enmity is awakened, and they return to engage in the same work which they repented of, and for a time abandoned. Again they speak evil, accusing and condemning in the bitterest manner the very ones to whom they made most humble confession. Satan can use such souls with far greater power after such a course has been pursued than he could before, because they have sinned against greater light.

The history of Saul is a lesson to all who would walk in the counsel of God. They should take warning from his proud and rebellious spirit, and learn to walk with humility before Heaven, placing their whole dependence upon God. Many have apostatized who have once been zealous advocates of the truth, and whose faith and teaching have been published throughout the world, verifying the words of Paul when he declares, "In the latter times some shall depart from the faith."

October 19, 1888

The Death of Samuel

"And Samuel died; and all the Israelites were gathered together, and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah." The death of Samuel was regarded as an irreparable loss by the nation of Israel. A great and good prophet and an eminent judge had fallen in death; and the grief of the people was deep and heart-felt.

The life of Samuel from early childhood had been a life of piety and devotion. He had been placed under the care of Eli in his youth, and the loveliness of his character drew forth the warm affection of the aged priest. He was kind, generous, diligent, obedient, and respectful. The contrast between the course of the youth Samuel and that of the priest's own sons was very marked, and Eli found rest and comfort and blessing in the presence of his charge. It was a singular thing that between Eli, the chief magistrate of the nation, and the simple child so warm a friendship should exist. Samuel was helpful and affectionate, and no father ever loved his child more tenderly than did Eli this youth. As the infirmities of age came upon Eli, he felt more keenly the disheartening, reckless, profligate course of his own sons, and he turned to Samuel for comfort and support.

How touching to see youth and old age relying one upon the other, the youth looking up to the aged for counsel and wisdom, the aged looking to the youth for help and sympathy. This is as it should be. God would have the young possess such qualifications of character that they shall find delight in the friendship of the old, that they may be united in the endearing bonds of affection to those who are approaching the borders of the grave.

From his youth up, Samuel had walked before Israel in the integrity of his heart; but he was no longer to go in and out before his people. Although Saul had been the acknowledged king of Israel, Samuel had wielded a more powerful influence than he, because his record was one of faithfulness, obedience, and devotion. We read that he judged Israel all the days of his life. The closing years of the prophet could not but be years of sadness and burden of soul. His own children had not followed the example which he had given them. They had not heeded the precepts which he had sought to

impress upon their minds. They had not copied the elevated, pure, unselfish life of their father. Through their impious and selfish life they had forfeited the confidence of the people, and this was a cause of great grief to Samuel. He had been to some extent too easy and indulgent with his sons, and the result that is usually seen where this is the case, was made apparent in his family. The characters of his children were marred with selfishness, and their course was such that it made them a dishonor to the cause of God. If the warning given to Eli had exerted the influence upon the mind of Samuel that it should have done, it would have aided him in the government of his household.

The Lord said of Abraham, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." If Samuel had been like Abraham, and had commanded his children after him, how different would have been the moulding of the lives of his children. Their characters were fashioned after the sight of their eyes and the hearing of their ears. The associations which they chose, the company which they kept, left an impress upon their minds; and reverence for God and sacred things was weakened.

The aged prophet had loved Saul with intense affection; but before he died, he saw the scepter dishonored in the hand of him whom he had anointed in the name of the Lord to rule Israel. He saw him as one who could not rule himself, much less a nation. With some consolation he recalled the fact that he had anointed the son of a shepherd in Bethlehem as the future king, and he looked forward to David's reign as the time when Israel would revive. The bright and morning Star was to come of the seed of David, and his throne was to be established forever.

After Israel had rejected Samuel as ruler of the nation, though well qualified for public labor, the prophet sought retirement. He was not superannuated, for he presided as teacher in the school of the prophets. This service for his God was a pleasant service. David's connection with Samuel during his stay at Naioth aroused the jealousy of Saul lest he who was revered as a prophet of God throughout all Israel, should lend his influence to the advancement of his rival. As the character and management of Saul were viewed in contrast to the character and management of Samuel, Israel saw what a mistake they had made in desiring a king, that they might not be different from the nations around them. The people looked with alarm at the condition of society, fast becoming leavened with irreligion and godlessness. The influence and example of their

ruler was leaving its impression on all sides, and well might Israel mourn that Samuel, the prophet of the Lord, was dead.

The nation had lost the founder and president of their college, but that was not all. They had lost him to whom they had been accustomed to go with their great troubles. They had lost one who had constantly interceded with God in their behalf. Israel had felt more secure while the prayers of this good man ascended to Heaven for them; for "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." They felt now that they were being forsaken of God. The king seemed little less than a madman. He was abandoned of God; but he was not filled with godly sorrow for the evil course he had pursued. He was remorseful, passionate, and unable to exercise reason. The Lord had declared by the lips of Samuel the condition of the disobedient: "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry." These words found their verification in the life of Saul. The uncontrolled passions of his wicked heart made him unfit to receive counsel or advice. He refused all instruction, and acted as if possessed of a demon. Justice was perverted to cruelty, and order was turned into confusion. Oh, that Saul had humbled his proud heart before God! But anger rests in the bosom of fools, transforming those who have been made in the image of God, into the image of the evil one.

Saul had a mind and influence capable of governing a kingdom, if his powers had been submitted to the control of God, but the very endowments that qualified him for doing good could be used by Satan, when surrendered to his power, and would enable him to exert widespread influence for evil. He could be more sternly vindictive, more injurious and determined in prosecuting his unholy designs, than could others, because of the superior powers of mind and heart that had been given him of God. He had ruined his own soul, and had wrought the ruin of his house; but he was impenitent and hardened. He had brought injury and disgrace upon himself, and yet he desired that David when he should come to the throne, should preserve his house and honor his name. But his very course in pursuing his successor from place to place, and of proclaiming him an outlaw and a rebel, brought infamy upon the name he desired to have honored.

It was while Israel was racked with perplexity and internal strife, at a time when it seemed that the calm, God-fearing counsel of Samuel was most needed, that God gave his aged servant rest. Oh, how bitter were the reflections of Israel as they looked upon

his quiet resting-place, and remembered their folly in rejecting him as their ruler; for he had had so close a connection with Heaven that he seemed to bind all Israel to the throne of Jehovah. It was Samuel who had taught them to love and obey God; but now that he was dead, the people felt that they were to be left to the mercies of a king who was joined to Satan, and who would divorce the people from God and Heaven.

David could not be present at the funeral of Samuel; but he mourned for him as deeply and tenderly as a faithful son could have mourned for a devoted father. He knew that his death had broken another bond of restraint from the spirit and actions of Saul, and he felt less secure than while the prophet lived. While the attention of Saul was engaged in mourning for the death of Samuel, David thought it necessary to seek for a place of greater security; so he fled to the wilderness of Paran. It was here that he composed the one hundred and twentieth and twenty-first psalms. In the desolate wilds of the wilderness, realizing that the prophet was dead, and the king was his enemy, he sang: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved; he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.... The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even forevermore."

October 26, 1888

The Work of a Peace-Maker

While David and his men were in the Wilderness of Paran, they protected from the depredations of marauders the flocks and herds of a very wealthy man named Nabal, who had vast possessions in Carmel. Nabal was a descendant of Caleb, but his character was churlish and niggardly.

David and his men were in sore need of provisions while at this place, and when the son of Jesse heard that Nabal was shearing his sheep he sent out ten young men, and David said unto the young men, "Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name; and thus shall ye say to him that liveth in prosperity, Peace be both to thee, and peace be to thine house, and peace be unto all that thou hast. And now I have heard that thou hast shearers; now thy shepherds which were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there aught missing unto them, all the while they were in Carmel. Ask thy young men, and they will show thee. Wherefore let the young men find favor in thine eyes; for we come in a good day; give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants, and to thy son David."

David and his men had been like a wall of protection to the shepherds and flocks of Nabal as they pastured in the mountains. And he courteously petitioned that supplies be given them in their great need from the abundance of this rich man. They might have helped themselves from the flocks and herds; but they did not. They behaved themselves in an honest way; but their kindness was all lost upon Nabal. The answer he returned to David was indicative of his character. "And Nabal answered David's servants, and said, Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse? there be many servants nowadays that break away every man from his master. Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men, whom I know not whence they be?" When the young men returned empty-handed, disappointed and disgusted, and related the affair to David, he was filled with indignation. "Surely," he said, "in vain have I kept all that this fellow hath in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that pertained unto him; and he has requited me evil for good." David commanded his men to gird on their swords, and equip themselves for an encounter; for he had determined to punish the man who had denied him what was his right, and had

added insult to injury. This impulsive movement was more in harmony with the manner of Saul than with that of David, but the son of Jesse had yet to learn lessons of patience in the school of affliction.

One of the servants of Nabal hastened to Abigail, the wife of Nabal, after he had dismissed David's young men, and told her what had happened. "Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he railed on them. But the men were very good unto us, and we were not hurt, neither missed we anything, as long as we were conversant with them, when we were in the fields. They were a wall unto us both by night and day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep. Now therefore know and consider what thou wilt do; for evil is determined against our master, and against all his household."

Without consulting her husband, or telling him of her intention, Abigail made up an ample supply of provisions, and started out to meet the army of David. She met them in a covert of a hill. "And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and fell at his feet, and said, Upon me, my lord, upon me let this iniquity be; and let thine handmaid, I pray thee, speak in thine audience." Abigail addressed David with as much reverence as though speaking to a crowned monarch. Nabal had scornfully inquired, "Who is David?" but Abigail called him, "My Lord." With kind words she sought to soothe his irritated feelings. She did not reproach him for his hasty action, for she felt assured that a little time and reflection would work a change in his purpose, and that his conscience itself would condemn the violent measure which he was about to take. She pleaded with David in behalf of her husband. With utter unselfishness of spirit, she desired him to impute the whole blame of the matter to her, and not to charge it to her poor, deluded husband, who knew not what was for his own good or happiness. What a spirit is this! With nothing of ostentation or pride, but full of the wisdom and love of God, Abigail revealed the strength of her devotion to her household. Whatever was her husband's disposition, he was her husband still, and she made it plain to the indignant captain that the unkind course of her husband was in nowise premeditated against him as a personal affront; but it was simply the outburst of an unhappy and selfish nature. Nabal was naturally unreasonable and abusive, and when aroused he knew not what he said or did.

"Now therefore, my lord, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the Lord hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood, and from avenging thyself with

thine own hand, now let thine enemies, and they that seek evil to my lord, be as Nabal," Abigail did not take to herself the credit of this reasoning to swerve David from his hasty purpose, but gave to God the honor and the praise. She then offered her rich provision as a peace-offering to the young men of David, and still pleaded as if she herself were the guilty party who had so stirred the indignation of David. "I pray thee, forgive the trespass of thine handmaid; for the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house; because my lord fighteth the battles of the Lord, and evil hath not been found in thee all thy days." Abigail presented by implication the course which David should pursue. He should fight the battles of the Lord. He was not to seek revenge for personal wrongs, even though persecuted as a traitor. She continued: "Yet a man is risen to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul; but the soul of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God; ... and it shall come to pass, when the Lord shall have done to my lord according to all the good that he has spoken concerning thee, and shall have appointed thee ruler over Israel; that this shall be no grief unto thee, nor offense of heart unto my lord, neither that thou hath shed blood causeless, or that my lord hath avenged himself; but when the Lord shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thine handmaid."

These words could only have come from the lips of one who had partaken of that wisdom which cometh down from above. The piety of Abigail, like the fragrance of a flower, breathed out all unconsciously in face and word and action. The Spirit of the Son of God was abiding in her soul. Her heart was full of purity, gentleness, and sanctified love. Her speech, seasoned with grace, and full of kindness and peace, shed a heavenly influence. Better impulses came to David, and he trembled as he thought what might have been the consequences of his rash purpose. An entire household would have been slain, containing more than one precious, God-fearing person like Abigail, who had engaged in the blessed ministry of good. Her words healed the sore and bruised heart of David. Would that there were more women who would soothe the irritated feelings, prevent rash impulses, and quell great evils by words of calm and well-directed wisdom. "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God."

A consecrated Christian life is ever shedding light and comfort and peace. It is purity, tact, simplicity, and usefulness. It is controlled by that unselfish love that sanctifies the influence. It is full of Christ, and leaves a track of light wherever its possessor may go. Abigail was a wise reprover and counselor. David's passion died away under the power of her influence and reasoning. He was convinced that he had

taken an unwise course, and had lost control of his own Spirit. He received the rebuke with humility of heart, in harmony with his own words, "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil." He gave thanks and blessing because she advised him righteously.

There are many who, when they are reproved or advised, think it praiseworthy if they receive the rebuke without becoming impatient. But how few take reproof with gratitude of heart, and bless those who seek to save them from pursuing an evil course.

Abigail rejoiced that her mission had been successful, and that she had been instrumental in saving her household from death. David rejoiced that through her timely advice he had been prevented from committing deeds of violence and revenge. Upon reflection, he realized that it would have been a matter of disgrace to him before Israel, and a remembrance that would always have caused him the keenest remorse. He felt that he and his men had the greatest cause for gratitude. He had had a horror of bloodshed, and had prayed that he might be delivered from blood guiltiness; and yet, when his feelings were injured, he had planned to avenge himself with his own hands. In this he had taken it upon himself to act in the place of God, who has said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay."

David had taken an oath that Nabal and his household should perish; but now he saw that it was not only wrong to make such a vow, but it would be wrong to keep it. If Herod had had the moral courage of David, no matter how humiliating it might have been, he would have retracted the oath that devoted John the Baptist's head to the ax of the executioner, that the revenge of an evil woman might be accomplished, and he would not have had upon his soul the guilt of the murder of the prophet of God.

When Abigail returned to her home, she found her husband and his guests participating in the enjoyment of a great feast. Nabal thought nothing of spending an extravagant amount of his wealth to indulge and glorify himself; but it seemed too painful a sacrifice for him to make to bestow compensation which he never would have missed, upon those who had been like a wall to his flocks and herds. Nabal was like the rich man in the parable. He had only one thought,--to use God's merciful gifts to gratify his selfish animal appetites. He had no thought of gratitude to the giver. He was not rich toward God; for eternal treasure had no attraction for him. Present luxury, present gain, was the one absorbing thought of his life. This was his God.

Abigail found her husband in a state of intoxication, joining in the drunken revelry of those around him. She knew it would be useless to tell him of what had happened when his reason was dethroned; but the next morning she related to him the occurrence of the day before. Nabal was a coward at heart, and his excessive indulgence of appetite, both in eating and drinking, had affected his physical and moral powers, and when he had realized how near his folly had brought him to a sudden death, his entire energy and power seemed smitten with paralysis. Fearful that David would still pursue his purpose of revenge, he was filled with horror, and sank down in a condition of helpless insensibility. After ten days Nabal died. The life that God had given him had only been a curse to society. In the midst of his rejoicing and merry-making, God had said to him, as he said to the rich fool of the parable, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee."

When David heard the tidings of the death of Nabal, he gave thanks that God had taken vengeance into his own hands. He had been restrained from evil, and the Lord had returned the wickedness of the wicked upon his own head. In this dealing of God with Nabal and David, men may be encouraged to put their cases into the hands of God; for in his own good time he will set matters right.

David afterward married Abigail. This was not according to the original plan of God; it was in direct opposition to his design, that a man should have more than one wife. David was already the husband of Ahinoam. The gospel condemns the practice of polygamy. The custom of the nations of David's time had perverted his judgment and influenced his actions. Great men have erred greatly in following the practices of the world. The study of everyone should be to know what is the will of God and what saith the word of the Lord. The bitter result of this practice of marrying many wives was permitted to be sorely felt throughout all the life of David.

November 2, 1888

David Spares Saul

After the death of Samuel, David was left in peace for a few months. Saul did not pursue or trouble him, and the son of Jesse returned to the solitude of the Ziphites, thinking they would not now molest him since the king had desisted from following him. But the people knew too well the character of Saul to credit him with sincerity repenting of seeking David's life. These enemies of the son of Jesse hoped to be favored by informing the king of David's hiding-place. They told Saul that David was within their reach, and that they would do their utmost to put him into his power.

This intelligence aroused the demon of passion that had been slumbering in Saul's breast. He thought an opportunity was offered which should not be left unimproved. He summoned his men to arms, and once more led them out in pursuit of David. After the solemn covenant that Saul had made with David, the son of Jesse was not inclined to believe that the king would still seek his life. In company with a few of his men, he started out to see if indeed Saul was pursuing him again. David and his companions beheld the tents of the king and his attendants. They were unobserved; for the camp was quiet in slumber. David called upon his friends to go with him into the very midst of the foe. In answer to his question, "Who will go down with me to Saul to the camp?" Abishai promptly responded, "I will go down with thee."

David and his attendant hastened into the shadows of the hills, and entered the encampment of the enemy. As they sought to ascertain the exact number of their foes, they came upon Saul sleeping, his spear stuck in the ground and a cruse of water at his bolster, while Abner and the people were slumbering on every side. Abishai raised his spear, and said to David, "God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day; now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the spear even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time." The servant waited for the word of permission; but there fell upon his ear the whispered words: "Destroy him not; for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless? ... As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish. The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed; but, I pray thee, take thou now the spear that is at his bolster, and the cruse of water, and let us

go. So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away, and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither awakened; for they were all asleep; because a dead sleep from the Lord had fallen upon them."

How easily the Lord can weaken the strongest, remove prudence from the wisest, and baffle the skill of the most watchful. Then David went over to the other side, and when he was at a safe distance from the camp, he stood on the top of a hill, and cried with a loud voice to the people, and to Abner the son of Ner, saying, "Art thou not a valiant man? and who is like to thee in Israel? wherefore then hast thou not kept thy Lord the king? for there came one of the people in to destroy the king thy lord. This thing is not good that thou hast done. As the Lord liveth, ye are worthy to die, because ye have not kept your master, the Lord's anointed. And now see where the king's spear is, and the cruse of water that was at his bolster. And Saul knew David's voice, and said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And David said, It is my voice, my lord, O king. And he said, Wherefore doth my lord thus pursue after his servant? for what have I done? or what evil is in mine hand? Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If the Lord have stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering; but if they be the children of men, cursed be they before the Lord; for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go, serve other gods. Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of the Lord; for the king of Israel is come out to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains."

David assured Saul that he would be glad to serve him as a servant; but without cause he was pursued as a rebel, and compelled to fly from him whom he would follow. He was cut off from the service of God, separated from the holy land, and driven away from his own people to live with strangers and idolaters. He presents the course of Saul in pursuing him as that of the king taking the flower of his army to seek a flea, or to hunt a partridge of the wilderness.

David urged that the real reasons of the king's enmity be searched out, and the controversy come to an end. He knew that it was jealousy [jealousy] that prompted Saul to hunt him from place to place, until there was no security for him, not even in the rocky home of the goats. He declared that if the Lord had stirred Saul up against him to punish him for his sins, God would accept an offering from him. He would make peace with God. If it was wicked counselors that advised the king to take such cruel measures

against an innocent man, let them be excluded from his presence as men accursed of God.

David pleaded for his life before the relentless Saul. Again the acknowledgment fell from the lips of the king, "I have sinned; return, my son David; for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day; behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly. And David answered and said, Behold the king's spear! and let one of the young men come over and fetch it." Although Saul had made the promise, "I will no more do thee harm," David did not place himself in his power. This second instance of David's respect for his life, made a still deeper impression upon the mind of Saul, and brought from his lips a more humble acknowledgment of his fault. He was subdued and astonished at the manifestation of David's mercy and kindness toward him. The son of Jesse might have deprived him of his life, but his soul had been precious in the eyes of him to whom he had thought he must be odious and abhorrent.

Saul had meant all that he had said, yet his relenting and confession came not from genuine repentance and conversion of heart. How many have acted in a similar manner. They have been enlightened by the Spirit of God in regard to the truth, but envy and jealousy and unholy ambition have been welcomed to the soul, and the light of truth has been permitted to grow dim. Men whom God has blessed, who have had new light, new purposes, and new hearts, who have meant to be sincere, have been placed in temptation, and by failing to resist the suggestions of Satan, they have allowed self-esteem, and desire for the highest place, to color all the thoughts and actions of their life. Light and darkness, good and evil, strive for the victory. Oh, that these souls might place themselves in right relation to God, and come into harmony with his law! Jealousy has found an entrance into their hearts, and has woven itself into their characters. Envy and jealousy are like two sisters who blend together in their workings. Envy will lead a man to desire some good which another possesses, and will urge him to use every means in his power to bring down and injure the character and reputation of one in whose place he desires to be. Falsehood, hearsays, and slanderous reports are circulated, and everything that can be made use of will be employed to place the envied man in an unfavorable light before the people. Jealousy leads a man to suspect another of seeking to deprive him of advantages and position. Saul had both envy and jealousy.

November 9, 1888

David Becomes Weary in Well-Doing

"And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul; there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines; and Saul shall despair of me, to seek me any more in any coast of Israel; so shall I escape out of his hand. And David arose, and he passed over with the six hundred men that were with him unto Achish, the son of Maach, king of Gath."

David's conclusion that Saul would certainly accomplish his murderous purpose, was formed without the counsel of God. He had at last become weary of waiting upon the Lord, and in a moment of discouragement placed himself in an unfavorable light before the people of God by his course of unbelief. It was not the Lord who had sent him for protection to the Philistines, the most bitter foes of Israel. This very nation would be nothing less than his worst enemies to the very last; and yet he had sought to them for help in his time of need. Yet having lost all confidence in Saul and in those who served him, he threw himself upon the mercy of the enemies of his people, to escape the treachery of the very men whom he afterward would be called upon to rule when God's appointed time should come.

The Lord had recently worked in David's behalf by aiding him to obtain a decided victory over Saul. The Lord's hand was in all this, and, if David had looked upon the dealings of God with him, he would not have taken this step of seeking unto the Philistines. The Lord had so arranged matters in the past, that the true spirit of David was made manifest before all Israel, and the false accusations brought against him by Saul were proven to be without foundation. Saul had represented David as a traitor and a conspirator, lying in wait to take the life of the king, that he might possess the kingdom himself. The king had represented the matter to the people in such a light that it seemed necessary to deprive David of his life, that the prosperity of Israel might be preserved.

But in working against David, he was working equally against himself in the course that he was pursuing. Through the curse of envy and jealousy, he had weakened his own kingdom by expelling David from his service; for, in so doing, he had driven

him into the enemies' ranks. But even while Saul was plotting and seeking to accomplish his destruction, the Lord was working to secure to David the kingdom. And after he had seen that God was caring for him, and had preserved his life again and again, he should have been courageous, and should have left his case in God's hands.

David looked on appearances and not at the promises of God. He doubted that he should ever come to the throne. But had not God sent Samuel to anoint him king of Israel? and would not the Lord perform his word? Although he could not rely on Saul's assurances, he might have safely trusted in the promises of God. The particular care that God had exercised over him in preserving him from all danger, so that he had not been harmed, should have given him confidence and comfort. But cruel unbelief had taken possession of David's heart.

God works out his plans though they are veiled in mystery to human eyes. Men cannot read the ways of God; and, looking at outward appearances, they interpret the trials and tests and provings that God permits to come upon them as things that are against them, and that will only work their ruin.

David took counsel with his own heart. Long trials had tried his faith and exhausted his patience. But these very trials were designed to work him blessing, to strengthen his faith in the belief that angels were encamped round about him, and that he was under the guardianship of Heaven. God was dishonored by his course of unbelief.

David was a brave general, and had proved himself a wise and successful warrior; but he was working directly against his own interests when he went to the Philistines. God had appointed him to set up his standard in the land of Judah, and it was want of faith and confidence that led him to forsake his post of duty without a command from the Lord. How could he expect that the God of Israel would give him protection, when he had placed himself with the bitterest foes of his people? Could he expect safety with the Philistines, when only shortly before he had barely escaped with his life by feigning himself to be a mad man? Could he reasonably hope to save himself by seeking an asylum with a people whom God had appointed to extinction? When he should come to the throne, he would be employed as the agent to carry out this purpose of destroying the Philistines.

In fleeing to the enemies of Israel, David encouraged the Philistines to take further measures to oppress his people, and the impression was received by his brethren that he had gone to the heathen to serve their gods. By this act he gave occasion for misconstruing his motives, and many were led to hold prejudice against him. This demonstrates the fact that great and good men, men with whom God has worked, will make grievous mistakes when they cease to watch and pray, and to fully trust in God.

There is a precious experience, an experience more precious than fine gold, to be gained by everyone who will walk by faith. He who will walk in the way of unwavering trust in God will have a connection with Heaven. The child of God is to do his work, looking to God alone for strength and guidance. He must toil on without despondency and full of hope, even though he is placed in most trying and aggravating circumstances.

David's experiences are recorded for the instruction of the people of God in these last days. In his warfare against Satan, this servant of God had received light and direction from Heaven, but, because the conflict was long continued, and because the question of his receiving the throne was unsettled, he became weary and discouraged. He was provoked that he was hunted from place to place as though he were a wild beast. The very thing that Satan desired to have him do, he was led to do; for, in seeking refuge among the Philistines, David caused great joy and triumph and exultation to the enemies of God and his people. David did not renounce his worship of God nor cease his devotion to his cause; but he sacrificed his trust in him for his personal safety, and thus tarnished the upright and faithful character that God requires his servants to possess.

November 16, 1888

David's Experience in Philistia

David was cordially received at Gath by the king of the Philistines. The warmth of his reception was partly due to the fact that the king admired him, and partly to the fact that it was flattering to his vanity to have a Hebrew leave his own nation to seek his protection. Achish hoped to be successful not only in gaining David as an ally, but in gaining others also, for he felt assured that many would be influenced through David's example to rally under his standard. David felt secure from betrayal in the dominions of Achish. He brought his family, his household, and his possessions, as did also his men, and to all appearances he had come to locate permanently in the land of Philistia. All this was very gratifying to Achish, who solemnly promised to protect the fugitive Israelites.

At David's request for a residence in the country removed from the royal city, the king graciously granted Ziklag as a possession, and it was afterward annexed to Israel's dominions. For a year and six months, David made his home in the country of the Philistines. He had tasted the bitterness of envy at Saul's court, and he feared that he might have a similar experience in the court at Gath. But it was for far weightier reasons that he desired to leave the royal city. He realized that it would be dangerous for himself and [his] men to be under the influence of those who were connected with idolatry and transgression. In a town wholly separated for their use, they might worship God with more freedom than they could if they remained in Gath, where the senseless, heathen rites could but prove a source of evil and annoyance.

While dwelling in this isolated town, David made war upon the Geshurites, the Gezrites, and the Amalekites, and he left neither man nor woman alive to bring tidings to Gath. When he returned from battle, Achish inquired as to where he had been, and David gave him to understand that he had been warring against those of his own nation, the men of Judah. But by this very dissembling, he was the means of strengthening the hand of the Philistines, for the king said, "He hath made his people Israel utterly to abhor him; therefore he shall be my servant forever." By placing himself under the protection of the Philistines, he had discovered to them the weakness of his people; for the Philistines had feared David more than they had feared Saul and his armies.

Although David knew that it was the will of God that the Philistines should be destroyed, and although he knew that he was appointed to do this work, yet he was not walking in the counsel of God when he practiced deception. Moreover, he had been anointed to stand in defense of the people of God; and the Lord would not have his servants give encouragement to the wicked by disclosing the weakness of his people, or by an appearance of indifference to their welfare.

David's faith in God had been strong, but it had failed him when he placed himself under the protection of the Philistines. He had taken this step without seeking the counsel of the Lord; but when he had sought and obtained the favor of the Philistines, it was poor policy to repay their kindness by deception. In the favor they had shown him they had been actuated by selfishness. They had reason to remember the son of Jesse, for his valor had cost them their champion, Goliath, and had turned the tide of the battle against them. The Philistines were glad of an opportunity to separate David's forces from the army under Saul. They hoped that David would avenge his wrongs by joining them in battle against Saul and Israel.

"And it came to pass in those days, that the Philistines gathered their armies together for warfare, to fight with Israel. And Achish said unto David, Know thou assuredly, that thou shalt go out with me to battle, thou and thy men." David had no intention of lifting his hand against his people, but he was not certain as to what course he would pursue until circumstances should indicate the direction of his duty. He answered the king evasively, and said, "Surely thou shalt know what thy servant can do." Achish understood these words as a promise to assist him in the approaching war, and the king pledged his word that if he would do this, he would bestow upon him great honor, and give him a high position among his officials.

But although David's faith had staggered somewhat at the promises of God, he still remembered that Samuel had anointed him king of Israel. He recalled the victories that God had given him over his enemies in the past. He reviewed the great mercies of God in preserving him from the hand of Saul, and he determined that he would not betray any sacred trust, or imperil his soul's salvation. He would not join his forces with the enemy against Saul, even though the king had sought his life.

How many would have yielded to the temptation that Achish presented to David! How many have fallen, and how many will fall, into the snare of Satan for temporary

advantages! Ambitious for exaltation, they will unite their influence with the avowed enemies of God's truth if they can only be honored among those who are honored of men. For present advantages, they will sacrifice the eternal good that God has in store for them. They will not endure the proving of God, and show themselves true in every place, and under all circumstances. God has promised that his faithful, obedient servants shall be exalted to be priests and kings. "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?"

Satan succeeds in making many grow restless, even after they have wrestled against difficulty, and have run well for a season. He presents temptation in a new way, and under a different aspect, and places before men human honors and advantages, and they fall, as did Adam and Eve when the serpent said, "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Stretching beyond their capacity, they seek a more exalted position; desiring the highest seat they will finally, with shame, have to take the lowest seat. They sell their souls to the enemy, that they may be lifted up, and they will find, at last, that they are slaves to the one who degrades and ruins mankind. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

November 30, 1888

God's Requirement of His People

The Lord cannot use men and women in his service, in any branch of his work, unless they possess a meek and teachable spirit. Those whom God employs in his service must be true to principle, but, while they must not swerve from the plain path of duty for any selfish interest, they are not to be bigoted and puffed up with self-esteem. Unless the heart is in connection with the Source of all wisdom, there will not be an abiding sense of the sacredness of the work. Workers for Christ must derive all their life and inspiration from God. They must seek to be conformed to his will and his ways, and not seek to have their own will and way. He who would become a living channel of light, must be governed by something more than habit or opinion. He must live hourly in conscious communion with God. His life must be brought into contact with the principles of truth and righteousness. He must become a partaker of divine nature.

The servant of God must be continually seeking for intellectual power, and every acquisition of the mind must be devoted to glorifying God. We must have enlarged conceptions of what the requirement of God is of his people. We are to love God with all our heart, might, mind, soul, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves. This love will elevate the taste, subdue the appetite, and control the passions. Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, these are the fruits of the Spirit. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." They are endowed with the heavenly endowment, even with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is of great value in the sight of God. God requires us to reach the highest standard.

We must not be content with anything short of the divine illumination from the central Light of the universe. When we have this illumination, we shall see the necessity of pressing onward and upward, of elevating the standard, of cultivating the loftiest ambition, and of reaching the highest attainments. We shall constantly draw from the Source of all wisdom, and live as in the sight of the Lord. We should consecrate all our powers to the service of Christ. He has loved us; he has died to redeem us, and to wash us from our sins in his own blood. Self must die. All success and honor must be accredited to Him who has died that we might live. Christ must be inscribed upon our

banners. How slow we are to understand that God requires the service of our whole heart, an unreserved consecration of all the powers of our being. He claims all there is of us. All that mortal man can render of service in any direction, must be devoted to the work of Christ, if we would meet the requirement of God.

Your talent has been intrusted to you by the Lord, and you will be held responsible for its employment and improvement. It is the design of the Giver that it shall be used in accordance with his divine will. We are not only to work out our own salvation, but we are to love our fellow-men as we love ourselves. We must manifest the glory of God. This is the high aim of our existence. We must be in such a condition that we can appreciate the light that God has brought into the experience of others. Our lives and characters are influenced by the physical, intellectual, and moral acquirements of past generations. If we remain in ignorance, we have no one to blame but ourselves. If we put to the stretch every power, and task every ability to the utmost, with an eye single to the glory of God, we shall not fail of doing a valuable work for God.

The time in which we live is full of the most solemn importance. There is nothing that can be more acceptable to God than to have the youth dedicate their lives to his service in the bloom and freshness of their years. Their talents may become a power for God, when they are properly cultivated. Their characters may be characters that will be acceptable to Heaven; but they must be shaped by line upon line, and precept upon precept. They must be modeled after the divine pattern.

Those who are educating the youth in the service of God, are doing a solemn and sacred work. They are channels through which flows the current of spiritual light from the throne of God. Without being conscious of it, they are doing a work that is far-reaching in its influence. In the work of saving souls, we are to know whereof we speak. The words of John are full of significance when he says, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you." He affirmed that he had known him that was from the beginning, and because of this, he was able to impart knowledge to those whom he sought to teach. We are to remember the experiences of the past, to recall the days of old, and then to be able to give the trumpet no uncertain sound, because we can affirm whereof we know. We can encourage others to reach forward for a better life, because we have had an experience ourselves in the things of God.

When your soul is the temple for the indwelling Spirit of the Saviour, the gross

elements of your nature will be consumed, and the whole being will become a living purpose. He who is truly Christ's will have an experience like that of Daniel, and the fruits of the Spirit will appear in his life. There are powers within us that are paralyzed through sin, that need the vivifying influence of the grace of Christ, that they may be restored. A mighty power from the Life-giver must quicken them to life, and rouse them to action. When this is your experience, you can work as Jesus has given you an example. Divine light and love will be reflected upon those who feel that they are sick in both soul and body. Jesus invites his own presence to your soul. He says, "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." Shall we not open the door of our hearts to the divine guest?

Those who engage in the work of God must be pure in heart, and circumspect in deportment. The souls of God's people should not be like a barren waste, as are so many souls at this time. God has given to every man some ability to use in his service, and it is God's design that it should be employed to his glory, and man's good. Many are losing much, simply because they will not learn in the school of Christ. They might gain eternal treasure, but, in turning away from the divine Teacher, their consciences are violated and seared, and the admonitions of God's word lose all power to stir their hearts. But there is no need of making such a failure. Christ will come into the heart and abide there if you will but cleanse the soul temple of every defilement.

March 4, 1889

The Fruits of Faith

God is not pleased with ignorance. We must become better acquainted with the principles of divine truth, that we may know better how to deal with human minds. We must have a closer connection with Heaven. We must follow the light, and reflect its rays upon the pathway of others. We want to enter right into the work, to go out to minister to souls. We should not be satisfied until the converting power of God attends our labors. To him who "goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed," the promise is given that he shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

Laborers are needed everywhere to reveal Jesus to the people as he is. Those who abide in him will not misrepresent the truth by complaining and murmuring. They will say with 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." By faith we behold Him who is invisible. Our faith reaches up to lay hold of the realities of the unseen world, and the affliction of the present is esteemed light in comparison with what is reserved in Heaven for us.

The angels of Heaven are looking upon us to see what we are doing to proclaim the truth for this time. Christ has made us ambassadors to make known his salvation to the children of men, and if we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and are filled with the joy of his indwelling Spirit, we shall not be able to hold our peace. The truth will be poured forth from hearts all aglow with the love of God. We shall long to present the attractions of Christ, and the unseen realities of the world to come. We shall reflect the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. We are to be partakers of Christ's suffering and his self-denial; and if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. If we are partakers of his humiliation, we shall also be partakers of his glory. If we go forth weeping, with the heart broken, with self subdued, there will be no lofty lifting up of self instead of Jesus; but there will be the bearing forth of precious seed, and the certain returning with joy and with precious sheaves for the Master. The quickening influence of the grace of God will be made manifest. There will be an intensity of desire

to follow in the path that Jesus trod. There will be an earnest longing that those around us may behold "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." We shall want to see the salvation of souls. Our thoughts will be filled with loving zeal for the Master.

There are souls all around us who are starving for the bread of life; and how can we keep it to ourselves? Present truth must be preached to the people with unwavering faith and untiring effort. You must minister to those around you the truth that you have received. Diffuse the light that has fallen upon your heart. Paul's charge to Timothy is just as applicable to us today as it was to the young disciple. He said: "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." We are to put every talent out to the exchangers, that it may be returned to God with usury. We are to do the work that Christ has committed to his followers, and preach the gospel to every creature. We do not realize what we shall be able to do when we are truly consecrated.

There are souls on every hand who are crying, "Come over and help us." Solemn responsibilities are resting upon the people of God. I thank God for our schools, where young men and young women may be prepared to labor in the Lord's moral vineyard. I thank God that the Bible is regarded as the most important study of our schools. Why should not the precepts of Jehovah be diligently studied? "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." It lies at the foundation of all knowledge and wisdom. When Daniel was in the court of Babylon, what was it that enabled him to stand as a rock amidst all the subtle and overwhelming temptations of the king's court? He had his eyes on the precepts of God, and he was determined to be a loyal subject of Heaven. He purposed in his heart that he would not indulge in the luxuries of the King's table, but that he would keep his faculties in the best order, and his mind in a condition to appreciate eternal and spiritual truths. And when the king inquired of him, he found him ten times wiser than all the astrologers and wise men in his court; for God gave him understanding and wisdom. Let the youth take the Bible as their guide, and stand like a rock for principle, and they can aspire to any height of attainment. There is no limit to the knowledge that they may reach. You may aspire as you wish, but there will always be an infinity beyond. Take God's word to balance the mind, and you will be led into large fields of fruitful thought. You may be fitted for positions of usefulness and trust in this world, and, in comparison with the wise men of earth, you may be found, as was

Daniel, to be men of tenfold greater wisdom than all the astrologers in the realm.

The only means whereby humanity can be reached and saved is through the cooperation of the human with the divine. Humanity can reach humanity. If the angels could have been saviours, it would have been necessary for them to take on them human nature, as did Christ. They would have had to experience the trials and sorrows of humanity, in order that they might know just how to pity and aid men, and to give them moral and divine power. But there was none who could be the saviour of the world but Jesus, the Son of God. Through his merits, men stand before God as candidates for eternal life. We are to be overcomers. We are to gain the victory here and now; we are to obtain a precious experience in the things of God now. If we do not get that experience and victory in this life, we shall never obtain it.

Every day we can each others precious lessons in forbearance, in love, in compassion. We are to be representatives of Christ in every action of our lives. We do not want an emotional religion, and we have not had it in the meetings at this place. The testimonies have been plain, simple testimonies, declaring that Christ had forgiven sins, and restored the joy of his salvation. As I have heard these testimonies, I have rejoiced; for I knew how angels looked upon the scene. There has been joy in Heaven among the angels of God. There has been among us a heavenly Guest who has been restoring the lost sheep to the fold. Sinners have been reclaimed and reconciled, and I praise God. All Heaven is interested in what has been going on here. You have been abundantly pardoned, and the grace of Christ has been imparted to your souls, and now you are to be Christ's representatives. Every treasure of his goodness is to be given again to others. Every ray of light that has fallen upon your pathway is to be reflected upon some other who is in darkness. You are to speak with this one, to pray with that one, to write a letter to another, and to go about doing good to all men as you have opportunity. You have been made stewards of the manifold grace of God, which you are to dispense to others.

March 11, 1889

Let Your Light Shine

"No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed, but setteth it on a candle-stick." Your life is to be set on a candle-stick. It is not to be inclosed in four walls, but is to shine forth unto the world. "Ye are the salt of the earth;" but if the salt has lost its saving quality, of what use is it? You are to exert an influence that shall be as far-reaching as eternity. What is the savor, or saving quality, of the Christian's life?--It is the divine nature of which you are to be a partaker. It is the heavenly light which you are to diffuse to those around you. Society is to be better for your having lived, and eternity will show that your efforts have been blessed to the salvation of souls.

We are to be God's peculiar people, whom he has called out of darkness into his marvelous light to show forth his praise, zealous of good works. This is to be our work; we are to show forth his praise. How many of us have done this in the past? How many have given unbelievers the impression that the religion of Christ is the most desirable thing in the world? Unbelievers have said, "We do not want to be Christians. There is no joy in serving God. Religion is only a dead round of lifeless ceremonies. We want the attractions of the world." Satan will see that they have these things. But Christ can give them rest and life and fullness of joy. When you see the glory of the Christian's hope, I know what you will do; you who have tasted and seen that the Lord is good, will reveal the praises of God. Have you not realized that Christ can save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him? When this fullness of salvation takes hold of your soul, you will have more and more of the praises of God on your lips, and more and more decided will be your testimony of the goodness of God. It will not be as it has been in the past.

When Satan comes to you to tell you that you are a great sinner, begin to look up to your Redeemer and to talk of his merits; that which will help you is to look to his light. Acknowledge your sin; but who was it that Christ came to save? Tell the enemy that "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners," and that you are saved by his matchless love. Jesus asked Simon a question in regard to two debtors. One owed his lord a small sum, and the other owed him a larger sum; but he forgave them both, and

he asked Simon which debtor would love him most. He answered, "He to whom he forgave most." We have been great sinners, but Christ died that we might be forgiven. The merits of his sacrifice are sufficient to present to his Father in our behalf. Those to whom he has forgiven most will love him most, and will stand nearest to his throne to praise him for his great love and infinite sacrifice. It is when we most fully comprehend the love of God that we best realize the sinfulness of sin, and the fullness of salvation. When we see the length of the chain that was let down for us, and understand something of the merits of that infinite sacrifice that Christ has made for us, the heart is melted with tenderness and contrition.

Why is it that you have not loved the Saviour more?--It is because you have been satisfied with your own goodness. You have been content to appear in the filthy garments of your own righteousness. But when self is crucified, and you come to Christ for his righteousness, your words of self-justification are gone. You speak, melted by the matchless love of your Saviour. You see his attractiveness, and lay hold of him who is the sinner's only hope. Then when you have found him, you are interested for somebody else. It is everything with us what kind of an influence we are exerting in the world. Shall we gather with Christ? Shall we draw men to the Man of Calvary? Lift him up. Self has been lifted up; but let self be humbled. Let self die. Educate the lips to talk of Jesus, and the heart to praise him, and it will become second nature to speak forth his matchless grace. You will go forth everywhere saying, "Hear what the Lord has done for my soul." The more you tell of his mercy, the more you will have to tell. Let it be your testimony, "The life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

I love him; for he is my love. I want to talk of him by the way. I want to praise him now and forever. Now will each one of us become a missionary? Shall it be written in the records of Heaven opposite our names, "Missionaries, co-laborers with Jesus Christ"? Do not disappoint our heavenly Father; and may God help you that you may say, "I live, yet not I; but Christ liveth in me."

Christ is coming, and he is coming for his people. He says, "I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands." The marks of the crucifixion are in his palms for us, and when he comes, "he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." We are to seek to save souls; we are to present his sacrifice to the perishing; for when he comes, we want to enter into the joy of our Lord; and his joy is to see souls in his kingdom for

whom he has died. We are to go on from strength to strength, growing more happy in his service, settled, rooted, grounded, in his love. He says: "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." Oh, what exaltation for fallen humanity! We are almost home. Christ is coming in the clouds of heaven, and he knows his sheep by name. He knows every soul who has come to him in faith, just as he knew that woman who touched him with the touch of faith. Jesus asked, "Who touched me?" The disciples were astonished that he should ask this. They answered, "Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?" When the woman saw that she was not hid, she came and fell at his feet, and told her story, and praised him for his healing power. At the touch of her faith he perceived that virtue had gone out of him. Faith had taken it from him. No one else knew that she had touched him; but he knew it. The crowding multitude had not felt the restoration that she realized. The actual contact of her faith with him had brought the blessing. And this will bring Christ's virtue to us, that we may be prepared for his service and his kingdom.

When he comes, he will say to those who are looking for him, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." "Well done"--what have they done? They have built up his kingdom. They have shared in his trials, his sufferings, his labors; and he gives them a place among the blessed. What exaltation, what privilege is ours! We may have the worthiest ambition which Heaven can approve, in saving souls for eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

March 18, 1889

The Substance of Things Hoped For

The word of the Lord declares that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." We desire that everyone should be in a position where he can believe the word of God. How should I feel if my children should be constantly complaining to me, just as though I did not mean well, when my whole life's efforts have been to forward their interests and to give them comfort? Suppose they should doubt my love; my heart would break. I couldn't endure it. How would any of you feel to be thus treated by your children? How can our heavenly Father regard us when we doubt his love, that has led him to give his only begotten Son that we might have life? The apostle writes, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" And yet we stand back, distrustful and suspicious, saying, "Well, he doesn't mean this for me. Perhaps he loves others, but he does not love me."

Why is it so difficult for you to believe in God?--It is because you have been educating your soul in doubt and unbelief all your life long. It makes my heart ache to hear your mournful testimonies, stating that your whole life has been a failure. Have there not been some bright spots in your experience? Have you not had some precious seasons when your heart throbbed in response to the Spirit of God? Dear brethren, for Christ's sake cherish every ray of light, every token of mercy and good, every blessing that God has bestowed upon you. Although you see that you have not given glory to God, that you have not been grateful, let that not be a reason why you should be ungrateful still, and sink down into despondency and discouragement. Have you not praised God in the past when the warm rays of his love fell upon your heart? Have you not sought to do his will as an obedient child? When you look back into the chapters of your experience, do you not find some pleasant pages? Is memory's hall filled only with pictures of neglect and sorrow? Are there only dark, forbidding, and unhappy representations there? Are there not some pleasant pictures, where you can see the providence of God? Confess your ingratitude of the past; but retain every pleasing memory, and every token of God's love that he has given to bind your heart to his great heart of infinite love. Oh, praise him! Let us educate ourselves to speak the language of faith. If Satan has cast his dark shadow across your path, look up in faith, and God will let his light shine upon you and dispel the darkness. Satan would like to have you

cherish that shadow. He would like to have you view God through a cloud of his own making; but we are to be in a position of faith and confidence in God, where we can cherish every bright beam of light; having seen a token of God's love, we are to say, "Here is an evidence that God is blessing me. I cherish this as a manifestation of his favor. I will gather up the precious jewels of his truth." If you do this, you will be full of light. If you have been in the shadow, confess your unbelief, and then claim the promises of God by living faith, and come into the light of your Saviour.

You are not to trust simply in pleasant emotions. Suppose that after you have been filled with joy, you should rise in the morning under a cloud, with the same train of shadowy thoughts as have troubled you in the past. Would that be an evidence that God had left you during the night? Not at all. It would simply be an evidence that your mind has so long been trained in the line of unbelief, that it is from force of habit running in the doubting channel. Dwell on the faith side of the question. Educate your thoughts in the line of God's mercy. Educate your tongue to speak of his goodness. Train the whole mind and soul to act in faith. It is praising Satan when you talk so continuously of your doubts and darkness. You are glorifying the prince of darkness when you give up your thoughts and words to follow in the shadow he casts on your pathway. Let your first morning thought be, "How good is the Lord! He is full of goodness and tender mercy." Praise him. Say, "Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." When the darkness of the enemy begins to sweep over you, say, "I do love the Lord. I know that I love him, and I know that the Lord loves me, even me."

A good way to disperse darkness is to talk faith and courage. We are admonished in the word of God to fight the good fight of faith. Suppose that you take your stand under the banner of faith. If you have repented of your sins, and have confessed them to God, you need no longer go on in doubt and despondency. God does not want you to stand under a cloud. He wants you to come into the light, and to have confidence in him, knowing that you have committed your soul unto his keeping, as unto a faithful Creator.

Satan will come to you after you have trusted in God, and will try to steal away the victory that faith has gained. He will present your sins to you; but can you not tell him it is written, "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin"? Can you not tell him that God has promised to remove your transgressions away from you as far as the east is from the west, and that they are to be remembered no more?

I see the necessity every day and every hour of exercising living faith. What is faith? It is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." There is a wonderful power in faith. It brings eternal things to view, and lays hold of the arm of infinite power. If you have been educating your soul to gather up the dark chapters in your experience, turn over a new leaf and have a new, bright, cheerful experience; put your will wholly on the Lord's side. We must exercise living faith if we would war successfully against the temptations of the enemy.

There are on the walls of this house two mottoes, "Praise the Lord," and, "Thy word is truth." These are good and pleasant words. Suppose that you hang your memory's hall all full of the remembrances of God's goodness, grace, and truth, and let not one dark thought or shadow have a place in that hall. We are not to be so selfish as to simply desire a flight of happy emotions. We are to fix our faith on the promises of God, which are sure and steadfast, and shall endure forever and ever. The joyful feeling will come when we fully trust in God's promises. Jesus has said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." This invitation is certainly for those who are burdened with unbelief; and his assurance is, "Ye shall find rest unto your souls." It is not, "May be you shall find rest." Oh, no; it is positive and certain: "Ye shall find rest." Why do we misinterpret our heavenly Father when he says "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." Take his yoke upon you, and he will bear the heaviest part himself. Is he not good company? do you object to association with him? He says, "I am at thy right hand to help you," "my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Why not make up your mind that you will stand in your God-given manhood and womanhood, and, through Christ, be overcomers? Why not say, "God has promised the power, and I will win back the moral image of my Creator and Redeemer"? Do not allow the mind to hold communion with the enemy. Do not talk of his power to discourage you. Talk of Christ, who is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him. We have a whole Saviour, and let us have a whole faith in him who has died for the sins of men, and for my sins. When we take this position, we shall find rest and peace in our Saviour. Come with your burdens, and lay them down at the foot of the cross, put off the yoke of self and sin, and wear the yoke of Him who is meek and lowly of heart. Let every soul come to the fountain, and drink of the waters of life, that will be in him like a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.

When I talk of the subject of faith, my faith grows. I feel as though I could run through the troops of darkness, and rise above all barriers. It seems as though nothing could hinder me. By living faith, I grasp the hand of Jesus, and I am all light in the Lord. I do not look at self, I look to Jesus, my high priest, who presents my case to the Father, offering up the merits of his life and sacrifice. Faith will keep the mind above the low level of earth, and direct the soul to Heaven in contemplation of the spiritual and eternal. Let us lift up Jesus, the Saviour of men. Talk of his love, tell of his power, and the angels of God will be attracted to you. Will you have faith in God, who "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"?

March 25, 1889

"Come Ye, Buy and Eat"

It will do you no good to believe that others may be blessed. Each one must appropriate the blessing to his own soul, or he will not be fed. Each must work for himself. Suppose that a table were spread with every desirable thing, and you were invited to come and eat, but you should make excuse and say, "I am not prepared. Let others eat; it is not for me." You know you would not be nourished by seeing a well-spread table, and by others eating. We would starve if we did not partake of physical nourishment, and we shall lose our spiritual strength and vitality if we do not feed on spiritual bread eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God, which is, receiving and doing his word.

The invitation has been given, "Let him that is athirst come, and take of the water of life freely." "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." The invitation has been given, and the question is, Will we come and eat? Others cannot receive blessings for us; and we have kept the Saviour apart from our lives. Jesus prayed that his disciples might be one with him as he was one with the Father; and if we are one with him, if we are obedient to his word, the Father loves us even as he loves his Son.

When Philip asked the Master to show him the Father, Jesus looked upon him in sorrow, and said, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." Our lives can be so connected with God that we can have this oneness with Christ. Our thoughts, inclinations, desires, and appetites may all be on the Lord's side. Then we shall have nothing separate and distinct from Christ. There will be perfect harmony between our hearts and his, so that we shall be one with him as he is one with the Father. And now is the time to come into this union with Christ. We have only today

to call our own; tomorrow is not ours. We want today to determine that we will no longer dishonor God by our unbelief, by standing back from the Master when he says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

The table has been spread, and Christ invites you to the feast. Shall we stand back, refusing his bounties, and declaring, "He does not mean this for me"? We used to sing a hymn that described a feast where a happy household gathered to partake of the bounties of the board at a kind father's invitation. While the happy children gathered at the table, there stood a hungry beggar child at the threshold. She was invited to come in; but sadly she turned away, exclaiming, "I have no father there." Will you take this position as Jesus invites you in? Oh! if you have a Father in the courts above, I entreat you to reveal the fact. He wants to make you a partaker of his rich bounties and blessings. All who come with the confiding love of a little child will find a Father there. How could the Lord express his love to us in more tender language than that in which he has expressed it in his precious word? He tells us just what to do in order that we may be saved. How I wish that we might all believe in the promises of God. He says, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for everyone that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." Do we really believe this promise? We should comply with the conditions laid down in God's word; for if we do this we shall receive, simply because God has pledged his word. We are not to look into our hearts for a joyful emotion as an evidence of our acceptance with Heaven, but we are to take God's promises, and say, "They are mine. The Lord is letting his Holy Spirit rest upon me. I am receiving the light; for the promise is, 'Believe that ye receive the things ye ask for, and ye shall have them.' By faith I reach within the vail, and lay hold of Christ, my strength. I thank God that I have a Saviour."

Are you doing this? Are you taking God at his word, planting your feet on the eternal Rock that cannot be moved? You should daily be making advancement in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. If you have been laboring in your own strength, make a covenant with God that from this time forth you will rely upon Him who is mighty to save to the uttermost all who come unto Him. If you have gone before the people, presenting your own weakness, now say, as did Moses, "I will not go up unless Thou goest with me." When you are imbued with the Spirit of God, self will no longer be cherished. What has been the trouble with your experiences in the past? Why have you not made a success of the Christian life?--It has been because of vain conceit, self-

esteem, self-righteousness, and unbelief. May God help us that self may die here. May he help us to humble our souls by repentance and confession until we can come before him clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

Say before Heaven, "I have nothing of my own to bring; I want that righteousness that comes through the merits of the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour. How thankful we should be that we have a whole Saviour, that in him is our complete righteousness and salvation! I want to see a wave of glory from Heaven waft over this congregation, until you see the great truths of redemption in a different light. When you have tasted and seen that the Lord is good, you will have something to tell. Like Philip, when he found the Saviour, you will go forth to invite others into his presence, saying, "I have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write."

May the blessing of God rest upon his people as never before. May they come up to their high privilege, and open the door of the heart and let Jesus in to sup with them and they with him.

April 1, 1889

Light and Responsibility

The blessing of God has rested upon us in a wonderful manner at this meeting; we believe that God has forgiven our sins, and we must never go back of this experience to take up the burden of our sins. The light of Heaven has shone upon us here, and our feelings may change, but this does not change God's love toward us. God wants us to make the best use of it by reflecting it upon others. That which has shut away the light from our souls in the past has been the spirit of criticism. Many have watched the course of others, and have condemned their actions instead of keeping their own hearts with all diligence. They have judged the motives of their brethren; but mortal man is not fitted to do this work. The heart knoweth its own bitterness. We all have hereditary and cultivated weaknesses, but we may obtain precious victories every day. When a man climbs upon the judgment-seat to judge his brother, he makes it manifest that Christ is not enthroned in his heart. The Spirit of God will go out of the soul that admits the spirit of criticism.

Suppose that your brother is in error; are you to take a course that will make his case more hopeless? Are you to drive the straying sheep farther from the fold, instead of laboring to bring it back? Says the Good Shepherd, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in Heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven. For the Son of man is come to save that which is lost." Do we expect that those who are lost will be faultless? There was once a sister who wrote to me in regard to adopting a child. She described the character of the child she wanted. She must be affectionate, industrious, truthful, pure, and patient. I wrote to her saying: "You cannot find such a child on earth. If you are looking for that kind of character, you must seek it among the angels of Heaven. You think you are offering to do a work of charity in adopting a child; but your motives are wholly selfish. If you would do something to be approved of Heaven, take a child who needs help, who needs forbearance, and the grace of Christ." We choose associates because we think they will benefit us; but Christ sought associations with those whom he could benefit. True religion will not lead you to do as did the Pharisee, to thank God that you are not as other men are, and congratulate yourself that you have not their faults and weaknesses. It will not lead you to stand off in self-righteousness, and despise and condemn your

brethren.

The Son of man came to seek and save that which was lost. He left the ninety and nine, to go into the mountains and deserts for the one sheep that had gone astray. And when he had found it, he rejoiced more over that one sheep than over the ninety and nine that had never left the fold. Jesus said, "It is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." How are we to treat those who are found in fault? The Bible gives directions. "Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Go in the spirit of meekness and love, desiring the salvation of his soul. Oh! when the Spirit of God is in the heart, there is no feeling of variance, no desire to criticise and condemn others. It is Satan that is an accuser of the brethren; but we must work the works of Christ. We must learn how to go out and seek for the perishing. Go to your brother in kindness, get your arm about him, say, "Come, my brother, let us talk over this matter of difference kindly, in the Spirit of Christ. Let us seek the Lord together. Let us love one another." This is the very thing to do. We are not to criticise the erring, pushing them away by our influence; but we are to bring them close to our hearts. Are there those in our neighborhood who are breaking the law of God? Plead with them tenderly. Who has gone in love and kindness to those who are perishing, seeking to save that which was lost? I want you to see that it is not merely to eat the loaf yourselves that constitutes Christianity; you are to offer it to others as well. Did not Christ say, "Feed my sheep"?

There are those among us who have inherited weaknesses, and because of these they have been criticised. When they have started in the path of right, there have been those who have raised the cry, "They will never hold out." And thus they have become discouraged, and have given up the warfare. But to such I would say: "It is not too late to renew the battle. It is not too late to gain the victory." When the father saw his prodigal son, he did not wait for him to come to the door; but when he was a great way off he ran and met him. Are you ready to treat your brother in this way? or must your brother come up to a certain standard before you can feel justified in extending that sympathy and love toward him that Christ has extended toward you? Oh, go to the straying ones while they are yet a great way off! Labor to bring them back to the fold. We have a work to do for our erring brethren for whom Christ died. You are not to report the failures of others, and to make discouraging remarks as to their steadfastness in the way of truth. You are not to prophesy that this one or that one will fall out by the way, and when your disheartening words reach his ears, and work their evil result, and

the trembling, tempted soul gives up, you are not to be ready to exclaim, "I told you so! I knew it would be so!" That is just the work that has been done; but we want that it shall be undone by repentance and confession, and that it shall be left undone in the future.

Oh, why not go to the wounded sheep, and bind up their bruises, and lead them to the Healer and the Shepherd of souls? Why not bind these weak ones by the cords of love and sympathy to your hearts, and make it hard for them to fall from their steadfastness, instead of pushing them away from you by evil surmising and evil speaking? Why not be a co-worker with Christ? Why not stand ready to grasp the hand that is stretched out for your help? Here are souls that are to be saved, and how earnestly you should labor for their salvation. This work has been long neglected. Why not do it now in the fear of the Master? Seek the lost, gather in the weak ones, help them by your faith and love, that they may gain victory after victory, and that where they are feeble they may become strong and whole. May God help you that you may be qualified by the Spirit of Heaven to pity and sympathize with the lost! All Heaven rejoices when characters are transformed, and when men work for the glory of God.

The blessing that Heaven showers upon men is not simply that they may be made happy. Those who receive it must work for others. I remember at one time we had a special blessing in the Battle Creek church, and many souls were swept into the faith by the heavenly current of God's love. One brother arose and said, "All this blessing means work. It means responsibility, and am I in a situation to bear this responsibility?" There is tenfold greater responsibility resting upon us now than ever before, because of the measure of grace that we have received. Take it up, brethren, and bear it. As you work for God, the light will break in. Gather up the rays of glory, and they will increase more and more. Oh! when I look on others, and know that they are in darkness, my heart goes out in sympathy for them. I was once in the depths of despair myself. I was struggling in a hopeless way. No one seemed to be able to help me; but Jesus pitied me and brought me out of darkness into light. I look upon others, and I wonder, "Are they as restless, as full of suffering, as I was?" Oh, to have the pitying tenderness of Christ! Are there any who have been driven out of the fold because of our lack of love? Go after them, plead with them, pray for them, and draw them back to the tender Shepherd.

April 8, 1889

The Christian's Calling Honorable

I have heard persons say, "I cannot think of such a thing as becoming a Christian. I would have to give up all my pleasures if I embraced religion." But I want to know what pleasures would have to be renounced to become a follower of Christ?--The poor, fleeting pleasures of the world. How many scores of people have come from places of amusement smitten with death! How many have contracted disease, and have stained their souls with sin in ball-rooms and banquet halls. This is wonderful liberty indeed that men are so reluctant to relinquish for the sake of gaining Heaven.

I have heard others say: "Oh, I can't come down to be a Christian. I would have to sever my connection with my associates. My mind is of too exalted an order to take any pleasure in the simplicity of the religion of Christ. I cannot afford to come down to the humble life that is described in the Bible as necessary to fit one for eternal life." The Lord of Heaven, the Majesty of worlds, he who marshaled the stars in their courses, and called them all by name, he who made the everlasting hills, and put in them their treasures of gold and silver and precious gems, he who clothed the fields with verdure, has invited you to come out from the world, to separate yourself from its sinful pleasure, and he promises that if you will do this he will be a Father unto you, and you shall be his sons and his daughters.

What an honor it is thought to be, to be noticed by a king or queen of earth! I was in London at the time of the queen's jubilee, and I saw the great preparations that were made to do her honor. All the verandas and windows that overlooked the street where her retinue was to pass, were rented for enormous prices by those who desired to catch a glimpse of her majesty as she passed by. What a privilege it was thought to be to touch her hand at the reception. But the King of Heaven has said that we may be his children. He says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, 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." We may be members of the royal family of Heaven, and bear the royal name.

During the jubilee, the queen's name was on every lip. How I desired that Jesus

might be as highly honored, and his name be spoken with as much praise. How I wished that the people might behold the King of glory! The whole city was full of the bustle of preparation for the coming of England's queen; but I wished that the same joy and earnestness might be manifested in preparing for the coming of Christ, the King of glory. Oh, that men might manifest as great eagerness to proclaim their loyalty to the Prince of Heaven as they manifested to proclaim their loyalty to Queen Victoria!

I want to be a Christian, an heir of Heaven. Men talk of the mansions of earth, but I will talk of the mansions of Heaven. Jesus has promised to come again and receive us unto himself, and he will take us to the mansions that he has gone to prepare for his people.

I have respect unto the recompense of reward. I will not dishonor my God, by thinking it is unimportant, or a dishonor, to be a Christian. "Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field? or shall the cold, flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken?" Shall we leave the Fountain of living waters that spring up unto eternal life, for broken cisterns that can hold no water? Shall we turn away from the prospect of Heaven for the fleeting pleasures of earth? I have seen enough of what men call perfection here below. Seekers for pleasure are only drinking at broken cisterns, that can hold no water. The glories of the unseen world attract my soul. The life hid in Christ, the privilege of being one with him as he is one with the Father, of being loved, if obedient, as God loves his Son,--all these claim the entire service of my life and affection. "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." Talk not to me of your blessings outside of Christ. They are empty, worthless.

The servants of God, by an interested effort, have found the field that conceals the treasure. They have found jewel upon jewel, and treasure upon treasure. The simple disciples of Christ have furnished us with examples in wisdom such as the world cannot give. Mighty men of God have digged in the mines of truth, and have brought forth precious gems. Those who prayerfully study God's word will find it infinite, exhaustless.

We are to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man. Jesus told his disciples that this meant that they were to live upon his word. The more we know of his truth, the more we shall desire to know. There will be an eternity before us, in which to explore the mysteries of God. It will be the delight of our Lord to lead us in green

pastures, beside flowing waters, and unfold to the redeemed the mysteries of redemption. Let me be a stranger and a pilgrim here. Let me toil and be weary, but let me know Jesus and his love, and I will not complain. Was not my Lord weary? Was not he a stranger? Did he not say to his disciples, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while"? Often his disciples had to take him by force away from his labors lest he should fail because of weariness. At night he sought the mountain, and poured out his supplication with strong crying and tears, not for himself, but for us.

Will you not give yourself to him now? Why do you delay? Is it gold you want? Can you not wait for an immortal inheritance? The streets of the New Jerusalem are paved with gold. Its walls are of jasper and precious stones. Is it honor that you desire? Can you not wait a little? Jesus will crown his children with glory, honor, and immortality. It is enough. My soul feasts on his love.

Consecrate your lives to Christ. Take your children and patiently educate them that they may have pure and holy characters. Tell them the blessed story of the cross of Calvary. This is the great, central theme of all wisdom. Teach them to bear the cross; for in bearing the cross the cross will bear them. It is the pledge to them of the crown of glory that will never fade away. Said the apostle, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Lift up the man of Calvary. Talk of his love, tell of his power. All the universe is watching to see if you prize the gift of eternal life that has been purchased for you at an infinite cost. Everyone that casts himself at the foot of the cross, giving his soul into the keeping of a faithful Creator, testifies his willingness to bear the contempt of the world. But the redeemed soul can say with 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." Therefore lift your minds up out of doubt and darkness by contemplation of the spiritual and eternal. Your King is exalted in the highest heavens, and you should exalt him below by reflecting his divine image. Let your faith lay hold upon his merits. Are you a sinner against him? Hear what his promise is to those who repent of their rebellion: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Oh, that the veil might be swept aside, and you might get a clear view of the King in his beauty! How the world would pale and fade before you!

I once had the privilege of speaking to twenty thousand people, and oh, how glad I felt that I could honor Jesus before that immense throng! Only a little while longer, and we shall see him as he is, and be made like him. He is coming with clouds and with great glory. A multitude of shining angels, "ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands," will escort him on his way. He will not wear that simple, seamless robe, but robes of glory, white, "so as no fuller on earth can white them;" and on his vesture and on his thigh a name will be written, "King of kings, and Lord of lords." He will come to raise the dead, and to change the living saints from glory to glory. Who will be able to stand at that day? Who will be ready to say, "This is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us"?

Make your peace with him today. Put your case into the hands of the great Advocate, and he will plead for you before the Father. Though you have transgressed the law, and must acknowledge your guilt, Christ will present his blood in your behalf, and through faith and humble obedience you may stand acquitted at last. God will be your friend when the final trump shall sound. Christ has enjoined upon his people the necessity of watching and praying, lest he come unexpectedly and find them unprepared.

The glory of the eternal world has been opened before me. I want to tell you that Heaven is worth winning. It should be the aim of your life to fit yourself for association with the redeemed, with holy angels, and with Jesus, the world's Redeemer. If we could have but one view of the celestial city, we would never wish to dwell on earth again. There are beautiful landscapes on earth, and I enjoy all these prospects of loveliness in nature. I associate them with the Creator. But I know that if I love God, and keep his commandments, there is a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory reserved in Heaven for me. Beautiful as are the scenes of earth, they can bear no comparison to the glories of the eternal world. Says the apostle, "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." God desires us to contemplate heavenly things. He desires us to behold the matchless charms of the divine character, and by beholding we shall become changed into the same image, through the power of his transforming grace.

April 15, 1889

The Love of God

"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. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

John presents before us the love of the Father toward the children of men. God's love has been manifested to us in the gift of his beloved Son. The apostle cannot find words to describe the greatness and the tenderness of this love; but he calls upon the world to behold it. This is to be our work. We are to call the attention of our fellow-men to the love of God that has been manifested to us by the infinite cost of Calvary. Jesus was one with the Father; he shared his majesty and glory. God made an infinite sacrifice when he gave his beloved Son to die for the world; but few have any appreciation of this great love that has been expressed toward a fallen race. Those who do have an appreciation of it are not looked upon with favor by the world. The apostle says, "Therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." He says further: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

Those who are sons of God will be constantly purifying themselves, and seeking to fashion their characters after the divine Pattern. Their thoughts will be upon heavenly things. Their conversation will be concerning Jesus, their Saviour. They will be waiting for him to appear in the clouds of heaven, and when he comes escorted by ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of angels, those who have looked for him, and who have loved his appearing, will meet him with joy.

We have a great work before us, not only to form characters ourselves for eternal life, but to labor that others may be fitted for the kingdom of Heaven. We must educate our tastes and our habits of life to simplicity. We cannot afford to place our hands in the hands of the world, and follow its customs and fashions. We must be natural, not

artificial. And how beautiful is the natural in contrast with the artificial!

We should have hearts overflowing with sympathy for souls for whom Christ died. We should seek to educate our children in the fear of God, teaching them that Christ died for them, and that they may have salvation without money and without price. It will only be a little while before Jesus will come to save his children and to give them the finishing touch of immortality. "This corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality." The graves will be opened, and the dead will come forth victorious, crying, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Our loved ones who sleep in Jesus will come forth clothed with immortality. And as the redeemed shall ascend to Heaven, the gates of the city of God will swing back, and those who have kept the truth will enter in. A voice, richer than any music that ever fell on mortal ear, will be heard saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Then the righteous will receive their reward. Their lives will run parallel with the life of Jehovah. They will cast their crowns at the Redeemer's feet, touch the golden harps, and fill all Heaven with rich music.

Satan has misrepresented the character of God. He has clothed him with his own attributes. He has represented him as a being of inflexible sternness. He had shut the world away from beholding the true character of God, by casting his shadow between men and the divine One. Christ came to our world to remove that shadow. He came to represent the Father. He said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." He prayed that his disciples might be one with him, even as he was one with the Father. Men have declared that this oneness with Christ is an impossibility, but Christ has made it possible by bringing us into harmony with himself, through the merits of his life and sacrifice. Why should we doubt the love and power of God? Why should we not place ourselves on the faith side of the question? Do you behold the charms and attractions of Jesus? Then seek to follow in his footsteps. He came to reveal the Father to the world, and he has committed to us the work of representing his love, purity, goodness, and tender sympathy, to the children of men.

We have eternal life to win, and this is worth the loss of everything besides. We should study the Scriptures diligently. The Bible is like a garden where God has placed rich roses, and lilies, and pinks of promise, and they are for us if we will only pluck them.

When Satan casts his shadow athwart your pathway, grasp the precious promises of God, and go through the shadow by living faith, and you will find only light, mercy, goodness, and truth. When the enemy tells you that you are a sinner, tell him that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Come to the foot of the cross with your burden, and roll it off into the open sepulcher. Our Lord is precious, but we lose sight of his willingness to help and save us, when we dwell in the darkness of unbelief. Lift up the Man of Calvary. There is enough to talk about without talking of the power of the evil one. We have found the field that contains the treasure which is of inestimable value. When God gave his Son he gave us all Heaven in that one gift. Why should we cherish darkness and doubt, and those things that bring despondency and discouragement into our lives?

Why not bring the joy and light and peace of Heaven into our hearts? The religion of Christ never degrades the receiver. The truth of God is the mighty cleaver that has separated us from the world, and now we have been brought into God's workshop to be hewed and squared and polished for the heavenly building. We are to be living stones in the temple of God. We are not to be dull and lifeless stones; but we are to reflect the rays of light that fall from Heaven, so that men may see that the truth has done something for us that the knowledge and wisdom of this world could not do.

Has the reception of the truth made you more cheerful? Have the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness shone upon your heart in vain? Those who are meeting the conditions on which the promises are based, should be the happiest people in the world, for they have all Heaven at their command. We may have Heaven below. God will put a new song into our hearts, even praise to his name. The enemy may stand ready to cast his shadow upon you, but will you talk of his power, his darkness?

Christians that carry a gloomy countenance are misrepresenting their Lord. They represent the Christian life as one of toil and hardship. They go mourning and groaning as if it were uphill work. Is the gate of Heaven shut? Have they no Father in Heaven? You might think from their attitude that Jesus was in Joseph's new tomb, and a great stone rolled against the door. But Jesus is risen. He has ascended on high, and has led captivity captive, and has given gifts unto men. He has made manifest what he will do. He will break the fetters of the tomb, and bring forth his people from the land of their captivity. We dwell too near to the lowlands of earth. Let us raise our eyes to the open

doors of the heavenly sanctuary, where the light of the glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ, who "is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." Why not talk of the plan of salvation? Why not dig in the mines of truth for the treasures of wisdom, that you may appreciate the promises of God? Why not dwell in the love of Christ, and talk of the plan of redemption? We should study how to overcome appetite, ambition, and the love of the world. Is there not enough for us to do that we have to give so much time to matters of small importance?

When Christ left the world, he committed his work to his followers. He came to represent the character of God to the world, and we are left to represent Christ to the world. We are not to go on in the path of darkness, stumbling on the dark mountains of unbelief. There is a way cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, and this is where we may walk securely every day. Do not grasp the thistles, gather the roses, the lilies, and the pinks. If we are to understand the rich treasures of God's word, we must separate our souls from all iniquity, that we may not come under its denunciations. As loyal soldiers we are to march under the banner of Prince Immanuel. We are to study the Bible, that we may know how to meet the assaults of the enemy. When Christ was tempted, how did he overcome?--He met the tempter with, "It is written." He used the words of God, declaring, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." This is the way that we are to overcome. We must search the Scriptures, and appropriate the promises of God to our souls.

April 22, 1889

Preparation for the Testing-Time

It is of the greatest importance to us that we obtain a knowledge of the Bible. Christ has said, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand." He has said again, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." He has also warned us to be on our guard against false doctrines. He said, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves."

Many false doctrines will be presented to us as the teaching of the Bible; but as we compare them with the law and the testimony we shall find that they are dangerous heresies. Our only safety is in becoming personally acquainted with the reasons of our faith. In the book of Revelation, we find warnings, injunctions, and promises given to John for the churches, and we need to understand these instructions more fully, that we may not be found in delusion. We should keep the condition of these churches as described in the Revelation before us, and discern our own spiritual deficiencies by the description of the deficiencies. We should heed the reproofs that are given to us in the counsel of the True Witness.

Christ has declared that "if any man do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." The Lord of Heaven has not left his people in darkness. He has revealed to them his truth for this time. While many of the professed followers of Christ have lapsed away into error and apostasy, those who have walked in the light, not only hear, but read and understand, the prophecies of his word. The law of God will be made void in the world; its authority will be despised just as it was in Heaven in the first great rebellion; and God would have us intelligent to note the movement of the nations, so that we may see the signal of danger, and recognize the warnings that he has given us, that we may not be found on the side of the great deceiver in the crisis that is just before us.

God has made full provision in the Scriptures for our equipment against deception, and we shall be without excuse, if, through neglect of God's word, we are

unable to resist the errors of the evil one. We need to watch unto prayer. We need daily to search the Scriptures diligently, that we may not be ensnared by some delusive error that seems like truth.

I found in traveling through Europe, that I was not acquainted with some of the minor laws of the country, and I was under the necessity of being informed as to the customs of the people lest I should be found a transgressor. But how particular we should be to understand the law of God, so that we may not be under condemnation as law-breakers. It is the willing and obedient that God will bless. If we are desirous of understanding the law of earthly Governments, how much more should we desire to know what God requires of us. If we are anxious to understand our duty, he will not leave us to be enshrouded in darkness, but will enlighten our understanding so that we shall know for ourselves what is truth.

We do not want to be found receiving dangerous error as truth. We do not wish to imperil our souls by rejection of God's messages of warning and counsel. Our greatest danger lies in our tendency to refuse increased light, and our only safety is to see and understand for ourselves "what saith the Lord." Says the prophet, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." The word of God alone is to be the rule of our faith and doctrine. A great contest is coming in regard to the law of Jehovah in our own day; but we read in Isaiah these words of instruction: "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples." "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth in Mount Zion." The controversy in regard to the law of God has begun, and we must be prepared to give a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear. We must know where our feet are standing.

Although the law of God will be almost universally made void in the world, there will be a remnant of the righteous that will be obedient to God's requirements. The wrath of the dragon will be directed against the loyal servants of Heaven. Says the prophet, "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 can see from this scripture that it is not the true church of God that makes war with those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. It is the people who make void the law, who place themselves on the side of the dragon, and persecute those who vindicate God's precepts.

There are many who will tell you that if you keep the law of God you have fallen from grace. They make strong assertions for which they have no foundation, to lead people astray, for they do not know whereof they speak. The prophet says, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples." Those who are seeking to destroy the law are not of the class who are sealing the law among the disciples of Christ, but they are of the class who "shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken." The dragon is represented as persecuting those who keep God's commandments. Evil angels conspire with evil men against God and his people. Persons of influence are stirred with a power from beneath; the energies of apostasy are united to deceive or to destroy the champions of truth.

John writes concerning scenes that have to do with our own time. He says, "The temple of God was opened in Heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." That ark contains the tables whereon is engraven the law of God. On the Isle of Patmos, John beheld in prophetic vision the people of God, and saw that at this time the attention of the loyal and true followers of Christ would be attracted to the open door of the most holy place in the heavenly sanctuary. He saw that by faith they would follow Jesus within the veil where he ministers above the ark of God containing his immutable law. The prophet described the faithful ones, saying, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." This is the class that excite the wrath of the dragon because they obey God, and are loyal to his commandments.

The winds of doctrine will blow fiercely about us, but we should not be moved by them. God has given us a correct standard of righteousness and truth,--the law and the testimony. There are many who profess to love God, but when the Scriptures are opened before them, and evidences are presented showing the binding claims of God's law, they manifest the spirit of the dragon. They hate the light, and will not come to it, lest their deeds should be reprov'd. They will not compare their faith and doctrine with the law and the testimony. They turn away their ears from hearing the truth, and impatiently declare that all they want to hear about is faith in Christ. They claim to be guided by the Spirit, and yet their spirit leads them contrary to the law of Heaven. They refuse to acknowledge the fourth commandment, which requires men to keep holy the Sabbath-day. They declare that the Lord has instructed them that they need not keep the Sabbath of his law.

The word of God declares, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." It is not enough to nominally assent to the truth, we must have its principles interwoven with the life, and wrought into the very character. We may well be afraid of any class who refuse to compare their faith and doctrine with the Scriptures. There is safety alone in taking the Scriptures as our rule of life, and as the test of our doctrines. Martin Luther exclaimed, "The Bible, and the Bible alone, is the foundation of our faith!" Our work is to hold up the law of God; for Christ has said that "it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for one tittle of the law to fail." He has said, "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."

May 6, 1889

Give Glory to God

"And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off. And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests; and it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, and fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks; and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole."

I am feeble tonight, but if I had ever so much strength, there would be no power in me to insure you a good meeting. If your minds are in a devotional frame, if your hearts are drawn out in prayer to God for his blessing, if there is a yearning of soul to know what is the will of God concerning you, if you are humbling your hearts before him, God will speak to your souls tonight. Oh, that every one of you may hear and understand the voice of the true Shepherd! Oh, that you may be susceptible to the influences of the Holy Spirit! There never was a time in my life when I felt more anxious and more in earnest to know that it was well with my soul. There never was a time when I felt that there was greater importance attached to what I should say and do, than I feel is attached to my words tonight.

I know that we are nearing the Judgment. I know that the angels of God are in this congregation tonight. Evil angels are here also. The Lord is looking upon us, and I know that he is acquainted with each one of us. He knows whether your heart is devoted to him, whether you have religion in your home, whether you have come to this meeting with prayer and intercession that you may receive his blessing. Unless the Lord does meet with us tonight, this meeting will be of no benefit to any of us. But we believe he will meet with us; we depend upon him; for we have no strength of our own. All we can do is to place ourselves in the channel of his mercy.

The question that Jesus put to the leper that returned to give glory to God, we should put to ourselves. We should inquire, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?" Has God received that glory and honor which he should have received? Has his praise come not only from our lips, but from our hearts? Have we bowed at the feet of Jesus to give glory to his name for his matchless love in placing salvation within our reach? He inquires, What more could have been done in my vineyard than that I have done? The cross of Calvary represents what God has done for us. In the gift of his only begotten Son he has insured to us eternal life upon condition of our faith and obedience. How few appreciate the matchless love that he has manifested! He proclaims himself as merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin. Those who come to him, he pardons abundantly. Shall we be like the heath in the desert, that knoweth not when good cometh? Shall we not from the fullness of our gratitude render praise and glory to God, like the one who returned and bowed in his humility at the feet of Jesus? We do not want to be represented by the nine who went right on their way in indifference, and did not return to glorify Him who had restored them to perfect health.

We are not anxious to have a great excitement at this meeting, but we are anxious that those for whom Christ has done so much should fall at his feet, and glorify and praise him for his matchless love. I feel anxious lest we shall not appreciate the gift of God's grace, lest we shall not appreciate Christ, the believer's hope, his joy, his all in all. Christ is the truth, the hidden treasure in the field of God's word. He is the pearl of great price, which we must gladly sell all we have to obtain. An excitement might be created among the people at this meeting, and just as soon as the feeling should die away, we should find that they were no better, but rather worse than before the revival commenced. We are desirous that there should be a deep, thorough work done in our souls. We want to know how you stand before God. Is it well with your souls? Has Christ cleansed your heart from its defilement? We know not what may be our condition one hour from this time. We know not whether we shall be in active life, or in the silence and inactivity of death.

A letter came to me from my sister a few days ago. She wrote: "A terrible thing has happened. My husband was taking some dishes from the table when I heard him fall. I thought I heard a groan, and I quickly went to him; but when I reached him he was breathing his last." "Oh!" said she. "it is so sudden. I cannot make it seem like a reality that my husband is lying in the next room cold in death."

We are constantly hearing of sudden deaths that come without one moment of warning, and it is a question of vital interest to ask ourselves, "Is it well with my soul?" Christ has paid an infinite price for our redemption. The Lord of glory laid aside his royal robes, and became a man among men. For "though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." What a wondrous plan is the plan of salvation. Christ clothed his divinity with humanity, suffered in the flesh, died a most cruel death, that he might reach to the very depths of human woe and misery, and lift men up to a seat upon his throne. Will you be lifted up? Will you be cleansed from the leprosy of sin? Will you, as you partake of the heavenly benefit, give glory to God for the wondrous work he has wrought in you? John exclaims, "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. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." Mark these words, brethren; it does not say one in one hundred, or one in ten, but every man that hath this hope, purifieth himself.

Is there any reason why defilement should be cherished in your heart? If there is not, why are you not cleansed? Nothing that is vile can dwell in the presence of a holy God. Christ gave himself for us that he might "redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." We should be like the leper who was cleansed, who returned to give glory to God. There is no reason why our lips should not be trained to the high praises of God. When we hear the words of a cheering discourse, or the earnest exhortation of a brother or sister, why should not a wave of glory and a chorus of "Amens" go up to God from the congregation of his people? Would it not be thus if the fire of God's love were kindled in our hearts? I know it would be so. Coldness, formality, want of faith and love and intense earnestness and devotion, has killed the spirit of warmth and religion out of our services. We need everything,--the gold of love, the white raiment, which is the righteousness of Christ, the eye-slave,--that we may discern the goodness and love of God. When God works for his people, how few return to give him glory? We want a religion that has some consolation in it, that has joy and peace and love in it to recommend it to others. Our religion should be of that heavenly character that will impress the world with the fact that we have been with Jesus and have learned of him.

May 13, 1889

God Requires the Best Use of Our Powers

"For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in Heaven and earth is named, 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 5/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."

We have presented before us the Christian's privilege; but we have not realized the value of this privilege. We have assumed an attitude of hesitancy and unbelief. Doubt has enshrouded our souls, and we have failed to claim the promises of God's word. What is the reason that these precious utterances are treated with such indifference? Why is it that we are so well satisfied with our present knowledge of Jesus? We are to grow up into Christ, our living head, until we reach the full stature of men and women in Christ. When we fail to advance in the knowledge of God, we rob our Lord of the glory that should flow back to him from those whom he has redeemed with his precious blood.

Said the prophet: "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. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But 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."

The Son of God has given us abundant evidence of his tender love, of his willingness to do great things for us. Why should we not take him at his word? "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." In the light reflected from Calvary's cross, we can have no excuse for doubting God's word. We can find no reason for not devoting all our powers to his service. Our reasoning powers, our means, our talents of ability, should be consecrated to him.

The greatest tact and skill are manifested in matters of mere temporal interest. Men cultivate their talent and ability for the service of the world; but how many who profess the name of Christ fail to see the necessity of making the most and the best use of their God-given ability in his service. Body and soul and spirit are to be devoted to God. The servant of God should see that his work is carried forward with fidelity, and wrought with nicety. He should seek to do his work in a manner that will recommend it to God, that he may finally receive the benediction, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

If men expect the best exercise of your skill and ingenuity in temporal matters, how much more should your heavenly Master look to you for the best exercise of your skill and discretion in his work, which is exalted above every earthly consideration?

The first work of the Christian parent is to educate the children properly, that they may know and love Jesus, that they may be able to influence others to love Jesus, to be rich in good works, for there are many who would influence them to take the path of disobedience and transgression. They should be trained to resist everything evil in this degenerate age.

The Lord said concerning Abraham, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." Wherever the servant of God pitched his tent, he erected close beside it an altar, and there worshiped God. This was the example he gave to his children. If the children are educated to love and fear God, they will be fitted to bear responsibilities in life. Abraham commanded his household after him to keep the way of the Lord. This is what you should do. What are the terms upon which we may have eternal life? This was the inquiry of the lawyer that came to Jesus. He asked, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He only asked this question to entangle Jesus. He did not know that Christ could read his heart as an open book. Jesus left the burden of the answer upon him; he turned to him, and said, "What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, 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. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live."

We might ask, What shall we do to inherit eternal life? And the answer would be, Keep the commandments of God. Who is it that lives up to this requirement? Why is there so great mourning all over the land because of the coldness and the worldliness that exist in the church? Everywhere there is a dearth of the Spirit of God. The words of Him who interpreted the law of God, are set aside. Most Christians act as though they had graduated after they were baptized. They bring no sheaves to Christ. They are not laborers together with God. We are not to inclose ourselves in our houses, and devote our whole attention to our families. This is the height of selfishness. The whole world is lying in iniquity and darkness, and we should not be content to shut away our light from perishing souls.

Christ has given his life for the souls of men, and while God works in us to will and to do of his good-pleasure, we are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. While we work on our part, God will work on his part. As Daniel set his heart steadfastly to serve God, he increased in wisdom and understanding. We cannot afford to make a mistake. We cannot afford to be dwarfed in our religious life.

What would we think of apprentices at a trade who learned nothing beyond the first few principles of their art, and never made any further advancement? What can we think of those who profess religion, when they never show any marks of progression in the Christian life? What has religion wrought for him who cannot pray any more intelligently after years of profession of godliness, than he could at first, who cannot testify with any more decision to the goodness of God, and who knows nothing more of the living oracles of his word? The religion of Jesus never degrades the receiver. It reforms his taste, sanctifies his judgment, and fashions his character after the divine model.

The farmer can tell you about his farm, he can describe the quality of the land, and the character of its products. He can speak of what he knows with great freedom and interest. The lawyer, the merchant, the mechanic, all prepare for their pursuits, and experience makes perfect their knowledge, and they can all talk easily and earnestly of the improvements made in their calling; but bring together all those workmen who profess religion in such a meeting as this, and many will speak of their faith with hesitancy, with stammering tongue, and in so low a tone of voice that it is difficult to understand what they say. Why is it that men and women who can speak intelligently about matters of temporal interest, cannot speak decidedly about things of eternal

interest? How do the angels look upon our lack of appreciation of the things of God? Why is it that there is such a deficiency in the service we profess to render to God?

We have found it difficult to find persons qualified to fill responsible positions in our institutions; for men have not received an education from their childhood that fitted them for the work of God. They have not labored as though the eye of God was upon them. They were not as Joseph in Egypt, and Daniel in Babylon. God honored these men who honored him, and they were exalted to be leading men in the kingdom. It is of the greatest importance to us that we establish right habits, and develop characters that will be acceptable to Heaven. It is of the greatest importance that parents be able to say, "Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me." If this is our privilege, it will be seen that we have done the work committed to our hands; that solid timbers have been used in the character building of our children. It will be seen that they are untainted, unpolluted by the evils of the world; the love and fear of God is in their souls.

One of the greatest influences for good in society is a well-disciplined family. How many lawless households there are. Parents too often take their ease, and indulge in pastime and pleasure, instead of seeking to repress the evil outgrowth of disposition in their children. They do not realize that the development of these evil tendencies in their children will finally result in the destruction of their own peace. Every father and mother should pray earnestly that Jesus may be revealed to their children as a complete Saviour, and that their characters may be fashioned according to the divine pattern. Oh, that our work may be done for time and for eternity!

May 20, 1889

It Is Best to Be Christians

A solemn responsibility rests upon every one to engage in the work of saving souls. We cannot afford to fold our hands, and engage in interesting nothings, gratifying our tastes and inclinations. We are to win souls for the Master. We should be constantly growing in the knowledge of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. If men loved God supremely, they would dedicate themselves unreservedly to his service; they would devote their means and their talents to the upbuilding of his cause; they would train up their children for Heaven.

It brings agony to my heart to see how few know how to deal with their children. Mothers need a great amount of patience and love. The mother who looks with compassion upon her own children, who conscientiously seeks to educate them for God and Heaven, will look with compassion upon the children of others. She will love others because she loves her own. She will be a blessing to her family and to the neighborhood. The same ability that fits her to be a wise mother will fit her to be a wise missionary for God. The greatest missionary work that is done is in the home circle. To educate and develop the best and highest faculties of your children's minds is to do a work that will have a moulding influence upon society. If you have educated one in the fear of the Lord, you may say you have educated one hundred. There is an atmosphere that surrounds every soul, an influence, either conscious or unconscious, that emanates from every person for good or evil; and to discipline a family so that the members shall meet the high claims of Heaven is a work that is counted of highest value in the sight of God.

It is of great importance to know how to keep the affairs of home in running order without friction. The oil of patience must be poured in when things go hard, and our children must be bound to our hearts by the silken cords of love. Parents should know how to sympathize with their children in their little troubles, that look as large to them as older people's trials look to them. We should not neglect our children. It is in the early years that we have the best opportunity for sowing good seed in their hearts. If we neglect to do this work in their childhood, we shall find that Satan will preoccupy the field. Why not preoccupy the field yourself, and before the Evil one has a chance to

plant his seeds of evil, fill the mind with that which is good and pure? The angels of God will help you in the work of forming your child's character, if you will work in harmony with the plan of God. Do not let impatience control you. Be patient, be forbearing, and may God help you to realize your accountability to him.

When you become weary, go to Jesus with all your care. He says, "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." If you are bearing a yoke of your own manufacture, just lay it aside, and take the yoke of Christ, and nothing will disturb your peace, for you will have the peace of Christ that passeth all understanding.

Your children should not be driven off, and shut away from your sympathies. They should be encouraged to make confidants of father and mother. I have known children who had been so trained that even when they were grown men and women they counted it a privilege to counsel with their parents, though they were old and feeble. Is it not best, brethren, to be Christians? Is it not best to bring all the happiness possible into your life here, and prepare yourselves for the eternal world?

Each one of us will have to engage in the battle for good or evil, and we desire that you should battle on the Lord's side, and know how to come off victorious in your own behalf through the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour. Divine power will unite with human effort. God will co-operate with you in your struggle against evil, and when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him. We must look to the source of our strength. We cannot afford to lose eternal life. We want to be missionaries for God. We want to know how to minister to the necessities of others. Christ is our example. Let us follow in his steps.

We should know how to direct the mind of friends and neighbors to Christ when they are in trouble. We should know how to lead repentant souls to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." How many go to human friends to pour out their griefs and sorrows, instead of seeking Christ, who alone can heal the broken in heart. There are many who do not know how to come to Jesus with their burden, and, feeling their need of support, they turn to human hearts for comfort. But they are only leaning on broken props. God is the one to whom the troubled soul should go. Why put man in his place? We should seek to direct souls to the open door of Heaven, where we

can see within the veil our Substitute and Surety. In every trial and perplexity, we should look to him; for in him is help for the fallen sons of men. Christ is the star of hope that illumines our darkness. The serpent may bruise the heel of the seed of the woman, but Christ will bruise the serpent's head and take away his power at last.

The plan of salvation was revealed to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. They were made to understand how the Son of God would come and bear their sin, and redeem them from the curse of the law. But when Christ came into the world how few recognized his divinity or comprehended the nature of his work! He was not acknowledged as the Prince of life. The earth was the battle-field where the Prince of light and the prince of darkness met to contend for the fallen race. Christ had laid aside his crown and his royal robe, he had stepped down from his throne, and had clothed his divinity with humanity. For our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. He came into a world all marred and scarred by the curse. He took upon him humanity that he might know the infirmities and temptations of humanity, that he might know how to help and save men. The Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering. Was he not perfect before?--Yes. But he was made a perfect Saviour, learning obedience by the things which he suffered, that humanity might have a perfect character and be fitted for the society of the angels of Heaven. Man was not able, in his own behalf, to meet and overcome the prince of darkness; but Christ overcame him in man's behalf and broke his power over the human race, so that through his merits they might be overcomers in their own behalf.

May 27, 1889

Love and Obedience

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." It is not enough to profess love for God, Christ asks an evidence that we do love him. Willing obedience to the law of God proves the truth of our profession. We have heard from the pulpits of today that the law is not binding, but this cannot be. Christ says, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous." How could we know what sin is, unless we could look into the law of God? John, the beloved disciple, defines sin as the "transgression of the law." He says, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law, for sin is the transgression of the law."

Says the prophet, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." We must search as diligently in the word of God as did the noble Bereans, who "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily whether those things were so." We should dig as for hid treasure in the mines of truth. Christ has warned us that false prophets would arise and would deceive many. There are many who profess to have great faith. They make great claims to holiness, but do they speak according to the law and the testimony? If they do not, it is because there is no light in them. Men fold the garments of their self-righteousness around them, and claim perfection of character; but they have only measured themselves with a standard of their own creating, and with sacrilegious hands they have torn down the true standard of all righteousness. The law of Jehovah is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. The sinner wants to get it out of the way because it condemns him. It is thought burdensome by the transgressor, but the obedient can say with David, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward."

The law of God, so defamed and trampled upon by transgressors, is declared by Paul to be holy, just, and good. David prayed, "It is time for thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void thy law." If David could make that prayer in his day, how much more should it be our prayer in our day! We see on every hand that the law is trampled under unholy feet. There was never a time when we needed to walk more carefully in the path of righteousness, nor to pray more earnestly, than at the present time. The same spirit of prejudice exists now against the commandments of God that existed when Christ was upon the earth; and if we think that we can keep the commandments without exciting the malice of Satan, we mistake; but we shall never have to suffer one-hundredth part of what our Redeemer suffered.

We should meditate on the sacrifice that Christ has made in our behalf. He left his honor and glory and majesty, to come to our earth, to be a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. It seems astonishing that the world did not accept and believe on him whom the Father had sent from Heaven. He said to those he came to save, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life." How grieved he must have felt when he entered the cities and found so few who manifested any interest in his mission. Every soul was precious in his sight; but the things of time and sense claimed the attention of men, and blinded their eyes to the Redeemer's merit. When I think of the many disappointments our Saviour met, I do not wonder that he was a man of sorrows. How sad it makes us feel when we make earnest efforts to bring the truth to those we love, and they will not hear us. Christ felt this sorrow as much more keenly than we can, as his nature was higher and holier than ours. When we think of what the Saviour endured, can we become discouraged in our work? We have a precious truth to bring before the people, and just as long as we have breath, we should lift up our voices and proclaim that the transgression of God's law is sin.

Christ said, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." Those who have faith in Christ will obey the words of Christ, "for faith without works is dead." If we have genuine faith in Jesus as our Saviour and example, we shall reflect his character, and correctly represent him to the world. We must keep his commandments, even as he kept his Father's commandments. If we do this, we shall find that there is not a precept of the law but that is for the good and happiness of mankind, both in this life, and in the future, immortal life. If we want to be like Christ when he is revealed in his glory, we must purify ourselves, even as he is pure, in this our day of probation. We want living faith,

faith that works by love, and purifies the soul. Although everything around us may be dark and trying, yet we must show that we have implicit confidence in our Redeemer. We should cast ourselves upon the promise, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love." Genuine Christians are the happiest people in the world, and they have the assurance that God will enable them to stand as faithful sentinels for the truth.

In the last days there will be a people who will be loyal to God's holy law. Through obedience to his precepts, they will be prepared to stand in the great day of wrath. Trouble and affliction will come upon them, for Satan will come down, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he has but a short time. He will work with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; but we need not be deceived by his fatal delusions. We should study the Scriptures for ourselves, so that when the enemy comes in like a flood, we may not be moved from the foundation of eternal truth, but may find that the Lord will raise up a standard against him. Let no soldier of Christ be discouraged. The Captain of your salvation will aid you in your battles with the enemy. If you have done all on your part that you can do, his arm will be stretched forth in time of need, and you will realize that help has been laid upon One that is mighty to save.

Men may talk of the law as a yoke of bondage; but the question of vital interest is, If you are found disobedient to God, can they pay a ransom for your soul? I beg of you, do not take the word of man that the law is abolished, for that law is as immutable as the throne of God. If the law could have been altered to meet man in his fallen condition, Christ need never have died. The cross of Christ is an unanswerable argument demonstrating the changeless character of the law. The very fact that Christ died establishes the law. Says the apostle, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." Christ died to vindicate the justice of God, and to remove the obstacles that man had placed between himself and eternal happiness. Through the intercession of Christ, man may now lay hold of eternal life. While we see that sin and iniquity abounds, we would say, Pray, pray as you never prayed before. We must walk in humility before God, rendering obedience to his holy law, and by and by we shall receive the reward. When the warfare is ended, Jesus will, with his own right hand, place the crown of immortal glory upon our brows, and we shall each hear the heavenly benediction, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

June 3, 1889

The Work of Reform

When Wesley began his career in England, there were only a few who rallied around his standard. When the Puritans emigrated from England to America, they were like shipwrecked mariners who had barely escaped with their lives. Left without friends or influence, all they had was their precious faith, their strong will, and their earnest devotion to God. They were as sheep without a shepherd. The believers were few. Like the mustard seed, which is the least of all seeds, so seemed the Pilgrims; but their influence became powerful and far-reaching. The faith of the Puritans was as a coal from the altar of God, an inextinguishable light that glorified the land with its radiance. The Puritans were obliged to practice the most rigid economy and self-denial, yet they did not neglect to build houses in which to worship God. They were guided by the providence of God. They realized their need of schools to educate their children in the way of the Lord, for it was necessary to raise barriers on every side against the influence from which they had fled. The establishment of schools under their own control was of great advantage to the maintenance of their faith. Special effort was made to educate their children and fit them for the work of diffusing the light of the gospel, and of upholding the principles of religious liberty. The history of past reform is repeated in the work of today. The people who have the precious truth for these last days are to turn their attention especially to the provisions God has made for them to become intelligent, in order that they may be qualified to meet the coming issues. The truth for these last days has not been supported by large legacies or advanced by worldly influence. God has given us the privilege of becoming partakers with Christ in his sufferings here, and he has provided that we may have a title to an inheritance in the earth made new. The secret of our success in the work of God will be found in the harmonious working of our people. There must be concentrated action. Every member of the body of Christ must act his part in the cause of God, according to the ability that God has given him. The body has been compacted by that which every joint supplieth to the effectual working of every part.

The hearts of our people must move in unison. There must be no holding back by anyone. We must press together against obstructions and difficulties, shoulder to shoulder, heart to heart. I look back with pleasure and with gratitude to God on the work

that has been done by our people in the past. I look at the small beginning both east and west of the Rocky Mountains, and then to the large institutions that have been established, and exclaim, "What hath God wrought!" When I consider the work that has been done, I do not fear to move forward, but I do fear for those who forget the lessons of the past. We have grown from a few believers to a numerous people, and as God has given us great and important truths, we have great and important duties, and weighty responsibilities to bear.

We owe all our prosperity to God, and we should co-operate with him in training our children to become missionaries for home and foreign fields. As a people whom God has highly favored, we should do all that it is possible to do to exercise our God-given powers, to adorn with truth and holiness the cause we profess to love. We must give less attention to fine houses, costly furniture, and changeable suits of apparel. Moral and intellectual training must be provided for the young, and for those newly come to the faith. We must deny self, and plan for increased facilities for the spread of the truth. Our work is to be extended by missionary effort. We must not only gain new ground, but cultivate the fields where the truth has already entered. We must depend less upon the preacher, and more upon personal effort, opening the Scriptures from house to house.

We are not at liberty to leave our children unprovided for, nor to subject them to influences unfavorable to the truth and to the perfecting of Christian character. We must not wait for every apparent obstruction to be removed from our pathway, but we must be bold, undaunted soldiers of Christ, who are looking forward to the heavenly reward. We are fast hastening to the Judgment, where we must render an account for all our works. We call upon all to do the very utmost of their ability. Let no one feel that this does not mean me. It means every soul that has tasted of the powers of the world to come. You have solemn, earnest work to do for the Master. Put away pride, put away everything hurtful, and come in sincerity to the foot of the cross. Give yourself to Him who has bought you with his own blood. He requires all that there is of you. Not only are the ministers called upon to labor for the salvation of souls, but every individual member of the church should make efforts to enlighten his friends and neighbors. Let us do our work in such a way that when our Lord shall reckon with his servants we may say, "Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents; behold, I have gained beside them five talents more."

The Lord requires careful thought, and the highest use of the intellect. When he comes to reckon with his servants, he will not inquire how successful you have been in gathering means; he will inquire, What have you done with the talents I have given you? What have you done for me in the person of the poor, the afflicted, the orphan, and the fatherless? I was sick, poor, hungry, and destitute of clothing; what did you do for me with my intrusted means? How was the time I lent you employed? How did you use your pen, your voice, your money, your influence? I made you the depository of a precious trust by opening before you the thrilling truths that heralded my second coming? What have you done with the light and knowledge I gave you to make men wise unto salvation?

Our Lord has gone away to receive his kingdom, but he will prepare mansions for us, and then he will come and take us to himself. In his absence he has given us the privilege of being co-laborers in the work of rescuing souls to enter those mansions of light and glory. We are either building upon the foundation, wood, hay, and stubble, to be consumed in the last great conflagration, and our life-work be lost; or we are building upon the true foundation, gold, silver, and precious stones, which will never perish, but shine the brighter amid the devouring elements that will try every man's work. Any unfaithfulness in spiritual and eternal things will result in loss throughout endless ages. I present these thoughts to the laymen of the church, that they may awaken to a sense of their responsibility. Work for Jesus. Put your entire interest into God's cause. Self-deception may make you feel that you are doing about right; but how does your life compare with the life of Jesus? Christ has done everything for you; he withheld not even himself. Now show zeal and earnestness in putting all your powers to work for him, and you will receive eternal life as your reward.

June 10, 1889

Faith and its Effects

Our citizenship is not in this world. We are pilgrims and strangers on the earth, and we look for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Christ has said, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

The consolation of these words has come down to our times to comfort the hearts of believers on Jesus in this our day. Our whole being should be thrilled with fervent gratitude that we have such a hope set before us. If we are co-workers with Christ, denying self, we may have connection with God, and obtain grace to help in every time of need, so that we shall not be found wanting when the Saviour comes to redeem his people. We may be found ready to be translated at the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour.' I cannot make preparation for you. I cannot repent for you. This is work between God and your soul. If you are defiled in heart, you must go to him who can cleanse you from all unrighteousness. You must seek God. You must have the soul temple purified, if you would have the blessing of the Father rest upon you.

We cannot bless one another. My faith cannot save you, nor your faith avail for my salvation. Though Noah, Daniel, and Job were in the land, they could deliver neither son nor daughter by their righteousness; they could only deliver their own souls. We should seek God now for his pardoning grace. Now is the time to obtain genuine religious experience for the trying scenes that are just before us. God wants us to be in earnest, he wants us to be happy. When he gave Christ to the world, he gave all Heaven in that one priceless gift. He opened up to us all the treasures of his power and grace. By living faith we may grasp the hand of Infinite Power. We may be so connected with the God of Heaven that his grace may be found sufficient in every emergency of life. Says the prophet, "Five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight."

Open the door of your heart, and Christ, the heavenly guest, will come in. Are

there any here who feel rich, and increased with goods, and in need of nothing? Are there any here who feel whole, and do not realize their need of a physician? They must fall upon the Rock and be broken, or the Rock will fall upon them, and crush them to powder. Why cannot we take hold of the righteousness of Christ this very day? There are many of you who profess to believe the present truth, but do you believe in Christ as your personal Saviour? You may have a nominal faith, just such a faith as the people had who crowded about Jesus in the streets of Judea, but this faith will not connect you with him. You need a faith similar to the faith of the poor woman who had been diseased for many years. She had sought help from the physicians, but her disease grew worse and worse. She heard of Christ, and her faith went out to him. She believed that if she could only touch the hem of his garment she would be made whole. Christ understood the longing of her heart; he understands the desire of every heart that is drawn out after him, and he responds to it. This poor woman who yearned after help improved her first opportunity to come into the presence of Jesus. The multitude were all about him, but she pressed through the crowd, until she could touch his garment, and that moment she was healed. Christ realized that virtue had gone out of him. The woman had felt her desperate need, and her faith had made her whole. So it will be with every one of you who go in your need to Jesus and lay hold upon him by living faith. Christ asked who touched him. His disciples were astonished that he should ask such a question when he was surrounded by a great multitude. They said, "Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?" But Jesus knew that somebody had touched him with no casual touch, but with the touch of faith. A longing soul had reached out to him for help which no one but he could give. Jesus said, "I perceive that virtue has gone out from me. And he looked around about to see her that had done this thing," and when the woman knew she was not hid, she acknowledged the good work that had been wrought in her. She told the story of her suffering and her hopeless condition, and her act of faith in touching his garment. He said unto her, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole."

Brethren, if we will come to Christ by living faith, we may receive virtue from him. Thank God, there is an abundant supply of grace in him. Jesus wants us to exercise simple faith, that we may have his virtue. If we will only give the touch of faith, the light, the glory, and the power of God will be imparted unto us. You say that you believe in Jesus, and we have a right to expect that your faith will manifest itself in works of righteousness. We have a right to expect that you will have a sound, healthful experience, that in contrition of soul you will present the offering of praise and

thanksgiving to Him who has bestowed rich blessings upon you. Are you willing to work for the glory of God? You say, "I believe." How do you believe? Do you believe that Jesus saves you now? Do you believe that you can appropriate the merits of your Saviour to yourself? Do you believe that you can cast your helpless soul upon Christ, and that his righteousness will be imputed unto you? If you have genuine faith, you will confess your backslidings and sinfulness. You will no longer stay in the darkness of unbelief; you will come to the light of Heaven. Says the Saviour, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Living faith makes itself manifest by exhibiting a spirit of sacrifice and devotion in the cause of God. Those who possess genuine faith stand under the banner of Prince Emmanuel, and wage a successful warfare against the powers of darkness. They stand ready to do whatsoever the Captain of their salvation commands. They are enabled through the grace of Christ to be an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. There is a great work for us to do if we would inherit eternal life. We are to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live a life of righteousness. Says the word of God, "Faith without works is dead." We are to "fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life," deny self, take up the cross, and follow daily in the footsteps of our Redeemer. We are exhorted to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." And he bids us follow him. If we make him our example, we shall not fail of an entrance into his everlasting kingdom. There is a cross to be lifted, if we follow Christ. We shall find that there is a high wall to be scaled, a ladder to be climbed, before we can enter the eternal city; but as we realize our own inefficiency, and cry for divine power, the voice of Jesus will come to us saying, "Take hold of my strength, 'lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.'" The strength of Jesus will be imparted to every soul who strives lawfully for the mastery. All may be overcomers.

June 17, 1889

Christ's Comforting Assurance

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

This comforting assurance was given to the disciples when their hearts were weighed down by sorrow because Christ had told them that he was soon to leave them. They were filled with distress at the thought of losing the presence of their beloved teacher. Although the Saviour's feet were in the path that led to Calvary, his thoughts were not on himself, nor on the suffering that he was to endure. His sympathy was drawn out to his beloved disciples, who were to bear a severe test. He thought of their disappointment and loneliness, and while he was on the way to Gethsemane, he sought to cheer them, saying, "Let not your heart be troubled." He tells them that his object in leaving them is to prepare homes, mansions, for them, that he will not always remain away, but will come again, and receive them unto himself. He will not leave them alone to battle with the trials and afflictions of this world, but he will come again and take them to himself, that where he is there they may be also.

After his resurrection he spoke words of encouragement and instruction to them. He said: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

This promise of the return of the Saviour did not make the disciples feel unhappy and gloomy. They were filled with joy to think that Jesus was coming again. And if the disciples of Christ were filled with joy then, why should not his followers on earth

today rejoice that their redemption draweth nigh? Our Lord is coming with clouds and great glory, and all the angels of Heaven will escort him on his way.

When he ascended on high after his resurrection, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Those who had transgressed the law of Jehovah had fallen in death. Although they had confessed and forsaken their sins, Satan had claimed them as his lawful subjects and prisoners. He said they were his victims; but when Christ came out of the grave, he led forth from the prison-houses of the enemy a multitude of captives as a sample of the general resurrection. And when he comes again, it will be to break the fetters of the tomb, to call forth the prisoners of hope from their prison-houses, to clothe them with a glorious immortality.

As Christ ascended from the earth, a cloud of angels escorted him on his way to the city of God. As they neared the gates they sang, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the king of glory shall come in." Then the sentinel angels inquired, "Who is this king of glory?" and the ascending host rolled back the response, "The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." As the heavenly train pass within the city, the angelic throng come forth to bow in adoration before him. The Saviour waves them back, he cannot yet receive their homage. He has a request to present before the Father. He remembers those that he has left in the world alone. He says, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Then the Father gives the command to the waiting host, "Let all the angels of God worship him," and they bow in adoration before him, saying, "Worthy, worthy, is the Lamb that was slain, and lives again, a triumphant conqueror."

Satan had not triumphed over Christ, although he had inspired wicked men to take his life. He had gained nothing by his rebellion. Even in the very act of crucifying the Prince of life, he himself had been conquered. Christ had gained the victory in every contest.

The sin of Adam and Eve had divorced earth from Heaven, and finite man from the infinite God, but Christ had passed over the very ground where Adam had failed, and at every step he was a conqueror. Every victory he gained elevated humanity in the

scale of moral value before Heaven. It was impossible for man to redeem himself, and this was the reason that Jesus took human nature upon himself, that through humanity his divine nature might reach and lift up humanity.

When Christ came to the world, he found that Satan had almost everything under his own control. Christ announced his mission at Nazareth. He said, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to teach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." This was his work. He went about doing good, and healing all those who were oppressed of the devil. There were whole villages where there was not a moan of sickness in any house, for he had passed through them and healed all their sick. His work gave evidence of his divine anointing. He had come to represent his Father to the world; and love, mercy, and compassion were displayed in every act of his life. His heart went out in tender sympathy to the children of men. This was his work in our world, to elevate humanity by combining divinity with humanity. He took man's nature that he might reach man's wants. With his human arm he encircled the race, and with his divine arm he grasped the throne of the Infinite, and united finite man with the infinite God, and earth with Heaven. Here was man, plunged in degradation, sin, and ruin, and Christ was willing to resign all his glory in order to offer to man the cup of salvation. Astonishment filled Heaven to see man's indifference, to see man so lacking in appreciation of the things that would make for his peace.

When the Son of God received baptism in the river Jordan, "the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him," and a voice, richer than any music that ever fell on mortal ear, came from the excellent glory declaring, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Did the voice of God come alone for the sake of Christ?--No; it came in behalf of the humanity that he represented. It came to assure man that he could be accepted in the beloved. Heaven was opened by the prayer of Christ, and it was opened for all who would come unto God by him. Thus divine power is given that it may be combined with human effort.

How often we have read over the description of Christ's baptism with no thought that there was any particular significance in it for us. But it means everything to us. It means that there can be no excuse for our living in alienation from God. You may claim much leniency because of your human nature, of your temptations and trials, and seek to

excuse yourself for sin because of inherited tendencies, but Christ gave himself in behalf of humanity, and there is no reason for failure. Christ bore temptations such as you will never be called upon to bear. He suffered as you will never suffer. He knew all your griefs, he has carried your sorrows. He has made it possible for you to be an overcomer. Do not say it is impossible for you to overcome. Do not say, "It is my nature to do thus and so, and I cannot do otherwise. I have inherited weaknesses that make me powerless before temptation." We know you cannot overcome in your own strength; but help has been laid upon One who is mighty to save. When God gave his only begotten Son, he provided everything essential to your salvation. And "he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" The resources of Heaven are open to us. We should believe this precious truth. And when the enemy comes in like a flood to discourage and to dishearten, the Spirit of the Lord will raise up a standard against him. When sorrows press you, cling closer to the Mighty One. Instead of faltering and losing faith, praise God that Jesus has died for you. A brother came into meeting at one time and related his difficulties, and trials, and sorrows. I said to him, "Brother, haven't you anything to praise God for? has not Jesus died that you might live? Is there any reason that you should be discouraged?" How does Heaven look upon our doubts and discouragements, when God has given his beloved Son to die on Calvary's cross, that we might have peace in this life, and everlasting joy in the life to come? How does Heaven regard us when we speak and act as though it were a very difficult path through which God was leading us? How must it seem to the angels when we act as though we doubted whether it would pay to be a Christian? All Heaven was poured out to us in Christ, and he that spared not his own Son will not withhold any good thing from those who walk uprightly.

June 24, 1889

Looking for That Blessed Hope

"For 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."

This scripture teaches a very different lesson from that which is presented in the words of many who profess to believe the gospel. We are exhorted to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, and to look for the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. Some have made an objection to my work, because I teach that it is our duty to be looking for Christ's personal appearing in the clouds of Heaven. They have said, "You would think that the day of the Lord was right upon us to hear Mrs. White speak in reference to the coming of Christ; and she has been preaching on that same subject for the last forty years, and the Lord has not yet come." This very objection might have been brought against the words of Christ himself. He said by the mouth of the beloved disciple, "Behold, I come quickly," and John responds, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," Jesus spoke these words as words of warning and encouragement to his people; and why should we not heed them? The Lord has said that it is the faithful who will be found watching and waiting for him. It was the unfaithful servant who said, "My Lord delayeth his coming," and began to smite his fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken.

The exact time of Christ's second coming is not revealed. Jesus said, "No man knoweth the day nor the hour," But he also gave signs of his coming, and said, "When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the door." He bade them, as the signs of his coming should appear, "Look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." And in view of these things the apostle wrote: "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." Since we know not the hour of Christ's coming, we must live soberly and godly in this present world, "looking for that blessed hope, and

the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. His people are to preserve their peculiar character as his representatives. There is work for every one of them to do. The rich should bring their means, the honored their influence, the learned their wisdom, the poor their virtue, if they would be effective workers with God. They are to bring themselves into right relation with God, that they may reflect the light of the glory of God that shines in the face of Jesus Christ. We read of a class who put far off the day of the coming of Jesus; but upon such his coming will be as a thief in the night, and they will be suddenly overtaken with destruction. How many there are who are willing to be rocked to sleep in the cradle of carnal security; but it is time for us to wake out of sleep. Says the apostle, "We are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober."

We should be awake to discern the signs of the times, and to give warning to the people. There are many in the world who seek to quiet the alarm of the people, who say, "Peace, peace; when there is no peace;" but we should take an opposite course from this. There are many who say to the aroused people, "Do not disturb yourselves, go on in godlessness, go on glorifying yourselves, and living in pleasure. The day of the Lord is not at hand." Did not Christ have an object in view when he said, "Behold, I come quickly"? Did he not see that his church would need to keep this solemn event in mind? Shall we say with the last-day scoffers, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation"? I do not mean to be with this class. I mean to arouse men with the message of Christ's near coming.

Those who have a knowledge of present truth are under a great responsibility before the world. They are to warn men of the coming judgments. They are to represent Christ to the people. They are not to go about deploring their condition, talking of their darkness, and murmuring and complaining of the hardness of the way; they are to lift up their minds to God, open the door of their hearts to Jesus, and let him come in and abide with them. We must have Christ enthroned in the heart, that the soul-temple may be cleansed from every defilement. The soon coming of our Saviour must be a living reality to us. The question of all importance for this time is, "How is it with my soul? Am I seeking to reiterate the words of Christ? Am I teaching my children that they have

souls to save; that peace and holiness must be a part of their life? Am I teaching them to place their hands in the hands of Christ, that he may guide them?"

We have most earnest work to do, and we have no time to waste in drinking at empty cisterns that can hold no water. We should come to Christ without delay for the water of life. We should diligently study the Bible. The study of the Bible is of the greatest importance to us. The Scriptures are able to make men wise unto salvation, yet how few find time to search the word of God! Men are all absorbed in the things of this perishing earth. They are building their hopes upon worthless foundations, and writing their names in the sand. Even those who profess to be followers of Christ do not heed his injunction. They are like the fig-tree whose leaves were abundant, but upon which the Master, seeking fruit, found nothing but leaves. The command will go forth at last concerning the fruitless tree, "Cut it down. Why cumbereth it the ground?"

God gives us his rich blessings to enjoy, and he expects us to bring forth fruit to his glory; but many neglect his work. They do not make a full surrender to his will. There are many who seem to feel that to think of God and heavenly things tends to make men gloomy and desponding; that it is detrimental to health to permit the mind to dwell upon religious subjects.

When in my youth God opened the Scriptures to my mind, giving me light upon the truths of his word, I went forth to proclaim to others the precious news of salvation. My brother wrote to me, and said, "I beg of you do not disgrace the family. I will do anything for you if you will not go out as a preacher." "Disgrace the family!" I replied, "can it disgrace the family for me to preach Christ and him crucified! If you would give me all the gold your house could hold, I would not cease giving my testimony for God. I have respect unto the recompense of the reward. I will not keep silent, for when God imparts his light to me, he means that I shall diffuse it to others, according to my ability."

Did not the priests and rulers come to the disciples, and command them to cease preaching in the name of Christ? They shut the faithful men in prison, but the angel of the Lord came to them and released them that they might speak the words of life to the people. This is our work. "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord," and we must pursue that work with faithfulness. How many are there who fulfill the mission of Christ? After their baptism there are many who act as though they had graduated, as though there was

nothing more to learn or to do; but baptism is only the beginning of our work. We are to go on to perfection, reflecting the light of Christ more and more, and bringing all that it is possible of the spirit and power of Heaven into our lives. We are to seek the salvation of souls around us.

We are to present the truth as it is in Jesus. Christ came into the world to save sinners. For thirty years he lived our example. He endured insult, ignominy, reproach, rejection, and death; yet he lives. He is a living Saviour. He has ascended on high to make intercession for us. Just before his crucifixion, he prayed that his disciples might be one with him, as he was one with the Father. Is it indeed a possibility that sinful, fallen man may be brought into such exalted relationship with Christ? Such a union with Christ will bring light and peace and comfort to our souls. When he went to Heaven, he told his disciples, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." Who would not have the Comforter in times of trial? There are many who refuse the service of God; but let sickness or sorrow overtake them, let death come into the family, and they will realize the weakness of earthly dependence, and they will then want a God to lean upon.

The Lord is coming, and when he shall appear we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And "every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." We must have our treasures transferred to Heaven, for where the treasure is, there will the heart be also. Let the light of the Sun of Righteousness into your hearts, and peace will rest upon you. I want you to enjoy the blessing of God. I want to direct your mind to heavenly things. Jesus has promised, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Tell of the love of Christ, talk of his power, and you may have a heaven in this world to go to Heaven in. Respond to the light of God, and you will be like a watered garden; your health will spring forth speedily; your light will rise in obscurity, and the glory of the Lord will be your reward.

July 1, 1889

Christ the Living Fountain

Brethren and sisters, I do hope that this precious opportunity of drawing near to God may not pass without improvement. I hope you will all have an assurance of the blessing of God. You should seek to retain every ray of light and knowledge that has shone upon you here; but you cannot do this unless you walk in the light, accepting and acting upon it. The Lord desires to give us his rich blessing. It is not his will that anyone should labor in his cause without his help and favor. He does not require his children to go in feebleness of heart to win souls for eternal life. There is fullness in him, and it is our privilege to come and obtain that fullness, to receive richly of his Spirit.

This morning my attention was drawn to the story of the woman who came to the well to draw water, and found Jesus, weary and thirsty, resting at the well while his disciples went into the village to buy bread. When she had drawn the water, Jesus said to the woman, "Give me to drink." She was surprised that he should ask this favor of her, and inquired, "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Jesus referred in these words to the divine grace which he alone can bestow, and which is as living water, purifying, refreshing, and invigorating the soul.

Jesus had said to the woman, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." The woman of Samaria was in ignorance of the divine Son of God; but we know today who has spoken these gracious words. It is necessary that we have a knowledge of Christ, that we have an acquaintance with him, so that we may know his willingness to bless. In him is all fullness of divine grace, and he says, "Ask, and ye shall receive." God giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; "but," says the apostle, giving instruction to him who feels his lack of wisdom, "let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord."

It would not be for our good if the Lord should give us what we ask for without faith. We would not render gratitude to the Giver if we received a gift that we did not attribute to his agency. Jesus wants to give us his light, and we should educate our souls to grasp the promises of God by living faith. He will give us the gift of salvation. We may have his richest blessing, and we should earnestly seek for the favor of God. The reason why we are not rejoicing in the freedom of the sons of God, is because we have piled up rubbish and barred the door of our hearts. Let us sweep it away, open the door, and let the Saviour in.

We cannot afford to keep Jesus outside. We cannot afford to let him pass by. We cannot afford to be without the knowledge of Christ. Says Jesus, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." We want Jesus to abide in our families and in our churches. We should give ourselves, soul and body, to his work, and submit ourselves to the training process that is to fit us for Heaven.

Many of us have idols in our hearts. But you will fail to find satisfaction in the things of this life. Jesus says, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but 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." What is the meaning of these words? They mean that when your mind is attracted by heavenly things, when you dwell upon Christ, then your idols are crucified, and you are satisfied with the love of God. But how little are thoughts of Christ brought into our lives! How few talk of Jesus! How little he is lifted up!

There are many who try to correct the life of others by attacking what they consider are wrong habits. They go to those whom they think are in error, and point out their defects. They say, "You don't dress as you should." They try to pick off the ornaments, or whatever seems offensive, but they do not seek to fasten the mind to the truth. Those who seek to correct others should present the attractions of Jesus. They should talk of his love and compassion, present his example and sacrifice, reveal his Spirit, and they need not touch the subject of dress at all. There is no need to make the dress question the main point of your religion. There is something richer to speak of. Talk of Christ, and when the heart is converted, everything that is out of harmony with the word of God will drop off. It is only labor in vain to pick leaves off a living tree. The leaves will reappear. The ax must be laid at the root of the tree, and then the leaves

will fall off, never to return.

In order to teach men and women the worthlessness of earthly things, you must lead them to the living Fountain, and get them to drink of Christ, until their hearts are filled with the love of God, and Christ is in them, a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Language cannot describe the peace and fullness of the joy of the true Christian. Let us seek to drink of the Fountain of life.

Do not come at your brethren to pick at their faults, to make a drive at their peculiar traits of character. Educate them to better habits, and better traits, by the power of your own example. If you make it evident that you have come to correct them, you will only arouse their combativeness, and do more harm than if you had not come at all. Reveal Jesus to them, that they may behold him and become like him. If you cultivate fault-finding, and take it upon yourself to correct your brethren, you will soon have no other religion save that of picking flaws and finding defects. You cannot benefit the sinner by coming to him in your own way and in your own strength. Christ alone can save him.

Let us press forward to the mark for the prize of our high calling which is in Christ Jesus. Press forward to the perfection of Christian character; be not satisfied with anything less than the fullness of God. You may attain unto the heights of character that Christ has made every provision for you to reach through his divine grace, growing up unto the full stature of men and women in Christ. Temptation will come upon you every day, but you must lay hold of the strength of Christ. Christ is our righteousness. We are not to depend on feeling, but by faith rest in the arms of his love, and claim to be the sons and daughters of God. He will make his strength perfect in our weakness. He will take the poor earthen vessels, make them vessels unto honor, and glorify himself through them; and through his love we shall love others, as he has loved us.

July 8, 1889

Christ's Yoke Is Easy

"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."

These are very precious words that are spoken to us. In them is revealed the love of Jesus, and this love seems to flow out in tender longing that the sinner may come unto Christ and find rest. The invitation is extended to all that labor, to all that are heavy laden. Christ makes no exception. All may come who are toiling under their burdens. He does not specify that only those who have peculiar difficulties may be relieved. His invitation is to the whole world. He says, "Come, all ye that labor."

Whatever may be the character of your troubles or wants, you need not go for help to those around you, for Jesus says, Come unto me, and I will give you rest. You need not keep away from me. You who have been seeking for relief and comfort and hope, come unto me. I am the source of your strength and help.

When Christ came to this world, men did not recognize his divine character, or realize the nature of his mission. If he had come with pomp and ceremony, to reign as a temporal prince on the throne of Jerusalem, the whole Jewish nation would have acknowledged him as the Messiah. But the prophets did not say that he was to come in this way. They did not tell the people that he was to break the Romish yoke. He was to come as a man of sorrows, to bear the infirmities of humanity. He came as a humble toiler, and worked at the carpenter's trade. The people saw him toiling up and down the hills. They were acquainted with his brothers and sisters, and knew his life and labors. They saw him develop from childhood to youth, and from youth to manhood, and although he left a spotless example of obedience and meekness, they could not realize that he was the promised Messiah. I am glad we have such an example.

He chose his disciples from the humble fishermen. He did not go to the learned, for it would have been impossible to give them the right mould. The education they had received tended to exalt self, and he chose those whom he could teach his precepts, and

bade them follow him. In following him, in listening to his words, in associating with him, they found the greatest teacher the world has ever known. He opened before them the beauties of nature, and taught them of the enduring realities of the world to come. He educated them to become fishers of men. From the swaying fisherman's boat, he uttered truths whose influence is as far-reaching as eternity.

Jesus had come to earth to do the very work that the Jewish nation had left undone. In a synagogue in Nazareth, he opened the word of God, and read the words of Isaiah that described his mission to men. He read, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." He healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, raised the dead, and preached the gospel to the poor. His words were simple and direct, and no one need look in the dictionary to ascertain his meaning. A child could comprehend his teaching. And as he did his work, so are we to do ours, following his example.

He preached the gospel to the poor, and offered men the gift of God without money and without price. He invited the weary and heavy-laden to come and find rest. The only condition was to come; for in coming, men made it manifest that they felt their want, and realized their need of Christ. Jesus wants us to come today He wants us to believe in him as the source of all light and peace. Whoever comes will be able to testify that he is light, and that in him they have found rest.

Jesus says, "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." I ask you who have borne Christ's yoke, Have you found it hard and grievous? For fifty years I have borne Christ's yoke, and I can testify that his yoke is easy, and his burden is light. I have never found any difficulty except when I manufactured a yoke of my own, and laid aside the yoke of Christ. I feel grateful that every one of you may find relief from all your troubles. Come to Christ in full faith, and find rest unto your souls.

Many profess to come to him, but they do not really come; for they are still in trouble, still under the load of their burdens. You are to follow on in the path of obedience, and submit your will to the moulding of God's will. If you are in trouble, it is because you are learning lessons of him who was once an exalted angel of Heaven, but

who fell from his high position through rebellion against God. Those who murmur against God, are learning from the evil one how to press their wills in opposition to the will of God.

Jesus invites us to come unto him; but how many go to every one else but him. We need not seek for help from those who are as weak as we are ourselves. He says, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." Men do not esteem lowliness of mind as they should. Intellect is highly exalted and extolled among men. My husband used to say that it was hard for him not to worship intellect; whenever he met a person possessed of a superior mind, he felt like paying homage to his intellectual powers. It is right that we highly esteem the powers of mind that God has given to men; we want an intellectual religion; but we should have all our powers of mind and body consecrated to God. We should have sanctified judgment and reason, devoted to the service of our heavenly Father. We should realize what our work is, and do it to the extent of our ability. The greater our ability, the greater will be our responsibility. There is danger of worshiping intellect; but if we bring our talents to God and devote them to his work, he will give us grace not to think more highly of our powers of mind than we should.

"For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability." When they were called to give an account as to how they had employed their lord's talents, he who had the five had doubled his talents, and he who had two had doubled his; but he who had received but one came to his lord and said, "Lord, 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 answered and said unto him, 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 put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury." The lord rewarded those who had increased their talents, but he condemned him who had buried his lord's money. (Concluded next week.)

July 15, 1889

Christ's Yoke is Easy

There are many who seem to be afraid that if they come to Jesus the Lord will get some of their means. They manage somehow to bury it all in the world. If the Lord has given you the talent of means, it is that it may be given out to the exchangers, that at his coming he may receive his own with usury. The ability God gives us, is not to be used for self, to gratify selfish ambition and pride. We are to employ our talents that we may be co-workers with Christ in winning souls for eternal life. We are not to despise small opportunities, but to improve them as they come to us.

In England a minister went to his church to preach one rainy morning, and found that he only had one man for audience. But he would not disappoint his hearer, and he preached to him with earnestness and interest. As a result the man was converted, and became a missionary, and through his efforts thousands heard the good news of salvation. One discourse did the work for him, and he gathered abundantly for the Master.

While in Vallence, France, I spoke at one time to a congregation of six with as much interest as I speak to this congregation today. That discourse resulted in much good. An intelligent man who had given up the truth, again took his stand on the Lord's side, and he has devoted his talents to doing the Lord's work. We must sow beside all waters, not knowing which shall prosper, this or that. We must put out our talents to the exchangers whenever there is opportunity.

I am glad that we have a Saviour who understands all our woes. It is true we manufacture half of our trouble, and suffer grief that is imaginary and unnecessary. There is much trouble in our families that might be avoided by manifesting courtesy and love. Jesus wants us to have religion in the home. He wants us to reveal his Spirit to those around us. We need to cultivate love. There are some who think that it is an evidence of weakness to show affection, to speak words of kindness. There are persons hungry for affection who seldom receive anything but bitter, unkind words. But if you manifest a harsh, unsympathetic spirit, you will see the same spirit reflected in those around you. All need tenderness and compassion. You should not make it harder for

those who have difficulties and sorrows by speaking unkindly and harshly.

Why should we not constantly cultivate a Christlike, kind and compassionate and loving spirit? Why should we allow Satan to make us his agents in the family circle, to cast a shadow when we may reflect light? You cannot afford to speak these harsh words; they will meet you again in the day of Judgment. We must put on the whole armor of God, and get a right hold from above.

Christ invites all the weary and heavy laden to come to him. He wants you to make him your friend and confidant. You have sought for human friendship and have revealed to others matters that belong only to husband and wife. You have brought in a third party to make mischief by betraying your secrets to those who should know nothing of them; but if you make Christ your familiar friend, he will never betray your confidence. Jesus will take no advantage of your confidence. He will listen patiently. He will know just what counsel to give, just what you should do, and he will adjust every difficulty for your own good. He will be a safe counselor, and will understand the motives which have prompted you to action.

When you come to Jesus, leave your burden with him. Do not carry away your load to torture some other soul with it. Leave it with him who alone can understand it all. The religion of Jesus elevates, ennobles, and refines the character. If we are learners in his school, he will put his mould upon us, and enable us to stand with moral power against the temptations of the evil one.

When Jesus bowed on the banks of Jordan at his baptism, Heaven was opened to his prayer in behalf of humanity. The Spirit, in the form of a dove of burnished gold encircled his head, and a voice from Heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." What does this say to us? It says to every poor tempted soul, Heaven is opened to the prayers of humanity. Christ has encircled the fallen race with his human arm, and with his divine arm he has grasped the throne of the Infinite. Through the merit of Christ, Heaven is opened to man. "These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth; I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it." The gates are open, and the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ shines to man. The light of Heaven may shine upon you, as it shone upon him.

Mothers, the invitation is for you, in your annoyances and perplexities, to come and find rest at the feet of Jesus. You must obtain his grace in dealing with your children. I never allowed my children to see mother out of patience. I did not try to correct them until I knew that I had perfect control over all my feelings of impatience. When I approached them with voice and spirit subdued, I gained their confidence. We are to learn meekness of spirit from the divine Master.

The children should be regarded as younger members of Christ's family. We should never utter a word that we would not be willing to hear repeated by our children. We are to learn of Christ while we are teaching them. When parents are patient and forbearing, and children kind and obedient, Heaven looks down with joy upon your households. Do you remember what Christ said to Peter? He not only said, "Feed my sheep," but also, "Feed my lambs." The lambs must be fed. Ministers should give more attention to the lambs of the flock. These young, tempted souls who have to contend with inherited and cultivated tendencies to evil, need your sympathy and patience, and love. You should speak words of encouragement to them. They are members of Christ's family. They should be bound to your hearts by the silken cord of love. They must be instructed to come to Christ, and find rest in all their temptations and burdens. They should be brought to him who is meek and lowly in heart, that they may learn of him, and bear his yoke, and they will find that his yoke is easy and his burden is light.

July 22, 1889

Home Training

The mother is a teacher, and to a great extent she moulds the character of her children. But how few are the mothers who realize the responsibility that is placed upon them! Many mothers spend their time in doing needless nothings. They give their whole attention to the things of time and sense, and do not pause to think of the things of eternal interest. How many neglect their children, and the little ones grow up coarse, rough, and uncultivated. Mothers may have acquired knowledge of many things, but they have not acquired the essential knowledge unless they have a knowledge of Christ as a personal Saviour. If Christ is in the home, if mothers have made him their counselor, they will educate their children from their very babyhood in the principles of true religion. They will teach them obedience and submission. They will not allow them to disobey their commands.

When children are permitted to take their own way in opposition to the will of their parents, they lose respect for father and mother, and learn to despise even the authority of God. They are indulged in manifesting passion in the home, and when they are brought into the church, they exhibit the same defects of character there, as they exhibit in the home. If they are ever converted, they will have to learn at the foot of the cross lessons which they might have learned at their mother's knee. They are marked by the defects of the father and mother. The parents did not go to Christ for the grace of patience and forbearance. The mother did not feel the importance of being Christ-like, of manifesting love and gentleness.

When Christ comes in the clouds of heaven, every man will be rewarded according as his work has been. Every father and mother will have to give an account of how they have employed their talents, and how they have borne their responsibilities.

A well-disciplined family is a great power for good in the world. To bring up your children in such a manner as will fit them to stand against temptation to evil, so that they will not be corrupted by iniquity, is one of the most important kinds of missionary work. Why is it that there is so much corruption among the youth of today? To a great degree it is because parents neglect their God-given work, and sin lies at their

door. Before it shall be too late, I urge you to take up your neglected duties, and arouse to a realization of your responsibilities. You will need the grace of Christ in your work, and he says not only to mothers, but to fathers and children, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Mothers, when you yield to impatience, and deal harshly with your children, you are not learning of Christ, but of another master. Jesus says, "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." When you find your work hard, when you complain of difficulties and trials, when you say that you have no strength to withstand temptation, that you cannot overcome impatience, and that the Christian life is up-hill work, be sure that you are not bearing the yoke of Christ; you are bearing the yoke of another master. But for Christ's sake, for the truth's sake, I entreat you to repent and be converted. Do not dishonor the name of religion by an inconsistent course.

You should begin to seek God where you are. You must be born again. There must be a renovation, a new life created within you, that you may not serve sin, or the lusts of the flesh. Your children must be converted. You have a solemn work to do.

You cannot afford to spend time in trifling conversation, or in entertaining fashionable visitors. You should take time to talk and pray with your little ones, and you should allow nothing to interrupt that season of communion with God, and with your children. You can say to your visitors, "God has given me a work to do, and I have no time for gossiping." You should feel that you have a work to do for time and for eternity. You owe your first duty to your children.

The father should not excuse himself from his part in the work of educating his children for life and immortality. He must share in the responsibility. There is obligation for both father and mother. There must be love and respect manifested by the parents for one another, if they would see these qualities developed in their children.

Those parents who manifest wisdom in the home will bring into the church the same tact and ability they exercise at home, and the church will be benefited by their influence. They will be interested for the children of their neighbors, and will influence others to be true and loyal to God.

When Christ bowed on the banks of Jordan after his baptism, and offered up prayer in behalf of humanity, the heavens were opened, and the Spirit of God, like a dove of burnished gold, encircled the form of the Saviour, and a voice came from Heaven which said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

What significance does this have for you? It says that Heaven is open to your prayers. It says that you are accepted in the Beloved. The gates are open for every mother who would lay her burden at the Saviour's feet. It says that Christ has encircled the race with his human arm, and with his divine arm he has grasped the throne of the Infinite, and united man with God, and earth with Heaven.

Praise God for this. If there is any people who should praise God, it is those who have had these wonderful evidences of his love! I point you to Calvary, and to the suffering Redeemer. O that we may know his love that passeth understanding! If parents have the love of God in their hearts, they will be able to bind their children to them by the tender ties of affection. It is in this way that you may be missionaries for God, you may be home missionaries. You have a work to do that Satan shall not gain the control of your children, and take them away from you before they are out of your arms. Mothers, you should see to it that the powers of darkness do not control your little ones. You should set your will that the enemy shall not raise his banner of darkness in your home. You should be determined to take your children with you to the kingdom of heaven. Your children are worth something; they have been purchased at an infinite price, and eternal life to them is worth more than anything that earth can afford. A pure and holy character is of more value than silver and gold. If you have instructed them in the principles of truth, if you have reproved them when they indulged in evil, if you have manifested the Spirit of Christ, you have done a work that Heaven will approve.

Eli did not reprove his sons when they transgressed his commands. He indulged them in their evil ways, and they became more and more corrupt, until the judgment of God fell upon the house of Eli. The Lord said, "Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house; when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever."

How different was the case of Abraham. God could bless him, for he said, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him." God's law was the rule in the tent of Abraham. Wherever he camped, he built an altar unto the Lord, and offered up sacrifice with supplication and praise.

Parents must be converted; they must arouse from the lethargy that has come upon them, and seek God for a realization of the solemn responsibility that has been placed upon them. I entreat you to awake, and take up your neglected work before you are weighed in the balance and found wanting. Every one has a work to do for the Master, and no one can accomplish his God-given work unless he is born again; but the soul in which Christ is abiding, will be able to meet the mind of God, and will receive the approbation of Heaven.

July 29, 1889

There is Help in God

"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."

When Christ came to the world, appetite and passion exercised almost unlimited control, and it seemed that the world was about to be swept away under its disastrous power. Men were debased, diseased, dwarfed and crippled through the baneful effects of selfish indulgence in evil. But never can the power of appetite be fully understood until the significance of Christ's temptation and his long fast in the wilderness is comprehended. When Christ was fainting for food, Satan came to him and sought to overpower him with temptation.

He did not appear to Christ as he is often falsely represented, as an imp with bat's wings and iron hoofs. The Scripture plainly states that he transforms himself into an angel of light. It was as a Heavenly angel that he accosted the Son of God. He told the Redeemer that he need fast no longer, that his long abstinence was accepted by the Father, that he had gone far enough, and that he was at liberty to work a miracle in his own behalf. The tempter said, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." And Jesus answered him, saying, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Oh, if man had but heeded this truth, the race would never have fallen.

"Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, 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." But again Jesus met him with the Scripture, saying, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

"Again the devil taketh him up into an 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." He did not present the

kingdoms of the world as they now appear, but in all the glory and attraction in which it is possible to present them. He desired that Christ should acknowledge him as his superior, and on this condition promised to give the world into his hands. But could Jesus admit that the world belonged to Satan? Could he acknowledge him as his superior, when there was but One to whom he owed homage? "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."

There are many in this world who would concede the principles of right for some worldly advantage. There are many who would forsake their rectitude for gold, or position, or power. But of what advantage is it to sacrifice your hopes of Heaven for earthly wealth and honor? You cannot take your treasure with you to the grave. Only a while at the longest, and life will be passed, and "what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" We would fix our eyes on something more enduring. The home of the saints is more worthy of our toil and affection; for it is an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

Appetite exerts a controlling influence in the world. Unlawful indulgence in appetite and passion paralyzes the brain power, and deadens all the moral sensibilities and perceptions. We have all been bought with a price, even with the precious blood of the Son of God, and we have no right to abuse our powers by selfish gratification of lust. We should keep ourselves in a condition to render to God the most perfect service possible. With an eye single to the glory of God, we should seek to live in harmony with the laws of our being.

Daniel refused to eat at the king's table, or to drink of the king's wine. Why did he do this? Because he knew that indulgence in wine-drinking and luxurious food would enfeeble the powers of mind and body. He desired to keep his mind in a condition to appreciate the inspired word of God. Those who indulge in forbidden things work directly against their own interests and hopes. Selfish motives lead to self-indulgence, and animal appetites and passions bear sway, and dominate over mind and soul. Those who are thus controlled cannot comprehend the truth of divine origin, or appreciate the value of heavenly things. They are ruled by appetite, and the brain power is benumbed. The very foundation of the physical being is undermined. We have no right to destroy the habitation that God has given us. We have been purchased at an infinite cost.

It was by a failure to resist the inclinations of appetite that Adam fell in the garden of Eden. But Christ came to take up the battle in behalf of man. He met and contended with the powers of darkness, and at every point where Adam fell, Christ won precious victories. He wrought out a way by which we may be saved. However depraved, however sinful, as men seek for forgiveness of their transgressions, they will find pardon and peace through the merit of Christ. Divinity co-operates with humanity in the work of elevating and purifying the character. When the converting power of God takes hold of the soul, it will work a radical change. Those who have formerly abused their families and friends, will begin to labor earnestly for their salvation. Jesus came to save the lost, to take them out of their fallen condition, to make them more than conquerors, and to give them a seat upon his throne. O that the soul temple might be cleansed of every defilement. O that we might not offer to God a diseased, defiled offering. An infinite price has been paid to bring us into connection with Christ. Self-indulgence must cease. We must come into right relations with God, and we must be cleansed from all iniquity, and walk worthy of the vocation whereunto we are called.

When Jacob journeyed to the house of Laban, he lay down to rest in the wilderness, with a stone for a pillow. He was a discouraged, disappointed man. It seemed to him that he was forsaken of friends, and forgotten of God. His own brother was seeking him, that he might take his life. While he slept he had a vision. There appeared before him a ladder, whose base rested on the earth and whose top reached into the highest heavens. God was above the ladder, and his glory shone through the open heaven and lighted up every round of the ladder. The angels were ascending and descending upon it. The plan of salvation was open to Jacob's mind in this dream.

When Jacob awoke, he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of Heaven." Christ was the ladder that Jacob saw. Christ is the link that binds earth to Heaven, and connects finite man with the infinite God. This ladder reaches from the lowest degradation of earth and humanity to the highest heavens. We are to ascend the ladder that Jacob saw, but not by our own strength alone. It is the goodness of God that leads to repentance and reformation. We are not left to struggle on alone.

Those who have fallen by sin and iniquity may receive the pardoning love of God. By repentance and faith, the transgressors of his law may come to God through

Christ. And when we have come to Christ, and have taken the steps requisite in conversion, we are to seek those things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. When we are burdened with care and sorrow why do we not go right to our Saviour, and claim his promises, and find him a very present help in every time of trouble? We are not left to be the sport of Satan's temptations. God has given us precious promises by which we are to become partakers of the divine nature. In Christ is our help. When we come with repentance and faith, however polluted and sinful, we shall find him the sinner's Saviour. He has said, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." The sinner may carry his load to Calvary, and lay it down at the foot of the cross. It is the privilege of every one to leave sin and transgression, and to become a loyal subject of the God of Heaven. We may be clothed with the righteousness of Christ, but his righteousness will not be a covering for the least iniquity. "Wash you, make you clean." There has been a fountain opened for Judah and Jerusalem, and every stain may be cleansed away.

Do not wait to make yourselves better. How many there are who think that they are not good enough to come to Christ. Do you expect to become better through your own efforts? "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." But there is help for us in God. We are prisoners of hope. God has power in reserve for us. Those who are reaching out for help, exercising faith in Jesus, will receive it.

Divine power will co-operate with human effort. Brethren, the gates are open, and the glory of God is shining for every soul who looks to Heaven in times of trial and perplexity. How many go to human friends when they are in trouble. But how vain is the help that man can give. Human aid is only as a broken reed. Christ has been manifested to the world as the One who can bind up the broken in heart, and comfort those that mourn. Heaven was open to man through the sacrifice of the Son of God. "For 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." He came into the world that he might understand all the needs of fallen humanity. He bore the griefs and sorrows of men. He was made a perfect Saviour through the sufferings that he bore in man's behalf, and we through his grace may become perfected, and be heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ in the everlasting kingdom.

August 5, 1889

The Gospel for Both Jews and Gentiles

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God (which he promised afore by his prophets in the Holy Scriptures), concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead; by whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations for his name; among whom are ye also called of Jesus Christ.... I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." Romans 1.

Paul declares that as an apostle he is called to do a special work. The truth had been revealed to him that he might preach the gospel of God, not only to the Jews, but also to the Gentiles. He was not, as were the false prophets, without a divine commission to devote himself to the work of preaching Jesus and him crucified. Christ himself had called him to the work by a heavenly revelation of himself.

He was to call men's attention to the gospel, which God had promised by the word of the prophets. He was to unfold the divine revelations of the Old Testament, and to show how the gospel shed a light into the old dispensation. He was to demonstrate the fact that both prophets and apostles were witnesses of Christ as the Messiah. In his divine nature Jesus was declared to be the Son of God, but the divinity of Christ was the fact that was constantly opposed by the Pharisees. The great argument that substantiated the divinity of Christ was his resurrection from the dead. Overwhelming testimony came to those that believed on him, for he had been seen among them, and those who would not receive the great array of evidence that could be presented, would not have been convinced by any amount of proof.

The first offer of the good news of salvation was made to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; but they refused the precious gift of God, and Paul said: "Ye judge

yourselves unworthy of everlasting life; lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Both Jews and Gentiles were without Christ, and in darkness. It was a most unwelcome thought to the Jews that they needed salvation. They had been the peculiar people of God, and had looked upon the Gentiles with contempt. Christ was not only presented as the hope and glory of Israel, but also as a light to lighten the Gentiles. This was wholly contrary to their prejudices.

The righteousness of God was revealed in the gospel. In it was made known the method by which man was to be reconciled to God. Notwithstanding the justice of God, and the guilt of the transgressor of his holy law, a way was devised whereby satisfaction could be made to the law by the infinite sacrifice of the Son of God. The typical offerings of the old dispensation pointed men forward to the Lamb of God that should die on Calvary's cross, when type would meet antitype in the death of God's dear Son. From Adam's time through successive generations the sacrificial offerings were pointing forward to Christ, and men's faith was fixed on an offering of infinite value. By faith, patriarchs and prophets depended upon God, who was dealing with them through Christ.

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." He so loved the world that he consented to give the just for the unjust. The greatness and depth of this love was revealed to Paul to make known to all nations. The plan of salvation was opened to his mind, and he preached, both publicly and from house to house, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The law condemns, but it cannot pardon the transgressor. The penitent, believing soul does not look to the law for justification, but to Christ, the atoning sacrifice, who is able to impart his righteousness to the sinner, and make his efforts acceptable before God. When we take Christ for our Saviour, we are enabled to become obedient children, keeping all the commandments of God.

It is faith that engrafts us into the parent stalk of the living vine. Faith that depends on Christ, derives virtue from him as the branch draws sap from the root. Says the prophet, "The just shall live by faith," and this truth, woven into the religious experience of every Christian, should be that by which the righteous shall live. True faith grows to a greater faith, increasing in strength. It is persevering in its operation. The apostle says, "For herein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith."

The Gentiles had no light upon the law of God, and had not followed after righteousness, but those who believed in Christ attained unto righteousness through faith in him. They accepted God's law as the rule of character. The unbelieving Jews had not attained to the righteous requirements of the law, because they refused the only virtue that could avail to make them righteous and acceptable before God. "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness [which is of the law], have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." Christ is the end, or purpose, of the law. The law condemns the sinner, and thus drives him to Christ for righteousness.

The Jews professed to believe the prophets, and to acknowledge the authority of God's law. But with by far the greater part of the nation, this was a merely nominal faith. Christ declared to the Jewish teachers: "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me." Those who really did believe the law and the prophets, were led by this faith to accept Jesus of Nazareth as the Saviour of men. The Gentiles, on the other hand, were first led to turn from their idolatry to accept of Christ, and through Christ they were brought to a knowledge of the law and the prophets.

First, man is to see the righteousness of the law in condemning sin, then he is to behold the righteousness of God in the merits of Christ, providing pardon for sin. "For the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." Men may have a knowledge of the truth, and yet fail to be sanctified through the truth. (Concluded next week.)

August 12, 1889

The Gospel for Both Jews and Gentiles

The people of Israel had been taken out of idolatry, to become the depositaries of sacred, ever-living truth. The knowledge of the one true God was given to them. They were greatly blessed with divine revelations, enshrouded in symbols and ceremonies, until type met antitype in the death of Christ. Everything in both their private and their public life was connected with a revealed religion. The law of God was given by Christ, and specified so plainly the duties of private, social, and public life, that none needed to err. One God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, was brought to view in the fourth commandment, and his will was to be their will. Those who worshiped the one true God were strengthened in moral power, and developed strong and symmetrical characters, while those who worshiped other gods grew more and more debased, because they exalted human passions and sanctioned vice in their religious services.

The religion of Israel was a living light from Heaven, that flashed its rays into all the broad ways and byways of life. Says the psalmist: "He showed his word unto Jacob, his statutes and ordinances unto Israel. He dealt not so with any nation, neither had the heathen knowledge of his laws." They were taught not only that the Lord was to be worshiped, and his holy law obeyed, that its principles were to govern them both in private and public life, but that their religious services were in anticipation of a better service. Their faith was directed to Him who was to come. By faith their hearts reached forward to the great antitype. They were constantly looking forward for the appearance of the Messiah foretold in prophecy.

Satan was not inactive during the Mosaic dispensation. He continually tempted God's people and led them into idolatry. At the foot of the very mount where the glory of God had been displayed in wonderful majesty, he led them to worship the golden calf, and again and again they fell into the grossest idolatry, because they cherished an evil heart of unbelief. Pride, love of display, love of pomp and pleasure, had a controlling influence upon them.

When Christ came into the world, Satan had so filled the minds of men with falsehood in regard to the object of his coming, that those who had been so thoroughly

instructed in regard to the long-promised Messiah did not recognize the Son of God as the divine Saviour. He did not come as their proud hearts had imagined he would come. Their superiority to other nations consisted in the light which Heaven had given them; but when they refused to walk in it, they were no better, but rather worse than other nations. Their own selfish ambitions and disregard of God's commandments dragged them down from the spiritual eminence on which God had set them. They fell into envy, jealousy, hatred of all that was pure and holy in character. They despised the divine One who stood among them, who was able to save to the uttermost, or destroy utterly. But their crime reached its height when Jesus was rejected and crucified.

In the days of Paul there were men who professed the truth and who held it in unrighteousness. There were those who claimed to be keeping the law when they were transgressors of the commandments of God, and thus, by precept and example, they made of none effect the holy precepts of Heaven. The apostle points out the iniquity of those who despised the Gentiles because they had no knowledge of the law, when they themselves, who had been blessed with so much light, were ungodly, and insensible of the mercies of God. They departed from the known precepts of the law, and their foolish hearts were so darkened by the practice of iniquity that they did not realize their own inconsistency. Professing themselves to be wise, they became so self-sufficient, and so corrupt of heart that God gave them up to their own foolish imaginations.

Those who have a knowledge of the law of God, and become proud of that knowledge, despising others who are more ignorant, are not doers of the law. While the apostle admits that the Gentiles were as dark and sinful as the Jews represented them, still he urges home upon the Jews their own defects of character. He says, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things." Those who acknowledged God, and condemned the practices of the Gentiles, thereby condemned themselves, as they were guilty of similar practices. He asks, "Thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"

The Gentiles are to be judged according to the light that is given them, according

to the impressions they had received of their Creator in nature. They have reasoning powers, and can distinguish God in his created works. God speaks to all men through his providence in nature. He makes known to all that he is the living God. The Gentiles could reason that the things that are made could not have fallen into exact order, and worked out a designed purpose, without a God who has originated all. They could reason from cause to effect, that it must be that there was a first cause, an intelligent agent, that could be no other than the eternal God. The light of God in nature is shining continually into the darkness of heathenism, but many who see this light do not glorify the Lord as God. They do not permit reason to lead them to acknowledge their creator. They refuse the Lord, and set up senseless idols to adore. They make images which represent God and worship his created works as a partial acknowledgment of him, but they dishonor him in their hearts.

God bestows upon them favors and blessings constantly. They are partakers of the rich bounties of Heaven, yet they are not thankful for the mercies and blessings that speak to them of God. They do not appreciate the knowledge and grace and forbearance of their heavenly Father. They do not try to establish themselves in truth, and their sinful imaginations lead them away into paths of darkness. When truth is forsaken, the mind fastens upon error, the foolish heart is darkened, and men, professing themselves to be wise in not acknowledging God, become fools, and worship the images of beasts and creeping things, and the works of their own hands.

August 19, 1889

Intercourse With Evil Spirits Forbidden

The Lord has purchased his people for himself, and has manifested his love toward them by the greatest possible evidence, even by shedding his blood and yielding his life on Calvary. He came down to our world to redeem us, to betroth and marry us to himself by an eternal covenant. The marriage union is taken as a symbol of the sacred and enduring character of the relation that exists between Christ and his church. He says, "I will betroth thee unto me forever;" and again, "I am married unto you;" and Paul employs the same figure in the New Testament when he declares, "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."

With untold love our God has loved us, and our love awakens toward him as we comprehend more of the length and depth and height and breadth of this love that passeth knowledge. But when we turn aside to another master, we break our vows to him, and make void the covenant; and we become adulterers, choosing the friendship and favor of others, and proving untrue to him who has died for us. We declare by this act of separation, that we have found his service hard and his love unsatisfying; and thus we dishonor him, and bring his name into reproach before the world.

The Lord, infinite in power and wisdom, has declared, "Thy Maker is thine husband." Everything that will serve for the best good and the highest interest of the people of God will be provided; and although the world seeks to entice them from their allegiance, although they are brought into difficult places, and experience affliction, they are not to seek the counsel of man, but to put their whole trust in God, casting all their care upon him. Christ proves the sincerity of the faith and love of his church by trial and sorrow; and he will bring those who are faithful out of the furnace, refined and purified.

There are many who do not bear the testing of their fidelity. When affliction comes upon them, and they are perplexed by circumstances, and cannot discover the purpose of God's providence, they become impatient and distrustful. They cast away their confidence, forgetful of the tender mercies of the past, and their hearts are filled with unrest and repining. They neglect prayer, and refuse the comfort and instruction of

the Bible. They seek for counselors among the children of men, questioning the dealing of God, and striving to know what he has wisely concealed.

The Lord, who knows all, will make known the very things that are for the best interests of his children; and if he sees fit to veil the events of the future, it is only because he loves us, and would work out our highest good. Should he permit us to see the future mapped out before us, some of us would be distracted by anticipating coming sorrows, and others would be self-confident and daring, and the very good that our heavenly Father intended to bring about by his all-wise providences, would be thwarted and frustrated.

We have an enemy who is ever seeking whom he may devour; and it is his purpose to draw away men's confidence in God, to make them dissatisfied with their condition in life, and to lead them to seek to know what God has veiled from them, and to despise what he has revealed in his holy word. He controls the minds of evil men, and the spirits of devils become the counselors of those who reject the wisdom of God. But shall we who have a holy God, infinite in wisdom, go unto wizards, whose knowledge comes from a close intimacy with the enemy of our Lord? Shall we be among those who turn "after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them," and thus prove false to our best friend until his face be set against us?

We are living in an age of peril, in an age of apostasy; evil men and seducers are waxing worse and worse, Satan is working with all "deceivableness of unrighteousness," and the servants of God must make no concessions to the enemy, nor listen to his suggestions to doubt God. There are many who become restless when they cannot see the definite outcome of affairs. They cannot endure uncertainty, and in their impatience they refuse to wait to see the salvation of God. Apprehended evils drive them nearly distracted. They give way to their rebellious feelings, and run hither and thither in passionate grief, seeking intelligence concerning that which God has not revealed.

If they would but trust in God and watch unto prayer, they would find divine consolation. Their spirit would be calmed by communion with God. The weary and the heavy laden would find rest unto their souls, if they would only go to Jesus; but when they neglect the means that God has ordained for their comfort, and rush off to other sources for information, hoping to learn what God has withheld, they commit the error

of Eve, and thereby gain only a knowledge of evil. God is not pleased with this course, and has expressed it in the most explicit terms. This impatient haste to tear away the veil from the future, reveals a lack of unfaltering trust in God, and leaves the soul open to the suggestions of the master-deceiver. Satan can lead the mind to seek unto those that have familiar spirits, and through the agency of his mediums he can reveal extraordinary views of the future. Through his knowledge of the past he inspires confidence, and he has the poor, misguided soul in his power to lead captive at his will; but the Lord says, "The soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people."

August 26, 1889

Spiritualism the Masterpiece of Deception

Spiritualism is the masterpiece of deception. It is Satan's most successful and fascinating delusion,--one calculated to take hold of the sympathies of those who have laid their loved ones in the grave. Evil angels come in the form of those loved ones, and relate incidents connected with their lives, and perform acts which they performed while living. In this way they lead persons to believe that their dead friends are angels, hovering over them, and communicating with them. These evil angels, who assume to be the deceased friends, are regarded with a certain idolatry, and with many their word has greater weight than the word of God. Thus men and women are led to reject the truth, and give "heed to seducing spirits."

The word of God declares in positive terms that "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." This plain scripture directly contradicts the teaching of Spiritualism, and if it were heeded would save souls from the snare of the enemy.

Many are investigating Spiritualism simply from curiosity. They have no real faith in it, and would start back horrified at the idea of becoming mediums; but they are venturing on forbidden and dangerous ground. When they are fast in the toils of the deceiver, they find they are in the power of him who makes the most abject slaves of his servants, and nothing can deliver them but the power of God. The only safety for us is in trusting implicitly and following faithfully the instruction of the word of God. The Bible is the only chart that marks out the narrow path which shuns the pitfalls of destruction.

It was God's purpose to deliver Israel from the abominations that wrought havoc in the idolatrous nations around them. They were not to sacrifice to Moloch, nor to make their sons or their daughters pass through the fire, nor to seek unto wizards, nor defile themselves by communion with those who had familiar spirits. The instruction of God to his ancient people is profitable to us today. "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and

be ye holy; for I am the Lord your God, and ye shall keep my statutes, and do them; I am the Lord which sanctifieth you."

The Lord presented before his people the results of holding communion with evil spirits, in the abominations of the Canaanites; they were without natural affection, idolaters, adulterers, murderers, and abominable by every corrupt thought and revolting practice. Says the apostle Paul, the "things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils." Sodom had been consumed for the same crime that existed in Canaan; but could it be that the people who had been privileged to behold the glory and power of Jehovah, had need to be warned by these examples, lest they fall into the same errors and die under similar judgments? Men do not know their own hearts, for "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;" but God understands the tendencies of the depraved nature of man.

Satan was watching for an opportunity to lead the people of God into conditions favorable to the development of rebellion and transgression, that they might make themselves as abhorrent to God as were the Canaanites. The adversary of souls is ever on the alert to open channels for the unrestrained flow of evil in our nature, that we have not overcome; for he desires that we may be ruined, and be condemned before God.

The condition of society today is the same as when God presented before Israel the abominations of the heathen; and the same warnings are necessary to the remnant people. Spiritualism is advancing through the land in triumph. "The spirits of devils working miracles" are going "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." Men are seeking unto them that have familiar spirits; but the people of God cannot in any sense follow the practices of the world. They must keep the commandments of the Lord. The line of separation must be distinctly marked between the obedient and the disobedient. There must be open and avowed enmity between the church and the serpent, between her seed and his seed.

Satan was determined to keep his hold on the land of Canaan, and when it was made the habitation of the children of Israel, and the law of God was made the law of the land, he hated Israel with a cruel and malignant hatred, and plotted their destruction. Strange gods were introduced through the agency of evil spirits; and because of

transgression the chosen people were finally scattered from the land of promise.

The same experience is repeating in the history of God's people. God is leading them out from the abominations of the world to keep his law in the land of the enemy, and the rage of "the accuser of the brethren" knows no bounds. "The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." The antitypical land of promise is just before us,--a land where no strange god shall ever come, no evil spirit enter; and Satan desires to destroy the people of God, and cut them off from their inheritance.

It is time to heed the Saviour's injunction as never before: "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." Trust in God, however perplexing may be your situation. Seek his counsel, and turn not after them that have familiar spirits to be defiled by them. He who has died to redeem you, has promised to guide you, and clothe you with his own righteousness, if you will but loathe sin, and purge yourself from evil by washing your robes of character, and making them white in the blood of the Lamb.

What love, what wonderful love, that God bears with the perversity of his people, and sends help to every soul that desires to do his will, and forsake sin! If man will but co-operate with the agencies of Heaven, he may come off more than conqueror. Fallen creatures as we are, capable of the most revolting crimes, yet we may become victors, through the power of the grace of Christ, and have a place in his everlasting kingdom, to reign with him forevermore.

September 2, 1889

The Christian's Commission

"Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth."

I wish to call your attention especially to the commission which Christ gave to his disciples. He said, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me ... unto the uttermost parts of the earth." But they were not fitted to present the gospel of Jesus to the world until they received the gift of the Holy Spirit. The commission Christ gave his disciples then, is our commission today. We are to be witnesses of him to the world; but we cannot impart Heaven's light, unless we have received it. We cannot reveal a Saviour of whom we have no knowledge.

There are many who have a legal, casual faith. They have nominally accepted Christ as the Saviour of the world, but they have no evidence in their hearts that he is their personal Saviour, that he has forgiven their sins, that they have a living connection with God, the source of all light. You cannot teach others of Jesus and his righteousness, you cannot portray his matchless love, and the fullness of his grace, you cannot picture him as the Christian's all in all, as the comforter and guide of man, unless your own heart is filled with his love. You will not be able to present God as a God of compassion and love unless you can say, "I have tasted and know that the Lord is good."

The fact that others receive blessings will not benefit your soul; unless you exercise faith in Christ on your own behalf, you will be unblessed. That others partake of food will not serve to nourish your physical strength, neither will it nourish your spiritual strength to see others rejoicing in God and his love. You yourselves must partake of the feast which your Saviour has provided. Every one of you must wash and be clean. But you say, How can I do this? Have you not told us we have no power of ourselves to cleanse our souls from one spot or stain of sin? Yes, I have told you this, and yet I say unto you, "Wash you, make you clean." God has provided a way of salvation at an infinite cost to Heaven. A fountain for sin and uncleanness has been

opened for Judah and Jerusalem.

The Father "gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." There are many who act as though Christ was the friend of men, but that the Father was their enemy. If this were so, would God have delivered his Son to death that man might have life? Jesus says, "I and my Father are one," Philip said to Christ, "Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus turned to him and said, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet thou hast not known me Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

Christ came into the world to do a special work. He did not come to originate truth. It was already originated. He did not come to set aside what patriarchs and prophets had spoken; for he himself had spoken through these representative men. He himself was the originator of truth. Every jewel of truth came from Christ. But these priceless gems had been placed in false settings. Their precious light had been made to minister to error. Men had taken them to adorn tradition and superstition. Christ came to take them out of the false settings of error and to put them into the framework of truth. He came from Heaven to give the world a correct representation of the Father. Through Satan's suggestions and temptations, the Father had been represented as a being of a stern and unforgiving nature. The Christian life had been represented altogether too much as a life of hardship and sorrow. God was pictured as a being who was watching with jealous eyes, spying the mistakes and errors of men that he might delight himself in punishing them by the severest discipline, and that there could be no peace or joy in his service, Satan clothed the Father in his own forbidding attributes of character. All this was a false representation, and Christ came to reveal the character of God, and the nature of his service.

Christians misrepresent their heavenly Father when they go mourning and groaning, as though they were burdened with an enormous load, when their countenances are expressive of gloom and despondency, and the shadow encompasses their souls. But let them not think they are serving God in so doing; they are doing Satan's work in misrepresenting God and his service. They should go before the Father, and plead with him for a view of his goodness. They have lost sight of Jesus and his love. Let them go to Christ and study his character, for he came to represent the Father. Shall we receive Satan's misrepresentations of our God, and go on in discouragement, lacking peace and joy in the Holy Ghost? Shall we go on mistrusting our heavenly

Father's love and doubting his goodness? What greater injury could we do to our children and our friends than to give them such false impressions of Christian life? It was at an infinite cost to the Father that man's salvation was purchased. The Father suffered with the Son to bring salvation within our reach. It is not his will that one soul should perish, but that all should come to repentance and receive eternal life. He has done all that it is possible to do to save fallen man. There was no other way by which man could be brought into harmony with his unchangeable law, save by the death of Christ. Christ became our surety, our sacrifice, Saviour, and example, and when all Heaven has been poured out to us in this gift of God, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?

How much we lose by doubting the love of God! Why do we not come boldly to a throne of grace, and by living faith lay hold of the merits of the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour? This must be an individual work. I cannot be saved by another's faith, nor can another be saved by my faith. Every soul must be saved by his own righteousness. Can we manufacture this righteousness? No. But Jesus has furnished it for us. When the sinner comes to him he takes his load of sin, and gives him his righteousness. The vilest sinner may claim all that was provided in the plan of salvation through the merits of Christ. He may have the attributes of the Saviour. He may go forth to tell of a living Saviour, and to win men to the truth; for he knows what it is to lay hold of Christ by living faith. He has taken the requisite steps in repentance, confession, and restitution, and he can teach others the way of salvation. He can present Christ as one who left his royal throne, who clothed his divinity with humanity that he might save fallen man. He can present him as one who was rich and yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. He can go without the camp, bearing his reproach. He is willing to deny self that others may be saved.

Suppose that Christ had always remained in Heaven, there would have been no salvation for man; but he came from Heaven to represent the Father, to tell us of the glory and riches of eternity, and to save sinners by the sacrifice of himself. He died that we might live; that we might lay hold of his righteousness, and by faith claim his merits. Have you an experimental religion? Are you laborers together with God? Have you received the endowment of the Holy Spirit? Those who have received a knowledge of Christ cannot hold their peace. It is those who have not tasted the love of Jesus that can fold their hands in carnal security, and have no burdens for souls. It is those who are not laborers together with God.

Those who are living branches of the True Vine, will seek to fulfill the commission of Christ, to be witnesses of him unto the uttermost parts of the earth. Jesus has said, "Ye are the light of the world." Has God given you intellect? You should use it to his glory. You should connect yourself with him who is the source of all light, if you are to be a light in the world. Jesus has said, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." When we come into straitened places, he will be with us. He will be at our right hand to uphold us. Those who keep a connection with God, may be as was Nehemiah in the king's court. One day the king asked him a question that involved consequences of the greatest importance to God's people, and Nehemiah felt his weakness and he darted up a prayer to Heaven. Help came to him in a moment. The very answer that was appropriate for the occasion was on his lips. It will be so with those who follow Christ. In a time of great need they will not be left to themselves. They can send up a prayer to Heaven, and God will provide the needed grace and wisdom. If we are to be laborers together with God, if we are to fulfill Christ's commission, we must come to the fountain of life. We must drink of the well of salvation ourselves, if we would refresh others. Brethren, let us open our hearts to Heaven's light, that we may be able to flash its bright rays on the pathway of others. Let us kindle our tapers at the divine altar, that we may be light-bearers in a world of spiritual darkness.

September 9, 1889

The Simplicity of Faith

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." Matthew 7:7, 8.

There are many who do not understand the simplicity of faith. They make great efforts to understand how to exercise faith, and think they must have a transporting emotion, a joyful flight of feeling, or they have not faith. But if they had what they desire, it would not prove that they had faith. What is faith? It is simply taking God at his word; it is believing that God will do just as he has promised. We should be a far greater power of good than we now are, if we would comply with the conditions that God has laid down in his word, and trust him implicitly. It is our unbelief that brings us under the description the Spirit of God has given of the Laodicean church in its condition of lukewarmness. There is nothing more disgusting to our taste than tepid water, and from the use of this figure in describing our condition, we can understand how our want of faith and love, and our indifference, is regarded by the Lord.

All Heaven is looking upon us; we are a spectacle to the world,--to angels and to men. The angels expect a great deal more of us than we give, in view of what God has done for us. They have seen with amazement the infinite sacrifice that has been made by Christ to rescue us from the bondage of sin, and make it possible to elevate us through his own righteousness to a seat upon his throne. He has brought divine power within our reach through the merits of his blood. We may become partakers of the divine nature, and why should not Heaven look upon us with sorrow and disappointment to see that we are lukewarm in the service of God? We give our attention to the trivial affairs of earth, while the salvation of our souls is treated as a thing of secondary importance. God has given us power and ability to improve to the best account in his service. He has made it possible for us to lay hold of the arm of infinite power that we may be strong in his might. But with all these great gifts and superior privileges within our reach, why are we content to be inefficient in his service. We cannot work out our salvation unless we increase in faith and love.

A person will manifest all the faith he has. If he believes that we are really living in the last days, he will devote his time and talents to the service of God. He will not be satisfied to bury his capabilities in the earth, employing them to further the perishing interests of time. He will be seeking the power that God alone can give; and the matter of most importance to him will be to see that he has a living connection with Heaven, that he may do his duty to his fellow-men, and to his God. Day by day, and hour by hour, he will realize that he is to be a laborer together with God, a co-laborer with Jesus Christ.

All our powers are the gift of God. He has endowed us with reason, and he intends that we shall use this power that we may understand our situation and glorify him. If we use our abilities simply for the glorification of self, we are not fulfilling the will of God. God gave Nebuchadnezzar his reason, but the king used his ability to exalt himself. He walked about in the great city, and said, "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?" He forgot the honor of God, and God removed his reason, and he was sent out to dwell with the beasts of the field, to eat grass as an ox. The relation of this experience of Nebuchadnezzar is to show us what a man will become if God removes his precious endowment of reason. God can take away the powers of the mind, and leave nothing in the breast of a man but the instinct of a beast of the field.

The Lord desires that we should do our best. He desires us to so exert the powers of mind that he has given us that we may reach the high standard of the law of God. He wants us to keep his law as the apple of our eye. Heaven is interested in every individual soul, because each one of us has been purchased by the precious blood of Christ. We are Christ's property. Says the apostle: "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."

Heaven is doing all that is possible to do, that we may obtain the victory, and work out our salvation while God is working in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. It is our privilege so to live that we may be elevated to the throne of God, that Christ look upon the redeemed, and see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

Will the talents that God has given you here, glorify him in the world to come? It

rests with you to decide. God has stated the conditions upon which you may be saved in his kingdom. Says the Saviour: "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." If you fulfill these conditions through the grace of Christ, you will behold the matchless charms of the King in his beauty, you will see the attractions of heaven, you will realize at last what is "the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" that will be given to the overcomer. Will you have the eternal riches that are reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith? This is the question that each one will have to decide for himself.

If we come to God, feeling our nothingness, feeling that we are helpless without Christ, feeling that we must have the power that God alone can give, we shall not be disappointed. Will God give us a stone if we ask for bread? No; he will satisfy our wants from his abundant fullness. Jesus has brought within our reach the power of earth and heaven. He has clothed his divinity with humanity. He came to our earth as a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, that we might know the blessing of endless joy in his everlasting kingdom. Ought we not to give to God all that he requires of us? If you have tasted the blessedness of peace and joy in believing, do your best to bring others to the fountain of living waters from which you have drunk. Lift up Jesus. His blood has bought us. He pleads in our behalf. It is Christ who will clothe us with his righteousness.

September 16, 1889

Christ's Burden is Light

"And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee; is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by." Zechariah 3:1-5.

Satan is ever ready to offer resistance to the work that Christ is willing to do for the souls of men. Jesus asks, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" Have I not chosen this people for myself? Although they have transgressed, the command is given, "Take away the filthy garments." This will be said concerning every soul that truly repents of sin, and believes in Christ. The righteousness of Christ will be imparted unto him. Christ came to bring divine power to man, to clothe him in his righteousness. He says, "I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands." He knows us by name. He knows all our trials and sorrows. He has wept and prayed, and he knows how to succor everyone who mourns. Satan will tell you that you cannot hope in God's mercy; that you are too great a sinner to be saved. But you should tell him that Jesus has said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

When Christ bowed on the banks of Jordan, he offered up a prayer in behalf of humanity, and heaven was opened unto him, and the Spirit of God descended in the form of a dove of burnished gold, and encircled his form, and a voice came from heaven which said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." What did this mean? It meant that heaven was opened to the petitions of humanity. When Jesus died on Calvary, the Father accepted the sacrifice, and humanity was exalted in the scale of moral worth with God, because Christ had become a partaker of humanity, and had undertaken its redemption.

The proclamation of Christ on the cross, "It is finished," tells you that you are prisoners of hope. There are many who idolize feeling. But your hope is not founded upon feeling; it is founded on the word of God. Has not God given you abundant evidences of his love? I point you to Calvary. The light of the cross should dispel every doubt from your mind. God loves you, and he wants to save you. You should cling to the Mighty One, and lay hold on the merit of a crucified and risen Saviour. He is your perfection. He has brought you his righteousness at an infinite cost. Will you accept it?

We should talk faith, and educate the soul to praise God. Says the apostle, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." While you appreciate the love of God, you will have living faith. You must climb up by Christ; he is the ladder. We could not scale the battlements of heaven were it not for the fact that Christ is the ladder. The base of the ladder rests upon the earth, and the top reaches into the highest heavens. The base of this divine ladder touches the earth. If it had stopped one inch short of that, humanity could never have reached the first round; but it is the goodness of God that leadeth you to repentance, and the grace and mercy of God shines down on every round, for God is above the ladder. Its topmost round reaches into the heaven of heavens. The light of God's love brightens the whole length of the ladder, and every step upward is a step toward him. When we are mounting this ladder, we are on our way to the mansions which Christ has gone to prepare for those that love him. Says the apostle, "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."

We should weave faith into all our religious experience. We should lift up our souls, and talk of the glory of God. How many there are who get into a strain of sadness, and talk in a hopeless way. What is the matter?--Satan has been misrepresenting the character of God to them. He has cast his shadow athwart their pathway, and, instead of talking faith, they have talked doubt. They have magnified the power of the enemy, and have become discouraged. When you feel darkness coming upon you, why not talk of the power of him who is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of peace? Why not say, "I have a mighty Saviour. My faith is fixed on him; it is entwined about Christ. He is my hope and righteousness;" and if you do this, it will not be long before your lips will speak forth the praises of God.

We should seek to understand the truth of heavenly origin. Christ is the author of truth, and he intends that we shall understand its principles. But how many say, We have read the Bible, and we cannot understand this or that, and therefore we reject the whole of it. Why is it that they cannot understand some part of the truth?--It is because they seek to interpret the word of God according to their own preconceived opinions. There are others who read the Bible only to prove their own position, and to bend everything according to their own way of thinking. He who cherishes error, has no one to blame but himself; for he who seeks diligently for truth will find it, and be sanctified through it. We should desire to know the truth in every point. The understanding is to be sanctified through the knowledge of the truth. We should desire to see its beauty, and to have its precious light shining upon our pathway.

Satan would have our minds belittled by contact with trivial things. The mind that feeds upon common thoughts, will be a common mind; but if it is carried up to the height of eternal things, the things of eternity will become full of interest, and the mind will be elevated and ennobled. Our physical being is composed of what we eat, and our spiritual nature is also composed of what it feeds upon. If you allow the mind to dwell upon common things, it will be of a common order. If you are here as pilgrims and strangers, you will talk of the country to which you are traveling. You will act as though you expected to dwell there. The mine of truth has been left to us to explore, and how shall we know what are its hidden treasures unless we dig in its depths? We must search as a miner searches for gems in the earth. There is nothing that can give us greater breadth of mind than the daily study of God's word. We should wrestle with the difficult problems of the Scriptures. The divine Teacher will help you in the study of truth. The angels will be at your side to aid you to understand its principles and appropriate its promises.

Let us fill memory's hall with beautiful pictures of divine things. Why is it that we talk so much of the commonplace affairs of life? We should have a more elevated conversation. Says the apostle, "Be ye holy in all manner of conversation." If we should obey this injunction, it would place us on vantage ground. Let us talk of the hope of immortality, and seek to win others to Christ. We should not act as though we were bearing a grievous yoke when we seek to fulfill the requirements of God. Jesus says, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Our Saviour is not in Joseph's new tomb. He is risen, and has ascended up on high, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us.

Let us talk of the blessed eternal inheritance that is reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. As you dwell upon heavenly things, you will become assimilated to the divine. Shall we not honor God? Shall we not seek to educate all within the sphere of our influence to honor him? If we ever join the song of the redeemed above, we must begin to sing the song here. If we would fill the vault of heaven with rich music, we must learn the notes of praise below. Talk not to me of earth; for my eyes have looked upon the King in his beauty, and it is the greatest and most glorious work to honor God. Let me be little and unknown, but let my name have a place in the Lamb's book of life, and be immortalized among the heavenly host. I want to praise God with an immortal tongue. No mortal language can describe the glory of Heaven. We should let the theme of God's love absorb the whole mind and attention. We should make a life-long effort to seek by patient continuance in well-doing, for immortality and eternal glory. I want to receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away, when the faithful people of God receive their crowns of life. When we catch a little glimpse of the glory of God, our hearts are filled with inexpressible joy. We must look away from self to Jesus, for he has provided that we may have joy and peace in the Holy Ghost; and as we behold the matchless charms of Christ, we shall be changed into the same image.

September 23, 1889

The Unchangeable Character of the Law

When Christ cried out from the cross, "It is finished," all Heaven triumphed. The controversy between Christ and Satan in regard to the execution of the plan of salvation was ended. The spirit of Satan and his works had taken deep root in the affections of the children of men; but the holy angels were horror-stricken that one of their number could fall so far as to be capable of such cruelty as had been manifested toward the Son of God on Calvary. Every sentiment of pity and sympathy which they had ever felt for Satan in his exile was quenched in their hearts. That his envy should be manifested in such a revenge upon an innocent person was enough to strip him of his assumed robe of celestial light, and to reveal the hideous deformity beneath; but to manifest such malignity toward the divine Son of God, who had with unprecedented self-denial and love for the creatures formed in his image, come from heaven and assumed their fallen nature, was such a heinous crime against Heaven that it caused the angels to shudder with horror, and severed the last tie of sympathy existing between Satan and the heavenly world.

When Christ died on Calvary's cross, he exclaimed in his expiring agony, "It is finished;" and Satan knew that he had been defeated in his purpose to overthrow the plan of salvation. When the Son of God came forth from Joseph's sepulcher, a triumphant conqueror over death, and broke the fetters of the tomb, he led forth the captives that Satan had bound in the grave. He presented to the world a sample of the great resurrection day, when all who have fallen asleep in Jesus shall be raised to a glorious immortality. They shall come forth from their graves at the trump of God, and shall ascend to the city of God, and see the King in his beauty.

When Christ cried, "It is finished," the great sacrifice was complete. Satan and his angels were uprooted from the affection of the universe. Satan had taken such a course of deception that the angels of heaven had been in doubt of his real character. God moves in a straightforward course. It was impossible for God to lie; but Satan was as crooked as a serpent. All Heaven rejoiced when Christ rose from the dead. He had power to bind the strong man, and to despoil him of his goods.

We should behold Christ and his matchless charms. We should accept him as our righteousness. He came to exalt the law of God. He took upon him our nature that he might reach man in his fallen condition. His death exalts the law of God, and presents to the universe and to the world the law of God as changeless in its character. The transgression of the law could be forgiven only through the sacrifice of the Son of God. There are many who claim to believe that the death of Christ releases men from the obligation of obeying the divine precepts; but this is Satan's masterpiece of falsehood. One time when I was traveling to Oregon on a steamer, a number of persons collected upon the hurricane deck, just outside of my state-room, the door of my room being open. A Baptist minister was talking to them concerning the law. After a while he said: "Mrs. White is on board, and she is a great stickler for the law. She says that no one can be saved except through keeping the law. She places all our salvation on the perfect keeping of the law." After he had misrepresented me and the Seventh-day Adventists for some time, I went to him and said: "Elder B., Mrs. White is here to speak for herself. I have listened to your words, and will assure you that Mrs. White believes no such thing. There is no quality in law to save the transgressor. It was because the law was broken, and there was nothing but death before the sinner, that He who was equal with the Father, came to earth and took upon him the garb of humanity. It was because of man's sin that Christ stepped down from the royal throne, laid aside his royal robe, and clothed his divinity with humanity. He came to bring to man moral power, to unite the fallen race with himself, that through faith in Jesus Christ we may become partakers of the divine nature, and escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust. Says the apostle, 'Sin is the transgression of the law.' But Christ was manifested to take away sin, to save his people from their sins. The soul that believes in Christ 5/be cleansed from all defilement, and, through the grace of Christ, may be restored to divine favor.

"The law points to Christ, and every transgression of the law can be atoned for only by the blood of the Son of God. The law is like a mirror, to reveal to man his defects of character, but there is nothing in the law that will remedy the defects it points out. Paul declares: 'I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.' Why did he preach repentance toward God?--Because man had broken the law of God, and therefore was not in harmony with God. Why did he preach faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ?--Because Christ had died on Calvary, and had opened a fountain for sin and uncleanness for Judah and Jerusalem to wash in, and be cleansed.

"But while Jesus died for the sins of men, he did not abolish one tittle of the law. He said in the sermon on the mount, 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.'"

"We are saved through the merit of the blood of Christ, but Christ's righteousness does not cover the sin of transgressing God's law, without repentance. We must do all in our power to keep the commandments of God, and then he will impute unto us his righteousness, because we believe in Christ and seek to obey the divine law. This is the reason that Christ came to this world, that he might bring his righteousness to man, that man might lay hold of his strength, and make peace with God. God accepts the efforts of man to keep the law, because Christ imputes his righteousness to him. We could not keep the law in our own strength.

"The death of Christ is an unanswerable argument that demonstrates the unchangeable character of the law of God. If God could have changed one precept of his law, then Christ need not have died."

I said to the minister, "Did you ever hear me speak?" He answered that he had not. "In the thousands of pages I have written, have you ever read anything to the effect that I believe the law will save us?" He answered, "No." "Then why have you made the statements which you have? I hope you will not repeat them again."

After this talk, the minister took his party to the other side of the boat, but what I had said did not influence him to discontinue his false statements.

The apostle John says, "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." We need not expect to be highly esteemed by the world, for the world did not esteem Christ. But the fact that we are not esteemed by the world is no reason why we should drape memory's hall with mourning, and fill it with dark pictures. Let us remember constantly that Christ gave his life for us; that although the world

knoweth us not, he loves us with infinite love. We should talk of his matchless love. Let us not have any doleful tales to tell. The Bible is full of the rich promises of God. Let us behold the Saviour; for by beholding, we shall become changed.

If we look at the disagreeable side, if we gather up doubts, we shall have doubts, we shall sow doubts, and reap a harvest of darkness. We should lie low at the foot of the cross. Let us not utter one word of unbelief. The enemy may bring about a train of circumstances that will influence our feelings, but we should not let this discourage us; we must live by faith. "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; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." We are to look away from earth, to breathe in the atmosphere of heaven. If we continually dwell in the atmosphere of earth's cares, we shall find our spiritual life dying out; but if we uplift our thoughts to heaven and heavenly things, we shall realize that our spiritual life is renewing and growing stronger day by day. If we follow on to know the Lord, we shall know that his goings forth are prepared as the morning.

September 30, 1889

How to Glorify God

Through all our trials we should think of the plan of salvation, we should educate the soul to exercise faith in Christ and to render praise to God. Christ suffered reproach. He was reviled and rejected of men. They even said that he had a devil, but he did not shrink from the cross of suffering, and we should not murmur at the self-sacrificing part of religion. All Heaven is interested in the trying of our souls, the whole universe is interested to see how we shall bear the cross and endure the shame. You are to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. God does not work with man without his co-operation. Divine power will combine with human effort, and enable you to successfully meet the enemy of your souls. In Christ you must meet every difficulty; and if others do not sympathize with your ideas, you must not wound them by enmity, but press close to the bleeding side of your Saviour.

If you have doubts, you should not gratify the evil one by telling others concerning them. If you trust in Christ, as surely as he died on Calvary's cross, you will obtain the victory. It was living faith that caused the woman who had suffered under disease for years to touch the hem of Christ's garment. This is the faith that we must have, and then we shall not speak of our trials and conflicts; for through them all, we shall have joy unspeakable and full of glory. Jesus has said, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." We should unfurl the banner of the Prince of Peace, and in perplexity and sorrow we must not lose sight of Him who is mighty to save.

Jesus came to this earth, marred and seared by the curse, for the purpose of bringing moral power to men. He fought the battle in man's behalf in the wilderness of temptation, and it was the same battle that everyone of us must fight till the close of time. Christ was not overcome in this conflict. He who worked miracles for others, worked none for himself. He had clothed his divinity with humanity, and he had come to bring divine power to man. He met the enemy at every step with "It is written." He used the word of God to thwart the temptations of the evil one. This is where our safety lies. We should study the word of God, and be so filled with it, that we can meet the

enemy of our souls with "It is written," as did our example. Then we could hope for the grace that God has promised, to enable us to be overcomers. You should be full of hope in the work of the Lord. A discouraged man cannot glorify God. Whatever you do, you should not lose your hope and faith. When you become discouraged it is an evidence that you have allowed the enemy to come in between your soul and God. You must lay hold of the hope set before you, and you will come off victorious, and be ready to sing the praises of God.

When Christ came to this world, he found that Satan had everything as he wanted it. The adversary of God and man thought that he was indeed the prince of the earth, but Jesus laid hold of the world to take it out of the power of Satan. He came to redeem it from the curse of sin and the penalty of transgression, that the transgressor might be forgiven. He planted the cross between earth and heaven, and between divinity and humanity; and as the Father beheld the cross, he was satisfied. He said, "It is enough, the offering is complete." God and man may be reconciled. Those who have lived in rebellion against God, may become reconciled, if as they see the cross, they become repentant, and accept the great propitiation that Christ has made for their sins. In the cross they see that "mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

We do not appreciate the love of God as we should. When God gave his Son to die for the sins of men, he gave all Heaven in that one gift. There was nothing that God could withhold from humanity after giving up his beloved Son; for Christ himself had assumed humanity. He was made a child that he might understand the temptations of childhood, and know its weaknesses and be able to help the children to be overcomers. He passed from youth to manhood, and carried our griefs and bore our sorrows. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. When we come to him in sincerity pleading for pardon, he forgives. We need not wait to make ourselves acceptable; for we can never. We cannot do works that will commend us to God when we have sinned. We must come to the cross, and lay our burden of sin upon Jesus Christ, and believe that we are pardoned for Christ's sake who died for us. When we acknowledge our sin, and seek pardon through Christ, the law is exalted. It is the moral standard of God, and tells us what sin is. Says John, "Sin is the transgression of the law." Those who have sinned must hang their helpless souls on Christ.

You should place your will on the side of God's will. You cannot be overcome of

the enemy unless you press positive resistance against God's will. We can be more than conquerors through faith in him who has loved us and given himself for us. When you come to God, you must come with confidence. When Satan presses upon your soul his temptations to doubt that God will have mercy in your case, you should press back his suggestions with the promises of God. Our heavenly Father has expressed his love for us individually in the cross of Calvary. The Father loves us, he is full of compassion and tender mercy.

Jesus came to this earth to represent the character of the Father to the world. He said, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." Satan had misrepresented the character of God, and placed him in a false light. But Jesus came to reveal the Father's love and compassion toward the fallen children of men. When those who profess to be the servants of God draw down their countenances in gloom, and are ever complaining, they misrepresent their heavenly Father. They are confirming the impression that Satan has made concerning his character. They say to the world, "The service of God is a hard service. It is bondage to keep the law of God." This is all false. What is it that puts the shackles on men's wrists? Is it obedience to law? No, indeed. Those who keep the laws walk at liberty. It is the transgressor that is in bondage. The curse of the law is not upon those who are striving to fulfill God's holy precepts through faith in the Redeemer. They are covered with his righteousness. They are at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

How wrong it is for those who profess to be engaged in the service of God, to dishonor God by misrepresenting his service. The Lord has proclaimed himself as "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." Will we believe this declaration of his character? He says again, "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."

How long we have resisted the pleading of the Spirit of God! How long he has borne with us! We would not bear such resistance as we have made against him. But he says, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways." "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him." It is because the Lord is not like one of us that he can forgive sins when we come to him

with repentance. Satan tries to discourage every soul that seeks to come to God. He will tell you that you are a sinner, unworthy of the love of God. And you can tell him that you know it, but that you have repented of your transgressions and by faith you depend upon the merits of the blood of Christ, and the mercy of God is for you. Reach over the doubts that he suggests to your mind, and grasp the promise of God. Tell your enemy that "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

The followers of Jesus should be living stones in the temple of God, so that they may emit light to those around them. They should work with a cheerful heart to show forth the praises of Him who has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. They should seek to unfold to men the glories of the law of liberty. If they go forth to labor for God with a gloomy countenance, and despondent heart, they will not accomplish anything that will glorify their Redeemer; for their attitude of doubt will destroy the effect of their words. The conflict is coming on the law of God in the world. Satan carries on the same warfare from age to age against the precepts of Jehovah. The sinner hates the law because it points out his shortcoming, and he tramples upon it in derision.

Those who profess to love God should search the Scriptures diligently, for they cannot afford to be found transgressors of the law. The time is coming when no one will be able to render an excuse to God for disobedience to his law. There are those who say now that they cannot keep the commandments of God. They excuse themselves from obedience to the fourth commandment because of business, or their family, or social relations. But these excuses will not be found to avail in the day of God. They will not stand the test of the judgment.

Christ left the royal throne, he stepped down from his high command in the heavenly courts, and for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty, might be made rich; and what answer can be framed before him for trampling on the holy law of God? When God gave his Son, he made provision in him for every emergency connected with man's salvation; and in the day of reward and meeting out the penalty for transgression, every mouth will be stopped, and all the world will become guilty before God. But of those who have obeyed the precepts of heaven, Jesus says, "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." Do you want to enter into the city of God? Christ has stated the condition upon which you may enter. It may seem to you now that

commandment-keepers are in the minority; but it will not seem so when the gates of the heavenly city swing back on their glittering hinges. God is on the side of those who obey him. God is a majority. Christ is on their side, the angels of heaven are on their side, and all the good are on their side. The doers of the law of God are in the majority. They have access to the power that the world cannot give or take away. Let us not exalt Satan by dwelling upon his power. Let us talk of the power of God. Let us think of the King in his beauty. Let us behold Christ, and by beholding, become changed into his divine image.

October 14, 1889

The Work of God's People

"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."

We should take heed that we do not make a mistake in this life that can never be remedied either here or in eternity. It is the purpose of your heavenly Father that his servants should carry the truth to all nations, but it is the design of the enemy to fasten their affection on the things of this life, and so thwart the purpose of God. There was a great work to be done after the ascension of Christ, but the disciples did not comprehend this fact. After the crucifixion they were placed in a situation of peculiar sorrow and trial. They had lost their Master, and were in despair, unable to understand why he should be taken from them.

While two of the disciples were journeying toward Emmaus, talking sadly of what had occurred, a stranger drew near and joined them as they toiled up and down the hills from Jerusalem to their place of abode. The stranger asked, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?" They were surprised that he should ask such a question, and said, "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people; and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel; and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; and when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive."

"Then he said unto 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 enter into

his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." The disciples were not able to believe the testimony of the women at the sepulcher. Their hearts were filled with unbelief and disappointment. Though Jesus had told them while he was yet with them that he would suffer these very things, all his words were forgotten in the hour of trial; but when this stranger showed from the prophecies the relation of these events to the Sacred Word, they were filled with new hope. Light began to break upon their minds, and when they came to their journey's end, they insisted that the stranger should abide with them. He entered their dwelling at their urgent invitation, and as they sat at meat, as he lifted up his hands, they saw the print of the nails, and recognized their risen Lord. As they rose to greet him, he vanished from their sight.

Then they began to talk of their experience as he talked with them by the way, and they said, "Did not our heart burn within us?" But the disciples were not content to enjoy this great blessing alone. They felt that they must hasten back over the rough way to communicate the good news to those who were bowed down in sorrow and disappointment. How is it with us? Do we feel this interest in others? When we have found some precious jewel in the mine of truth, are we content to keep it to ourselves? We cannot do this, if Christ is with us. If we have found the field that contains the treasure, we shall want everybody to rejoice with us.

The disciples went back the way they had come, but the distance did not seem long as they talked of their hope. They hastened through the streets of Jerusalem to the upper chamber where the disciples were wont to gather. They knew just where to find them. They had also heard the reports of the women, but they did not believe them to be true, and now these two others come to add their testimony to the certainty of Christ's resurrection. The disciples from Emmaus told over all the circumstances of their meeting with Jesus, and how he was known to them in the breaking of bread. They declared that though their hopes had been buried with Christ, they now believed that he would indeed reign on the throne of David. And while they were uttering these words of faith, Jesus himself stood among them, and said, "Peace be unto you." Those hands that were uplifted in blessing, were the same hands that had been pierced upon the cross. He unfolded to their minds the prophecies concerning his life and death and resurrection. He took up the Old Testament and confirmed it by the facts that are now recorded in the New Testament. He proved to the disciples that he was indeed the Messiah, the Saviour of the world.

Christ did on this occasion just as he desires us to do now. We are to show that the specifications of prophecy have been fulfilled in the history of the world. In the light of the prophetic word the disciples did not have the least reason for unbelief, for all had come to pass according to the Scriptures. We should take the Old Testament to explain the New Testament, and the New Testament to reflect light into the Old. The typical service pointed forward to Christ, and in him type met antitype. The disciples were to carry on this very work, for they were to go forth to teach all nations that the Messiah had come.

When Jesus spoke to them of the work that they must do, and how the Holy Ghost should come upon them, they asked, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" He told them that a great work was to be accomplished before he should reign on the throne of David. He said, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." The disciples were to begin their work where he had sown the seeds of truth. Multitudes had heard his words, and believed them, but they did not have the moral courage to acknowledge him as their Saviour, lest they should be turned out of the synagogue. When the Holy Ghost was poured out, the seed that Christ had sowed blossomed and ripened into fruit. Courage and hope inspired the disciples, and they were ready to go to the uttermost part of the earth to proclaim a risen Saviour. The early disciples accomplished their work, and from age to age, men have been raised up to carry forward the gospel. Advanced light has shone upon every succeeding generation, and today we are nearer the great white throne, we are nearer the consummation of the Christian's hope, than ever a people were before. We have more distinct views of Jesus than any have had before.

Is it not appropriate to read this text at this time, "Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal"? How many are laying up their treasures upon the earth. I have known those who professed to love God, and yet who would add field to field and place to place, and the more they accumulated, the less willing they were to give to the cause of Christ. I dare not ask for property. I do not know how I would bear the test. I do not want anything here on which to place my heart. I want my treasure in heaven. I once knew a woman whose husband was a drunkard, and she was obliged to wash for a living. She used to wish that she had riches so that she could help the cause. And the Lord tested

her with riches, but she did not remember the cause of God. She built a fine house, and furnished it with every luxury. She added land to land, and kept promising herself that she would give to the cause as soon as she had accomplished this or that. I visited her.

One of her sons was intemperate and wild. I said, "You should give your means to God while you can. You do not know what may happen. Don't wait. It will prove a perfect loss to you if you do, for you will be tested again with poverty, if you cling to your earthly possessions." She promised that she would give to the cause. She said she meant to do it, but she never gave anything. She became a poor woman, poorer even than she had been in the beginning. When she died, she had nothing to leave to the cause of Christ. It is much safer to be tested with poverty than with wealth; but if God gives you riches, he intends that you shall use them for his glory, to save souls for whom Christ has died. God has given us all that we have, and we should not consider that it is ours at all. All we enjoy is ours, only because of the righteousness of Christ. We should say, "All things come of thee, O Lord, and of thine own do we give unto thee." We should not rob God, but let his means flow into the treasury.

Says the prophet, "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." If we have robbed God, we should repent and make restitution as far as it lies in our power. If we had faith in God, we should see that we are only stewards of his means. You should mix faith with your prayers, and come up to God's requirement, that he may open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that you shall not be able to receive. As soon as you humble your heart before God, he will fill you with his Spirit and power. How do you expect sinners to be converted unless you do something to place the light of truth before them? You are to "lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven." You should put your treasure in an unfailing bank, into bags that wax not old.

We read of disciples who, although they were poor, sent a contribution by the hand of Paul to distribute for the necessity of the poor saints at Jerusalem. Oh, that selfishness might all go out of our hearts! We should let our sympathies go out to the precious souls for whom Christ has died. I would not be deprived of doing something in

the work of salvation, for all this world can afford. Christ left the royal throne, he clothed his divinity with humanity, he came to a world all marred and [scarred] by the curse, to rescue lost humanity, to rescue you and me. Oh, I want my heart exercised to carry on the work that he has left for me to do. I want to see the gospel preached to perishing souls. I want an interest in everything that is started for the advancement of the cause of Christ. Every one of us can do something, and we must come up to the responsibility that has been placed upon us. If we do this, we shall see every soul melted into tenderness and humility before God.

October 21, 1889

The Service of Love

"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. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure."

Those who are looking and waiting for the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, will purify their hearts. They will realize that they must make continual progress in the divine life, that they must have a daily increasing faith, so as to be able to overcome.

We have no right to study our own pleasure and convenience; for we have been bought with a price, even with the life of the Son of God, therefore we should glorify God in our bodies, and in our spirits, which are his. Our Saviour has given to every man his work, and it is for each one to do his work to the very best of his ability. It is not for us to overlook the duties that lie directly in our pathway; but in the fear and love of God we must take them up in order, and the blessing of God will abide upon us. You should let your light shine before those who are in darkness. How carefully you should walk before those who do not have a knowledge of the truth, that you may recommend it to them. Our work does not end in simply living an exemplary life in a passive way; we are to work aggressively, and follow up our work with prayer, that God may prosper our efforts. If we do this we shall be as lights in the world. We need living faith, that we may take God at his word; for there is a battle for every soul to fight and it must be fought manfully, or we shall never see the city of God. Lack of faith has been manifested by the professed people of God in every age, and even at the present time the same want of faith is apparent.

When God sought to lead the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, they manifested lack of faith by fearing the result of leaving the bondage of Pharaoh. When they came up to the Red Sea, with mountains on either side, and the armies of their enemies in their rear, they forgot how God had wrought for them with mighty signs and

wonders, and they allowed unbelief to control their minds. They began to accuse the Lord, and to blame Moses for bringing them out of Egypt into the wilderness; but God commanded them to go forward, and when their feet touched the waters in obedience to his word, the sea opened before them and they passed through it on dry land. Our greatest need today is an increase of faith. We may be bound about by circumstances that make it seem impossible to advance, but if we do the best we can, the Lord will open the way before us.

The Lord does not propose to do that which we can do ourselves. He will educate us to do his work, and as we go forth to his service, he will work mightily with our efforts. God claims our talents, he requires that they shall be employed in his service. A portion of our substance is the Lord's also, and if we render him his just dues, he will recognize the offering and commend our course. He does not estimate the value of our gifts to his cause by their amount in money, he looks upon our motives. It is the heart service that makes the gift valuable. When we fulfill our obligations in faith, we shall not rob God even in little things, but we shall bear every responsibility that he places upon us to his glory.

When the Majesty of Heaven became a babe, and was intrusted to Mary, she did not have much to offer for the precious gift; but when she brought her two doves to the altar, they were received as an acceptable offering to the Lord. She could not offer the rare treasure that the wise men came to Bethlehem to lay before the Son of God, and yet the mother of Jesus was not rejected because of the smallness of her gift. It was the willingness of her heart that the Lord looked upon, and her love made her offering sweet.

Everyone who will do his best, to the utmost of his ability, will find that God will open ways before him. Everyone who will put his talents out to the exchangers will find that they will increase. We should ever remember that Christ for our sake became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich, and in faith and love we should act well our part. Let us show by our actions that we believe that we are responsible to God for the best use of our talents. In return for his mercies and blessings, let us render to him all he claims, and his favor will rest upon us.

I love Jesus, and I must plead with him that I may have more of his Spirit. God is willing to bless us, and he wants us to have a part in his kingdom. As we go out to labor

for souls, our hearts should go up to God in gratitude and love for his rich blessing which he has so bountifully bestowed upon us. Let us all make it a principle that we will serve God through all time. Let us not neglect secret prayer. Let us meditate much on the goodness of our God, and on that love that has been manifested toward us in the gift of Christ. In our association with one another in public or in private life, may we ever seek to breathe an influence that will tell on the side of truth. We should grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Let us show by our works how much we value the truth and the souls of our fellowmen. Let us be diligent, sincere, and faithful. Let us trade with the talents that God has bestowed upon us, and intrusted to us as his stewards, and if we work with disinterested, self-sacrificing effort, the Lord will bless us, and by and by we shall have a glorious reward, even eternal life.

October 28, 1889

A Peculiar People

"For 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."

In these words is presented before us the work that is required of every follower of Christ. Through the grace of Christ we are to perfect a Christian character. We must not think that we can wait until Christ comes, and that he will then give us the necessary virtue and grace. It is in this life that we are to represent Christ. He gave himself for us that he might cleanse us from all unrighteousness, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

We are not to continue in sin that grace may abound; we are to cease from transgression. The love of Christ manifested in the infinite sacrifice which he has made in Calvary, is without a parallel. It is sincere, devoted, measureless, and meets the emergency of the sinner's case, awakening in the heart of those who receive it, respect and reverence for the holy law of God. In the light reflected from Calvary, the law is seen to be holy, just, and good. It cost the life of the Son of God to pay the debt of transgression which the sinner had incurred. It is when the sinner has a realization of the offensive character of sin, a realization to some extent of what it cost the Son of God to redeem him, to give him another trial and probation, that his heart is filled with love and gratitude, and an earnest faith awakens that works by love and purifies the soul. This faith and love will be seen in the soul of him who is truly converted to God; and he who experiences the love of God, will ever feel humiliation and repentance for past transgression. If Christ had to make so great a sacrifice, if he had to endure such sufferings because of my sin, shall I not bow in humility, and regret that I have inflicted such grief upon his divine soul? Shall I not fear lest I shall crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame? The soul who appreciates the precious gift of salvation will ever behold Christ dying upon the cross, and the language of that soul

will be the language of unselfish sorrow that he has ever committed sin to so wound the Son of God. I shall always grieve that I have sinned, and have cost the Man of Calvary so great anguish. I look upon him whom I have pierced, and I mourn that I have transgressed the law of God. When we have a proper appreciation of the sacrifice that has been made in our behalf, we shall not plead for the privilege of continuing in transgression. We shall put away sin, and our hard hearts will melt under the amazing love of Christ for our souls.

With correct views of Jesus, we cannot allow our affections to be placed upon earth and earthly things, but we shall center them upon heaven and heavenly things. The hours of probation that are granted us here, are very precious hours; and we are to take heed unto ourselves, lest at any time our hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and the day of God come upon us unawares. If Christ is formed within, the hope of glory, we shall ever keep in view the fact that he is soon coming; and when we consider the infinite sacrifice that has been made in our behalf, we shall have respect unto the recompense of reward.

If we are thinking soberly, if we are living righteously, we shall have a good influence over those that are associated with us; for we shall be breathing in the atmosphere of heaven. And we should think soberly; for we are not here to bless ourselves only, but as sinners and debtors to God, we are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, and help others that they, too, may be saved. If we would have the Lord purify us unto himself, we must do on our part all that we can that iniquity may be removed from us. We must have a living experience with Christ; and if we love God, we shall want to talk of him to others, and lead them to the fountain of life.

It may look like a discouraging task to seek to present the truth in a large city like this, when there are so few to engage in the work. But if there is only one to lift up the banner of truth, a great work may be done. Isn't it something that there is one scattering the divine rays of truth? If there is only one to go to work, let him begin, and let his light shine; and if he walks in the light, he will leave a bright track heavenward. God has given us our intellect that we may use it for him. With all our powers of mind, we should exalt the standard of holiness, exemplifying the truth by our own piety and integrity, and thus we shall teach others how to glorify God.

There are many who desire to forget God; but these will not inherit eternal life. It

will be those who walk in harmony with his divine precepts, that God will save in his kingdom. They will often have to endure trial and suffer affliction, but they must remember Jesus, the Lord of Glory, who was supreme over all. He was self-sacrificing. He suffered the loss of all things, that he might bring eternal life within our reach. And he has said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

The lawyer who came to Jesus, asked: "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live." Here are stated the conditions of eternal life; but if you are setting your affections on the things of this life, if you are not loving God with all the heart and your neighbor as yourself, you are not fulfilling these conditions, and cannot expect that you will be saved unless you repent and turn to God with all the soul.

I have spent the last forty years of my life in the service of God, and my only regret is that I have not given every hour of my life to his work. I feel that it is my duty to have every power of my being devoted to him. I often wish that the curtain which separates heaven from earth could be swept back, and that we might behold the glories of the eternal world, and have a more vivid sense of the great sacrifice made for man; that we might understand more fully what high claims heaven has upon us. Says the apostle, "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." (Concluded next week.)

November 4, 1889

A Peculiar People

All Heaven is interested in our salvation, and I would that our minds were spiritualized, that we might fully realize this great fact. Although Christians will experience trials and difficulties, they should be the happiest people on the earth; for if they are obedient children, they can address God as their Father and Friend. "As a father pitieth his children so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." God has a deep interest in those who are striving to obey his precepts.

Although the children of God may at times be placed in situations that are trying and full of sorrow, they need not imagine that the Lord has forsaken them. Joseph was cast into prison without any provocation, and it seemed that God had forgotten him; but Joseph trusted in the Lord. He had been true to the Lord under temptation, declaring, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

And the Lord did not forsake him. Heaven gave him wisdom to answer the tempter, and a firm purpose to resist evil. If one of us were called to go through such trial as Joseph endured, would we have borne without complaint and murmuring? He forgot his own trials, and sought to help others. Even in the prison he made himself a necessity and a blessing.

Look at the case of Daniel in Babylon. He was surrounded with all the luxury of the king's court, but he refused to participate in the banquets of extravagance. He would not defile himself with a portion of the king's meat, or take of his wine. When men have the principle that will enable them to stand amid temptation, as did Daniel, the God of heaven will look upon them with approval, and will send them needed help and strength at the moment of their trial. If Daniel had weakly yielded to temptation to indulge appetite, he would have placed himself in a position where he could not have received the wisdom and grace the Lord had for him. He would have brought upon himself physical and mental weakness.

God does not take any man into connection with himself, to give him wisdom and grace, unless he places himself in right relation to the precepts and principles of truth.

Man has a work to do to close the door against temptation. He must build a wall around himself, and then God will train his powers for the highest use. It is not possible for us to tell what a man may become, and what he may achieve through the power and grace of Christ. The reason why we are so weak in moral power, is that we are continually venturing on Satan's ground. We should be careful where we go, and see to it that we take no backward steps. For when professed Christians do not live up to the light that God gives them, they can do more harm than open sinners.

When Daniel had been exalted in the court of Babylon, he was not free from trial and temptation. The wise men of the court were filled with envy, and plotted for his destruction.

How earnestly the enemies of Daniel watched for an opportunity to accuse him before the king, but they decided that they could find nothing against him, except in his fidelity to his God. They induced the king to frame a decree, according to the custom of the Medes and Persians, that could not be changed, to the effect that if any man for thirty days offered prayer to anyone except the king, he should be thrown into the den of lions. The king was flattered by this proposition, and as he did not understand the motive that prompted it, he signed the desired decree, and made it a law. Did these men think because they had deceived Darius that they had deceived the Lord also? Daniel knew all about the decree, but when the time came for prayer, "he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."

The report was quickly carried to the king, and too late he saw that the decree had been proposed and carried into effect through the envy and jealousy of his court. Daniel had determined that he would be true to God. He would let the world know that no king, prince, or power, had a right to come between his soul and God. God did not forsake him, for though he was cast into the den of lions, the angels of heaven were with him, and he suffered no harm. The king, filled with sorrow, spent a restless night in his chamber, and at early light he came to the den, and cried, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" Then Daniel said to the king, "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."

Daniel was soon delivered from the den of lions, and his enemies who had plotted his ruin were themselves destroyed.

Through the trial that was permitted to come upon Daniel, great good resulted to the nation; for it gave opportunity to call the attention of great and small to the fact that God was able and willing to save him who trusted in him. Daniel showed to the nation that Jehovah was a living God. He brought out chapters in his experience showing that God had manifested himself to his servant in a remarkable manner. He told them how he had stood before them as a prophet of the Most High God, and that no earthly power had the right to interfere with a man's personal relation to his God. Thus God was manifested above every king, emperor, or statesman, as the one to be honored and obeyed.

Daniel was counted peculiar, and every man who makes God his counselor, and who seeks him in simplicity of heart, will be counted peculiar by the world. But this is the faith we need, this is the experience that we must have; for Christ has died to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. We should live with an eye single to his glory, and then we shall be able to gain the victory over the world. We must come out from the world and be separate, if we would be the sons of God, the heirs of heaven. If we do this, we shall enter in through the gates into the city, we shall have a right to the tree of life, and we shall see the King in his beauty.

November 11, 1889

Have Light in Yourselves

We have most precious promises in the word of God, which ought to give us courage and confidence. They should enable us to come out of uncertainty and darkness, to come where we may know that the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. There is nothing wanting in the store-house of our God.

Jesus has said, "Believe me, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do, shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." The disciples of Christ are to do greater works than Jesus himself has done. He says further: "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." "If ye ask anything in my name, I will do it." Christ spoke these words for the comfort of all who should have faith in him, and it is our privilege to believe that God will do just as he has said he would.

It is not enough to say, "I believe;" we must exercise the living faith that claims the promises of God as our own, knowing that they are sure and steadfast. The enemy of our souls would be glad to steal away these precious promises from us, and cast darkness before our eyes, so that we should not be able to appropriate the good things that God means that we shall have. God is waiting to do great things for us as soon as we come into a right relation with him; but if we hold ourselves in doubt and unbelief, the enemy can keep the control of our minds, and intercept the promises of God. Unbelief always results in a great loss to our souls. It was said concerning one place where Christ visited, "He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief." Christ cannot work in our behalf if we do not manifest faith in him. We should train our souls to have faith in God. But instead of this, how many there are who educate themselves to doubt. I have heard testimony after testimony in meeting in which there did not seem to be one word of genuine faith, but which cast a shadow over the whole congregation. It is not God's will that we should be in this position. Brethren and sisters, it is our privilege to walk in the light, as Christ is in the light. He is at our right hand to strengthen us, and he tells us that greater works than he has done shall we do, because he goes to the Father. He is ready to impart unto us the rich blessing and grace of God.

How shall we encourage you to have faith in God? You say, "How can I talk faith, how can I have faith, when clouds and darkness and despondency come over my mind? I do not feel as though I could talk faith; I do not feel that I have any faith to talk." But why do you feel in this way?--It is because you have permitted Satan to cast his dark shadow across your pathway, and you cannot see the light that Jesus sheds upon your pathway. But another says: "I am very frank; I say just what I feel, I talk just as I think." Is that the best way to do?--No; God wants us to educate ourselves so that we shall speak right words,--words that will be a blessing to others, that will shed rays of light upon their souls.

Suppose that at times we are destitute of the joy we should like to experience, can we not feel assured that the promises of God are still yea and amen in Christ Jesus? The promises of God do not rest upon feeling. They have a foundation as distinct from feeling as light is from darkness. We must learn to move from principle, and when we learn to do this, we shall move understandingly, and not be controlled by varying emotions.

Christ has said, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Brethren, can you explain why we are not more efficient in ministering to others, and why we are not better able to help the church, than we were ten years ago? There is no reason why we should not be growing in efficiency and power to do the work of God. The Lord wants us to use every iota of the ability he has given us, and, if we do this, we shall have improved and increased ability to employ. God desires that we shall have a thorough understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus. We should dig in the mine of truth for the rich treasures of knowledge that are hidden in God's word. If we employ our talents in searching the Scriptures, and in imparting knowledge to others, we shall become channels of light. You should not allow the channel between God and your soul to become obstructed. You should not be moved by circumstances. You should refuse to listen to the suggestions of Satan, that he may not paralyze your efforts to do good.

What we need is Bible religion; for if Christ is abiding in us, and we in him, we shall be continually advancing in the divine life. If we are connected with the source of all wisdom and power, we shall not fail of becoming strong men and women in Christ Jesus. If we fully receive the truth of heavenly origin, we shall not fail of becoming

sanctified through it; and when trials come we shall not go to complaining, as did the children of Israel, and forget the source of our strength. We must gather up the divine rays of glory, not to hide our light by putting it under a bushel or under a bed, but to set it on a candlestick, where it will give light to others. We must put our talents out to the exchangers, that we may accumulate more talent to bring to Jesus. In this way we shall be growing Christians, and every word we speak will be ennobling and sanctifying. We should educate ourselves to speak in such a way that we shall not have cause to be ashamed of our words when we meet them in the judgment. We should seek to have our actions of such a character that we will not shrink from having our Saviour look upon them. Christ is here this morning; angels are here, and they are measuring the temple of God and those who worship therein. The history of this meeting will be carried up to God; for a record of every meeting is made; the spirit manifested, the words spoken, and the actions performed, are noted in the books of heaven. Everything is transferred to the records as faithfully as are our features to the polished plate of the artist.

We must fight the good fight of faith. Satan will try to sever the connection which faith makes between our souls and God. He will seek to discourage us by telling us that we are unworthy of the grace of God, and need not expect to receive this or that favor because we are sinners. These suggestions should not cut off our confidence; for it is written: "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." There is no reason why we should not claim the promises of the Lord. There is no reason why we should not be light-bearers. There is no reason why you should not advance, why you should not become more and more intelligent in prayer and testimony, and make manifest that God hears and answers your petitions.

We should have more wisdom and confidence today than we had yesterday. Why are we so well satisfied with our feeble attainments? Why do we settle down content with our present deficient experience? We should not always be fed upon the milk of the word; we must seek for meat, that we may become strong men and women in Christ. God will give you everything that you are prepared for, everything that will minister to your strength. He will make peace with you if you lay hold of his strength. But he will not let his power drop upon you without effort on your part. You must co-operate with God in the work of salvation.

We need to grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We must educate ourselves to talk faith, to pray in faith, and to abstain from dropping one

seed of doubt and discouragement. We desire that young men shall go forth from this conference to become experienced workers in the cause of God. Let the older ministers take heed that they make straight paths for their feet, that the lame be not turned out of the way. Let no watchman or shepherd of the flock place himself on the judgment-seat, to criticise others, to pick flaws and find fault with the brethren. Oh, that everyone at this meeting would take his position on the Lord's side! We must have light in ourselves. Do not believe anything simply because others say it is truth. Take your Bibles, and search them for yourselves. Plead with God that he will put his Spirit upon you, that you may know the truth and understand its principles. If you gain an experience of this kind, there is nothing that will turn you from the truth. You will be like Daniel in the lions' den, and like Joseph in Pharaoh's prison.

From the light that God has given me, I can say that not half of those who profess to believe the present truth have a thorough understanding of the Third Angel's Message. Many believe the truth because they have heard it preached by someone in whom they had confidence. When our people search the word of God for themselves, we shall hear less murmuring than we hear today. We need that faith that will lead us to study the Bible for ourselves, and take God at his word.

Christ says: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever."

Brethren, you must take advanced steps. God wants every one of you to turn from your iniquity, and connect with him, the source of all wisdom and truth, that when you open your lips the words of Christ shall flow forth. Shall we not let the Spirit of God come among us, and flow from heart to heart? The Spirit of God is here this morning, and the Lord knows how you will receive the words that I have addressed to you on this occasion.

November 18, 1889

The Love of God

"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."

The love of God toward fallen man is incomprehensible. The apostle cannot find words to describe it, but he calls upon the world to "behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." The love of the infinite God for his rebellious children is the most wonderful thing that the universe knows, and it will be constantly unfolding throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity.

I feel an intense interest that all should comprehend, as far as possible, the love of God. We cannot afford to draw away our attention from this subject, for in it is contained the mystery of God,--the plan of salvation. We may put to the stretch every power of our mind, and yet we shall not be fully able to comprehend the heights and depths of the love of God; for the human mind is not capable of understanding its full significance. It is our privilege, however, to obtain clearer and more distinct views of the plan of salvation. We should not be content with a superficial knowledge of this wonderful plan, but we should seek to behold it in all its greatness, that as far as possible we may understand the love of God.

It is our privilege to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. We should become better and better acquainted with the things of God. It is Satan's design to engage the attention of men with matters of worldly interest, so that they shall have no desire to contemplate the wonders of the love of God.

When our first parents transgressed the holy law of God, the Lord promised that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head; the serpent was to bruise the heel of the seed of the woman. But he was to have no power to touch the head. Humanity was lost, and Christ appeared as the world's Redeemer, the seed to whom the promises were made. He died to redeem mankind. Those who believed in him excited the wrath of the evil one, for Satan claimed man as his property. Satan persecuted the

people of God. He tortured them, and put them to death; but in dying they became conquerors. They revealed in this steadfast faith a mightier one than Satan. Satan could torture and kill the body, but he could not touch the life that was hid with Christ in God. He could incarcerate in prison walls, but he could not bind the spirit. Living faith connected the people of God with Him who only hath immortality. They could look beyond the gloom to the glory that was to be revealed at the appearing of Jesus. Paul suffered much. He was persecuted from city to city, in perils oft, in prison, in scourging, in bonds, in fastings, in wearinesses and painful watchings, but he looked beyond the sufferings of the present time to glory beyond, and said: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." This is what God would have his people do. He would have us reckon and consider the rich reward of the eternal world, that we may appreciate the privileges that are brought within our reach through the plan of salvation.

Christ came to our world to become our sacrifice. He came to discover to our eyes the gems of truth, to place them in a new setting,--the frame-work of truth. He brought out of the treasure-house of God things new and old, that we might be able to trace down the links in the great plan of salvation. Through the sacrificial offerings of the Jewish dispensation, we are pointed forward to Christ, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. When Christ came, it was to engage in the conflict with the enemy of God and man, on this earth, in the sight of the universe of heaven. But why was it necessary to wage the warfare in the sight of other worlds?--It was because Satan had been an exalted angel, and when he fell, he induced many angels to join him in his revolt against God's government. He worked in the minds of the angels as he works in the minds of men today. He made a pretension of loyalty to God, and yet he argued that angels should not be under law. He inculcated his ideas, his rebellion and enmity, and hatred of God's law originated in the minds of the angels in heaven through his influence. He caused the fall of man through the same temptations with which he had caused the fall of angels; and in the world where he proposed to work out his principles of rebellion, the battle had to be fought, that all might behold the real nature and results of disobedience to God's great moral standard. He represented God in a false light, clothing him with his own attributes. Christ came to represent the Father in his true character. He showed that he was not an arbitrary judge, ready to bring judgments upon men, and delighting in condemning and punishing them for their evil deeds. The Lord proclaimed his character to Moses in the mount. "And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord

passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty."

This was the description that God gave of his own character. Jesus came to represent the goodness and mercy and love of the Father, and Satan was filled with enmity toward the Son of God, and strove from his very birth to destroy him. He worked through wicked Herod to accomplish his design, but the Lord preserved the life of the young child Jesus, and thwarted the design of the evil one. Repeatedly the life of Christ was in peril. Many times even after the people had listened to his gracious words, and had seen the manifestation of his power in healing the sick and blessing those around him, they were ready to destroy him. He hated sin with a perfect hatred. It was the pure, spotless life of Jesus that stirred up the hatred of Satan and a profligate nation; for Christ did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. The Jewish nation was filled with doubt and prejudice, and this led them to hate the Son of God. Because of their unbelief, they were on the enemy's side, under the control of the evil one. (Concluded next week.)

November 25, 1889

The Love of God

Jesus was hunted from place to place during his ministry. Priests and rulers were on his track. They misrepresented his mission and labor. He came unto his own and his own received him not. Angels watched the conflict at every step. They saw the spirit and work of the enemy. They looked with amazement upon the devices of Satan against the divine Son of God. They saw that he who had only been second to Jesus in power and glory had fallen so low that he could influence men to hunt the steps of Christ from city to city. When Christ sought the garden of Gethsemane, the enemy pressed darkness upon his soul. Even his disciples did not watch with him through that hour of trial. They heard the agony of prayer that came from his pale and quivering lips, but they soon allowed sleep to overcome them, and left their suffering Master to wrestle with the powers of darkness alone.

It was in the garden of Gethsemane that the mysterious cup trembled in his hand. Would he drink of the bitter portion and save a lost world? or would he forbear and let it perish? The destiny of the fallen race trembled in the balance. If he drank of the cup of suffering, he must open his breast to the griefs and woes and sins of humanity. He prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." He had said to his disciples, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." His suffering almost extinguished his life. The drops of blood beaded his forehead, and dewed the sod of Gethsemane. "His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." When he fainted as in death, an angel came to the divine Sufferer, and offered him the cup of consolation to strengthen him for the conflict.

The Saviour of the world arose, and for the third time sought his disciples, and found them sleeping. He looked sorrowfully upon them, and his words aroused them: "Sleep on now, and take your rest; behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."

Even while these words were upon his lips, the footsteps of the mob that was in search of him were heard. Judas took the lead, and was closely followed by the

murderous throng. Jesus turned to his disciples, as his enemies approached, and said, "Rise, let us be going; behold, he is at hand that doth betray me." The countenance of the Saviour wore an expression of calm dignity; no traces of his recent agony were visible as he stepped forth to meet his betrayer.

He suffered himself to be taken by the murderous throng, and was dragged from one tribunal to another. Although Isaiah had written, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of peace," yet he was now mocked, derided, spit upon, scourged, and maltreated. Was he innocent?--Yes; but innocence does not save men from persecution when the evil one controls the minds of their tormentors. Jesus is our pattern. He has given us an example that we should follow in his steps. Many will have to pass through scenes similar to those through which Jesus passed. After he was judged, he was brought forth to the people, and Pilate declared, "I find no fault in this man," but the people cried, "Crucify him, crucify him." "When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children."

Christ was the Son of God, equal with the Father; and yet he was abused, ridiculed, scourged, and crucified. There are many who have thought that the Father had no part in the sufferings of the Son; but this is a mistake. The Father suffered with the Son. When the Son of God hung upon Calvary, the darkness gathered like the pall of death about the cross. All nature sympathized with its dying Author. There were thunderings and lightnings, and a mighty earthquake, but the hearts of men were so hardened that they could quarrel at the foot of the cross upon which hung the world's Redeemer, about the dividing of his vesture. Their hearts seemed to be wholly under the control of the powers of darkness. Angels looked upon the scene with sorrow and amazement. As man's substitute and surety, the iniquity of men was laid upon Christ; he was counted a transgressor that he might redeem them from the curse of the law. The guilt of every descendant of Adam was pressing upon his heart; and the wrath of God, and the terrible manifestation of his displeasure because of iniquity, filled the soul of his Son with consternation. The withdrawal of the divine countenance from the Saviour, in this hour of supreme anguish, pierced his heart with a sorrow that can never be fully understood by man. Sin, so hateful to his sight, was heaped upon him till he groaned

beneath its weight. The despairing agony of the Son of God was so much greater than his physical pain, that the latter was hardly felt by him. The hosts of Heaven veiled their faces from the fearful sight. They heard his despairing cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" they saw the divine Sufferer die beneath the sins of the world.

Jesus was laid in the tomb. He went into the darkness of the grave, and tasted death for every man. But he did not long remain under the power of the enemy. A mighty angel came from heaven and rolled back the stone from the sepulcher, and for fear of him the keepers did fear and quake, and became as dead men. Christ came forth from the tomb a triumphant conqueror, and led forth from their graves a multitude of captives.

The Roman guard hastened to tell the rulers what had occurred, and they were bribed to testify that his disciples had stolen his body away by night. When the women who had followed Jesus came to the sepulcher, the angel said unto them: "Fear not ye; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him; lo, I have told you."

We have a risen Saviour; he has ascended up on high, and ever liveth to make intercession for us. Through him those who believe in him shall be crowned with glory, honor, and immortality; for "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

December 16, 1889

"Pray Without Ceasing"

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.... Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

We are not always so situated that we can enter into our closets to seek God in prayer, but there is no time or place in which it is inappropriate to offer up a petition to God. There is nothing that can hinder us from lifting up our hearts in the spirit of earnest prayer. In the crowds of the street, in the midst of a business engagement, we may send up a petition to God, and plead for divine guidance, as did Nehemiah when he made his request before the king Artaxerxes. A closet of communion may be found wherever we are. We should have the door of the heart open continually, and our invitation going up that Jesus may come and abide as a heavenly guest in our souls.

Although there may be a tainted, corrupted atmosphere around us, we need not breathe its miasma, but may live in the pure atmosphere of heaven. We may close every door to impure imaginings and unholy thoughts by lifting the soul into the presence of God through sincere prayer. Those whose hearts are open to receive the support and blessing of God, will walk in a holier atmosphere than that of earth, and will have constant communion with God. But those who reserve their thoughts of God, their earnest soul longings for purity and grace, for certain times, and places, and occasions, will be overcome by temptation. The thoughts will be impure, the promptings of the natural heart will be fulfilled, and the man will be worsted in the conflict; for he will be drawn away of his own lust and enticed. The injunction of the Saviour is, "Pray without ceasing." The heart is to be continually going out in desire for the presence and grace of Jesus, that the soul may have divine enlightenment and heavenly wisdom.

We need to have more distinct views of Jesus, and a fuller comprehension of the value of eternal realities. The beauty of holiness is to fill the hearts of God's people, and that this may be accomplished, we should seek for divine disclosures of heavenly things. Brethren, we should pray in all places, and under all circumstances. Our petitions may be only broken ejaculations, or they may be but secret thoughts of the

heart, but whatever we have opportunity for, let the soul be drawn out and upward, that God may grant us a breath of his heavenly atmosphere. Let the spirit groan after God, and mingle faith with fervent desire. We should encourage gratitude and praise, and always be found warring against every unholy impulse, crushing out of the soul every unclean lust. This is the warfare that must be accomplished. We may keep so near to God that in every unexpected trial our thoughts may turn to God as naturally as the flower turns to the sun. The sunflower keeps its face sunward. If it is turned from the light, it will twist itself on the stem, until it lifts up its petals to the bright beams of the sun. So let everyone who has given his heart to God, turn to the Sun of Righteousness, and eagerly look up to receive the bright beams of the glory that shine in the face of Jesus. Thus we may educate the soul to press its way out of the corrupted moral atmosphere of the world, of sin and selfishness, into the atmosphere that is divine and health-giving.

We are to pray in the Spirit, with the understanding also, and God will prompt the longings of the soul, and satisfy the desires of the heart. We must become intelligent as to the conditions upon which God will hear and answer prayer. There are many useless, meaningless words employed in prayer, but these heartless petitions are not acceptable, and cannot prevail with God. If the soul is stained with impurity, if iniquity is cherished in the heart, the offering of prayer is an abomination to God.

The psalmist says: "Come, ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. 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 Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." Says the prophet Isaiah: "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

The psalmist says again: "Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt-offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he

respect unto the lowly; but the proud he knoweth afar off."

The Lord is under no obligation to grant us his favors, yet he has pledged his word that if we will comply with the conditions stated in the Scriptures, he will fulfill his part of the contract. Men often make promises, but do not live up to them. Often we have found that in trusting to men we have leaned upon broken reeds; but the Lord will never disappoint the soul that believes in him. "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed." He still speaks to the soul, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." "With everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee." (Concluded next week.)

December 23, 1889

"Pray Without Ceasing"

God condescends to meet man in his human weakness. The Lord has pledged us his word, so that there need be no occasion for questioning and doubt. The Scripture says: "God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."

How gracious and merciful is our God to thus meet the thoughts of human minds! Surely God could do no more for his people than he has done. These precious promises are not given to a few talented ones, but to all, high or low, free or bond, rich or poor, who have endeavored to comply with his requirements.

Those who, through faith in the merits of the blood of Christ, have clean hands and a pure heart, will receive the white robe, the crown of righteousness, and the life that will run parallel with the life of God. There is no limit to the blessings that we may receive in answer to sincere, fervent prayer. The love of God to fallen man is measureless, and if our Father sees that we will not be lifted up with the blessings he has power to bestow upon us, but will receive them with humble and grateful hearts, he will abundantly grant unto us our requests. He says: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

The prayer that ascends from a broken and contrite heart, though it should come from the lips of the lowliest saint, is never disregarded. It is as sweet music in the ears of our heavenly Father; for he waits to bestow upon us the fullness of his blessing. It is not in our power to estimate the supplies that are provided by the Lord to meet our demands. What power might attend the church did we but call frequently and in faith for the abundant treasure of the store-house of God. We have only begun to taste of the richness of the divine promises. It is our privilege to drink largely of the fountain of boundless love. What a wonder it is that we pray so little! God is ready and willing to

hear the sincere prayer of the humblest of his children, and yet there is much manifest reluctance on our part to make known our wants to God. What can the angels of God think of poor, helpless, human beings, who are subject to temptation, when God's heart of infinite love yearns toward them, and he is ready to give them more than they can ask or think, and yet they pray so little, and have so little faith? The angels love to bow before God, they love to be near him. They regard intercourse with God as their highest joy, and yet the children of earth, who need so much help that God only can give, seem satisfied to walk without the light of his Spirit, the companionship of his presence.

The darkness of the evil one incloses those who fail to pray to God. The whispered temptations of the enemy entice them to sin, and it is all because they do not make use of the privileges that God has given them in the divine appointment of prayer. Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's store-house, where are the boundless resources of Omnipotence? Without unceasing prayer, without diligent watching, we are in danger of growing careless, and of deviating from the right path. Our backsliding may be so gradual that we may fancy ourselves in a good spiritual condition when we are surely on the enemy's ground. The adversary seeks continually to obstruct the way to the mercy-seat, that we may not by earnest supplication and faith obtain supplies of grace and power to resist temptation.

There is so much cowardice and helplessness, and so much dependence upon others, that we are inefficient to do the great work which has been committed to us. God's work cannot be done without a spirit of independence. Every man is to know by personal experience that he can lean upon God alone, and find in him a support and helper. Every man must learn to say humbly and firmly, "Looking unto Jesus, I dare to stand alone; for the Father is with me." This was the attitude of Jesus. He said to his followers before his hour of trial: "Ye shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me."

December 30, 1889

What Was Secured by the Death of Christ

It became Him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in the redemption of the world to save sinners by the blood of the Lamb. The great sacrifice of the Son of God was neither too great nor too small to accomplish the work. In the wisdom of God it was complete; and the atonement made testifies to every son and daughter of Adam the immutability of God's law. The value of the law of Jehovah is to be estimated by the immense price that was paid in the death of the Son of God to maintain its sacredness.

The law of God is a transcript of his character; it portrays the nature of God. As in Christ we behold the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person, so also in the law the attributes of the Father are unfolded. Although the law is unchangeable, his having provided a means of salvation for the law-breaker does not in the least detract from the dignity of the character of God, since the penalty of man's transgression was borne by a divine Substitute. The Father himself suffered with the Son; for "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." Man, with his human, finite judgment, cannot safely question the wisdom of God. Hence it is unbecoming for him to criticise the plan of salvation. Before the theme of redemption, let man lay his wisdom in the dust, and accept the plans of Him whose wisdom is infinite.

God grants men a probation in this world, that their principles may become firmly established in the right, thus precluding the possibility of sin in the future life, and so assuring the happiness and security of all. Through the atonement of the Son of God alone could power be given to man to establish him in righteousness, and make him a fit subject for heaven. The blood of Christ is the eternal antidote for sin. The offensive character of sin is seen in what it cost the Son of God in humiliation, in suffering and death. All the worlds behold in him a living testimony to the malignity of sin, for in his divine form he bears the marks of the curse. He is in the midst of the throne as a Lamb that hath been slain. The redeemed will ever be vividly impressed with the hateful character of sin, as they behold Him who died for their transgressions. The preciousness of the Offering will be more fully realized as the blood-washed throug more fully comprehend how God has made a new and living way for the salvation of men, through

the union of the human and the divine in Christ.

The death of Christ upon the cross made sure the destruction of him who has the power of death, who was the originator of sin. When Satan is destroyed, there will be none to tempt to evil; the atonement will never need to be repeated; and there will be no danger of another rebellion in the universe of God. That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels. Fallen men could not have a home in the paradise of God without the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Shall we not then exalt the cross of Christ? The angels ascribe honor and glory to Christ, for even they are not secure except by looking to the sufferings of the Son of God. It is through the efficacy of the cross that the angels of heaven are guarded from apostasy. Without the cross they would be no more secure against evil than were the angels before the fall of Satan. Angelic perfection failed in heaven. Human perfection failed in Eden, the paradise of bliss. All who wish for security in earth or heaven must look to the Lamb of God. The plan of salvation, making manifest the justice and love of God, provides an eternal safeguard against defection in unfallen worlds, as well as among those who shall be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Our only hope is perfect trust in the blood of Him who can save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. The death of Christ on the cross of Calvary is our only hope in this world, and it will be our theme in the world to come. Oh, we do not comprehend the value of the atonement! If we did, we would talk more about it. The gift of God in his beloved Son was the expression of an incomprehensible love. It was the utmost that God could do to preserve the honor of his law, and still save the transgressor. Why should man not study the theme of redemption? It is the greatest subject that can engage the human mind. If men would contemplate the love of Christ, displayed in the cross, their faith would be strengthened to appropriate the merits of his shed blood, and they would be cleansed and saved from sin. There are many who will be lost, because they depend on legal religion, or mere repentance for sin. But repentance for sin alone cannot work the salvation of any soul. Man cannot be saved by his own works. Without Christ it is impossible for him to render perfect obedience to the law of God; and heaven can never be gained by an imperfect obedience; for this would place all heaven in jeopardy, and make possible a second rebellion.

God saves man through the blood of Christ alone, and man's belief in, and allegiance to, Christ is salvation. It is no marvel to angels that the infinite sacrifice made

by the Son of God was ample enough to bring salvation to a fallen race, but that this atoning sacrifice should have been made is a wonder to the universe. It is a mystery which angels desire to look into. The angels are amazed at the indifference and coldness manifested by those for whom so great a salvation has been provided. They look with grief and holy indignation upon those who do not seek to appreciate the unspeakable gift of God. Instead of offering adoration to God, finite men think themselves capable, without divine unction, of determining what is worthy of praise or blame in their fellow-men. But to be glorified by man is no glory. We should learn to value the praise of man at what it is worth. The Lord says, "Them that honor me I will honor." Let every breath of praise, every word of exaltation, flow to him who is worthy, flow to Jesus, the Prince of life, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Elevate the cross of Christ. Elevate the Mediator. Lift up Jesus. In him is everything noble. Contemplate God in Christ. He is surrounded with angels, cherubim and seraphim continually behold him. Angelic voices day and night cry before him: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.... Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee." But although God only is holy and worthy to be praised, human tongues are perverted to praise and glorify man rather than God.

The greatest gift that God could bestow upon men was bestowed in the gift of his beloved Son. The apostle says, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" There was nothing held in reserve. No second probation will ever be provided. If the unspeakable gift of God does not lead man to repentance, there is nothing that ever will move his heart. There is no power held in reserve to act upon his mind, and arouse his sensibilities. The whole character of God was revealed in his Son, the whole range of the possibilities of heaven is displayed for the acceptance of man in the Son of the Infinite One. The way for man's return to God and heaven has no barriers. The matchless depths of the Saviour's love have been demonstrated; and if this manifestation of God's love for the children of men does not prevail to draw men to himself, there is nothing that ever will.

Those who will be saved in the kingdom of God will be those who have washed

their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. The image of Christ will be perfected in every soul who accepts the gift of his grace, and those who are perfected through his grace, will stand before God equal in elevation, in power and purity, to the angels, and will be honored with them before the eternal throne. The angels of heaven will love those whom Christ has loved, and has bought with his own precious blood.

The attention of all the inhabitants of all worlds will be directed to the cross of Christ, around which will cluster the exceeding and eternal weight of glory. The imagination becomes exhausted in its stretch to comprehend the wonderful work of redemption. The plan of salvation is too high to be fully reached by human thought. It is too grand to be fully embraced by finite comprehension. The apostle says, "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." Can we wonder that Heaven is amazed because men act as though the gift of God were valueless? What will be the eternal loss of those who reject so great a salvation, offered freely through the merits of God's only-begotten and well-beloved Son!

January 6, 1890

"How Much Owest Thou?"

The tender mercies and loving-kindnesses of the Lord have been toward us all the days of our life, and the whole world should be filled with thankful voices, proclaiming the benevolence and love of God. The psalmist says: "The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." When we were sold under sin, He who was rich in glory, for our sake became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. Well may we ask our souls, "How much owest thou unto my Lord?" The benevolence of Christ is exercised every day in the year. He gives daily his gifts unto men. His Holy Spirit is constantly at work, drawing the hearts of men, guiding them into all truth. Before the crucifixion of Christ, he told his sorrowing disciples that he would send them another Comforter, which should abide with them forever. The grace of Christ is multiplied toward us, and given without stint. The streams of salvation are continually flowing for us.

In view of what Christ has done and is doing for the children of men, should we not bring gratitude offerings to him? Should our gifts flow only to one another, and the Giver of every good and perfect gift be forgotten? The Lord has said, "Them that honor me, I will honor." We should not wait to make an offering to God until we are out of debt. His cause demands the means that he has given to us in trust, and we should present a portion on the altar of God as freely as the infinite sacrifice was made for us. We have no time to lose in passing our treasures on to the bank of heaven. Whatever we may do, let us not forget God. If we love him with all the heart, we shall remember his claims upon us. God requires that we shall be like him, that we shall imitate the self-sacrificing example of Christ, and live a life of self-denial. We should prayerfully consider the question, "How much owest thou unto the Lord?"

Are there those who are robbing God in tithes and offerings? Seek to make your accounts straight; do not leave your obligation to God as the last thing to be settled. Let those who have borrowed, try to pay their debts; especially see to it that no poor person who has labored hard for his means, is left in perplexity because you fail to pay what you owe him. Let no injustice be done to your neighbors, but let everything be made

right as far as possible between you and your fellow-men. This is keeping the last six commandments.

Let those who have means give of their means to the glory of God. Let them show that they appreciate the gift of God's dear Son, that they love him with undivided affection, and will manifest their faith in his mission and work by replenishing the treasury of God. The means that God intrusts to men is for the forwarding of his work in the earth. God's word appeals to you to give. There are souls to be saved. There are those who know not the truth, and they must be enlightened by missionary effort. How many have withheld their tithe? How many have withheld themselves from the service of God? When those who have for years withheld their tithes become convicted, and reckon up and see how large is the sum they owe to God, they must not become discouraged and do nothing to diminish the debt. If you can, pay the whole amount, but if you cannot, do the best you can, begin to pay tithes from the first of 1890. Confess to the Lord your robbery toward him, and give yourselves in full surrender as an offering to the Lord. Tell the Lord that if he will place it in your power, you will meet your obligation to him, and render back to him his own.

Do something, do it soon. In the sight of God, in the sight of heavenly angels, make decided moves toward a better life. What does God speak to us at this time? He says: "And He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Let the purifying process go on in every soul. Pray that every sin may be revealed, that the corruption of the heart may be made plain; and when it is exposed, pray for grace to put away defilement. Make wrongs right between you and your brethren; and when you do your part, God will not fail to do his part.

Why delay? Why go on in weakness? Why not cast your soul in all its helplessness upon Christ, and lay hold on the merits of his precious blood? He waits to receive you. He longs to help you. And when the soul temple is cleansed from every defilement, you will have a new and precious experience. The Lord says: "Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the Lord, as in the days of old, and as in former years." But if the work of repentance and reformation is neglected, if you pass on your way, sinning in word and action, the Lord says: "I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the

widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts. For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

If the Lord did not continue his guardian care over us by day and night, Satan would exercise his power against us, and we should be consumed. The Lord has appointed his angels to shield his people, that the wicked one may not destroy us. But because of the preserving care and tender mercies of the Lord, men become careless. The wise man says, "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." The patience and forbearance of God should soften instead of hardening the hearts of men. Do not presume upon the forbearance of God, but rather seek to understand his dealings with the children of earth. An unerring register is kept with the accuracy of Omniscience of the iniquities of nations and individuals; Christ declares, "I know thy works." But although the figures rapidly accumulate, God's mercy does not cease until a certain amount is reached, which marks the limit of divine forbearance. There is still time for wrongs to be righted by confession and restitution to man and God. By faith we may claim the merits of the blood of Christ, and those who will receive his counsel may be purged and made white. Shall we not now draw nigh to God? Shall there not be confession of sin while it is called today? The record in the books of heaven may be canceled by the shed blood of Jesus. The Lord says, "Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them." This is the charge the Lord makes against the unfaithful ones. (Concluded next week.)

January 13, 1890

"How Much Owest Thou?"

Satan is in controversy with God. Says the prophet: "And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee; is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair miter upon his head. So they set a fair miter upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by. And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts: If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by."

We should seek to appreciate the unparalleled mercy and the inexpressible love of God in not giving those who have dishonored him into the hands of the enemy of souls. It is the care of God that preserves them from Satan's power. Satan constantly presents the sins and wrongs of those who claim to be the children of God, and he taunts the angels of God with their defects. What will bring the Lord's people into a right position before him? The Lord answers the question in Malachi, saying, "Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts." When we seek the Lord with full purpose of heart, he will be found of us.

Daniel purposed in his heart that he would be true to the God of heaven. He determined that he would not eat of the king's meat, or drink of his wine; and his three companions determined that they would not dishonor God by bowing down before the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar set up in the plain of Dura. When we purpose to serve the Lord with a determination like that of these faithful servants of God, the Lord will take our part, and enable us to lay hold of his strength. When there is no repentance for sin, no effort made to reform, Satan will not molest the soul; but when the heart is touched by the love of Christ, when sin is confessed, and in the strength of Christ efforts

for reform are put forth, then Satan arouses to oppose the work that God would do for his children. At every step he will seek to hedge up the way; but if the children of God will press on, the Lord will work in their behalf, and reveal himself as a sin-pardoning Saviour, who will impart his grace and righteousness to all that come unto him.

The prophet speaks of a class who are insensible of their need. They ask, "Wherein shall we return?" They do not realize that they are far from God. But the answer is, "Will a man rob God?" as though this was a crime of which man could scarcely be guilty. Angels look with amazement upon the ingratitude of those for whom God has done so much in continually bestowing his favors and gifts. Men forget the claims of God, and indulge in selfishness and worldliness. The Lord says: "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."

God cannot bless men in lands and flocks when they do not use his blessings for his glory. He cannot trust his treasure to those who misapply it. In the simplest language the Lord has told his children what he requires of them. They are to pay tithes of all they possess, and to make offerings of that which he bestows upon them. His mercies and blessings have been abundant and systematic. He sends down his rain and sunshine, and causes vegetation to flourish. He gives the seasons; sowing and reaping-time come in their order; and the unfailing goodness of God calls for something better than the ingratitude and forgetfulness that men render to him. Shall we not return to God, and with grateful hearts present our tithes and offerings? The Lord has made duty so plain that if we neglect to fulfill his requirements we shall be without excuse. The Lord has left his goods in the hands of his servants to be handled with equity, that the gospel may be preached in all the world. The arrangement and provision for the spread of his truth in the world has not been left to chance. The tithe is the Lord's, it is his interest money, and it is to be paid regularly and promptly into his treasury. We are to render him his own with gladness for his love toward those who are so undeserving of his mercy. The gospel of Christ is to go to the uttermost part of the earth, and when men fail to pay God his interest money, they are unfaithful stewards. Souls just as precious as their own are to be saved, and missionaries must be sent, that the precious light of the truth which the Lord has permitted to shine upon us in these last days may be diffused. We should see to it that there is provision made for the cause of God and for the relief of the poor; for these claims cannot be neglected; they must be met with the unvarying promptness that their importance demands. The Lord says: "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."

January 20, 1890

God Made Manifest in Christ

At the first advent of Christ, darkness, covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. Light and truth seemed to have departed from among men, and Satan appeared to reign in undisputed power. Rival sects existed, and among those who professed to be the servants of God were displayed love of preeminence and strife for power and position. Souls who were desirous of light were filled with perplexity and sorrow. Many were sighing, "What is truth?" Ignorance prevailed, but many were looking for something better, looking for light that would illuminate the moral darkness of the world. They were thirsting for a knowledge of the living God, for some assurance of a life beyond the tomb. There were men not of the Jewish nation who prophesied that an inspired instructor would come to teach them of the truth. There were among the Jews men who had not polluted their integrity, who read with eager anticipation the sure word of prophecy that pointed to the advent of the Redeemer. They rejoiced in the promise that God had made to his servant Moses: "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him."

Again they read how the Lord should anoint Him to preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord. They read how he would set judgment in the earth, how the isles should wait for his law, how the Gentiles would come to his light, and kings to the brightness of his rising.

Christ came just as prophecy had foretold. He was the "way, the truth, and the life," and the beams of the Sun of Righteousness dispelled the moral darkness so that the honest in heart might see the truth. The absence of outward display and worldly grandeur, called forth comments of disapprobation from the people. Doubt and criticism met him on every side. Christ himself had chosen the human conditions of his life. He had selected the lowliest place in society. He was the Majesty of heaven, and he knew that the world would bear sway by magnificence, carrying everything before its display

and grandeur; but Jesus honored those whom the world looked upon with contempt. Christ's birthplace was devoid of conveniences, not to speak of riches and luxury. And his entire life in this world was in keeping with the humble home of his early experience.

The Saviour of the world proposed that no attraction of an earthly character should call men to his side. The light and beauty of celestial truth alone should be the drawing power. The outward glory, the worldly honor, which attracts the attention of men, he would not assume. He made himself accessible to all, teaching the pure, exalted principle of truth as that which was only worthy of their notice. But although so humbly born, so unpretending in life, God did not leave him without a witness. The principalities of heaven did him homage. Wonders in the heavens above and signs in the earth beneath attested his power and majesty. At his baptism a voice from heaven fell upon the ears of men, declaring, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The bright glory of God in the form of a dove of burnished gold encircled him. John declared: "That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

Christ came to represent the Father. We behold in him the image of the invisible God. He clothed his divinity with humanity, and came to the world that the erroneous ideas Satan had been the means of creating in the minds of men, in regard to the character of God, might be removed. We could not behold the glory of God unveiled in Christ and live; but as he came in the garb of humanity, we may draw nigh to our Redeemer. We are called upon to behold the Lord our Father in the person of his Son. Christ came in the robe of the flesh, with his glory subdued in humanity, that lost man might communicate with him and live. Through Christ we may comprehend something of him who is glorious in holiness. Jesus is the mystic ladder by which we may mount to behold the glory of the infinite God. By faith we behold Christ standing between humanity and divinity, connecting God and man, and earth and heaven.

Christ came to save fallen man, and Satan with fiercest wrath met him on the field of conflict; for the enemy knew that when divine strength was added to human weakness, man was armed with power and intelligence, and could break away from the captivity in which he had bound him. Satan sought to intercept every ray of light from the throne of God. He sought to cast his shadow across the earth, that men might lose

the true views of God's character, and that the knowledge of God might become extinct in the earth. He had caused truth of vital importance to be so mingled with error that it had lost its significance. The law of Jehovah was burdened with needless exactions and traditions, and God was represented as severe, exacting, revengeful, and arbitrary. He was pictured as one who could take pleasure in the sufferings of his creatures. The very attributes that belonged to the character of Satan, the evil one represented as belonging to the character of God. Jesus came to teach men of the Father, to correctly represent him before the fallen children of earth. Angels could not fully portray the character of God, but Christ, who was a living impersonation of God, could not fail to accomplish the work. The only way in which he could set and keep men right was to make himself visible and familiar to their eyes. That men might have salvation he came directly to man, and became a partaker of his nature.

The Father was revealed in Christ as altogether a different being from that which Satan had represented him to be. Said Christ, "Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." The love of Jesus, expressed for the fallen race in his life of self-denial and sufferings, is the manifestation of the Father's love for a sinful, fallen world. Christ endured shame and grief and death for those who despised his love and trampled upon his mercy. He paid the debt of man's transgression upon the cross of Calvary with his own precious blood. The men of his own nation, the leaders of the people, were so ensnared by the deceptions of Satan that the plan of redemption for a fallen race seemed to their minds indistinct and unexplainable.

Man was God's workmanship, made after his image, endowed with talents, and fitted for a high destiny. But Satan has worked to obliterate the divine image, and to impress his own image instead of the image of God in man's nature. Jesus condescended to humble himself, to take human nature, and by uniting divinity with humanity, he proposed to elevate man in the scale of moral value. All heaven was poured out in the gift of God's dear Son. Through faith in him the sinner could be justified, and God could yet be just in justifying the sinner; for Christ had become a propitiation for the sins of the repentant soul. The only plan that could be devised to save the human race was that which called for the incarnation, humiliation, and crucifixion of the Son of God, the Majesty of heaven. After the plan of salvation was devised, Satan could have no ground upon which to found his suggestion that God, because so great, could care nothing for so insignificant a creature as man. The redemption of man is a wonderful theme, and the

love manifested to the fallen race through the plan of salvation, can be estimated only by the cross of Calvary. The depth of this love even angels cannot sound. That God could consent to become flesh, and dwell among fallen beings, to lift them up from their helplessness and despair, is an unfathomed mystery. He whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, whose dominion endureth throughout all generations, made himself to be sin for us that he might lift up all that are bowed down, and give life to those who are ready to perish.

Oh, that men might open their minds to know God as he is revealed in his Son! Truth came forth from the lips of Jesus, uncorrupted with human philosophy. His words were from heaven, such as mortal lips had never spoken nor mortal ears ever heard. His heart was an altar on which burned the flames of infinite love. Goodness, mercy, and love were enthroned in the breast of the Son of God. He set up his tabernacle in the midst of our human encampment, pitched his tent by the side of the tents of men, that he might dwell among them and make them familiar with his divine character and love. No one could love Christ and pay homage to him without serving and honoring the infinite God. Those who had an appreciation of the character and mission of Christ, were filled with reverence and awe, as they looked upon him and felt that they were looking upon the temple of the living God. Officers were sent to take the Son of God, that the temple in which God was enshrined might be destroyed. But as they drew near and heard the words of divine wisdom that fell from his lips, they were charmed, and the power and excellence of his instruction so filled their hearts and minds that they forgot the purpose for which they had been sent. Christ revealed himself to their souls. Divinity flashed through humanity, and they returned so filled with this one thought, so charmed with the ideas he had presented, that when the leaders of Israel inquired, "Why have ye not brought him?" they replied, "Never man spake like this man." They had seen that which priests and rulers would not see,--humanity flooded with the light and glory of divinity. Those who would behold this glory would be drawn to love Jesus and to love the Father whom he represented. Christ exalted the character of God, attributing to him the praise, and giving to him the credit, of the whole purpose of his own mission on earth,--to set men right through the revelation of God. In Christ was arrayed before men the paternal grace and the matchless perfections of the Father. In his prayer just before his crucifixion, he declared, "I have manifested thy name." "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." When the object of his mission was attained,--the revelation of God to the world,--the Son of God announced that his work was accomplished, and that the character of the Father was made manifest

to men.

January 27, 1890

The Most Effective Agent for God

"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."

The Lord does not delight in the deficiencies of his people, and as we are the objects of his love and pardoning mercy, we should seek most earnestly to come into harmony with his will. The purest, meekest, most child-like Christian will be the most effectual agent in the hands of God for the advancement of his work. The accepted instrument of God will make no great display, but his work will be as enduring as eternity. We are to be laborers together with God. The preaching of the word is an important part of the divine plan of making known Christ and him crucified. The apostle asks: "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"

Those to whom the gospel is committed should labor diligently to convert souls; and in doing this work, they will save themselves and those who hear them. Those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed. The faithful workers who have consecrated all to Christ, will receive a hundred-fold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting. The Lord confers special honors upon the men to whom he has given the work of proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation. The Lord's ambassadors are to stand as a mouth-piece for God, showing forth the love, goodness, and compassion of our heavenly Father. The prayer of Christ for his disciples was: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world, and for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

The apostles had been associated with Christ in his work, but there were still greater attainments for them than they had yet reached. They needed to be purified, renewed, and consecrated to God for the important mission before them. The Master had opened before them many precious gems of truth that had been hidden beneath the rubbish of error; he had placed them in their proper frame-work of truth; and yet all this labor of the Son of God would be in vain unless the truth should be enshrined in the inner sanctuary of the soul. The revealed truth of God must become an abiding principle in the hearts of his followers. The teacher of truth must be a living representation of its sanctifying power. The truth he reveals to others must become a living agent to transform his soul into the divine image. The minister must dedicate all his intrusted capital of power to the Lord's service.

Ministers and people have lost much by not dwelling more continually upon the work of our Redeemer. We should contemplate the love that led Christ to give himself as a ransom for fallen man, and this amazing love should be revealed in every discourse. The sacrifice of Christ not only makes apparent his compassion for the children of men, but also makes manifest the love of the Father; and this love ought to draw all men to God. The closest relation exists between God and his people, and the ambassador of God's truth should ever represent Christ. He should exemplify, by precept and example, the love of God, that those who are instructed by him may be brought into a position where they shall receive the divine blessing. The servants of God are to be earnest, penitent, trustful, thankful. Their lives should be living epistles, known and read of all men. They should be continually looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. The subjects dwelt upon by the gospel minister will be of a character to elevate, ennoble, and sanctify the soul. The teacher of divine truth should present the necessity of close communion with God, and dependence upon the righteousness of Christ. When the minister fully realizes his own helplessness without the aid of Christ, the danger of his becoming exalted will be removed, and Christ will absorb everything; his presence will pervade the whole soul, and impress all the senses.

Faith in the abiding presence of Jesus will not bring gloom and depression, but it will bring the peace that elevates the mind, the pure and holy joy that is inexpressible and full of glory. It is thus that the Christian will become a light to the world. The truth we believe should make us earnest, full of love, and kindle in us desires to communicate

to others that which we have found so great a blessing to ourselves. The representatives of Christ will emit light that will shine into the hearts of the people, and lead them to hold up the standard of divine truth. They will be the agents through whom God will call the attention of men to Him who was lifted up on the cross of Calvary.

The people of the world would gladly forget all about eternal things; but they cannot do this while the ambassadors of Christ are working together with God to shed light upon the world. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." The duty of letting your light shine can be well done only when you diffuse the light of truth in a humble, Christ-like character. Regulation, ceremony, and display may be found in the church, but without inward holiness it will not shed forth warm, softening rays of light that will subdue the heart, awaken the sympathy, and inspire faith and love in the soul. Christ has said, "Without me ye can do nothing."

The minister whose discourses simply move the feelings of the people, does not exert the most healthful influence, nor work for his own spiritual advancement or for that of his hearers. The preaching that calls forth the praises of men to a poor, fallible mortal, instead of to God, does not lead to the best results. If a minister has really accomplished a good work, if he has set forth Christ crucified among you, if he has drawn men and women, not to himself, but to God, the church will not bemoan that he cannot always minister to them. If he has indeed been a messenger of light, if he has done a work for the Master, if the church has been illuminated, the church in her turn will let her light shine in clear, steady, bright rays. We shall know those to whom has come the light of life, for they will arise and shine, because the glory of God has risen upon them. To every man the Lord has given his work, and if the members of the church have indeed opened their hearts to the Sun of Righteousness, wherever they are found they will be a light, for in them Christ will be glorified. They will bear an effective testimony. A living energy will attend their words, because they have a rich endowment in the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The success of a church does not depend on the efforts and labor of the living preacher, but it depends upon the piety of the individual members. When the members depend upon the minister as their source of power and efficiency, they will be utterly powerless. They will imbibe his impulses, and be stimulated by his ideas, but when he leaves them, they will find themselves in a more hopeless condition than before they

had his labors. I hope that none of the churches in our land will depend upon a minister for support in spiritual things; for this is dangerous. When God gives you light, you should praise him for it. If you extol the messenger, you will be left to barrenness of soul. Just as soon as the members of a church call for the labors of a certain minister, and feel that he must remain with them, it is time that he was removed to another field, that they may learn to exercise the ability which God has given them. Let the people go to work. Let them thank God for the encouragement they have received, and then make it manifest that it has wrought in them a good work. Let each member of the church be a living, active agent for God, both in the church and out of it. We must all be educated to be independent, not helpless and useless. Let it be seen that Christ, not the minister, is the head of the church. The members of the body of Christ have a part to act, and they will not be accounted faithful unless they do act their part. Let a divine work be wrought in every soul, until Christ shall behold his image reflected in his followers.

I would warn the churches everywhere to respect your ministers, but do not make idols of them; for you not only imperil your own souls, but the souls of God's messengers. Do not flatter and extol your minister, telling him what a fine discourse he has preached. Let him stand in his position as Christ's ambassador. Listen to his words as to one sent from God; heed his instructions, and show by your life that you have heard to some purpose. And as a humble Christian, without any parade, let the minister fulfill his duties, and give to others what he has received of God. We are nearing the judgment, and the Lord has set watchmen upon the walls of Zion, who are never to hold their peace day or night. They are to watch for souls as they who must give an account.

February 3, 1890

God's Object in Blessing His People

Christ's church is to be a blessing, and its members are to be blessed as they bless others. The object of God in choosing a people before all the world, was not only that he might adopt them as his sons and daughters, but that through them he might confer on the world the benefits of divine illumination. When the Lord chose Abraham it was not simply to be the special friend of God, but to be a medium of the precious and peculiar privileges the Lord desired to bestow upon the nations. He was to be a light amid the moral darkness of his surroundings. Whenever God blesses his children with light and truth, it is not only that they may have the gift of eternal life, but that those around them may also be spiritually enlightened. Jesus has said of his followers, "Ye are the light of the world," "a city set upon a hill" that "cannot be hid;" "Ye are the salt of the earth." And when God makes his children salt, it is not only for their own preservation, but that they may be agents in preserving others. The religion of Christ is not a selfish religion. It is not to be kept under lock and key, but it is to be an influence of power going forth from every genuine Christian to enlighten those that sit in darkness. Every soul connected with a true Christian will be made better thereby. We are to be God's light-bearers, reflecting the steady beams of heaven upon others.

It is through the merits of Christ that all our spiritual and temporal blessings are given us to enjoy. The salvation of Christ was placed within our reach that we might lay hold upon it by faith, that we might weave the love of Christ into our characters, and practice it in our lives, that we might be a blessing to all our race. But not one of us can shed light upon others unless we ourselves have gathered rays of divine illumination from the word of God. We must have the Christ-like mould of character or we cannot be true representatives of our Lord. We can do nothing without the help of God. The Spirit of God must work with our efforts, and if God's blessing attends us, we shall be channels of light. The Lord is willing to give us all an experience, which, if improved, will bring us from the lowlands of earth into close, heavenly relationship with God, and every fiber of selfishness will be uprooted from our natures. Do you shine as living stones in God's building? There are many who say, "I am so full of business, I cannot give time to religious things." But if they cannot give time to the service of the Lord, can they expect that he will command his angels to prosper the work of their hands? We

have not the genuine religion, unless it exerts a controlling influence upon us in every business transaction. We should have practical godliness to weave into our life-work. We should have the transforming grace of Christ upon our hearts. We need a great deal less of self, and more of Jesus.

Many who profess to believe the truth, deal too closely with their hired help, and God is not well pleased, and cannot bless and prosper such in their business. They need the converting, sanctifying power of the truth in their souls. They need to become Christ-like. Everyone who has to deal with others, should make their case his own; for just as we deal with others will God deal with us. We are treating Christ as we treat his children; for he is represented in the person of his saints. The truth of God must sanctify the soul, refine and elevate the character, and we must obtain the heavenly mould, before we shall be fitted for the courts above.

Many are situated where they are brought in contact with believers in present truth, and with those who do not believe, and how important that all the lower lights should be trimmed and burning, that all may catch rays of light from the shining lamps of those who profess to be the followers of Christ. We need plenteous grace for this time of spiritual declension. We need plenteous grace to keep us humble, to make us prayerful, pitiful, tender-hearted, and courteous, that we may deal with others as the Lord designs we should.

Have you, who have hired help, let your light shine to your workmen, that they, too, may be laborers together with God? God has given you precious privileges and advantages in sending you the light of his truth, and you are to improve these blessings, and let others share your mercies. What large missionary fields there are right around your homes, what opportunities every day for you to speak of the value of God's promises, to revive poor souls who are compelled to labor hard for small wages, to encourage the hearts of those who are struggling with poverty, who have scarcely the bare necessities of life! The children of God are called upon to show forth the praises of him who has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light; for they are to be Christ's representatives. They should ever seek to teach those with whom they come in contact, of higher, holier truths than the questions of commonplace life. The Lord says through the prophet Ezekiel, "I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing." (Concluded next week.)

February 3, 1890

A Lesson for the Times

Entire abstinence from every pernicious indulgence, and especially tobacco and intoxicating drink, should be strenuously taught in our homes, both by precept and example. Upon no consideration should wine be placed upon our tables. Our children should grow up to consider it a deadly evil, leading to misery and crime.

The youth of today are the sure index to the future of society; and as we view them, what can we hope for the future? These young men are to take a part in the legislative councils of the nation; they will have a voice in enacting and executing its laws. How important, then, it is that the voice of warning should be raised against the indulgence of perverted appetite in those upon whom such solemn duties will rest! If parents would zealously teach total abstinence, and emphasize the lesson by their own unyielding example, many who are now on the brink of ruin might be saved.

What shall we say of the liquor sellers, who imperil life, health, and property, with perfect indifference? They are not ignorant of the result of their trade, but they become callous of heart. They listen carelessly to the complaints of famishing, half-clad mothers and children. Satan has no better agents by which to prepare souls for perdition, and he uses them with most telling effect. The liquor seller deals out his fiery draughts to men who have lost all control of reason and appetite; he takes their hard-earned money and gives no equivalent for it; he is the worst kind of robber.

We find in the special precepts given by God to the Hebrews, this command: "if an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die; then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be quit. But if the ox were wont to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death. If there be laid on him a sum of money, then he shall give for the ransom of his life whatsoever is laid upon him." "And if a man shall open a pit, or if a man shall dig a pit, and not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall therein; the owner of the pit shall make it good, and give money unto the owner of them; and the dead beast shall be his."

The principle embodied in this statute holds good in our time. The liquor seller compares well with the man who turns a vicious ox loose upon his neighbors. The liquor seller is not ignorant of the effects of the fiery draught which he deals out unhesitatingly to husbands, fathers, youth, and aged men. He knows that it robs them of reason, and in many cases changes them to demons. The liquor seller makes himself responsible for the violence that is committed under the influence of the liquor he sells. If the drunkard commits murder under the effect of the maddening draught, the dealer who sold it to him, aware of the tendency of its effect, is in the sight of God equally responsible for the crime with him who did the deed.

The liquor dealer digs a pit for his neighbor to fall into. He has seen the consequences of liquor drinking too often to be ignorant of any one of their various phases. He knows that the hand of the man who drinks at his bar is likely to be raised against his own wife, his helpless children, or his aged father or mother. He knows, in very many instances, that the glass he hands to his customer will make him a raging madman, eager for quarrel and thirsting for blood. He knows that he is taking bread from the mouths of hungry children, that the pence which fall into his till, and enable him to live extravagantly, have deprived the drunkard's children of clothes, and robbed his family not only of the comforts, but of the very necessities, of life. He is deaf to the appeals of weeping mothers, whose hearts are breaking from cruelty and neglect.

Crimes of the darkest dye are daily reported in the newspapers as the direct result of drunkenness. The prisons are filled with criminals who have been brought there by the use of liquor; and the blood of murdered victims cries to heaven for vengeance, as did the blood of Abel. The laws of the land punish the perpetrator of the deed; but the liquor seller, who is also morally responsible for it goes free; no man calls him a murderer; the community looks calmly on his unholy traffic, because justice is fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter. But God, who declared that if a man owned a dangerous ox, and knew it to be so, yet let it loose upon his neighbors, if it caused the death of any man or woman, he should pay the penalty with his own life--that just and terrible God will let fall the bolts of his wrath on the liquor vender who sells violence and death to his fellow-men in the poisonous cup of the inebriate, who deals him out that which takes away his reason and makes him a brute.

Parents who freely use wine and liquor leave to their children the legacy of a

feeble constitution, mental and moral debility, unnatural appetites, irritable temper, and an inclination to vice. Parents should feel that they are responsible to God and to society to bring into existence beings whose physical, mental, and moral characters shall enable them to make a proper use of life, be a blessing to the world, and an honor to their Creator. The indulgence of perverted appetite is the greatest cause of the deterioration of the human race. The child of the drunkard or the tobacco inebriate usually has the depraved appetites and passions of the father intensified, and at the same time inherits less of his self-control and strength of mind. Men who are naturally calm and strong-minded not infrequently lose control of themselves while under the influence of liquor, and, though they may not commit crime, still have an inclination to do so, which might result in the act if a fair opportunity offered. Continued dissipation makes these propensities a second nature. Their children often receive the stamp of character before their birth; for the appetites of the parents are often intensified in the children. Thus unborn generations are afflicted by the use of tobacco and liquor. Intellectual decay is entailed upon them, and their moral perception is blunted. Thus the world is being filled with paupers, lunatics, thieves, and murderers; and disease, imbecility, and crime, with private and public corruption of every sort, are making the world a second Sodom.

For the sake of that high charity and sympathy for the souls of tempted men for whom Christ died, Christians should come out from the popular customs and evils of the age, and be forever separated from them. But we find in the clergy themselves the most insurmountable obstacle to the promotion of temperance. Many are addicted to the use of the filthy weed tobacco, which perverts the appetite, and creates the desire for some stronger stimulant. The indifference or disguised opposition of these men, many of whom occupy high and influential positions, is exceedingly damaging to the cause of temperance. Mrs. E. G. White, in Bible Echo, Australia.

February 10, 1890

God's Object in Blessing His People

There is a work for every Christian to do right at his own door, in his own neighborhood. But how many lose sight of eternal interests and are completely swallowed up in their temporal affairs. There is no necessity for this, for Jesus says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Make your own and your neighbor's eternal welfare the first and most important consideration. Your neighbors have souls to save or to lose, and God expects those to whom he has given the light, to make decided, interested efforts for others. They must remember the holy claims of the truth in every transaction of life. Let believers and unbelievers see in the life of those who claim to have a knowledge of advanced truth, a steady, clear, strong light shining forth in zeal, in devotion, in nobility of character, in their dealings with men. Then the Lord will deal bountifully with you, his servants. We should take time to pray. The time is all the Lord's, and we should be careful not to give others, in our example, a specimen of how we may rob God. Do not steal the time that should be given to God's service, and for gaining spiritual strength, and appropriate an extra half hour to your temporal affairs. May God forbid that those who have had the light of the truth, shall be found as were the foolish virgins, without oil in their vessels.

Suppose that you let your light shine, and through your devotion to the cause of God, a few others are led to consecrate their service to him, then they will be a blessing to still others that you could not reach by your personal influence. The Lord says, "I will make the places round about a blessing." Your light is to be far-reaching. You are God's hired servant to give light, to give time, thought, tact, to his work; and if you do this, you will receive the approbation of your heavenly Father and the gift of eternal life. Talk of the Bible truth, live it out, and when Jesus comes the "Well done" will be spoken to you.

May the Lord open the eyes of our brethren that they may see the precious opportunities on every hand, and improve them. Be much in prayer. Let no person, or personal interest, separate you from God, who is the source of your strength. When you arise in the morning, gather all the members of your household together, as did

Abraham, and invite them to seek God with you. If your business presses strongly, and urges you to your work, then there is still greater need to take time to pray, to present your petitions to a throne of grace, and secure the protecting care, the aid, the mercy and blessing of God. Do not grudge the time that God requires, and hurry through a faithless, formal prayer, that you may rush to your business. God can do much for you, even in your labor, if you ask him. He can send his angels to preserve you from accidents, from breakage, and losses of life and property. The reason why those who neglect the privileges that God has provided, have no more comfort and peace and joy, is that they do not pause to have communion with God, who is the source of their strength. Can God pour out his Spirit, can he bless us, when there is so much indifference to his service? He cannot give us his rich blessing without our co-operation in his plans. He says, "Them that honor me I will honor."

It is just as convenient, just as essential, for us to pray three times a day as it was for Daniel. Prayer is the life of the soul, the foundation of spiritual growth. In your home, before your family, and before your workmen, you should testify to this truth. And when you are privileged to meet with your brethren in the church, tell them of the necessity of keeping open the channel of communication between God and the soul. Tell them that if they will find heart and voice to pray, God will find answers to their prayers. Tell them not to neglect their religious duties. Exhort the brethren to pray. We must seek if we would find, we must ask if we would receive, we must knock if we would have the door opened unto us. If there are only a few assembled, there are enough to claim the precious promises of God. The Father, the Son, and the holy angels will be present with you to behold your faith, your steadfast principle, and there you will have of the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit. God has rich blessings in store for those who will bring not only all the tithes into his store-house, but also time and strength of bone and brain and muscle into his service. Those who will do this, will walk in the light, and will triumph in God.

Let each professed follower of Christ carry out the principles of practical godliness in his own house. Religion in the home is the best proof of genuine piety. It is not the stranger, the visitor, the minister, that can best judge of your Christian devotion; it is your children, your servants, the workmen who toil in your fields, who can best tell whether or not you love God and keep his commandments. If your household, your workmen, are not better for your Christianity, then the truth has not wrought its designed work upon your soul. Let not your workmen say; "This man for whom we

work has a queer sort of religion. There are no morning or evening prayers in his house. We begin and end the day with drudgery, and we have so much to do on the Sabbath that we can scarcely get time for secret prayer."

Carry your Christianity into your family. Let a bright, steady light be burning. Let impressions be left upon minds of the truth of your God, and the value of his service, that will be as far-reaching as eternity. Oh, how much need there is of prayer, of tears, of faith! You should pray for the ministers, for those who are weak in faith. You should let your prayers follow the laborers as sharp sickles in the great harvest-field. You should wrestle with God as did Jacob. We may have pentecostal seasons even now, if the people will pray fervently, and believe in the promises of God. And when prayer and faith abound among God's people, the world will see a steady light shining forth from them.

We should study the experience of past life, study it just as we study the proof-sheets of an article, to find the errors and to note them on the margin of the page. We should do this daily, and note our faults so that we may avoid them in the future. Do not forget to examine yourselves whether you are in the faith. Prove your own selves, for unless Christ is in you, you are reprobates. Reform every unchristlike action, seeking the Spirit of your divine Master. Take your hearts, by nature cold as an iron wedge, and let melting mercy fall upon them, that they may be subdued by the grace of God, and impressed by the Spirit with the image of your divine Lord.

February 17, 1890

Strive Lawfully

"So run that ye may obtain." Not all who run obtain the prize. Some miss the crown that is to be given at the end of the race. Not everyone that seeketh, not everyone that striveth for the mastery, is victorious. Paul says, "If a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully."

Multitudes have had light upon the truth for this time. They have understood the claims of the law of God, but because the world keeps Sunday, they reason to themselves that they cannot be singular. They say, "I will serve God, and be correct in everything else; but I cannot keep the Sabbath, because I should lose my influence in the world. I cannot afford to be unpopular." They say, "I will run, I will strive to obtain the crown of life, and the Lord will not refuse to give me the reward simply because I did not keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. I will keep Sunday as sacredly as anyone can keep the seventh day." But the Lord has said, "Yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." "Not everyone 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. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell; and great was the fall of it." "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment; and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen."

Many profess to be children of God who have not taken heed to their ways. They

have not understood what Christ meant when he prayed that his disciples might be sanctified through the truth, and added, "Thy word is truth." The man who presumed to come to the wedding feast with the citizen's dress on represents that class who decide that their own righteousness is sufficient to recommend them to God, and they do not purify their souls by looking to Christ, and striving to run so that they may obtain. They do not put away the evil of their doings. They do not the words of Christ. They do not see the necessity of putting on the robe that has been prepared for them at an infinite cost, the robe of Christ's righteousness, and they will be cast into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

In the parable of the ten virgins, five of them are described as wise, and five as foolish. The foolish virgins took no oil in their vessels with their lamps. They did not obtain the grace of Christ. They were just like the wise virgins as far as theory and appearances were concerned. They had their lamps, but they had no oil. They made a profession, but they did not know what genuine conversion meant; and when the bridegroom came, they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. "When once the master of the house is risen up," saith Christ, "and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are; then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity."

There will be multitudes who run but cannot enter into heaven's gates; for they are not crowned unless they strive lawfully. In life and spirit and character they must come into conformity with the will of God.

Genuine faith works by love, and purifies the soul. There is a faith that has power to cleanse the life from sin. The devils believe that Christ came into this world as man's Redeemer, that he wrought mighty miracles, that he was one with the Father, that he died a shameful death to save fallen man. The devils believe that he rose from the dead, that he ascended into the heavens, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father. The devils believe that he is coming again, and that shortly, with power and great glory, taking vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the gospel. They believe all that is recorded in the Old and New Testaments. But will this faith save the demons of darkness? They have not the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. That faith,

and that alone, which cleanses the soul-temple, is the genuine faith. Everything that defileth must be put away, all filthiness of the flesh and spirit must be removed from us, if we would enter in through the gates into the city. Jesus says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

February 24, 1890

Bible Religion

The religion of the Bible comprises not only faith but works. The Christian is not simply to believe on Christ, but to do the will of God. Genuine love to God will open the heart, and make a man liberal and charitable. He will know what it means to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and will continually desire that the power and grace of Christ shall be expressed in his life, that glory may redound to God. Every opportunity to do good to those for whom Christ died will be sought out and improved. The love of God will transform the character, and fashion it after the lovely character of Christ. The apostle says, "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."

In doing the works of Christ, in imitating his life, in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, in being eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, in manifesting compassion to the widow and the fatherless, we shall be manifesting the characteristics of true religion. The doing of the works of Christ will not bring remorse. If we carry out the principles of God's love for Christ's sake, we shall know genuine happiness and peace. Ambition, covetousness, vanity, inordinate affection, malice, revenge, and envy, carry with them a weight of woe. The exercise of evil passions sows a harvest after their kind that will bring no pleasure to reap. God declares that there is no peace to the wicked, and without repose of mind there can be no true happiness.

Everyone who is a new creature in Christ Jesus will have new and elevated motives of action, for the Spirit of Christ within will prompt his deeds. To love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves is genuine sanctification. Pride will be expelled from the sanctified heart, and with all lowliness of mind we shall esteem others better than ourselves. To esteem others better than themselves is a great trial to those who are naturally self-inflated. There are many who despise those who have had advantages inferior to their own, in birth or education. They exalt their own judgment and experience, and look disparagingly upon those who have had to battle with greater obstacles. But could they see as God sees, they would have a different estimation both of themselves and of those whom they think inferior. Every step of progress that is made by those who have to battle for advancement, wins the approval of God, and we

should take heed that we despise not one of these little ones, for their angels do always behold the face of the Father.

Those who are attaining to holiness, are daily growing in love, in meekness, in patience, and in loveliness of character. As faith increases, holiness grows in the soul. As the knowledge of God is enlarged, love is increased, because God is love. The love of God is unlike the carnal attribute which fastens the mind upon the human, and leads men to neglect the service of God. There are many who have only a kind of half-way religion. At times they appear to be humble, to esteem others better than themselves; and again self rises, and their meekness is broken by impatience. Their love for God is not equal to their love for themselves, and love for their neighbor is fitful, mingled with envy, evil surmising, and jealousy. Those who are in this condition have never fully submitted their will to God's will. They should consider the example and spirit of the Captain of their salvation. He said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." When we have the mind of Christ, we shall love and work as Christ has loved and worked. When the love of Christ is in the heart, it exerts a controlling influence over the thoughts and affections.

Whatever may be our condition or position in life, it is our privilege to have the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Faith that produces love to God and love to our neighbor is true faith. This faith will lead to genuine sanctification. It will increase our reverence for sacred things. The name of God will not be used carelessly. It is dishonoring God to speak of him as though he were on a level with finite man. We should speak with reverence the sacred name of Christ, for, although he humbled himself and became obedient to the death of the cross, yet he thought it not robbery to be equal with God. Let us take this precious name upon our lips with profound reverence. Some have allowed their feelings to control their judgment, in meetings for worship, and have indulged in words and attitudes that have not been in harmony with the solemn worship of God. We have heard men shout and jump, and pound the desk, and use vain repetition, and this they thought was worship to God. But it was not according to the direction or will of God. All that is coarse in attitude or word makes the service of Christ a matter of ridicule, and brings confusion into the house and worship of God. True religion is not to be found in noise, in contortion of the body, which profiteth little, but it is made manifest in good works, and in the holy temper of the soul. Genuine sanctification will make a man calm and sensible. He will be humble, gentle, kind, forbearing, full of love,--this is the fruit of sanctification. Those who possess these

graces of the spirit will alone be counted worthy of eternal life.

So deceitful is the human heart, so skillfully do the cherished passions justify themselves, that many will pass on in deception, satisfied with counterfeit religion and fraudulent sanctification, until probation closes, and the harvest is past.

One of the chief characteristics of true love is humility. The apostle says: "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, hopeth all things, endureth all things." The man who has true zeal for God will be distrustful of self, and little in his own eyes. Love teaches us to be meek as well as lowly. Sanctified love will enable us to exhibit the grace of patience; it will help us to restrain impetuosity and fretfulness, so that we shall repine at nothing. Love to God and our neighbor will melt away all hatred, bitterness, wrath, malice, prejudice, envy, and evil surmising.

A Christian once said that when he reached heaven he expected to meet with three causes of wonder. He would wonder to find some that he did not expect to see there. He would wonder not to see some that he expected to meet, and, lastly, he would wonder most to find so unworthy a sinner as himself in the Paradise of God. Many who have stood in high places as Christians upon earth, will not be found with the happy throng that shall surround the throne. Those who have had knowledge and talent, and yet have delighted in controversy and unholy strife, will not have a place with the redeemed. Their hearts were not in harmony with the meekness and self-denial of Christ. They desired to do some great work, that they might be admired and flattered by men, but their names were not written in the Lamb's book of life. "I know you not," are the sad words that Christ addresses to such. But those whose lives were made beautiful by little acts of kindness, by tender words of affection and sympathy, whose hearts recoiled from strife and contention, who never did any great work in order to be lauded of men, these are found recorded in the Lamb's book of life. Though the world counted them as insignificant, they are approved of God before the assembled universe. They are astonished to hear the word, from the lips of the divine Master, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

I would impress upon all Christians that patience, resignation, humility, and self-

control are the fruits of real faith and love, fruits of true zeal for God. But impatience, fretfulness, discontent, and all manner of unkindness, are revealings of an unsanctified heart. What mischief false zeal has wrought in the church. Bigotry, love of one's own opinion and way, has been called zeal for God, but it is of the earth, earthy. The Scripture says, "It is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing." We are to serve the Lord with the whole heart, might, mind, and strength. We are to walk faithfully in the path of his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word. Those who study carefully what God requires of them, and will carefully avoid what he has forbidden, will always do zealously what he has enjoined.

March 3, 1890

Jesus Knocking at the Heart

"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."

Christ is willing to take possession of the soul temple, if we will only let him. He is represented as knocking at the door of our hearts for admission, but Jesus never forces himself upon us; he will come in only as an invited guest. If we seek him, we shall certainly find him. Many seem to have an idea that Christ is a great way off. It was difficult for the children of Israel to understand that Christ was their divine leader, and that he was enshrouded in the pillar of cloud by day, and in the pillar of fire by night. If we could only realize that we do not have to ascend into the heavens to bring Christ down, nor descend into the earth to bring him up, but that he is near us, how different would be our actions. There would not be so much trifling conversation. We would not be so easily led into temptation, and there would not be so many things in our lives to displease Jesus. We would realize that the divine eye is upon us, and that the record is passing up to heaven which we must meet again in the day of final accounts; for the judgment is to sit, the books are to be opened, and everyone is to be judged according to the deeds done in the body.

In order to let Jesus into our hearts, we must stop sinning. The only definition for sin that we have in the Bible is that it is the transgression of the law. The law is far-reaching in its claims, and we must bring our hearts into harmony with it. Men may wrap themselves about with their own righteousness, they may reach their own standard of character, but they do not reach the standard that God has given them in his word. We may measure ourselves by ourselves, and compare ourselves among ourselves; we may say we do as well as this one or as that one, but the great question is, Do we meet the claims that Heaven has upon us? The reason why iniquity prevails to such an alarming extent is that the law of God is made void in the earth. His law spoken from Sinai and exemplified in the life of Christ, is perfect, converting the soul. It condemns every sin, and requires every virtue. Not only does it demand a correct outward deportment, but its principles reach even to the thoughts and affections of the heart. "Behold," said the psalmist, "thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden

part thou shalt make me to know wisdom." In the light of the law, covetousness is seen to be idolatry, lust adultery, and anger murder. No wonder that the carnal mind is enmity against God, and not subject to his law.

Those who are loyal to God's law will not always find the way smooth. God has not promised his people exemption from trials, but he has promised that which is far better. He has said: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." "The God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation." "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth." All who love and fear God will suffer persecution. But Jesus will be near to sustain everyone who is afflicted for the truth's sake. When in the prison of Philippi, the scourged and heavily-manacled servants of Christ had such divine consolation that they sang praises to God, and the walls resounded with their triumph. To these faithful messengers, that cold dungeon, reeking with dampness, was made as the gate of heaven. The glory of the Sun of Righteousness beamed forth into that inner prison, making it radiant with a divine effulgence. Christ, the royal messenger, came to John when on his sea-bound isle, and gave him the most wonderful revelations of himself, and of what was to take place in the world's history prior to his second appearing. Jesus revealed himself to Stephen while he was surrounded with pitiless foes. The martyr was given a view of the glory of God with Jesus standing at his right hand to give help to his suffering servant.

Like Paul and the worthies who suffered for the truth's sake, we may be brought into positions of great trial because of our fidelity to God. But Christ is a tender, pitiful Saviour, and will never forsake his children. When on earth, his heart was ever touched with human woes. On every occasion he relieved the afflicted and suffering that were brought to him; he turned none away. A woman who had suffered for years believed that Christ had power to heal her of her infirmity if she could only go to him and tell him her great need. The multitude thronged him as he passed on his way, but she pressed her way through the crowd, and as Jesus came near, she reached forth her hand, and succeeded in touching the hem of his garment, and in a moment she felt that she was made whole. Hers was not the casual touch; it was the touch of faith. This should impress us all with the importance of having living faith in Jesus as our personal Saviour. Many say that all we have to do is to believe, but they make the service of Christ altogether too superficial. They are satisfied with a nominal belief in Christ; but it is not enough to merely assert that Jesus is the Son of God. We must abide in him as the

branch abides in the vine. We must have an experimental faith, a faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Then we have evidence that we bear fruit to the glory of God. What is it to bear fruit to the glory of God? It is to manifest the love of Jesus in our daily life, to be kind and courteous and forbearing to those around us, and to try to lead them to the Saviour. The divine light that shines in the face of Jesus shines also in the heart of the believers, and they walk in the light as he is in the light. That same Jesus represents himself as standing at the door of our hearts and knocking for entrance. Every one of us has a work to do to open the door, if we would have Jesus as our guest. The work of perfecting the soul through obedience to all God's requirements must be constantly going on in our lives. If we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us. Will you open the door of the heart, and let the light of heaven in? Will you just now invite Jesus as a welcome guest to take possession of your heart? We should desire his presence above everything else on the earth. We should regard him as the one altogether lovely, the chief among ten thousand. Why do we keep the door of the heart closed, when he has given us such a gracious invitation to open the door and let him in?

Some seem to think that if they accept the religion of Christ, they will take a step down; but that is not so. Those who receive honors from earthly kings feel that they are exalted; how much more are they exalted who receive honors from the King of heaven! The Monarch of the universe has promised to adopt into his family all who come out from the world and are separate. All who are faithful in his service will become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. Is not this an exalted privilege? We should seek to increase in knowledge and wisdom; for we are to take our talents of intellect into the future world. Our minds should become strengthened, and our hearts refined and elevated, that Jesus may take possession of them. We must imitate his character if we would find ourselves in the society of holy angels in the kingdom of glory. All who enter there will be obedient to the law of God. That law may be trampled under foot here by those who are rebels to God's government, but Jesus said, "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." It would be a terrible thing to meet the Lawgiver over the broken law. We should pray, as did David, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

March 10, 1890

Look and Live

"As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 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."

When the children of Israel were passing through the wilderness toward Canaan, they brought upon themselves the judgments of God by murmuring and complaining. They were bitten by fiery, poisonous serpents of the wilderness, and were smitten with death. A messenger came through the camp, with the news that a remedy had been provided. By the direction of Christ a brazen serpent had been lifted up, and those who would but look upon it would be healed. When this messenger [message] was announced, some of the sick and dying did not accept it. Here and there throughout the camp were heard the words, "It is impossible for me to be healed, because I am in such a dreadful condition. Those who are not in so bad a state as I am, may, perhaps, look and live." Others thought they had a remedy of their own that could cure the poisonous bite of the serpent; but only those who accepted the message and looked to the brazen serpent were healed. This serpent represented Christ. He says, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up."

Man is poisoned by sin; but a remedy has been provided for the fallen race in the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Every hope that we have of salvation out of Christ is a vain hope. We cannot dishonor our Saviour more than by doubting that he will save us. Whatever may have been our life of transgression, however deep may be the stain of our sin, there is One who is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. Jesus is the remedy for sin. We may have intellect, but human intelligence can devise no way of salvation; we may have earthly possessions, but that will not provide a ransom for the sin of our soul. Salvation is the gift of God through Christ, and the promise is, "Whosoever believeth on him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

It is not enough to have a nominal faith. We must have faith that will appropriate

the life-giving power to our souls. We suffer great loss because we do not exercise simple, living faith in Christ. We should be able to say, "He is my Saviour; he died for me; I look to him as my complete Saviour and live." We are to look to Christ day by day. We are to regard him as our example in all things. This is faith. The true believer in Christ is represented by a branch connected with a living vine. The sap and nourishment of the vine extends through every vein and fiber of the branch, and thus the branch becomes knit with the life of the vine, and bears precious fruit. Every soul that abides in Christ will do the works of Christ. Those who love God will keep his commandments; for Christ has said, "I have kept my Father's commandments." Jesus made an infinite sacrifice in leaving his majesty, to come to a fallen world, that he might lift up sinful man; and everyone that is connected with Christ, as the branch is united with the vine, will manifest the spirit of his Redeemer.

We honor our Lord and Master when we place implicit confidence in him. If we distrust the message that he has sent us, we shall be in a position similar to that of the Israelites who were bitten by the fiery serpents, but who would not look and live. If we accept the message of love that has come to us in invitations, exhortation, and reproof, it will prove life and healing to our souls.

We should not be satisfied with anything less than a close connection with Christ. Freedom and salvation are offered to us, and we should grasp the precious promises of God by living faith. But if we only partially believe, if we do not show in our experience the power of living faith that works by love and purifies the soul, we shall fail to meet the expectation of our Lord and Master. Jesus says, "Without me, ye can do nothing," but if he abides in us and we in him, we can do all things through the power of his might. We should trust him as a child trusts his earthly parents. We should feel such love toward him that we cannot betray his confidence in us, or distrust him under any circumstances. We should have a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. We should be like the afflicted woman who pressed her way through the throng to touch the hem of Christ's garment. She gave no casual touch; it was the touch of faith; for virtue went out from Christ and healed her. Although the throng were pressing and crowding about the Saviour, he recognized the touch of faith. He turned and asked, "Who touched me?" His disciples looked up in wonder and replied: "Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me; for I perceive that virtue has gone out of me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all

the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."

Neither learning, oratory, nor wealth can bring men into favor with God; but simple, trusting faith will bring his blessing. We are to take God at his word. The experience that comes through living faith is the experience that God wants every one of us to have. We should reach out the hand of faith, and grasp the arm of infinite power. The simplest prayer that is put up in faith is acceptable to heaven. The humblest soul that looks up to Christ in faith is connected with the God of the universe. We may walk in the light as Christ is in the light. We are to look into the great mirror of God's law and see if our characters are condemned therein. If condemnation is resting upon us, we need not despair, for he has provided a way whereby we may not perish, but have pardon and life. The promise is given that "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." I am glad every day I live that this precious promise has been recorded for us. We may be filled with rejoicing that we have a living Saviour who is mighty to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him. Jesus desires you to ask much that you may receive much, and we need him with us at every step as we advance. When we see that there are defects in our characters, we must be zealous and repent and reform; for if we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Scripture declares that God will not hear us. Christ has given us an invitation full of mercy. He says, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." There is nothing worse than a scarlet sin except the sin that can have no forgiveness in this life or in the life to come.

When I see my Saviour so full of mercy toward us, it seems to me that every heart ought to be melted into tenderness and gratitude toward God. Sin should be hated because it grieves our very best Friend; we should desire to know the truth even though it require a sacrifice, and no one who has stood in defense of truth has done so without sacrifice. Those who have living faith in Christ will pass through difficulties as did Paul. They will say with him: "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." Paul measured the difficulties of the present with the glory of the eternal. And the glory to come so far overbalanced

the suffering of the present, that he said it was not worthy to be compared with it. We must keep our eyes fixed upon the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus, and as we do this, we shall receive comfort, and peace, and joy. (Concluded next week.)

March 17, 1890

Look and Live

The Christian is not to live for this present life. We are to look to Jesus, who through an ignominious death made a way for our escape. We must every one of us lay hold of the hope that is set before us in the gospel, if we would have everlasting life. You should ask yourself, "How much am I willing to sacrifice for the truth's sake?" Before you answer this question, I would direct you to the life and sacrifice of Jesus for you. As you see him whom your sins have pierced, lifted upon the cross of Calvary, you will in contrition of soul lay all at his feet. When we remember how much our salvation has cost, we may be sure that eternal life is worth everything. The enemy is determined that we shall not come into possession of this precious boon. We are traveling through an enemy's land, and we must keep on the whole armor of righteousness, that we may fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life.

Satan will come in many ways to tempt the soul away from Christ. He will first tell you that you are good enough of yourself; that you do not need a work of reformation wrought for you. He will suggest to you that you have made but few mistakes in your life, and that these will be overbalanced by the good you have done. If you have lived such a life as he would make you believe you have, it would be like a chain with unsound links in it, wholly worthless. One sin unrepented of is enough to close the gates of heaven against you. It was because man could not be saved with one stain of sin upon him, that Jesus came to die on Calvary's cross. Your only hope is to look to Christ and live. He came to save to the uttermost all who came unto him; and he is fully able to do all that he has undertaken to do for you. He will lift us up from the degradation into which we have fallen because of sin.

We should exercise living faith in Christ. When our hopes of life seem to be slipping away, Jesus is ready to put his everlasting arms beneath us, and to draw us to his heart, and to comfort, encourage, and bless us. As soon as you surrender wholly to Christ, he will accept you. Christ has said that it was his will that your joy should be full. Why should you not have fullness of joy, when through Christ you have the prospect of eternal life at his coming? Why should we not every day show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light? "He that

spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? He wants us to grow better in his love every day. As we follow on to know the Lord, we shall know that his goings forth are prepared as the morning. The sun rises in dimness; but as it begins to climb the heavens, its rays become more and more bright. Thus it is with the Christian in his life. He catches the bright beams of light from Christ, and by trusting in him he becomes better acquainted with his Saviour. It is a difficult matter for human nature to have perfect confidence in divine power, but the Lord will strengthen our faith, and we may have a precious experience in the knowledge of Jesus. We do not have the simplicity we should have in coming to our heavenly Father. We are sinners, but Christ has died for us, and it is our privilege to place ourselves upon the platform of his promises. If we have the love of Jesus in our hearts, we shall express it in our actions toward others. We shall proclaim to those who are out of Christ the beauty of faith and religion. It is not our place to inquire whether we shall have trials if we walk in the path of obedience; we are to search for the truth as for hidden treasures, and to accept it whatever may be its cost.

Christ prayed that his disciples might be sanctified through the truth. It is not error but the truth of God that sanctifies the soul. When we follow in the humble path of obedience, we leave a bright track heavenward for others to walk in. It is our privilege to have a deeper experience in the things of God. Will you review your past life, will you see where your defects and mistakes have been, and when you see that they are many, will you remember that Jesus lives to make intercession for you, and not sink down in discouragement? Jesus pleads his blood before the Father, and says, "I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions as a thick cloud." Let this be the language of your heart: "Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." Do not even for a moment distrust your Saviour's power to save you. Fall in your helplessness at the foot of the cross; today believe the promise of God. Jesus loves us with a love that is infinite. Oh, what love, what matchless love, he has shown for the children of men! Jesus does not desire you to wait to make yourself better; he desires you to take him today as your Saviour. This very day say: "He is mine, and I am his. I will give my soul into his keeping, and he will keep that which I have committed to his trust against that day. Through faith he will give me victory over the temptations of the enemy. I shall see of his salvation. I shall triumph in God." Do you not think that such language as this will drive back the enemy from the tempted soul? Satan tries to interpose himself between us and Christ, but we must drive him back by talking faith, and by exalting the power of Jesus to save us. Shall we not take steps in

advance without delay? Shall we not show that we are not afraid to trust our Saviour in the darkness as well as in the light? I have been tested on this point. One loved one after another has been torn from me by death, and it has seemed as though it would crush me; but in these hours Jesus has seemed to say to me: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

The peace that Jesus gives is not the peace of the world. In my sorest trials, when I could not understand why they had come upon me, the only course I could take was to believe that Jesus doeth all things well. After the death of him who had stood by my side for thirty-six years, I was in great distress, in such anguish that it seemed that I would die; but I had to fight the fight of faith. While Satan suggested temptations, and sought to make me distrust God, I would continually say, "He knows what is best for me, and I will trust him."

We should not think that Jesus has forsaken us when clouds and darkness come upon our souls. He is a pitying, loving Redeemer. He does not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men. He is not willing that any of us should perish, but that all should have eternal life; but he wants us to follow him as the sheep follow the shepherd; and by and by he will lead us to living waters, and wipe away all tears from our eyes.

Jesus loves you, and when trials come upon your soul, as they surely will, you must be often found with God in prayer. The enemy may tell you that God will not hear you; but you must rest in his promise that he will hear the prayer of the contrite soul. Keep your petitions continually ascending to Jesus, and believe that he hears you, and he will hear you and deliver you from every trial and temptation. The apostle says: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."

March 24, 1890

Faith Does Not Make Void the Law

The blood of Christ was shed to atone for sin and to cleanse the sinner; and we must take hold of the merits of Christ's blood, and believe that we have life through his name. Let not the fallacies of Satan deceive you; you are justified by faith alone, but faith in Christ does not absolve you from obligation to keep God's unchangeable law, which is as sacred as his throne. Faith is essential, but genuine faith will enable its possessor to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit.

Sin is the transgression of the law, and no man can be saved in sin. The sinner must repent toward God, and become obedient to God's law through faith in Christ. Faith is the hand that lays hold on Omnipotence. When we do those things that are lawful and right, through the grace of Christ, we are keeping God's commandments; and to such God has pledged his word that he will do great things. Like Daniel, you may make confession of your sin, and present daily supplication unto God; but however poor and unworthy and erring you may feel yourselves to be, it is your privilege to appropriate the promises of God. You may obtain the grace and help which Christ alone is able to give you. God can no more forget one of his children who is seeking to be obedient to his holy requirements than he can forget himself. The Scriptures declare that Christ has graven us on the palms of his hands, that he holds us in everlasting remembrance.

An impulse, an emotional exercise, is not faith or sanctification. Sanctification is the doing of all the commandments of God. Some of you have failed to do this, because you have taken your eyes away from Jesus, and have looked to yourselves. Some have kept Christ apart from their lives because they felt their own unworthiness; but Christ died upon the cross of Calvary for the unrighteous and unworthy. If they look to him, will they perish?--No; they are to look and live. You who feel that your work is unworthy and full of imperfections, you who are weary and heavy-laden, Jesus invites you to come to him, that you may find rest to your souls. Jesus desires you to wear his yoke, to lift his burdens, and he says his yoke is easy, and his burden is light.

Noah was a preacher of righteousness; but all his warnings were despised by the

generation to whom they were addressed. Truth will never be popular with the world; for the world is at enmity with God's law. The world is full of sin, full of falsehood, full of transgression. Jesus preached the truth faithfully, affectionately, earnestly, practicing self-denial; and did the world flock to his banner?--No; when did truth ever meet with more stern and positive rejection than at the time of Christ? If we place ourselves in right relation to God, that we may teach the truth, practice the truth, and become sanctified through it, we shall not always meet with success in our efforts for others; we shall have to trust the result with God, and not drive ourselves to the brink of despair because men will harden their hearts and reject the plainest declaration of the Scriptures. We must hold fast our faith, and strengthen our souls by firm reliance upon the promise of God. You may say, "I know I am an unworthy laborer, but I rely upon Christ's righteousness. The merit of the blood of Christ is my only plea. I know I am a sinner, but the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin." We must honor God by believing his promises.

There are those who have had an excellent experience, who have been strong in the truth, who have known what it is to believe God, and their faith has been counted unto them for righteousness, but Satan has worked to discourage them and to break their hold upon God. Although clouds have encompassed them, the Lord has not forsaken, the Lord will lift them up, give them physical strength, and encourage and revive their faith. We shall have to wage a constant battle with Satan, if we preserve our faith to the end amid the discouragements that will press upon us. We must look away from self, for Jesus is our only hope. The language of the soul must be, "He is mine; I will never let go his arm. He will bless me; the cleansing blood will be applied to my soul."

Whatever may be our difficulties, Jesus knows all about them; we may tell them all to our sympathizing Saviour. He pities our every weakness, he is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Let us carry our burdens to him trustingly, and we shall see his salvation. If we pray for it, if we believe for it, we shall have the heavenly endowment of his Spirit. Stretch forth your hands in faith today, for Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. Send up your petitions, crying, "Abide with us; we need thy presence, thy love, thy pardon." He will not pass you by, he will abide with you and bless you.

The Lord is willing to give each of you a rich experience; for he would have you able to appreciate the knowledge of the truth he has given you, and to value the precious tokens of his love. He desires to give you greater evidences of his love, still more

marked answers to your prayers, a deeper and closer acquaintance with himself; for the Lord has a work for each one to do. If you will come up to your exalted privileges, you will have increased faith. Remember that faith is not feeling. We are inclined to measure our religious attainments by our emotions; but feeling is no criterion by which to judge. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Those who have had moral courage to stand in defense of the faith in times past, should now be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. We have a work to do for the Master, and we should put on the whole armor of righteousness. When Satan tells you of your unworthiness, you can acknowledge it, but at the same time you can present a compassionate Saviour, who will save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him. Talk faith, talk hope and courage, and come into the light. It is by beholding the loveliness of the character of Christ that we are to be changed into his image. Look away from the darkness, look away from yourself to your compassionate Redeemer, and let your soul be inspired by faith and prayer. Bring Jesus into your life, the virtues of his character into your character.

We are not to yield to the suggestions of Satan. It is his design to deceive you either by flattering your vanity, or by causing you to become discouraged in dwelling upon your unworthiness. He will seek to surround you with the society of those who will confuse your faith and break your connection with God; but you should keep a holy trust in God, and maintain a Christian character consistent with your religious faith. You should be meek yet resolute, cheerful yet devout, that sin may not be sanctioned by you in any form.

In your home life you should manifest patience, forbearance, and love. You should walk circumspectly, wisely, and in a perfect way. You should begin and end the day with prayer, and be full of faith and gratitude toward God. Let your words be select, well chosen, seasoned with salt, that your soul may be constantly reaching up for higher attainments. If this is your attitude, the peace of God will not be an occasional visitor, but an abiding guest, ruling in the heart. The Spirit of God will soften and subdue the soul, and ennoble the character. What is healthful piety but a well-balanced experience? We must have more faith. The language of the soul should be, "Because Jesus lives, I shall live also." There is freedom for us in Christ, and if we look to him in faith at all times, we shall have the blessed assurance of his presence; but if we distrust his love and power, we shall dishonor God. It is our privilege to have Jesus as our constant helper.

March 31, 1890

Genuine Faith Leads to Obedience

"Without faith it is impossible to please God." It is our privilege to appropriate to our own use the promises which God has given us in his word. We have had great light, most wonderful truths have been unfolded to us; and our faith should correspond to the light and power of the truth that has been opened to our understanding. Our prayer should be as was the prayer of David, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." We have a great and solemn work before us. We are to present the last message of mercy to the world,--the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. We should have faith corresponding to the message we have to bear to the world. We shall need more than finite wisdom in doing this work. We must have divine power connected with our efforts, that we may reach the people.

It is our privilege to take God at his word. As Jesus was about to leave his disciples to ascend into heaven, he commissioned them to bear the gospel message to all nations, tongues, and peoples. He told them to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. This was essential to their success. The holy unction must come upon the servants of God. All who were fully identified as disciples of Christ and associated with the apostles as evangelists, assembled together in Jerusalem. They put away all differences. They continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, that they might receive the fulfillment of the promise of the Holy Spirit; for they were to preach the gospel in the demonstration of the Spirit and in the power of God. It was a time of great danger for the followers of Christ. They were as sheep in the midst of wolves, yet they were of good courage, because Christ had risen from the dead, and had revealed himself to them, and had promised them a special blessing, which would qualify them to go forth to proclaim his gospel to the world. They were waiting in expectation of the fulfillment of his promise, and were praying with special fervency.

This is the very course that should be pursued by those who act a part in the great work of proclaiming the coming of the Lord in the clouds of heaven; for a people are to be prepared to stand in the great day of God's preparation. Although Christ had given the promise to the disciples that they should receive the Holy Spirit, this did not remove the necessity of prayer. They prayed all the more earnestly; they continued in prayer

with one accord. Those who are now engaged in the solemn work of preparing a people for the coming of the Lord, should also continue in prayer. The early disciples were of one accord. They had no speculations, no curious theory to advance as to how the promised blessing was to come. They were one in faith and spirit. They were agreed. The disciples of Christ should become one with him, and one with each other. All differences should disappear. Soul should blend with soul. No strife should be permitted to sway the soul; no love of supremacy, no thought of self, should be cherished; we should be one in Christ.

It is the privilege of God's people to go forth to their work in the strength of Jesus. We should go forth, not depending upon our talents, but wrestling with God for sanctification through the truth. We should feel a constant assurance that Jesus is present to help us. If success attends our labors, we should give all the glory to God. The frail, defective beings of earth should not take one particle of honor to themselves. The worker for God is to be clothed with humility; for Christ has condescended to be his helper. Paul may plant, and Apollos water, but it is God that gives the increase.

We shall have to meet many false doctrines and deceptive theories, and it will require more than human intelligence to discern their falsity, and to keep clear of their influence. Many claim sanctification who are wholly deceived in themselves; and we should inquire, How can we present their deceptions in a true light, that souls may be delivered from the snare of the enemy? There is only one test for all doctrines, and that is God's great standard of righteousness. Says the prophet, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Many of those who claim sanctification present themselves, like the enemy of God and his law, in the garments of their own righteousness. They oppose the commandments of God, and show that their heart is carnal. Many years after the crucifixion of Christ, the apostle wrote these words, that test the profession of those who claim holiness, and yet oppose the law of God,--"The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be."

With ruthless hands many have sought to remove the landmarks, to tear down God's great moral standard, and to erect one of their own. In claiming holiness they measure themselves by their own standard. They do not test their actions and character by the law of God. It was by his own standard that Satan measured his actions, he represented himself before men as an angel of light; but his pretension does not make

him such, by any means. There is a class of persons who are not following the example of Christ in keeping God's law, yet they claim to be holy. They are ready to appropriate the promises of God without fulfilling the conditions upon which they are given. But their faith has no foundation; it is like sliding sand. There is another class who see the claims of the law of God, and, although it involves a cross, they choose the path of obedience, coming out and separating themselves from the world. They do not consult convenience, nor shrink from accepting the truth for fear of reproach. They step out from the path of transgression, and place their feet in the way of God's commandments. The promises of God, which are given on condition of obedience, are for those who walk in the light of his holy word. Those who do his will may claim all the benefits the Lord has promised. The obedient do not simply cry, "Believe, all you have to do is believe in Christ;" but their faith is like Noah's and Abraham's, which led them to keep the commandments. They follow the example of Christ, they listen and wait to catch every word of direction from the Captain of their salvation. They respond to the voice that says, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Every step that Noah and Abraham took in obedience to God's word was a step of victory. A "Thus saith the Lord" fortified Noah in doing his work of warning the world. The testimony in regard to Noah is, "And Noah did according to all that the Lord commanded him." The path of obedience is the path in which our safety lies; for it is the willing and obedient that shall eat the good of the land. If we keep the commandments of God, we may claim his recorded promises in all their fullness. Many feel so unworthy that like the poor publican they dare not lift up so much as their eyes to heaven. They should encourage faith. We may have an intelligent faith; we may not only say we believe, but we may in meekness and confidence be able to define what we believe, and why we believe as we do. We should exercise living faith, not a blind credulity. All heaven is at the command of those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus.

We need to come up to a higher standard, to go forward and claim our exalted privileges. We should walk humbly with God, make no proud boasts of perfection of character, but in simple faith claim every promise in the word of God; for they are for the obedient, not for the transgressors of God's law. We are simply to believe the testimony of God, and have entire dependence on him, and all possibility of self-glory or pride will be removed. We are indeed saved by faith, not by a passive faith, but by the faith which works by love, and purifies the soul. The hand of Christ can reach the veriest sinner, and bring him back from transgression to obedience; but no Christianity is so lofty that it can soar above the requirements of God's holy law. This would be

beyond Christ's power to help, it would be outside of his teachings and his example; for he says, "I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love," and all who follow Christ will render obedience to God's holy law.

April 7, 1890

Be Strong in the Grace of Christ

"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." Those who engage in the work of God in any capacity should strengthen themselves for the work. They should not lift themselves up in self-conceit, but by their humility of spirit, make it manifest that they are strong in the grace of Christ. As opposition and trials increase, the Christian should grow stronger in the power that comes from Heaven. There is always great weakness where there is self-sufficiency, but when, through humble contrition of soul, we take hold of the strength of Jesus, special help will be given as our need may require. We are exhorted to "be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

Great self-sufficiency was manifested by Peter when he confidently declared, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." Peter supposed himself to be strong, but when the test came he discovered that he was weakness itself. He had been with Jesus and had often obtained his help, but past grace does not avail for present needs. Daily, hourly, we must have divine strength imparted to us. We must trust at all times in Christ, dwell upon his words till we long to realize their fulfillment in our own case. The reason that more power does not attend the proclamation of the truth for this time, is that there is too much reliance placed upon the ability of man, too much trust in the talent and tact of the workers, and not enough reliance upon the arm of Infinite Power. The gospel of truth is not preached in demonstration of the Spirit and in the power of God. Self is ready to take the credit if any measure of success attends the work, self is flattered, self is exalted, and the impression is not made upon minds that God is all and in all.

Paul gave a solemn charge to Timothy that has the same importance in this day as it did when given. He said, "And the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." This injunction we must cherish, as did Timothy, as a sacred trust from the apostle. Paul saw that the night in which he could no longer work, was fast hastening upon him. He was to die a martyr's death, and the precious light given him of God was not to lose any of its brightness, but to be committed to others as a rich legacy. Timothy

was to train up others to succeed him in the ministry of the gospel. He was not to think that his work was done in merely teaching the truth to unbelievers; he was to impart the knowledge he had received, to repeat the precious instruction he had heard from the lips of Paul, and to record the things which he himself had witnessed, that the light of truth might be passed along to others who were faithful, and who should be ordained to the ministry. These, in their turn, were to realize their responsibility, and teach others also, and thus the sacred truth of the gospel would be communicated from one to another throughout the ages.

Timothy was to have discernment that would enable him to choose men of fidelity and integrity, for he was to commit the word of God to faithful men. The men to whom the solemn truth of God was to be given in trust were not to be self-seekers, but men who would lose sight of self, and have an eye single to the glory of God, and work for the salvation of souls. They were to be willing to do everything in their power to advance the Redeemer's kingdom. They must not only be capable of comprehending the evidences of the truth themselves, but they must be able from their knowledge and experience to impart truth to others; they must be apt to teach. This was the precious light that Paul had received through inspiration, and it was his work to see that no part of this instruction should be lost. He charged Timothy with the responsibility of committing it to faithful men, who would in their turn transmit the precious legacy of truth, pure and uncorrupted, to others. The words, the ideas, of men were not to be mingled with the sacred truth of God in any way to lessen its divine importance. Men of ability, of humility,--men who had a conscientious realization of the fact that they were not to misstate the lessons given them by Paul, were to be chosen, who would not take from or add to the sacred teaching of Scripture. Mark the care with which Paul guards the matter so that the light and knowledge of the gospel shall be imparted in its purity. Timothy was instructed to commit it to faithful men, who would seek others equally faithful, so that the precious truth might reach even to our day, and shine upon our pathway in undimmed brightness.

The New Testament was not then written, therefore there was need of the greatest caution, that the teachings of Christ might be imparted without adulteration. What a responsibility rests upon the chosen men of God for this time; for they, too, are to train up others to succeed them in the ministry, and they are also to see to it that self does not mingle with their work.

The work of the ministry is no common work. Christ is withdrawn only from the eye of sense, but he is as truly present by his Spirit as when he was visibly present on earth. The time that has elapsed since his ascension has brought no interruption in the fulfillment of his parting promise,--"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." God has provided light and truth for the world by having placed it in the keeping of faithful men, who in succession have committed it to others through all generations up to the present time. These men have derived their authority in an unbroken line from the first teachers of the faith. Christ remains the true minister of his church, but he delegates his power to his under-shepherds, to his chosen ministers, who have the treasure of his grace in earthen vessels. God superintends the affairs of his servants, and they are placed in his work by divine appointment.

The work of the messengers the Lord sends to earth is not understood, and the message of truth is too lightly regarded. The energizing presence of Christ is not felt as it should be among the ministers of God. They do not sacrifice all to him as they should; but Paul further charged Timothy to "endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." All Christians are represented as soldiers of the cross of Christ, but especially this figure applies to the ministers of the gospel. They are to fight under the banner of Prince Emmanuel, and wage war against his enemies, trusting in Christ, for he is the Captain of their salvation. The soldiers of Christ must prove themselves faithful, they must have courage, and be willing to endure hardness. They must expect to have hard things to meet, and they must accustom themselves to bear burdens with patience and fortitude, always maintaining and representing the simplicity of Christ. (Concluded next week.)

April 14, 1890

Be Strong in the Grace of Christ

We should educate the mind so that we can hold communion with God constantly. We must learn to glance upward in sincere desire, sending a prayer to Heaven in all places and under all circumstances. You may have that faith that will place your hand in the hand of Jesus, and by faith you may keep hold of him. You should keep your mind filled with the precious promises of God. As Christians we do not make half enough of the promises, for God will never fail in any good thing which he has promised. We should take these promises singly, view them critically in all their richness, meditate upon them until the soul is burdened with their greatness, and delighted with their strength and power. I am so sorry that we deprive ourselves of the blessing we might have, and it is simply because we do not cherish the thought that the promises of God are for us. God has left them in his word for us, and we should dig for them as for hidden treasures. Why are we so easily satisfied with little flashes of light when there is a heaven of illumination for us? We drink at shallow streams, when there is a great fountain just above us, if we will only rise a little higher in the pathway of faith. Our natures must be raised from their earthliness, they must be kindled and purified in the upper brightness of God's divine presence. But you must remember that only those who obey the commandments of God through his grace have a right to appropriate the promises written for the consolation of the children of God. The psalmist says: "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom."

When a man gives himself to the work of the gospel and is made overseer of the church of God by the Holy Ghost, he is to keep himself as free as possible from everything that would hinder his work. The apostle writes: "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." Christ has given the command, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest." And when one gives himself to the ministry he should not in his very first move entangle himself with the perplexities and burdens of this life, but he should seek to be free that he may attend to his Captain's orders. He must so arrange his affairs that he may be able to give undivided attention to the work of saving souls. If he is so circumstanced that he is drawn away from his duty

to God, he should not claim to be an enlisted soldier in the service of God. The greatest anxiety of the soldier should be to please his captain, and the greatest care of Christ's soldiers should be to please their divine Master. Many have become cumbered with care; earthly things have taken up their attention until their spiritual discernment is dimmed. They cannot appreciate the wants of the cause of God, and therefore cannot put forth well-directed efforts to meet its emergencies, and to advance its interests. They constantly seek to shape the work in accordance with their circumstances, in place of shaping circumstances to meet the demands of the cause of God.

The minister's first thought should be, How shall I labor so that I will meet with God's approval? If a soldier loads himself down with extra burdens, he unqualifies himself both for the march and the battle, and if a minister becomes absorbed in the temporal things of this life, he cannot be a success as a soldier of Christ. "And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits." The minister is to present the truth to others, not in a harsh, dictatorial manner, manifesting fretfulness when opposed, and becoming impatient when those for whom he labors are slow to accept the truth; he is to be patient, gentle unto all men, in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves, if peradventure God may give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. The laborer for God will not receive the crown unless he strives according to the requirement of God, and that is in the spirit of Christ.

The apostle says: "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."

Those who strive lawfully will have complete victory at last, but there is too much striving that is not done in the Spirit of Christ. We should strive to obtain the victory over every unholy passion of the soul, over every spiritual weakness, over every defect of character. We should seek to excel in the graces of the Spirit of God, in meekness, patience, goodness, love, peace, and joy. If we strive for this, it will be a

worthy, lawful striving that will be rewarded of God. In contending for the faith, we must be careful to stand as did Christ before the people; we must have a spirit that will correspond to the purity and greatness of the doctrines we advocate. We must teach the truth as it is in Jesus. We must labor as does the husbandman, with diligence and patience, that we may be partakers of the fruits. We must do the will of God before we can receive the promise. "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." "Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things."

April 21, 1890

The Danger of Skepticism in Our Youth

The words of Jesus addressed to this generation may well be regarded with sorrow and awe. He asks, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Christ looked down the ages, and with prophetic eye marked the conflict between the antagonistic principles of truth and error. He saw how real Christianity would become almost extinct in the world, so that at his second advent he would find a state of society similar to that which existed before the flood. The world would be engaged in festivity and amusement, in theatrical shows, in the indulgence of base passions. Intemperance of every grade would exist, and even the churches would be demoralized, and the Bible would be neglected and desecrated. He saw that the desperate revelries of the last days would only be interrupted by the judgments of God.

Society is now in a state of demoralization, and this will ripen until the nations become as lawless, as corrupt, as were the inhabitants of the world before the flood. The degradation that is found in the world today is largely due to the fact that the Bible no longer exerts a controlling influence upon the minds of men. It has become fashionable to doubt. The law of God has been made void to those in sacred office, and what can be expected of those who have listened to their sophistry and error? What can be expected of the youth who have come under the influence of those who have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts and have despised the word of the Holy One of Israel? It is no wonder that the Bible has come to be lightly regarded.

Infidelity is increasing in our land. Our youth are sent to college, and are brought into association with those who hold skeptical views; for even well-educated young men now boast of their unbelief in the word of God. Who is chargeable for this state of affairs? Is it not chargeable to those who from the sacred desk have belittled the claims of the law of God? Is it not chargeable to those who lead men away from the path of truth by terming the law of God a yoke of bondage, and who thereby picture transgression as a state of liberty? Oh, if those who make light of the requirements of God's law, did but know what they are doing, if they did but realize that they were undermining the faith of our youth in the Bible, sending them adrift without anchor or compass on a shoreless sea, they would recoil with horror from their fearful work!

I feel the most intense anguish for our youth. I warn you, as one who knows the danger, not to be entrapped by Satan through the little knowledge of science which you may have acquired. It is better to have a pure and humble heart than all the knowledge you can possibly gain without the fear of the Lord. The youth of today will be likely to meet skeptics and infidels wherever they may go, and how necessary that they be equipped, so that they may be able to give a reason of their hope with meekness and fear. Thomas Paine has passed into his grave, but his works live to curse the world, and those who doubt the truth of God's word, will place these infidel productions in the hands of the young and inexperienced, to fill their hearts with the poisonous atmosphere of doubt. The spirit of Satan works through wicked men to carry on his schemes for the ruin of souls.

We are living in an age of licentiousness, and men and youth are bold in sin. Unless our youth are sacredly guarded, unless they are fortified with firm principles, unless greater care is manifested in choosing their associates and the literature which feeds the mind, they will be exposed to a society whose morals are as corrupt as were the morals of the inhabitants of Sodom. The appearance of the people of the world may be very attractive, but if they are continually throwing out suggestions against the Bible, they are dangerous companions; for they will ever seek to undermine the foundations of your faith, to corrupt the conscientiousness of old-fashioned, gospel religion.

The youth often come in contact with those of skeptical tendencies, and their parents are in ignorance of the fact, until the terrible work of evil is consummated, and the youth are ruined. The young should be instructed diligently, that they may not be deceived in regard to the true character of these persons, and not form friendships with this class, or listen to their words of sarcasm and sophistry. Unless our young people have moral courage to sever their connection with these persons when they discover their unbelief, they will be ensnared, and will think and talk as do their associates, speaking lightly of religion and the faith of the Bible.

Could the eyes of deluded youth be opened, they would see the exultant leer of Satan at his success in ruining souls. In every conceivable way he seeks to adapt his temptations to the various dispositions and circumstances of those whom he wishes to entangle. He will try every device, and if the subjects of these temptations do not seek God, they will be blinded to his deceptions, and will be self-confident, self-sufficient,

and in ignorance of their condition and danger. They will soon come to despise the faith once delivered to the saints. I speak to the youth as one who knows, as one to whom the Lord has opened the perils that attend their pathway. Self-confidence will lead you into the snare of the enemy. The youth do not ask counsel of God, and make him their refuge and strength. They enter society with all assurance, confident that they are fully able to choose the right and to comprehend divine mysteries, because of their powers of reason, as though they could discover truth for themselves. We fear more for those who are self-confident than for any others, for they will surely be entangled in the net that has been set by the great adversary of God and man. Some associate who has been chosen as a familiar friend, who has been tainted with the corruption of doubt, will instill his leaven of unbelief into the minds of this class. By fulsome flattery of their talent, their intellectual superiority, by inciting in them an ambition for high position, their attention will be gained, and moral blight will fall upon them. Those who are exalted in their own opinions will despise the blood of the Atoning Sacrifice, and will do despite to the Spirit of grace.

The children of Sabbath-keeping parents, who have had great light, who have been the objects of the tenderest solicitude, may be the ones who will leave a heritage of shame, who will sow to the wind and reap the whirlwind. In the judgment the names of those who have sinned against great light, will be written with those who are condemned to be separated from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. They will be lost, lost, and will be numbered with the scornors of the grace of Christ. I would rather see my children laid in the grave, than see them taking the path that leads to death. The terrible fact that I had nurtured children to fight against the God of heaven, to swell the ranks of apostates in the last days, to march under the black banner of Satan, would indeed be a thought of horror to me.

Our youth will meet temptations on every hand, and they must be so educated that they will depend upon higher power, higher teaching, than can be given by mortals. There are despisers of our Lord everywhere, who habitually throw contempt upon Christianity. They call it the plaything of children, invented to impose on the credulity of the ignorant. Those who have not moral power cannot stand in defense of the truth; they have not courage to say: "Unless such conversation ceases, I cannot remain in your presence. Jesus, the world's Redeemer, is my Saviour; in him is centered my hope of eternal life." But this is the very way in which to silence them. If you argue with them, they will have arguments with which to meet you, and nothing you may say will touch

them; but if you live for Christ, if you are firm in your allegiance to the God of heaven, you may do for them that which argument will fail to do, and convince them of the fallacy of their doctrines, by the power of godliness.

There is no sadder spectacle than that of those who have been purchased by the blood of Christ, who have been intrusted with talents wherewith they may glorify God, turning to jest the messages graciously sent to them in the gospel, denying the divinity of Christ, and trusting to their own finite reasoning, and to arguments that have no foundation. When tested with affliction, when brought face to face with death, all these fallacies they have cherished will be melted away like frost before the sun. How terrible it is to stand by the coffin of one who has rejected the appeals of divine mercy! How terrible to say: Here is a life lost! Here is one who might have reached the highest standard, and gained immortal life, but he surrendered his life to Satan, became ensnared by the vain philosophies of men, and was a plaything of the evil one!

The Christian's hope is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entereth into that which is within the veil, whither Christ the forerunner is for us entered. We have an individual work to do to prepare for the great events that are before us. The youth should seek God more earnestly. The tempest is coming, and we must get ready for its fury, by having repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord will arise to shake terribly the earth. We shall see troubles on all sides. Thousands of ships will be hurled into the depths of the sea. Navies will go down, and human lives will be sacrificed by millions. Fires will break out unexpectedly, and no human effort will be able to quench them. The palaces of earth will be swept away in the fury of the flames. Disasters by rail will become more and more frequent; confusion, collision, and death without a moment's warning will occur on the great lines of travel. The end is near, probation is closing. Oh, let us seek God while he may be found, call upon him while he is near! The prophet says: "Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger."

April 28, 1890

The Words and Works of Satan Repeated in the World

Before Lucifer was banished from heaven, he sought to abolish the law of God. He claimed that the unfallen intelligencies of holy heaven had no need of law, but were capable of governing themselves and of preserving unspotted integrity. Lucifer was the covering cherub, the most exalted of the heavenly created beings; he stood nearest the throne of God, and was most closely connected and identified with the administration of God's government, most richly endowed with the glory of his majesty and power. The prophet writes of his exaltation, saying: "Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so; thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee."

The angels had been created full of goodness and love. They loved one another impartially and their God supremely, and they were prompted by this love to do his pleasure. The law of God was not a grievous yoke to them, but it was their delight to do his commandments, to hearken unto the voice of his word. But in this state of peace and purity, sin originated with him who had been perfect in all his ways. The prophet writes of him: "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness." Sin is a mysterious, unexplainable thing. There was no reason for its existence; to seek to explain it is to seek to give a reason for it, and that would be to justify it. Sin appeared in a perfect universe, a thing that was shown to be inexcusable and exceeding sinful. The reason of its inception or development was never explained and never can be, even at the last great day when the judgment shall sit and the books be opened, when every man shall be judged according to the deeds done in the body, when the sins of God's repentant, sanctified people shall be heaped upon the scapegoat, the originator of sin. At that day it will be evident to all that there is not, and never was, any cause for sin. At the final condemnation of Satan and his angels and of all men who have finally identified themselves with him as transgressors of God's law, every mouth will be stopped. When the hosts of rebellion, from the first great rebel to the last transgressor, are asked why they have broken the law of God, they will be speechless. There will be no answer to give, no reason to assign that will carry the least weight.

The change from perfection of character to sin and defection did come even in heaven. Lucifer's heart was lifted up because of his beauty, his wisdom was corrupted by reason of his brightness. Self-exaltation is the key to his rebellion, and it unlocks the modern theme of sanctification. Satan declared that he had no need of the restraints of law, that he was holy, sinless, and incapable of doing evil; and those who boast of holiness and a state of sinlessness, while transgressing the law of God, while willfully trampling under-foot the Sabbath of the Lord, are allied on the side of the first great rebel. If the sanctified, holy angels became unsanctified and unholy by disobedience to God's law, and their place was no longer found in heaven, think you that men, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, will be received into glory who break the precepts of that law which Christ came to magnify and make honorable by his death upon the cross? Adam and Eve were in possession of Eden, and they fell from their high and holy estate by transgression of God's law, and forfeited their right to the tree of life and to the joys of Eden.

Satan had told them that they were under restriction, under bondage to the law, and that they might be free and independent by disregarding the divine prohibition concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He informed them that they would be as the angels if they would but partake of its fruit, for they would then be able to discern both good and evil. But what angels would they be like?--Not holy angels, but like the angels who had left their first estate, who were reserved under everlasting chains unto the judgment of the great day. The holy pair had received the positive word of God in regard to what they should do, but they presumed on God's mercy, and ate of the forbidden fruit.

Is not the story of the fall repeated by thousands of lips today, and even from the pulpit do we not hear the words of the tempter, "Thou shalt not surely die"? Is not the law of God represented as a yoke of bondage which men are free to violate as they choose? Satan insinuated to Adam and Eve that they might reach a higher, happier state by violation of the divine command, and today the same falsehood is spread through the world, even by those who claim to be sanctified. Do not these who claim sanctification while violating the commands of God, become a false and fatal sign to the world? Do they not say to the sinner, "It shall be well with thee"? The Lord has defined sin as the transgression of his law, but they say they are saved in sin, and thus make Christ the minister of sin. These professed Christians are doing the very work that Satan did in

Paradise, they are leading souls astray by precept and example. They say to the sinner, to the transgressor, It shall be well with thee; you will rise to a higher, holier state by violating the law of God. The lesson that is heard throughout the land is, "Disobey and live." But how different is this teaching from the lessons of Christ. He declared: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

If the law of God should relinquish its claims upon men, if its restraints were removed, the result would be a state of society in which lawlessness would be rife, and our world would be in a condition similar to that which existed before the flood, which brought down on the earth the wrath of God. If the law of God could have been changed, or altered in one of its statutes, it would have been so altered when sin originated in heaven, when the brightest son of the morning, who was good, noble, and lovely above all the beings that God had created, found fault with the precepts of that law in the counsels of angels. If ever a change was to have been made, it would have been accomplished when rebellion revealed itself in heaven, and so have prevented the great apostasy of the angels. The fact that no change was made in God's administration, even when the most exalted of the angels drew away from allegiance to God's law, is evidence enough to reasonable minds that the law, the foundation of God's government, will not relax its claims to save the willful transgressor.

Satan and his followers were expelled from heaven in consequence of rebellion, and the spirit of the evil one now works in the children of disobedience; Satan carries on his rebellion against God in this world. He seeks to corrupt all; but the instruments most favorable to his purpose of ruining souls, are men who have had great light and blessing from God; for they can accomplish more harm in making void the law than can those who have been less favored of heaven. They use the same flattering sophistry that Satan used in heaven and in Eden; they speak of the law as a yoke of bondage, and picture the liberty of him who disregards its claims, as a state of holiness and sanctification. Those who claim holiness and make a boast that they cannot sin, though at the same time living in transgression of the law, are in the same condition as the angels that sinned in heaven. They make great pretensions to the favor of Heaven, claim to possess exalted

knowledge of spiritual things, while they go on in reckless disregard of the word of the Lord.

Satan deceives and corrupts the world and makes men believe that they are sinless and holy while sinning against God, but in so doing he is only carrying on his original work. He has introduced no new arguments, he has created no new empire of darkness from which to draw supplies for the furtherance of his deceptions. And sin that was sin in the beginning is sin today; and sin, the apostle declares, is the transgression of God's law. In these days it is Satan's determined purpose to intensify sin by making it legal in the children of disobedience. He is to reveal to the world and to heaven what is the order and result of a government carried on according to his ideas of administration and law. He is working with secret yet with intense zeal in both Church and State, to cause men to throw off all the restraints of God's law, and take a decided stand with him in the ranks of rebellion; but when his work is accomplished, the Lord will interpose, and vindicate his honor as the supreme Ruler of the universe.

May 12, 1890

God's Requirements in Grace, the Same as in Paradise

When our first parents were placed in the beautiful garden of Eden, they were tested in regard to their loyalty to God. They were free to choose the service of God, or by disobedience to ally themselves with the enemy of God and man. If they would abstain from that which God had forbidden, they might keep possession of their beautiful Eden home, and remain in the favor of God, but if they disregarded God's commands, and listened to the voice of Satan, as he spoke through the serpent, they would not only forfeit their claim to Eden, but to life itself. The penalty for sin had been set before them, and they were informed as to the tremendous issues depending on their action in obeying or disobeying the requirements of God.

With what intense interest the whole universe watched the conflict that was to decide the position of Adam and Eve. How attentively the angels listened to the words of Satan, the originator of sin, as he placed his own ideas above the commands of God, and sought to make of none effect the law of God through his deceptive reasoning! How anxiously they waited to see if the holy pair would be deluded by the tempter, and yield to his arts. They asked themselves, Will the holy pair transfer their faith and love from the Father and Son to Satan? Will they accept his falsehoods as truth? They knew that they might refrain from taking the fruit, and obey the positive injunction of God, or they might violate the express command of their Creator.

The mildest test was given them that could be given; for there was no need of their eating of the forbidden tree; everything that their wants required had been provided. The special work of Satan was to misrepresent the character of God, and in the first effort at man's overthrow he impeached the veracity of God. God had said to them of the forbidden tree, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die;" but the enemy of all righteousness declared: "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." Satan represented God as a deceiver, as one who would debar his creatures from the benefit of his highest gift. The angels heard with sorrow and amazement this statement in regard to the character of God, as Satan represented him as possessing his own miserable attributes; but Eve was not horror-stricken to hear the

holy and supreme God thus falsely accused. If she had turned her thoughts toward God, if she had looked upon beautiful Eden and remembered all the tokens of his love, if she had fled to her husband, she might have been saved from the subtle temptation of the evil one. One word of repulse would have brought to her the aid that God could give. One word in vindication of her Creator would have caused the accuser to flee, and her integrity would have been untarnished. If she had resisted the first temptation, she would have stood on higher, holier ground than ever before; but she yielded to the flatteries of her enemy, and became a captive to his will.

Our first parents fell through disobedience to God's express command, and this is where thousands fall today. The Lord says, "Thou shalt not," but Satan persuades that it is for man's interest to disobey God. There are many who even claim to be sanctified, who do not yield obedience to God's expressed command, and these cannot be sanctified through the truth. They seek to climb up to heaven some other way than the way which has been appointed. They say, "Believe, only believe," and they make a great boast of their faith, but the faith they claim to possess is simply presumption, and they have no knowledge of what constitutes genuine faith. The Jews cast aside Christ, and rejected the idea that faith in him would be efficacious in saving their souls; but they trusted in their works as a means of salvation. Genuine faith in Christ works by love and purifies the soul. Faith and works go hand in hand, for faith without works is dead. God requires of every soul today what he required of our first parents in Eden,-- perfect obedience to his law. There must be found in the life unswerving allegiance to God, righteousness without a flaw in the character. We must be clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and stand without blemish before God. The requirement that God has made in grace is the requirement that God made in Paradise.

It is a dangerous theory that leads men to declare that all that is necessary to salvation is to simply believe in Christ, while disregarding his plain commands. The gospel is not the Old Testament standard lowered, it requires faith that works righteousness, that keeps the commandments of God. Says the apostle, "This is the love of God that we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous." When men claim to be saved while living in violation of God's law, they claim that to which they have no right. Their salvation is not assured, but they are deceived by the falsehood of the evil one. The same sophistry is indulged, the same lie repeated by men, as was first spoken in Eden through the mediumship of the serpent. Though the medium is changed, the sentiment is the same.

God's law appeals to man as an intelligent being; he possesses a mind to understand its demands, a conscience to feel the power of its claims, a heart to love its requirement of perfect righteousness, a will to render prompt and implicit obedience. God does not compel men to render obedience to his law. If man purposes to defy God, and transgress his law, as did Adam, he may do so, but he must suffer the terrible consequences. If he chooses to obey God, he may attain to the experience of the psalmist when he says, "I love thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold."

May 19, 1890

Obedience is Sanctification

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor." In all the fullness of his divinity, in all the glory of his spotless humanity, Christ gave himself for us as a full and free sacrifice, and each one who comes to him should accept him as if he were the only one for whom the price had been paid. As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive; for the obedient will be raised to immortality, and the transgressor will rise from the dead to suffer death, the penalty of the law which he has broken.

Obedience to the law of God is sanctification. There are many who have erroneous ideas in regard to this work in the soul, but Jesus prayed that his disciples might be sanctified through the truth, and added, "Thy word is truth." Sanctification is not an instantaneous but a progressive work, as obedience is continuous. Just as long as Satan urges his temptations upon us, the battle for self-conquest will have to be fought over and over again; but by obedience, the truth will sanctify the soul. Those who are loyal to the truth will, through the merits of Christ, overcome all weakness of character which has led them to be moulded by every varying circumstance of life.

Many have taken the position that they cannot sin because they are sanctified, but this is a delusive snare of the evil one. There is constant danger of falling into sin, for Christ has warned us to watch and pray lest we enter into temptation. If we are conscious of the weakness of self, we shall not be self-confident and reckless of danger; but we shall feel the necessity of seeking to the Source of our strength, Jesus our righteousness. We shall come in repentance and contrition, with a despairing sense of our own finite weakness, and learn that we must daily apply to the merits of the blood of Christ, that we may become vessels fit for the Master's use. While thus depending upon God, we shall not be found warring against the truth, but we shall always be enabled to take our stand for the right. We should cling to the teaching of the Bible, and not follow the customs and traditions of the world, the sayings and doings of men. When errors arise and are taught as Bible truth, those who have a connection with Christ will not trust to what the minister says, but, like the noble Bereans, they will search the Scriptures daily to see if these things are so. When they discover what is the word of the

Lord, they will take their stand on the side of truth. They will hear the voice of the true Shepherd saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." Thus you will be educated to make the Bible the man of your counsel, and the voice of a stranger you will neither hear nor follow.

If the soul is to be purified and ennobled, and made fit for the heavenly courts, there are two lessons to be learned,--self-sacrifice and self-control. Some learn these important lessons more easily than do others, for they are exercised by the simple discipline the Lord gives them in gentleness and love. Others require the slow discipline of suffering, that the cleansing fire may purify their hearts of pride and self-reliance, of earthly passion and self-love, that the true gold of character may appear, and that they may become victors through the grace of Christ. The love of God will strengthen the soul, and through the virtue of the merits of the blood of Christ we may stand unscathed amid the fire of temptation and trial; but no other help can avail to save but Christ, our righteousness, who is made unto us wisdom and sanctification and redemption. True sanctification is nothing more or less than to love God with all the heart, to walk in his commandments and ordinances blameless. Sanctification is not an emotion, but a heaven-born principle that brings all the passions and desires under the control of the Spirit of God; and this work is done through our Lord and Saviour.

Spurious sanctification does not glorify God, but leads those who claim it to exalt and glorify themselves. Whatever comes in our experience, whether joy or sorrow, that does not reflect Christ and point to him as its author, bringing glory to him, and sinking self out of sight, is not true Christian experience. When the grace of Christ is implanted in the soul by the Holy Spirit, its possessor will become humble in spirit and will seek for the society of those whose conversation is upon heavenly things. Then the Spirit will take the things of Christ and show them unto us, and will glorify, not the receiver, but the Giver. If, therefore, you have the sacred peace of Christ in your heart, your lips will be filled with praise and thanksgiving to God. Your prayers, the discharge of your duty, your benevolence, your self-denial will not be the theme of your thought or conversation, but you will magnify Him who gave Himself for you when you were yet a sinner. You will say: "I give myself to Jesus. I have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write." As you praise him, you will have a precious blessing, and all the praise and glory for that which is done through your instrumentality will be given back to God.

The peace of Christ is not a boisterous, untamable element made manifest in loud voices and bodily exercises. The peace of Christ is an intelligent peace, and it does not make those who possess it bear the marks of fanaticism and extravagance. It is not a rambling impulse, but an emanation from God. When the Saviour imparts his peace to the soul, the heart will be in perfect harmony with the word of God; for the Spirit and the word agree. The Lord honors his word in all his dealings with men. It is his own will, his own voice, that is revealed to men, and he has no new will, no new truth, aside from his word to unfold to his children. If you have a wonderful experience that is not in harmony with the expressed directions of God's word, you may well doubt it; for its origin is not from above. The peace of Christ comes through the knowledge of Jesus whom the Bible reveals.

If happiness is drawn from outside sources, and not from the Divine Fount, it will be as changeable as varying circumstances can make it; but the peace of Christ is a constant and abiding peace. It does not depend on any circumstance in life, on the amount of worldly goods, or the number of earthly friends. Christ is the fountain of living waters, and happiness and peace drawn from him will never fail, for he is a well-spring of life. Those who trust in him can say: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High."

We have reason for ceaseless gratitude to God that Christ, by his perfect obedience, has won back the heaven that Adam lost through disobedience. Adam sinned, and the children of Adam share his guilt and its consequences; but Jesus bore the guilt of Adam, and all the children of Adam that will flee to Christ, the second Adam, may escape the penalty of transgression. Jesus regained heaven for man by bearing the test that Adam failed to endure; for he obeyed the law perfectly, and all who have a right conception of the plan of redemption will see that they cannot be saved while in transgression of God's holy precepts. They must cease to transgress the law, and lay hold on the promises of God that are available for us through the merits of Christ.

Our faith is not to stand in the ability of men but in the power of God. There is

danger of trusting in men, even though they may have been used as instruments of God to do a great and good work. Christ must be our strength and our refuge. The best of men may fall from their steadfastness, and the best of religion, when corrupted, is ever the most dangerous in its influence upon minds. Pure, living religion is found in obedience to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Righteousness exalts a nation, and the absence of it degrades and ruins man.

From the pulpits of today the words are uttered: "Believe, only believe. Have faith in Christ; you have nothing to do with the old law, only trust in Christ." How different is this from the words of the apostle, who declares that faith without works is dead. He says, "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." We must have that faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Many seek to substitute a superficial faith for uprightness of life, and think through this to obtain salvation. The Lord requires at this time just what he required of Adam in Eden,-- perfect obedience to the law of God. We must have righteousness without a flaw, without a blemish. God gave his son to die for the world, but he did not die to repeal the law which was holy and just and good. The sacrifice of Christ on Calvary is an unanswerable argument showing the immutability of the law. Its penalty was felt by the Son of God in behalf of guilty man, that through his merits the sinner might obtain the virtue of his spotless character by faith in his name. The sinner was provided with a second opportunity to keep the law of God in the strength of his Divine Redeemer. The cross of Calvary forever condemns the idea that Satan has placed before the Christian world, that the death of Christ abolished not only the typical system of sacrifices and ceremonies but the unchangeable law of God, the foundation of his throne, the transcript of his character. Through every device possible Satan has sought to make of none effect the sacrifice of the Son of God, to render his expiation useless, and his mission a failure. He has claimed that the death of Christ made obedience to the law unnecessary, and permitted the sinner to come into favor with a holy God without forsaking his sin. He has declared that the Old Testament standard was lowered in the gospel, and that men can come to Christ, not to be saved from their sins but in their sins. But when John beheld Jesus he told his mission. He said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." To every repentant soul the message is, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

May 26, 1890

Candid Investigation Necessary to an Understanding of the Truth

We must have greater wisdom than we have yet manifested in regard to the manner in which we treat those who in some points of faith honestly differ from us. It is unbecoming in anyone who claims to be a follower of Christ to be sharp and denunciatory, to stoop to ridicule the views of another. The spirit of criticism unfits men for receiving the light that God would send them, or for seeing what is evidence of the truth. Should the Lord reveal light after his own plan, many would not respect or comprehend it; they would ridicule the bearer of God's message as one who set himself up above those who were better qualified to teach.

The papal authorities first ridiculed the reformers, and when this did not quench the spirit of investigation, they placed them behind prison walls, loaded them with chains, and when this did not silence them or make them recant, they finally brought them to the fagot and the sword. We should be very cautious lest we take the first steps in this road that leads to the Inquisition. The truth of God is progressive; it is always onward, going from strength to a greater strength, from light to a greater light. We have every reason to believe that the Lord will send us increased truth, for a great work is yet to be done. In our knowledge of truth, there is first a beginning in our understanding of it, then a progression, then completion; first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear. Much has been lost because our ministers and people have concluded that we have had all the truth essential for us as a people; but such a conclusion is erroneous and in harmony with the deceptions of Satan; for truth will be constantly unfolding.

The greatest care should be exercised lest we do despite to the Spirit of God by treating with indifference and scorn the messenger, and the messages, God sends to his people, and so reject light because our hearts are not in harmony with God. When Christianity is truly received, it will always transform the heart and mould the character. Let those who have been accounted worthy to be expositors of God's word, who have been intrusted with the care of the flock of God, like humble, wise men, open their Bibles with grateful hearts and study its precious utterances. The messenger of God should not only search the Scriptures, but he should also urge the people to study the

word of truth. As the miner seeks for gold in the rocks and the mountains, so men should dig in the mine of truth, that they may find out what God has revealed concerning the salvation of man.

If you come to the Bible to find texts simply to prove your theory or vindicate your opinion, you will not be enlightened by the Spirit of God; but if you come with fasting and humiliation of soul, with love for man and God in your heart, your prayers will be answered, and light will break upon you. We every one need to seek the Lord with our whole heart and in humble prayer. We need to lay down the prejudices that have for years bound us about. If you have been in the truth for many years, and some brother who is much younger in years and in the faith is called upon to teach, your age, your position, your intelligence, and understanding of the Scriptures, will not give you license to treat this brother with indifference and disrespect. Timothy learned many things of Paul. Although a young man, he obtained knowledge of the word of God by patient industry. He put his powers to the task of understanding the word of God, and he was richly rewarded. Paul writes to Timothy: "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.... Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Grave responsibilities were laid upon Timothy, who was a mere youth. The injunction comes sounding down to our time concerning him and other youthful disciples of Christ, "Let no man despise thy youth."

Samuel was chosen as a servant of God even from his childhood. God could communicate to him his word, although he had to pass by the ancient Eli, who had not been careful to do the will of God or to carry out his instruction. It will not answer to think that unless messages shall come from old and honored servants of God, they cannot be authoritative and God-given. With all deference to the youthful agent, Eli accepted the word of God from the lips of the child Samuel. Great care should be manifested by those who have acted a prominent part in the work, that they may not think that light cannot come to God's people except through them. When they are meek and lowly of heart, without prejudice or self-exaltation because they have been highly privileged, they will be one with youthful men whom God has educated to act a special part in his work. These young men would find a great blessing in depending upon the experience of older brethren, if those who have been long in the work do not stand upon

their dignity, if self does not assume prominence, and the younger brethren seem insignificant. But if this is the case, the Lord cannot use them in the work.

There is a witness ever present with you who reads the motives, who knows the thoughts and purposes of the heart. It is safe to be always kind and courteous, to manifest a hearty friendship and love for your brethren. In counsels or assemblies where differences of views are to be discussed, you should remember that the Master of assemblies is with you. Unfairness, hard speeches, and efforts to turn others away from an impartial decision, will all be recorded in the books of heaven. If, upon a candid investigation, your cherished ideas should be weakened by a comparison with the law and the testimony, do not let a willful, hard, stubborn spirit rise up in opposition to that which you see to be evidence against your views. If a brother differs with you, do not become provoked; treat him with candor; do not overwhelm him with assertions. Do not handle the word of God deceitfully, presenting detached passages of Scripture which you think favor your ideas, and withholding other passages which seem to weaken your position. Let God speak in his word. If you think your brother believes an error, you should deal with him considerately, manifesting tenderness, patience, and courtesy. You should reason with him from the word of God, comparing scripture with scripture, considering carefully every jot of evidence. In no case should his words be made a matter of ridicule, for "with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

Paul charged Timothy: "Flee also youthful lusts; but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if any man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another." Let every man obey these directions. You have before you the example of Christ. Although the

homage and service of all was his due, yet he sought not honor of men; he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." All the world belonged to him; but when he was rejected in towns and cities, he did not assert his right to his own, he went to another village to teach the truth whether men would hear or whether they would forbear. Let every soul be careful lest he prove himself to be among those who despise and wonder and perish, who turn from Christ in the person of his saints, and bring upon themselves the condemnation that fell upon the Jews.

The teachers of the people in the time of Christ were fully satisfied with themselves. They held counsels and strengthened one another in their ideas and opinions, and Satan was in their assemblies controlling their decisions. They strove to make the people afraid of hearing the words of Christ. They threatened to turn those who would heed his doctrine out of the synagogue, and this was regarded by the people as the greatest curse that could fall upon them. The scribes and Pharisees had formed their plans, and they did not intend to change their course of life or their manner of teaching. They would hear Christ, but they refused to let his teachings have any weight with them. They feigned to be his friends in order to draw him out on different subjects. They questioned him concerning difficult problems, that whatever he might answer, they would be able to turn his words against him.

On one occasion the scribes and the Pharisees "brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, they say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned; but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last."

Although Jesus gave evidence of his divine power, yet he was not permitted to teach his lessons without interruption. The rulers sought to hold him up to ridicule before the people. They would not allow him to state his ideas and doctrines in a connected way, but, although frequently interrupted, light flashed into the mind of

hundreds, and when the rulers heard the words of Jesus, that were clothed with power and held the people spell-bound, they were angry, and said, "Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil." Jesus met these charges with quiet dignity, fearlessly and decidedly claiming that covenant rights were centered in himself, and were not received through Abraham. He declared, "Before Abraham was, I am." The fury of the Jews knew no bounds, and they prepared to stone him, but the angels of God, unseen by men, hurried him out of their assembly.

There are men among us who profess to understand the truth for these last days, but who will not calmly investigate advanced truth. They are determined to make no advance beyond the stakes which they have set, and will not listen to those who, they say, do not stand by the old landmarks. They are so self-sufficient that they cannot be reasoned with. They consider it a virtue to be at variance with their brethren, and close the door, that light shall not find an entrance to the people of God. It will require heavenly wisdom to know how to deal with such cases. Light will come to God's people, and those who have sought to close the door will either repent or be removed out of the way. The time has come when a new impetus must be given to the work. There are terrible scenes before us, and Satan is seeking to keep from our knowledge the very things that God would have us know. God has messengers and messages for his people. If ideas are presented that differ in some points from our former doctrines, we must not condemn them without diligent search of the Bible to see if they are true. We must fast and pray and search the Scriptures as did the noble Bereans, to see if these things are so. We must accept every ray of light that comes to us. Through earnest prayer and diligent study of God's word, dark things will be made plain to the understanding.

June 2, 1890

"Is Not This A Brand Plucked Out Of The Fire?"

"And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee; is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair miter upon his head. So they set a fair miter upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by."

Joshua represents those who are seeking God and keeping his commandments. Ever since the fall, Satan has sought to bring a reproach upon God's cause. The word of God declares that he is an accuser of the brethren. As the end is brought near, he will work with more determination to bring God's people under condemnation. Satan is represented as presenting the mistakes and errors that he has caused the people of God to commit, urging this as a reason why the Lord should not bless and guard them. He claims that it is his right to do with them as he pleases. It is impossible for us to understand his plans unless we have the Spirit of God abiding in our hearts. It is the care of the heavenly angels that keeps us from being destroyed by Satan's cruel power; for those who seek God and are preparing for the coming of Christ, are the objects of his enmity. He constantly seeks to bring them into reproach before God. He is represented as resisting the work of Jesus in behalf of his people. Joshua stands before the angel of the Lord, and Satan stands at his right hand to resist him. But "the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee; is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?"

Jesus speaks of his people as a brand plucked out of the fire, and Satan understands what this means. The infinite sufferings of the Son of God in Gethsemane and on Calvary were endured that he might rescue his people from the power of the evil one. The work of Jesus for the salvation of perishing souls is as if he thrust his hand into the fire to save them. Joshua, who represents God's people, is clothed in filthy garments,

and stands before the angel; but as the people repent before God for the transgression of his law, and reach up by the hand of faith to lay hold on the righteousness of Christ, Jesus says, "Take away the filthy garments from them, and clothe them with change of raiment" It is through Christ's righteousness alone that we are enabled to keep the law. Those who worship God in sincerity and truth, and afflict their souls before him as in the great day of atonement, will wash their robes of character and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. Satan seeks to bind about the human mind with deception, so that men will not repent and believe, that they may have their filthy garments removed. Why will you cling to your miserable defects of character, and by so doing bar the way, that Jesus may not work in your behalf?

During the time of trouble, the position of God's people will be similar to the position of Joshua. They will not be ignorant of the work going on in heaven in their behalf. They will realize that sin is recorded against their names, but they will also know that the sins of all who repent and lay hold of the merits of Christ will be canceled. Jesus says: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." The judgment of the dead has been going on, and soon the judgment will begin upon the living, and every case will be decided. It will be known whose names are retained upon the book of life, and whose are blotted out. Every day the angels of God keep a record of the transactions of men, and these records stand open to the eyes of angels, and Christ, and God. Those who have manifested true repentance for sin, and by living faith in Christ are obedient to God's commandments, will have their names retained in the book of life, and they will be confessed before the Father and before the holy angels. Jesus will say, "They are mine; I have purchased them with my own blood."

The time of trouble is soon to break upon us, and the decree will go forth that everyone who will not keep the first day of the week shall be put to death. Those who have not regarded the Sabbath as they should, who have exalted their business above God's commandment, will trample upon the Sabbath and keep the first day of the week, because they have consulted their own convenience before the honor of God. They did not learn to bring themselves into harmony with the Sabbath, but sought to bring the Sabbath to meet their own convenience. With the preparation they have made, they are no more fitted to stand in the day of judgment than the greatest sinner. Their ideas are confused; they have tried to serve God and mammon; they received not the love of the

truth, that they might be saved. Those who love God with all the heart, and their neighbor as themselves, will be the only ones who will stand the test of the decree. When Satan brings his power to bear upon half-hearted professors, he will sweep them over to his side, he will claim his right to do with them as he pleases. But of those who honor God, the Lord says, "They shall be mine, ... in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him."

Those who are in the favor of God will not be deceived. Many now pass as Sabbath-keepers who, when the test comes upon the question, will no longer have a place among those who observe God's commandments. The prophet says, "Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." Those who are determined to have their own way, who measure themselves by their own standard, will have their time of trouble. The prophet declares: "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts."

The Sun of Righteousness shall arise upon those who have kept the commandments of God. Those who think that they can set their will against God's will are in the greatest danger. Those who wish to be covered in the day of God's anger, must be true to God now. Now is the time to show our fidelity to God, and our faith in Christ. The sins that have been committed against God will be blotted out if they are repented of. Christ said: "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair miter upon his head. So they set a fair miter upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by. And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts: If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by." Who are these that stand by?--The angels of God. They will be as a wall of fire round about the people of God, and the hosts of evil will not be able to pass their ranks. The angels of Satan are working with the children of disobedience to inspire them with madness against those who are loyal

to the law of God. Although the people of God are despised by the world, and "it doth not yet appear what we shall be," yet the wicked will one day see God's people glorified; they will see the promise fulfilled, "Them that honor me, I will honor."

While we are in the world, we should be the light of the world; for God has a work for each one to do. Only a few will choose to obey the truth, and we should seek for the grace of God that we may represent his service aright. There is a spirit in the church which greatly misrepresents the exalted character of the truth. In place of having your attention turned toward Jesus, in place of studying his life and character that you may copy the divine pattern, you have measured yourselves among yourselves, and in this way the truth of God has been greatly dishonored. Envy, jealousy, criticism of others, love of supremacy, have all flourished among the professed people of God. Some have claimed that special messages have been given them of God, and their attention has been turned away from the preparation of heart necessary to meet Christ in peace. Satan will invent everything possible to lead men away from the real work. If the members of the church are not subject one to another, if they go here and there with a message God has not given them, the church will become demoralized, and fanaticism of the worst order will come in. There are conscientious souls who will accept anything that calls for sacrifice. Christ has said, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." God sends his messenger, and if the people will receive the message, they will not be led into error.

The Lord wants you to consult together. If, in years past, there had been more consultation concerning the work in Norway, it would have been far in advance of what it is today. Personal effort, personal opinion, personal plans, have placed upon the work a mould that does not elevate and ennoble the people of God. The enemy is trying to make of none effect the word of God. Those in the church who ought to set an example to the flock, have had such a lax hold of God that they have not been able to influence the people.

You are to be obedient to all the requirements of God. When you bring your own work into God's time, when you violate the Sabbath, your moral sense becomes clouded, and you cannot discern that your course is an offense to God. If your eyes could be opened, you would see the Saviour by your side with blood-stained hands. He was wounded for your transgressions; will you refuse to accept the great sacrifice that was made in your behalf? For your sake, Christ became poor, that you through his

poverty might be made rich in heavenly riches. Today we present the cross of Calvary. It speaks in plain language to every soul that is not deluded by the temptation of Satan in consequence of disobedience to God's law. Christ came to our world and died a shameful death because the precepts of the law could not be changed. He endured the cross, despised the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. He suffered all this for the joy that was set before him,--the joy of bringing many sons and daughters to God. He died to bring us into harmony with the law of Heaven. He has said: "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

Many are in peril today; their eyes have been blinded; and as Christ said to Nicodemus, I say to them, "Ye must be born again." I expect to meet my words in the last great day. When I look at the people here who are trying to serve God, I would try to fulfill the words of the prophet, and comfort the people of God. Your Saviour is a living Saviour, who is pleading with the Father in your behalf. Everyone who will keep the word of his patience will be saved from the temptation that will come upon all the world. The smallest acts are written in the book of God, but God says that he will not despise a humble and a contrite heart. If you had all the wealth of the world, it would not provide a ransom for your soul, or elevate you in the favor of Heaven. Will you be a child of God? Will you walk in humility before him? Your talents, your ability, your means, belong to God. Give all to him; for he has purchased all with an infinite price.

We exhort you to come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Shut out everything that will separate you from God; put away sin from among you. The people of the world may seem to pass on without perplexity, and to be more favored than the righteous. David says: "Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning.... When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end." There are many who are in the same condition of mind today as was David; but if they would go into the sanctuary, and understand the latter end of the wicked, they would be no more envious of them.

"Then I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a flying roll. And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I answered, I see a flying roll; the length thereof

is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits. Then said he unto me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth; for everyone that stealeth shall be cut off as on this side according to it; and everyone that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side according to it. I will bring it forth, saith the Lord of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name; and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it with the timber thereof and the stones thereof."

The angel is represented as flying through the midst of heaven with a roll in his hand, on which are written the deeds of our daily life. God bears long with the children of men, but there is a time coming when he will cease to bear with them. God wants them to get under the cover of his wings. Jesus is pleading his blood in our behalf, but Satan is standing at his right hand, resisting every effort in our behalf. May God help us to humble our hearts, before it shall be forever too late to make wrongs right.

Let the Spirit of God fashion our character and our work. We are responsible for the manner in which the truth is presented. We should seek to impress unbelievers with its exalted character. Christ is soon coming, and those who have not kept the Sabbath sacredly should reform. God will frown upon those who disregard his commandments, and he cannot bless the church that retains Sabbath-breakers in its fellowship.

Oh, that Christ might walk among you, that he might say, "Take away the filthy garment, and clothe them with change of raiment." We want to know that we are on the Lord's side. We want to dwell with him through all eternity. Those who sit with Christ on his throne must be partakers with him of his sufferings. They must drink of the cup that he drank of, and be baptized with the baptism that he was baptized with.

June 9, 1890

"He that Hath Seen Me Hath Seen the Father"

Through Jesus, the Son of God, the Father is more fully revealed to the world. Jesus said to his disciples: "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also; and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." The souls of thousands are crying out today, "Show us the Father, and we will be satisfied. We cannot claim God as our Father until we see him." Jesus says to every such soul, as he said to Philip: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me? Have you seen my works, have you listened to my teachings, have you witnessed the miracles that I have wrought in my Father's name, and yet have you not understood the nature of God? I have prayed with you and for you, and yet can you not comprehend that I am the way, the truth, and the life, and that in my life I have unfolded to you the character of my Father? I am the brightness of my Father's glory, I am the express image of his person. 'Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.'"

The time had come for Jesus to stand in contradiction to the work of Satan, to rebuke and oppose his power. At the beginning of his ministry, John was baptizing in the Jordan, and Christ came to him to receive the baptismal rite. As man's example he took the step in conversion requisite for the repenting, believing sinner; and the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him, and lo, a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He was consecrated to his office by God himself. He was anointed by the Spirit, invested with the authority, and endowed with the attributes, of God; and his mission was to reveal the Father to the world.

As Christ was to reveal the Father, so those who believe in Jesus are to reveal

Christ to the world in spirit and character; they are to be good, and to do good. Wherever Jesus went, he taught his disciples concerning the kingdom of God; he turned every event into an occasion of usefulness, and his followers are to do the same.

After the ascension of Christ, his disciples were left to carry forward the work which he had been doing. They were to be the instruments through which the Lord should speak, and many were to believe on their word, and engage in the work that Jesus had done when he was upon earth. God's appointed agents are to study carefully the lessons which Christ taught his disciples. They are to contemplate his precious instruction, and to imitate the holy characteristics of his teachings; if they fail to do this, they fail to represent Christ as he represented the Father. There is need of fervent and frequent prayer that we may understand the import of his instruction, and carry forward the work he has given us to do. We are to bear in mind that it is only a small proportion of what Jesus taught and did that has been recorded.

That the disciples of Christ might be prepared for the great work which they were to do, Jesus had instructed them to tarry in Jerusalem until they should be endowed with power from on high. On the day of Pentecost, as they were assembled together, and with one accord were seeking for the fulfillment of his promise, the Spirit of God descended, and the hearts of those who believed were filled with the Holy Ghost. The most signal evidence of the power of God was manifested, and thousands were converted in a day. Our Saviour has provided that those who go forth to fulfill his commission of preaching the gospel to the world, shall not go without the divine unction. He has said, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." If men would come to God and make an entire surrender to him in full assurance of faith, they would have grace to do the great work committed to them.

When Moses was called out to lead the children of Israel, he prayed earnestly to the Lord, and said: "See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people; and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight. Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight; and consider that this nation is thy people. And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. And he said unto him, If thy presence go not with

me, carry us not up hence. 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. And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken; for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy."

The Lord did not rebuke Moses as presumptuous because he asked greater and greater favors at his hand. Every laborer in the cause of God should have firm, earnest faith and determined purpose, that he may know that he has the favor and presence of God with him. Co-workers with God may obtain all that they ask for if they will but seek the Lord with faith. In the time of Christ, many of his disciples remained ignorant of the very thing that it was their privilege to know. Jesus sought to teach them of spiritual things. He reproached his disciples because of their dullness of comprehension. If it had been impossible for them to comprehend the things he uttered, he would not thus have reproved them. They might have exerted their mental powers to a greater extent, and stimulated their souls, by prayer and faith, and so have been enabled to understand the mysteries of godliness. Jesus saw that they did not lay hold of the real meaning of the great truths that he presented, and he compassionately promised that the Holy Spirit should recall these sayings to their minds, and revive in their remembrance many of the truths which they had lost. He tried to impress upon them the fact that he had opened before them great truths, the value of which they had failed to comprehend. After his resurrection, when he opened to them the scriptures concerning himself, he said unto them, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you.... Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures." Although Christ had been with them, and they had heard his exposition of the prophecies, they had failed to comprehend the great plan of the atonement, and they needed the power of the Spirit of God to make plain to their minds its deep significance.

When the Holy Spirit fell upon the disciples of Christ, they saw their Saviour in a light in which they had never seen him before. Gladness and peace came to their souls. Jesus had told them what would be the result of the operation of the Holy Spirit. He had said. "He shall glorify me." Through the agency of the Holy Spirit, the soul is sanctified by obedience to the truth, and Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He

unfolded to man the important lesson that the sum of all science is to be found in the excellency of the knowledge of Christ. This knowledge can be incorporated into everyone's experience. The Scriptures declare, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

The knowledge of God and Christ lies at the foundation of all knowledge. Through the study of the Bible, moral power is developed; and while the mind is put to the task of comprehending its truths, the intellect expands; as the image of Christ, the Author of all truth, brightens to the vision, the understanding becomes enlarged to comprehend more fully the elevated character of the standard of perfection. Those who study the Bible in the right manner, drink from a fountain which is inexhaustible. The teaching of Christ is simple, and yet the greatest and best disciplined minds are charmed with his profound and comprehensive utterances. In all his lessons, Jesus presented to men the worthlessness of ceremonial obedience. He sought to impress men with the spirituality of the law, unveiling its vital principles, and making plain its eternal obligations. The righteousness of the law was presented to the world in the character of Christ, and the holy, benevolent, and paternal attributes of God were revealed in his dealings with mankind. He explained the solemn relation which existed between man and God, between man and his fellow-man. He taught the necessity of prayer, repentance, faith, virtue, and perfection of character.

Through Christ, moral power is brought to man that will change the entire affections, and enable man to work with a will for the cause of God. Where all the power of mind and body was before concentrated to work the works of evil, by the Spirit of God a revolution is brought about. The Holy Spirit enlightens, renews, and sanctifies the soul. Angels behold with inexpressible rapture the results of the working of the Holy Spirit in man. By the revelation of the attractive loveliness of Christ, by the knowledge of his love expressed to us while we were yet sinners, the stubborn heart is melted and subdued, and the sinner is transformed and becomes a child of God. Love is the agency which God uses to expel sin from the human soul. By it he changes pride into humility, enmity and unbelief into love and faith. He does not employ compulsory measures; Jesus is revealed to the soul, and if man will look in faith to the Lamb of God, he will live.

Jesus has given this invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." In coming to Jesus, we reveal our faith. The law

condemns the sinner, and by this condemnation he is led to see the necessity of a Saviour. He seeks refuge in Jesus, and the Son is glorified and exalted as the Redeemer of the world; he is the sinner's substitute and surety.

No man can keep the law of God apart from Christ, and God will not accept his unaided efforts. The nature of man is in opposition to the divine will, depraved, deformed, and wholly unlike the character of God expressed in his law. Man is accepted through the righteousness of Christ, through obedience to God's law. God imputes beauty, excellence, and perfection to man through the merits of his Son, and thus places the highest honor upon Christ by making him the pattern by which he works to fashion the character of all believers. Christ is presented to men that they may catch his temper, his perfection; and as the model is complete and perfect in every part, so, as man is conformed to the image of Christ, he is made complete in him; for aside from Christ there never can be righteousness in the human heart.

When the Spirit was poured out from on high, the church was flooded with light, but Christ was that light; the church was filled with joy, but Christ was the subject of that joy. When the Spirit is poured upon his people in this day, Christ's name will be upon every tongue, his love will fill every soul; and when the heart embraces Jesus, it will embrace God; for all the fullness of God dwells in Christ. When the beams of Christ's righteousness shine upon the soul, joy, adoration, and glory will be woven with the experience.

June 16, 1890

Faith and Works

"Without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." There are many in the Christian world who claim that all that is necessary to salvation is to have faith; works are nothing, faith is the only essential. But God's word tells us that faith without works is dead, being alone. Many refuse to obey God's commandments, yet they make a great deal of faith. But faith must have a foundation. God's promises are all made upon conditions. If we do his will, if we walk in truth, then we may ask what we will, and it shall be done unto us. While we earnestly endeavor to be obedient, God will hear our petitions; but he will not bless us in disobedience. If we choose to disobey his commandments, we may cry, "Faith, faith, only have faith," and the response will come back from the sure word of God, "Faith without works is dead." Such faith will only be as sounding brass and as a tinkling cymbal. In order to have the benefits of God's grace, we must do our part; we must faithfully work, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. We are workers together with God. You are not to sit in indolence, waiting for some great occasion, in order to do a great work for the Master. You are not to neglect the duty that lies directly in your pathway; but you are to improve the little opportunities that open around you. You must go on doing your very best in the smaller works of life, taking up heartily and faithfully the work God's providence has assigned you. However small, you should do it with all the thoroughness with which you would do a larger work. Your fidelity will be approved in the records of heaven. You need not wait for your way to be made smooth before you; go to work to improve your intrusted talents. You have nothing to do with what the world will think of you. Let your words, your spirit, your actions, be a living testimony to Jesus, and the Lord will take care that the testimony for his glory, furnished in a well-ordered life and a godly conversation, shall deepen and intensify in power. Its results may never be seen on earth, but they will be made manifest before God and angels.

We are to do all that we can do on our part to fight the good fight of faith. We are to wrestle, to labor, to strive, to agonize to enter in at the strait gate. We are to set the Lord ever before us. With clean hands, with pure hearts, we are to seek to honor God in all our ways. Help has been provided for us in Him who is mighty to save. The spirit of

truth and light will quicken and renew us by its mysterious workings; for all our spiritual improvement comes from God, not from ourselves. The true worker will have divine power to aid him, but the idler will not be sustained by the Spirit of God. In one way we are thrown upon our own energies; we are to strive earnestly to be zealous and to repent, to cleanse our hands and purify our hearts from every defilement; we are to reach the highest standard, believing that God will help us in our efforts. We must seek if we would find, and seek in faith; we must knock, that the door may be opened unto us. The Bible teaches that everything regarding our salvation depends upon our own course of action. If we perish, the responsibility will rest wholly upon ourselves. If provision has been made, and if we accept God's terms, we may lay hold on eternal life. We must come to Christ in faith, we must be diligent to make our calling and election sure.

The forgiveness of sin is promised to him who repents and believes; the crown of life will be the reward of him who is faithful to the end. We may grow in grace by improving through the grace we already have. We are to keep ourselves unspotted from the world, if we would be found blameless in the day of God. Faith and works go hand in hand, they act harmoniously in the work of overcoming. Works without faith are dead, and faith without works is dead. Works will never save us; it is the merit of Christ that will avail in our behalf. Through faith in him, Christ will make all our imperfect efforts acceptable to God. The faith we are required to have is not a do-nothing faith; saving faith is that which works by love, and purifies the soul. He who will lift up holy hands to God without wrath and doubting, will walk intelligently in the way of God's commandments.

If we are to have pardon for our sins, we must first have a realization of what sin is, that we may repent, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance. We must have a solid foundation for our faith; it must be founded on the word of God, and its results will be seen in obedience to God's expressed will. Says the apostle, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Faith and works will keep us evenly balanced, and make us successful in the work of perfecting Christian character. Jesus says, "Not everyone 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." Speaking of temporal food, the apostle said, "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat." The same rule applies to our spiritual nourishment; if any would have the bread of eternal life, let him make efforts to obtain it.

We are living in an important and interesting period of this earth's history. We need more faith than we have yet had; we need a firmer hold from above. Satan is working with all power to obtain the victory over us, for he knows that he has but a short time in which to work. Paul had fear and trembling in working out his salvation; and should not we fear lest a promise being left us, we should any of us seem to come short of it, and prove ourselves unworthy of eternal life? We should watch unto prayer, strive with agonizing effort to enter in at the strait gate.

There is no excuse for sin, or for indolence. Jesus has led the way, and he wishes us to follow in his steps. He has suffered, he has sacrificed as none of us can, that he might bring salvation within our reach. We need not be discouraged. Jesus came to our world to bring divine power to man, that through his grace, we might be transformed into his likeness. When it is in the heart to obey God, when efforts are put forth to this end, Jesus accepts this disposition and effort as man's best service, and he makes up for the deficiency with his own divine merit. But he will not accept those who claim to have faith in him, and yet are disloyal to his Father's commandment. We hear a great deal about faith, but we need to hear a great deal more about works. Many are deceiving their own souls by living an easy-going, accommodating, crossless religion. But Jesus says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

July 7, 1890

"What shall I Do to Inherit Eternal Life?"

"And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, 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. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor? And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him."

The scribes and Pharisees trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others. They looked with contempt upon the Samaritans, and Jesus related this parable to show them that it is the spirit of the man that makes him of value with God, and not his nation or profession. The priest and Levite had passed by the man who was in need of their help, and had left him to die by the wayside; but the Samaritan had had compassion upon him, and had acted the part of a Christian neighbor to him. It would not have been best to present this lesson to the haughty priests except in a parable, yet in this parable Jesus made it evident that they had only a religion of ceremonies. They rested in outward observances of the law, but did not keep it in heart. The Scriptures declare that "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin." In the gospel the great standard of righteousness is not presented in a dimmer light than in the Old Testament. Christ declared that not one jot or tittle of the law should pass until heaven and earth should pass. The divine Teacher held up the perfect standard of righteousness as the only thing by which to test human character. The law reveals to men the deformity of the heart, and the gospel enforces the law by presenting Christ in contrast to man.

In the parable of the good Samaritan, Jesus gave a picture of himself and his mission. Man had been deceived, bruised, robbed, and ruined by Satan, and left to perish; but Christ had compassion on our helpless condition. He left his glory to come to our rescue. He found us ready to die, and he undertook our case. He healed our wounds, he opened to us a refuge of safety, made complete provision for our needs at his own charges. He died to redeem us. We are to look to Christ's life, we are to see his Spirit and work, that we may view our life and work in the light reflected from the life of Christ. We may see how far short we come of keeping the commandments of God, how far short we come of loving our neighbors as ourselves.

When the rich young ruler came to Christ, inquiring the way of salvation, Jesus told him to keep the commandments. The ruler answered that he had kept them from his youth up, but he who could penetrate into the secrets of the heart, showed him that he had failed. Jesus said to 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."

Conviction of sin is the first step in conversion, and by the law is the knowledge of sin. When the sinner has a realization of his sin, he is in a condition to be drawn to Christ by the amazing love that has been shown for him on the cross of Calvary. When he is humble and penitent, he does not look for pardon to the law which he has broken, but he looks to God, who has provided forgiveness and sanctification through his well-beloved Son. As he beholds the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world, he grows to love him, and by beholding he becomes changed into his image. The apostle wrote, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." The meek and holy Sufferer bore our sins, that the plan of salvation might be opened before men, that whosoever should believe on him might not perish, but have everlasting life.

All who see their own ignorance and sin, will have some appreciation of the great work of redemption, through which man is chosen as the object of God's patience and loving-kindness. As man sees the sinfulness of his nature in the light of the law, he will realize his great need of a Saviour. We all need to search the Scriptures, that we may become acquainted with the conditions of salvation, by which reconciliation may be brought about between man and God. Man must find the path that leads back to the

Father's house, and every step away from transgression is a step toward Paradise. Every step in repentance, contrition, obedience, and faith, is a step toward the Father. True faith in Christ will lead to obedience to the requirements of God. (To be Continued.)

July 14, 1890

"What Shall I Do to Inherit Eternal Life?"

There are many who say, "Believe, believe; all you have to do is to believe." But faith must have foundation, and those who preach that all we must do is to believe, do not themselves know what constitutes true faith. They do not carefully search the Scriptures to know on what ground faith should rest. The advocating of faith, and the disparaging of the keeping of the commandments of God, is only another phase of the controversy originated by Satan in heaven. Indifference to the precepts of the law lowers the conception of what constitutes righteousness; and one who opposes the law at this time, places himself in a more perilous position than that in which Adam and Eve were when they disobeyed God's commandments, for they afterward repented of their sin, and turned away from their allegiance to his enemy.

After Satan brought sin into the world, he tempted man to set himself in rebellion against the authority of God. He inspired him with hatred against God because of the results that followed sin. He suggested that God was arbitrary, destitute of mercy and benevolence, because the penalty of the law fell upon the transgressor. When fallen man views God in this light, he casts aside his authority as a moral governor. God has a right to enforce the penalty of the law upon transgressors, for law without a penalty would be without force. God's law is the foundation of all law and government. The fact that Christ suffered the penalty of the law for all transgressors, is an unanswerable argument as to its immutable character, and it will justly condemn those who have sought to make it void. When the curse fell upon the beloved Son of God, who became sin for us, the Father made it manifest that the unrepenting transgressor of his law would have to suffer its full penalty. The word of God declares, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." The law of God was upheld and vindicated by the Son of God. The death of Christ, as an expiatory sacrifice, opens a way whereby the sinner may be pardoned, and turn from the path of transgression into the path of truth and righteousness, while at the same time it vindicates the honor and unchangeableness of the law. In the plan of salvation, justice and mercy clasp hands together.

The sinner will find no saving quality in law; he must look to the surety and substitute, for it is the blood of Christ that cleanseth from all sin. The repenting prodigal

is taken into fellowship with God, and he becomes one with Christ, as Christ is one with the Father. The obedient children of God recognize the law as a divine law, the sacrifice on Calvary as a divine sacrifice, and the Holy Spirit as their divine sanctifier. All the claims of the law are met in Jesus. In him we have a perfect foundation for our faith. The Son of God did not die that man might always remain a transgressor; for Christ is not a minister of sin. He died that by that act man might no longer remain a rebel against God's law. He died to point men to the way of faith and obedience, that they might see to the end of that which is abolished. When sinners have a view of the plan of salvation, there is no more disposition to cavil concerning the law; for the way of truth and light is open to their understanding. They see that "whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." In the light of the law the sinner is convicted as was Paul.

Christ revealed himself to Paul in a flood of glory, and he was struck down helpless before him. He asked, "Who art thou, Lord?" and the Lord answered, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." Paul then inquired, "What will thou have me to do?" When Christ is revealed to the soul, the sinner's relation to the law is made plain. There must be repentance toward God for the transgression of his law, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ as the sinner's substitute. The convicted sinner sees his bruised, demoralized condition, feels his need of a physician, sees Christ as his only hope, and lays hold of him by faith. He is deeply conscious of his sin and ruin, and seeks the divine remedy in the world's Redeemer. (Concluded next week.)

July 21, 1890

"What Shall I Do to Inherit Eternal Life?"

Man is prone to forget God, even while claiming to be his servant. When Jesus stood up in the synagogue at Nazareth, announcing himself to be the Messiah, the people thought they loved him. They were glad to hear the tidings he brought them as he read the words of the prophet Isaiah concerning himself, saying: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." Divine light flashed upon their darkened minds, and their hearts were stirred to adoration. But when Christ showed them that they were no more in favor with heaven than were the Gentiles, who had had less light and fewer privileges, but who had walked in all the light they had, and improved all the opportunities they had been given, they dragged him from the synagogue, and sought to hurl him from the brow of the hill.

The multitudes who had been fed by Christ in the desert place imagined that they loved Jesus; but when he reproved them, charging them with caring more for the bread which perisheth than for the bread of life, they were angry, and many turned away from him. The rich young ruler came to Jesus, calling him master. He had listened to his wonderful words, he had seen his wonderful works; but when Christ showed him that he loved his riches more than his neighbor, he went away sorrowful, clinging to his idols. Simon thought he loved Jesus, but when he found that a poor, sorrowful, repentant woman was esteemed more highly than himself, the shallowness of his love was proved.

Many will see beautiful characteristics in Christ, and will admire them; but that love which embraces his entire character, will never dwell in a heart filled with self-righteousness, will never dwell in a heart that does not realize and abhor its own sinfulness. Not to hate ourselves in sin, is not to love Jesus. Not to see our own deformity, is not to see the beauty of Christ; for it is when the heart is fully aroused to its own state of degradation that Jesus will be appreciated. The more humble our views of self, the more exalted will be our views of Christ, and the more clearly we shall discern the sacred, spotless character of our Redeemer.

There are many who say, "We are holy, we are sinless." By their words they give the impression that they think themselves as good as Jesus, and some have even dared to assert that they were Christ; but even to entertain such thoughts as these is blasphemy. Not to see the marked contrast between ourselves and Jesus is not to know ourselves, and to be ignorant of our Lord.

Jesus died to save his people from their sins, and redemption in Christ means to cease the transgression of the law of God, and to be free from every sin; no heart that is stirred with enmity against the law of God, is in harmony with Christ, who suffered on Calvary, to vindicate and exalt the law before the universe.

Those who make bold assumptions of holiness give proof in this that they do not see themselves in the light of the law; they are not spiritually enlightened, and they do not loathe every species of selfishness and pride. From their sin-stained lips fall the contradictory utterances: "I am holy, I am sinless. Jesus teaches me that if I keep the law I am fallen from grace. The law is a yoke of bondage." The Lord says, "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." We should study the word of God carefully, that we may come to right decisions, and act accordingly; for then we shall obey the word and be in harmony with God's holy law.

While we are to be in harmony with God's law, we are not saved by the works of the law, yet we cannot be saved without obedience. The law is the standard by which character is measured. But we cannot possibly keep the commandments of God without the regenerating grace of Christ. Jesus alone can cleanse us from all sin. He does not save us by law, neither will he save us in disobedience to law.

Our love to Christ will be in proportion to the depth of our conviction of sin, and by the law is the knowledge of sin. But as we see ourselves, let us look away to Jesus, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity. By faith take hold of the merits of Christ, and the soul cleansing blood will be applied. The more clearly we see the evils and perils to which we have been exposed, the more grateful shall we be for deliverance through Christ. The gospel of Christ does not give men license to break the law; for it was through transgression that the flood-gates of woe were opened upon our world. Today sin is the same malignant thing that it was in the time of Adam. The

gospel does not promise the favor of God to anyone who in impenitence breaks his law. The depravity of the human heart, the guilt of transgression, the ruin of sin, are all made plain by the cross where Christ has made for us a way of escape.

Self-righteousness is the danger of this age; it separates the soul from Christ. Those who trust to their own righteousness cannot understand how salvation comes through Christ. They call sin righteousness, and righteousness sin. They have no appreciation of the evil of transgression, no understanding of the terror of the law; for they do not respect God's moral standard. The reason there are so many spurious conversions in these days, is that there is so low an appreciation of the law of God. Instead of God's standard of righteousness, men have erected a standard of their own by which to measure character. They see through a glass darkly, and present false ideas of sanctification to the people, thus encouraging egotism, pride, and self-righteousness. The doctrine of sanctification advocated by many is full of deception, because it is flattering to the natural heart; but the kindest thing that can be preached to the sinner is the truth of the binding claims of the law of God. Faith and works must go hand in hand; for faith without works is dead, being alone. The prophet declares a truth by which we may test all doctrine. He says, "To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Although error abounds in the world, there is no reason why men need remain in deception. The truth is plain, and when it is contrasted with error, its character may be discerned. All the subjects of God's grace may understand what is required of them. By faith we may conform our lives to the standard of righteousness, because we can appropriate to ourselves the righteousness of Christ. In the word of God the honest seeker for truth will find the rule for genuine sanctification. The apostle says: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.... For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally-minded is death; but to be spiritually-minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you."

July 28, 1890

God's Infinite Love to Man

"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. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

The love of the Father is an infinite love; and as John contemplates its fullness, he can find no language in which to express his wonder. He exclaims, "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 the human mind to fully comprehend the height, the depth, and the breadth of this love, which passeth knowledge.

Our first parents transgressed the law of God in the garden of Eden, and fell from their high estate, and death was pronounced upon Adam and his posterity; but the human race was not left to hopeless misery. The Son of God consented to become man's substitute and surety; he consented to take the wrath of the Father upon himself. Through the infinite sacrifice of Christ in man's behalf, the star of hope illuminated the dark future of Adam, and another probation was granted him in which to prepare for eternal life. Jesus came to our world to be a man of sorrows, to become acquainted with grief. He did not take his position with the lofty and rich of this world, although he owned the world. Had he done this, there might have been some excuse for the haughty bearing of the rich, as though they thought salvation was only for them. Jesus said that he came to preach the gospel to the poor. With his human arm he reached to the very depths of human woe, in order that he might lift up fallen man, and elevate and ennoble the race, and finally exalt the overcomers to his throne.

Jesus might have remained in heaven, to receive the adoration of the heavenly host, but he did not do this. For man's sake he stepped down from the throne, laid aside his royal robe, clothed his divinity with humanity, and for our sake became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. In assuming humanity, he exalted the fallen race before God, and made it possible for sinful man to become an heir of heaven. Can

we wonder that John exclaimed, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God"? Men think that it is a great honor to be connected with an earthly king, but John tells us that by a life of obedience we may become the children of the heavenly King, and have connection with the Majesty on high. When Christ became man's substitute and surety, it was that he might unite finite man with the infinite God, and connect earth with heaven. The Son of God took upon him the nature of man, bore insult, ignominy, shame, and death, in order to save a wicked world. He was tempted in all points like as we are, that he might become acquainted with our temptations; by this experience of suffering and trial, he opened the way that the sons and daughters of Adam may return to allegiance to God, and make their way back to the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God. That Jesus has been tempted in all points like as we are, that he is able to succor those who are tempted, has given men confidence to come to him and pour out all their sorrows before him; for he has borne our griefs, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. After he has made an infinite sacrifice for us, will any of us be so ungrateful as to refuse to accept it? He was our example in all things, and we are to study the life and character of our Lord, and learn of him meekness and lowliness of heart.

He received baptism at the hands of John, and in coming up out of the water he bowed upon Jordan's banks, and offered up a prayer to Heaven. Never before had angels listened to such a prayer as came from his lips. The Father heard the petition of his Son in man's behalf, and the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit, like a dove of burnished gold, encircled him, while a voice from the highest glory was heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." How many have read over this relation, and have not had their hearts stirred by its significant truths! Many have thought that it did not concern mankind; but it is of the greatest importance to each one of them. Jesus was accepted of Heaven as a representative of the human race. With all our sin and weakness, we are not cast aside as worthless; we are accepted in the Beloved; for heaven has been opened to our petitions through the Son of God. The gates are ajar, and the light of heaven will shine upon all those whom Jesus came to save, if they will but come within the circle of the beams of the Sun of Righteousness; for ample provision has been made for the salvation of every soul.

Man did not, of himself, have moral power to enable him to gain the victory over Satan. From his baptism in Jordan, Jesus went into the wilderness of temptation, and fasted forty days and forty nights. He was assaulted by the fierce temptations of Satan,

and, passing over the ground where Adam fell, he resisted every suggestion of the wily foe. He redeemed Adam's disgraceful failure and fall. When he was faint and hungry from his long fast, Satan appeared to him as an angel of light, tempting him to employ his divine power in his own behalf. He urged him to command the stones to become bread; but Jesus met him with the word of God, the only weapon that could defeat him, the weapon that each one of his followers must use if they would obtain the victory. Jesus said to the evil one, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

The lesson here presented to us by our great Exemplar is that it is of far greater consequence to obey the word of God than to sustain our natural life. We are God's property, and we are not to feel it our privilege to use even that which we claim as our own as we please, in eating and drinking and feasting. The favor of God is of far higher value to us than our temporal food. Jesus made it manifest, though assailed with the fiercest pangs of hunger, that he trusted in his heavenly Father with unshaken confidence. He knew that his Father was acquainted with his position of trial, and would strengthen him to endure it. In the unfaltering trust of Jesus there is a lesson for us; we are to have an eye single to the glory of God. (Concluded next week.)

August 4, 1890

God's Infinite Love to Man

When Satan saw that Jesus maintained faith in God in the first temptation, he changed the character of his temptation, and came to him in another guise. He took him to the pinnacle of the temple, and appealed to his unswerving faith. And he said unto him, "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 met him again with the word of God, saying, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Another precious lesson is presented to man in the attitude of our Saviour. We are not to presume that God will manifest miraculous power in our behalf to save us from the consequences of our own folly. It is proper for us to manifest perfect confidence in God when in the path of duty, but if we go aside from the way of his direction, we have no ground to presume that God will deliver us. Satan knew he could not hurl Christ from the lofty pinnacle, for his power was prescribed. Jesus overcame the artful foe in this temptation also.

"Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them." Satan claimed to be the prince of the world, but he offered to release his claim upon the earth if Jesus would thus acknowledge his supremacy. And he said unto him, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." When Jesus was invited to acknowledge allegiance to the prince of the powers of darkness, his indignation was stirred. Divinity flashed through humanity, and he said, "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Satan then left Jesus. The Prince of Life was faint and dying on the field of battle; but angels came and ministered unto him. The lesson Jesus has given us in his dealing with these temptations is summed up in these words, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Adam fell through yielding to appetite. Man never could have overcome the power of appetite unless Christ had overcome in his behalf; but now man may obtain the victory. Christ came to bring divine power to unite with human effort, so that although we have been debased by perverted appetite, we may take courage, for we are

prisoners of hope. We are not required to overcome in our own strength; by living faith we can grasp the hand of Infinite Power, and when Satan comes with his temptations, we can point to the cross of Calvary, and say, "Christ died for me; in his name I can and will overcome. I want the Eden home that Adam lost. I must, I will, fight the battles of the Lord, and become a victor, and have a place in the kingdom of glory."

Only in the light shining from the cross of Calvary can we estimate the value that God places upon man. He says, "I will make a man more precious than fine gold, even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir." Man can be thus elevated through the merits of Jesus. How few look at religion in its true light. Many have it confused with traditions and ceremonies. The religion of Christ will convert men, and separate them from the world; but it does not take them out of the world, for God has said, "Ye are the light of the world." Our work is to reflect light in good works to those who know not God. God has given us a cross to bear, but under no circumstances does he want us to manufacture tests and crosses for ourselves. Jesus says: "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."

Why is it that so many wear a sad countenance, that so many complain of the cross and of the hardness of the way that leads to heaven? It is because they are yoked up with the world, and not with Christ. They do the very things that Christ has told them not to do. They place their affections upon the things of earth; but Christ says: "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."

We are to make God the supreme object of our affection. There are many who are seeking to serve God and mammon at the same time; but if they continue in this course, they will lose both worlds. Everyone that truly submits to the yoke of Christ will say that his yoke is easy; all who bear his burdens will say that they are light. The religion of Christ never degrades the receiver. When the truth of God takes possession of the mind and soul, it purifies, refines, and ennobles the character. Some have said that religion brings us all down upon a level; but there is no low level in the religion of Christ. The truth of God brings those who receive it, up to walk in a high and holy pathway cast up for the ransomed of the Lord. Those who are coarse, harsh, and

uncourteous in manner, will, as they learn in the school of Christ, become meek and lowly in heart. Those who claim to be serving God, and yet are not daily refined, are in darkness; for everyone that is in harmony with Christ will bear the Christ-like mould. We are to be sanctified through the truth. Our conversation is to be on heaven and heavenly things. God would not have the mind dwell upon the trivial matters of earth, but upon the themes of eternal interest. There are some who seem to have the impression that in order to be humble you must be odd, impolite, uncourteous; but this is an evidence, not of true humility, but of selfishness. The religion of Christ will never make you uncourteous. We do not think it essential to imitate the politeness of the world, which is simply affectation and display; but everyone who is connected with Christ will be elevated in character, and be an example of piety to others.

The world is not in harmony with the religion of Christ. When the people of the world are hungering and thirsting for the treasures of earth, the people of God will be hungering and thirsting for righteousness. The true followers of Christ will not make a compromise with the world; but they will be as lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. Christ gives the test by which the world will judge of our relation to him. He says, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." If Christ abides in my heart by faith, and abides in the hearts of my brethren, we shall love one another, and present an example of unity to the world.

We are sojourners here, pilgrims and strangers on the earth; but we are fitting up for a better country, even a heavenly. We must now learn the language of that country, and prepare for the life that runs parallel with the life of God. Our life in this world is but a vapor, that vanisheth away. Then shall we devote all our powers to securing the treasures of earth for this little, short life-time, or shall we apply all our abilities in such a way that we may gain the future, immortal life? Christ says, "Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

Everyone that shall see the King in his beauty, must be without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. We now have an opportunity to form characters for the future life, and what a rich blessing we shall receive if we obtain the recompense of the reward! There is no comfort in sin. Men are made miserable because they refuse to obey the commandments of God. The whole world lieth in wickedness, but Christ came to remove the woe that comes as a consequence of sin. He came to our world to show us how to live a pure, holy life, and I have purposed in my heart that he shall not have

lived and died in vain for me. I want to say with the apostle: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." I want to leave a bright track heavenward for all that may be attracted in the way of life.

Who will be among the happy throng that will sing praise around the throne of God? Who will serve God, whatever may be the consequences? I see in Jesus matchless charms. Let us lift up the Man of Calvary. If those who are burdened with sin will come and give their hearts to Jesus, and then go forth to gather sheaves for him, what joy will be theirs by and by. Although glory will be given to Jesus for full redemption, there will be those in heaven who will say to the co-workers with God, "I never would have had the light if you had not opened the word of God to me. I never would have accepted the truth if you had not manifested Christ in your life." God would have us co-laborers with himself, that, when the pearly gates of the city of God shall be swung back upon their glittering hinges, he may say to us, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

August 11, 1890

Christ Gives Repentance

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

Many think that repentance is a work which wholly devolves upon man as a preparation to come to Christ, his mediator; but this is an error and deception. Repentance must precede forgiveness, but the sinner does not repent until he has faith in Christ as his mediator. The Bible does not teach that man must repent before he comes to Christ. Our Saviour has been lifted up upon the cross of Calvary, and the love of Christ shining from the cross speaks constantly to the sinner of the sufferings of Jesus for fallen man. His love for the fallen race constantly draws sinners to him. The transgressor may resist this love, may refuse to be drawn to Christ; but if he does not resist, he will be drawn to Jesus, and a knowledge of the plan of salvation will lead him to the foot of the cross in repentance for his sins, which have caused the sufferings of God's dear Son.

Could sinful man repent of his sins in his own strength, there would be no more virtue in that repentance than in the offering made by Cain. Christ is the author and finisher of our faith. If it were possible for man to repent of himself, the virtue of the atoning sacrifice would be in vain. But this is not possible. As Peter bore his testimony before the high priest and the Sadducees, he spoke by the power of God in reference to Christ, and said, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Repentance comes from Christ just as much as does pardon for transgression. That repentance is a work which man must do without any special help from Christ, is a false theory. The sinner cannot take the first step in repentance, without the help of Christ. He cannot keep the moral law unless Christ imputes to him his righteousness. The grace that works contrition and repentance, as well as the forgiveness of sins, is the grace of Christ. If one step could be taken without Christ, every step in the way of salvation might be taken without him. It is true that great reformations in outward conduct are often made where there is no expressed faith in Christ; many have not even a knowledge of Jesus;

but it is a divine influence that makes man capable of any change, and leads him to reformation. This reformation is the result of a blind faith, and the one who changes the habits of his life without an intelligent faith in Jesus, worships he knows not what, but he worships that which leads him to respect his own manhood; and as he takes steps toward the light, increased light will shine upon him, that he may see the sinfulness of sin, and be led to recognize the fact that 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 repentance required of those who seek God is that repentance that needeth not to be repented of,--a repentance manifested in a radical change of mind and heart. The heart must be brought in subjection to Christ, and a repentance that works such a result can never be brought about by man; it can only proceed from Christ, who has ascended on high, and has imparted gifts unto men. Christ said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." When the heart and mind submit to the drawing power of Christ, the love of Jesus will lead the sinner to repentance, and as he earnestly seeks help from God, power from on high will be given him. The Saviour says, "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me."

We are to watch unto prayer, and our earnest efforts to overcome evil in our character, will make manifest the sincerity of our prayers. We are to look into the royal mirror, the law of God, that we may understand our moral standing, and detect the imperfections of our character; then we are to appropriate the righteousness of Christ, that we may keep the law of God. As we realize the worthlessness of our own righteousness, as we feel our dependence upon Christ, we fall upon the Rock and are broken, and then Jesus moulds and fashions our characters after his own divine character. Let us all bear in mind that those whom God pardons are first made penitent. Some will say that we leave man with nothing to do, with no task to take up in the struggle. This is not so; all the powers with which God has endowed man must be employed in order that we may do the will of God.

August 18, 1890

Christ Gives Repentance

Man can never be saved in indolence. Christ has said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work;" and man, for whom Christ has given his life, is designated as a co-laborer with him. No one can be saved in idleness and slothfulness. We must watch and pray lest we enter into temptation. We must keep down pride, self-esteem, envy, jealousy, evil-surmising, evil-speaking, and refrain from evil-doing. We must wrestle with infirmities, with human passions; we must keep the perfect Pattern before us; we must search the Scriptures for their hidden treasures of truth. We should be diligent to dig in the mines of truth for new and precious gems; we should bring forth from the treasure-house of God's word things new and old. Those who are indeed followers of Christ must leave the ninety and nine and go into the wilderness to hunt for the lost sheep that has strayed from the fold. He who loves Jesus must seek to convert sinners from the error of their way, must seek to save souls for whom Christ has died, and hide a multitude of sins. To every man the Master has given his work; and in order to do this work acceptably, he must gather every ray of light God sends, and reflect it upon others. He must abase self and exalt Jesus, realizing more and more his own unworthiness and the worthiness of Christ. Through an experimental knowledge of the way of life, he must be able to lead the sinner to repentance, faith, and obedience. He must cast down the idea that has prevailed, that repentance is to spring from ourselves, and that then we are to come to Christ; this is a false theory, a deception fatal to the soul.

There are many who conclude that they are saved, simply because they have good impressions; but this is not enough. The entire affection must be renovated. Every individual must learn by experimental knowledge where lies his true strength. No one can leave his first love without a forfeiture of the Christian character. The Church must come up out of the wilderness, leaning upon the arm of her Beloved. When each member of the church can say, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me," then Christ, the hope of glory, will be revealed in his people.

Faith is the gift of God, and "without faith it is impossible to please him; for he

that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Those who feel that they are sinful and poor and wretched, are the very ones to whom the invitation of mercy is extended; they may ask and receive. Jesus says, "I came not to call the righteous,"--those who are clothed with the garments of their own righteousness,--"but sinners to repentance." Those who are rich and honorable in their own eyes cannot hunger and thirst after righteousness, therefore they cannot ask in faith and receive the blessing of God; for they feel no need. They are full, therefore they must go away empty. We must not think for a moment that we can do anything to merit the blessing of God. It is by faith alone that we can claim his promise; by faith alone we can say, "I receive the things I ask for of thee; for thy word is sure, it cannot fail."

How precious to the believer are the rich promises of God! Jesus himself endured the penalty of the law in his own body upon the accursed tree, that he might make it possible for all the human family to keep the commandments of God. Without the merits of the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour, fallen man could never meet the claims of the law, God could not sustain his holiness and justice, and justify the sinner; but how glorious is the truth of the atonement! what a firm foundation have the saints of the most high God upon which to rest their salvation! Not one of the promises can fail; the condemned sinner may be purified and made white through the righteousness of Christ. Those who love Jesus will love the law of God, because it is a transcript of his character. Through the merit of Christ the transgressor is freed from the charges the law held against him. The world's Redeemer has carried the burden of guilt and woe that rested upon the sinner, and he is able to strengthen him for the conflicts he will meet day by day in his pathway to heaven. Why should not the Christian rejoice always? By faith the followers of Christ view the eternal glory of their Redeemer. The thought that we are privileged to commit the keeping of our souls to God as unto a faithful Creator, is a most precious thought; for he says that those who love him shall be his when his jewels are made up. Oh, what love God has manifested for his church, that he has purchased with his own precious blood!

From the beginning of my labor with pen and voice, my greatest fear has been that I should make altogether too feeble efforts in seeking to set forth Christ crucified among you. I have never feared that I should place the subject before you in too strong a light. Every line my pen has traced, has been unsatisfactory because of the feebleness of my language to unfold the wonderful theme of redemption. My expressions have fallen

far below the magnitude of the subject. The pen of man, the tongue of an angel, can never adequately describe the love of God as manifested in Christ. We see through a glass darkly; we have but dim and imperfect glimpses of him who is the expression of his Father's glory. Oh, that every worker in the cause of God might have a practical experience in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! Oh, that every ambassador of Christ might raise his hands, as did John, and say to the people, not with lips only, but with heart and soul, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!"

September 1, 1890

Devote Yourselves to God's Service

It should be your determined purpose to bring every power of your being into the service of Christ. His service is profitable for the life that now is, and for that which is to come. If your thoughts, your plans, your purposes, are all directed towards the accumulation of things of earth, your anxiety, your study, your interests, will all be centered upon the world. The heavenly attractions will lose their beauty. The glories of the eternal world will cease to have the force of reality to you. Your heart will be with your treasure, and every faculty of your mind will be so concentrated on the work you have chosen, that you will not heed the warnings and entreaties of the word and Spirit of God. You will have no time to devote to the study of the Scriptures and to earnest prayer that you may escape the snares of Satan and render intelligent obedience to your heavenly Father.

"The light of the body is the eye; if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." If the eye is single, if it is directed heavenward, the light of heaven will fill the soul, and earthly things will appear insignificant, and uninviting. The purpose of the heart will be changed, and the admonition of Jesus will be heeded. You will lay up your treasure in heaven. Your thoughts will be fixed upon the great rewards of eternity. All your plans will be made in reference to the future immortal life. You will be drawn toward your treasure. You will not study your worldly interest; but in all your pursuits the silent inquiry will be, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Bible religion will be woven into your daily life.

The true Christian does not allow any earthly consideration to come in between his soul and God. The commandment of God wields an authoritative influence over his affections and actions. If everyone seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness would be always ready to work the works of Christ, how much easier would become the path to heaven! The blessings of God would flow into the soul, and the praises of the Lord would be on your lips continually. You would then serve God from principle. Your feelings might not always be of a joyous nature; clouds would at times shadow the horizon of your experience; but the Christian hope does not rest upon the sandy foundation of feeling. Those who act from principle will behold the glory of God

beyond the shadows, and rest upon the sure word of promise. They will not be deterred from honoring God, however dark the way may seem. Adversity and trial will only give them an opportunity to show the sincerity of their love. When depression settles upon the soul, it is no evidence that God has changed. He is "the same yesterday, and today, and forever." You are sure of the favor of God when you are sensible of the beams of the Sun of Righteousness; but if clouds sweep over your soul, you must not feel that you are forsaken. Your faith must pierce the gloom. Your eye must be single, and your whole body will be full of light. The riches of the grace of Christ must be kept before the mind. Treasure up the lessons that his love provides. Let your faith be like Job's, that you may declare, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Lay hold on the promises of your heavenly Father, and remember his former dealing with you, and with his servants; "all things work together for good to them that love God."

The most trying experiences in the Christian's life may be the most blessed. The special providences of the dark hours may encourage the soul in future attacks of Satan, and equip the servant of God to stand in fiery trials. The trial of your faith is more precious than gold. You must have that abiding confidence in God that is not disturbed by the temptations and arguments of the deceiver. Take the Lord at his word. You must study the promises, and appropriate them as you have need. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Become rooted and grounded in the word, and then you will not renounce the important truths for this time, which are to exert a sanctifying influence upon your life and character.

September 8, 1890

Courtesy and Christlikeness

No man can be a Christian without having the Spirit of Christ; and if he has the Spirit of Christ, it will be manifested in kind words and a refined, courteous deportment. The religion of Jesus is designed to soften whatever is hard and rough in the temper, and to smooth off whatever is rugged or sharp in the manners. External change will testify to an internal change. The truth is the sanctifier, the refiner. Received into the heart, it works with hidden power, transforming the character. But those who profess to be followers of Christ, and are at the same time rough, unkind, and uncourteous in words and deportment, have not learned of Jesus. A blustering, overbearing, fault-finding man is not a Christian; for to be a Christian is to be Christlike. It is no mark of the Christian to be continually jealous of one's dignity. All these manifestations show that men are still servants of the wicked one.

Very many who are seeking for happiness will be disappointed in their hopes, because they seek it amiss, and indulge in sinful tempers, and selfish feelings. By neglecting to discharge the little duties and observe the little courtesies of life, they violate the principles on which happiness depends. True happiness is not to be found in self-gratification, but in the path of duty. God desires man to be happy, and for this reason he gave him the precepts of his law, that in obeying these, he might have joy at home and abroad. While he stands in his moral integrity, true to principle, and having the control of all his powers, he cannot be miserable. With its tendrils twined about God, the heart will be full of peace and joy, and the soul will flourish.

Kind words, pleasant looks, a cheerful countenance, throw a charm around the Christian that makes his influence almost irresistible. It is the religion of Christ in the heart that causes the words to be gentle, and the demeanor winning, even to those in the humblest walks of life. In forgetfulness of self, in the light of peace and happiness he is constantly bestowing on others, is seen the true dignity of the man. This is a way to gain respect, and extend the sphere of usefulness. It costs but little to be gentle and kind; and the one who pursues this course will not complain that he does not receive the honor that is his due. But Bible rules must be written on the heart; Bible rules must be carried into the every-day life.

Genuine faith is followed by love,--love that is manifested in the home, in society, and in all the relations of life,--love which smooths away difficulties, and lifts us above disagreeable trifles that Satan places in our way to annoy us. And love will be followed by obedience. All the powers and the passions of a converted man are brought under the control of Christ. His Spirit is a renewing power, transforming to the divine image all who will receive it.

To become a disciple of Christ is to deny self, and follow Jesus through evil as well as through good report. It is to close the door to pride, envy, doubt, and other sins, and thus shut out strife, hatred, and every evil work. It is to welcome into our hearts Jesus, the meek and lowly One, who is seeking admittance as our guest.

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." Jesus is a pattern for humanity, complete, perfect. He proposes to make us like himself,--true in every purpose, feeling, and thought,--true in heart, soul, and life. The man who cherishes the most of the love of Christ in the soul, who reflects the image of Christ most perfectly, is, in the sight of God, the truest, most noble, and most honorable man. But he that has not the Spirit of Christ is none of his.

September 22, 1890

Love is the Fulfilling of the Law

"And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, 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. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live."

To love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves is to keep the first four and the last six commandments. God has given to man a large field in which he may work; and in doing the work appointed him of God, man will not lift up himself, but will exalt Christ. He will cherish love for God, and love for his brethren, and for all men. Love will soon die out of the heart if it is left without cultivation; we can only keep divine love in the soul by doing the words of the Master. Are there not many claiming to keep the commandments who are living in transgression of the sacred precepts? We cannot keep the law of God unless we give to our Creator and Redeemer our undivided affection. It is impossible to keep the last six commandments unless we keep the first four.

John says: "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 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? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."

Are we obeying the words of Christ, or are we following the impulses of our own depraved hearts? Do we have a clear conscience that we are doing our whole duty to our

God in the line of raising joyful thanksgiving and praise for his constant care and love? We must cultivate the precious traits of character that abound in Jesus in all their divine fullness. We must daily learn in the school of Christ, and practice the graces of his spirit, till our lives shall shed the divine fragrance of his life. We shall be representatives of Christ if we are thoughtful of others, ministering to their necessities.

When we come into close sympathy with Jesus, he will impart his love, and this will flow out in loving acts, in tender compassion to others. When we fail to love God supremely, we surely fail to love our neighbor as ourselves. When you love God with all your heart, might, mind, soul, and strength, you will be as a living stream in the desert to all around you. There will be no expressed doubts, no sowing of tares in your suggestions. You will not rest satisfied with a meager experience. You will say with Paul: "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 no standing still in the Christian life. The follower of Jesus sees ever before him higher things to be attained, and he will not be satisfied with a low standard. There is great danger in being satisfied, in not pressing forward for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Why is it that so many are content with a limited knowledge of Christ? Why do not all professed Christians strive earnestly for growth in knowledge and experience, that they may grow up into Christ, even to the full stature of men and women in him? It is painfully evident that many have ceased to advance heavenward. There is no growth in Christian character; they are but dwarfs in their religious life. When you see such persons, you long to open before them the value of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. You desire to inspire them with spiritual vigor that they may grow. You do what you can to open before them the privileges and opportunities of the gospel; you urge them to have faith and love and hope, and yet when you meet them in a year's time, you are pained to see the same listless spirit, the same stunted growth. They say the same things as before; there is no new idea in their testimonies, no fresh feature in their experience.

Again you set before them the prize of the high calling of God. They assent to all you say, declare that they are benefited, but the next year you meet them with sadness,

for you see that they indeed can say, "I have not attained;" and yet they would not go further and say, "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 is evident that they are not convicted of sin, nor converted to God. They have not responded to the drawing power of Christ. Like Nicodemus, the Holy Spirit must move upon them, and they must be born again. The truth must be received into good and honest hearts, before light can shine forth to the world in clear, distinct rays. Every follower of Christ is required to let his light shine forth to the world. But when they fail to gather increased light from the Sun of Righteousness, how can they diffuse light to others?

Why cannot the followers of Christ understand that they are to be taught, disciplined, and trained--that they are to learn obedience by the things which they suffer? Why is it that we do not have more love for Jesus? more love for the truth? "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned; and in keeping of them there is great reward."

In the truth, Jesus is unfolded in all his matchless loveliness; but of what advantage will be our knowledge of truth, if it does not lead us to Jesus, if it does not increase our knowledge of him and our love for him? As soon as you surrender your whole heart to God, you will render self-denying, cheerful obedience. God requires that we shall be found in him, not having our own righteousness, but the righteousness of Christ. When, with grateful appreciation of his love, we open the door of our heart to Jesus, saying, "Come in," the heavenly Guest is with us. When we love Jesus, we love all whom Jesus loves.

October 6, 1890

Sin Perverted, Grace Restores, Man's Faculties

When God created man, he endowed him with a well-balanced mind, with noble qualities and powers. Man was perfect in his being, and in harmony with God. His thoughts were pure, and his aims holy. But through disobedience to God, his powers were perverted, his affections misplaced, his high and holy purposes were lowered, and selfishness took the place of love. The fall did not create in man a new set of faculties, but worked the perversion of all that was good in his character.

Through the plan of salvation a way was provided whereby man could return to God; and in returning to his allegiance to God, he places himself in right relation to his Creator, where he is susceptible to the reproofing, warning, instruction, and comfort of the Holy Spirit, where he can live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, and be in direct communication with God through Christ. In such a connection and communion, he is placed where he can regain the moral image of God.

The affections, perverted by sin, become degenerated and depraved; but through a connection with Christ they are brought into a higher, holier channel; and, aided by divine grace, man may be an overcomer. The faculties, warped in a wrong direction through the influence of sin, need no longer be misused and perverted, need no longer be wasted on accomplishing selfish purposes, or fastened upon the perishing things of earth. When the soul has been convicted of sin, has accepted of Christ, the character becomes transformed, and there is an elevation and purification of all the powers of the being. They are no longer debased by selfish aims and unholy actions. What may not man become through the grace given him of God! Through the sanctification of the truth, he may become a partaker of the divine nature, and escape the corruption that is in the world through lust. He may show forth an example of righteousness, of true holiness.

Through the degradation of man's highest, noblest powers, sorrow, crime, and suffering came into our world, a result of breaking the commandments of God. Oh, that men would practice the holy principles of the law of God! We see those who are eagerly bent on amassing wealth. They give all their energy, tact, wisdom, and inventive power

to the gaining of worldly treasure,--treasure that they will never need themselves, and that will fail to benefit their children. They are so intent on the pursuit of this one object that they have no time for prayer, no time to seek or serve God, or to place themselves on the side of Christ. Heaven and eternal things have no charms for them. All their moral powers are dwarfed, and they spend their lives for the one purpose of obtaining worldly treasure. The opportunity granted them of Heaven for gaining eternal life is squandered in striving for the perishing things on earth.

Would that the melancholy picture described above were only applicable to those who are of the world, who have made no profession of Christ! Sadder is it to see those who profess godliness presenting to the world an exhibition of misused powers! The passion for laying up treasures upon the earth, for making provision for an unknown future, for laboring for corruptible possessions, which pass away with the using, is not all confined to those who have not tasted the good word of God. It is sad indeed to see men who have had a knowledge of Christ, casting away their hope of an immortal inheritance for the sake of heaping up treasure upon earth.

If men were as eager candidates for the honors of heaven as they are for those of earth, if they were as anxious for an immortal inheritance as they are for worldly gain, if they employed the same concentration of mind and energy for the accumulation of divine riches as for the accumulation of treasures that pass away, what might not be done in the world? What light would flash upon the world from men who were whole-hearted in the service of their God! Such would reflect the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness upon the pathway of others.

Oh, how many mind earthly things, striving only for that which is perishable and fleeting! The whole power of their being is employed in securing earthly treasure, and their talents are dwarfed, their spirituality is crippled. God sets before men a heaven to gain, a crown of immortal glory to win, honors that will never tarnish, joy that will never fade. Oh, shall we allow Satan to pervert our powers, to set our eyes upon an unworthy object, so that we shall mind earthly things, and give soul and body for the fleeting treasures that serve us but a day, and miss of securing the eternal inheritance?

October 13, 1890

Result of Genuine Conversion

Genuine conversion brings the soul into living connection with Christ, and makes the person who has this experience a channel of light to the world. We have all had objectionable traits of character transmitted to us, and many have cultivated these until wrong habits of thought and action have taken deep hold on the nature; but when the truth of heavenly origin finds a place in the heart, a new, divine power begins to fashion the character after the divine Pattern. In the soul consecrated to the service of Christ will be a growing distaste for coarse thought, rough manners, and unseemly language, for it is all in opposition to the chaste, pure Spirit of Christ, which dwells within. How necessary that everyone who professes to be a follower of Christ should be so indeed, and practice the truth he professes!

Among the youth there are many whose names are on the church record, but who fail to bring themselves under discipline that they may improve in thought, speech, and manners. They persist in carrying with them their objectionable traits of character. They have vulgar sentiments, coarse manners, low habits. They carry these to others through their school association, and through life they sow tares instead of precious wheat. If low, common ways are indulged in childhood and youth, in the forming period of life, the future will be marred by blemishes; and even in manhood, many will fail to see the necessity of overcoming these defects, and of rectifying their hateful malformations of character. Temptation will overcome them, because they are weak in moral power.

Those who have divine enlightenment will see the necessity of overcoming, for they will realize something of the purpose of Heaven in regard to the influence they are to exert upon others for their salvation. If those who have serious faults to overcome, would rely on God with earnest faith, he would work for them; and the more diligently they devoted themselves to the cultivation of virtue and the discharge of duty, the more grace would they receive to become like the Pattern. With the experience of conversion to Christ, a new life begins. The apostle says, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Whoever accepts Jesus will make determined efforts to overcome through the strength imparted to him from Heaven; his whole character must and will be transformed. Looking unto

Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith, he will go on from grace to grace, from strength to strength, and power will be given him to uproot every evil. He will turn from the service of Satan to the service of God. Faith, living, active faith, works by love and purifies the soul; it becomes an abiding principle in the life. Everyone who has accepted the righteousness of Christ is placed on high vantage-ground. His conversation, his habits, will be of a high, refined character, after the example of his Lord, and then he will not lie against the truth. He will rise above all baser things into the pure atmosphere of heaven.

Every soul who is drawn to Christ is to be a co-laborer with him. The apostle writes, "Ye are laborers together with God." But to be laborers together with God necessitates some high qualifications. The Lord requires those who would labor with him to be refined in language, to be polished in manner, and he is ready to bestow the grace of Christ on every earnest seeker. Through the help that Christ can give, the laborer with God may cultivate habits of neatness, of thoroughness, and present to the world an example which will in all things be worthy of imitation; for he may grow up unto the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus.

Those who have a careless, clownish manner, either in the family or in society, dishonor their divine Lord. Even ministers have thus misrepresented Christ, when in the pulpit they have made a display of theatrical actions and eccentric manners. This is not of God. Eccentricities are sometimes looked upon as virtues by men, but they do not aid in representing Christ. Careless attitudes and irreverent expressions may serve to please men of unrefined tastes, anecdotes may amuse, but the minister who seeks to cater to such tastes has a meager appreciation of the dignity, simplicity, goodness, and loveliness of the character of the divine Lord.

November 3, 1890

Justification by Faith

When through repentance and faith we accept Christ as our Saviour, the Lord pardons our sins, and remits the penalty prescribed for the transgression of the law. The sinner then stands before God as a just person; he is taken into favor with Heaven, and through the Spirit has fellowship with the Father and the Son. Then there is yet another work to be accomplished, and this is of a progressive nature. The soul is to be sanctified through the truth. And this also is accomplished through faith. For it is only by the grace of Christ, which we receive through faith, that the character can be transformed.

It is important that we understand clearly the nature of faith. There are many who believe that Christ is the Saviour of the world, that the gospel is true and reveals the plan of salvation, yet they do not possess saving faith. They are intellectually convinced of the truth, but this is not enough; in order to be justified, the sinner must have that faith that appropriates the merits of Christ to his own soul. We read that the devils "believe, and tremble;" but their belief does not bring them justification, neither will the belief of those who give a merely intellectual assent to the truths of the Bible bring them the benefits of salvation. This belief fails of reaching the vital point, for the truth does not engage the heart or transform the character.

In genuine, saving faith, there is trust in God, through the belief in the great atoning sacrifice made by the Son of God on Calvary. In Christ, the justified believer beholds his only hope and deliverer. Belief may exist without trust, but confidence born of trust cannot exist without faith. Every sinner brought to a knowledge of the saving power of Christ, will make manifest this trust in greater degree as he advances in experience.

The words of the apostle shed light upon what constitutes genuine faith. He says, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." To believe with the heart is more than conviction, more than assent to the truth. This faith is sincere, earnest, and engages the affections of the soul; it is the faith that works by

love, and purifies the heart.

God reveals Christ to the sinner, and he beholds him dying upon Calvary for the sin of his creature. He then understands how he is condemned by the law of God, for the Spirit works upon his conscience, enforcing the claim of the broken law. He is then given the opportunity of defying the law, of rejecting the Saviour, or of yielding to its claims, and receiving Christ as his Redeemer. God will not compel the service of any man, but he reveals to him his obligation, unfolds to him the requirements of his holy law, and sets before him the result of his choice--to obey and live, or to disobey and perish.

The command from Heaven is, "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." When the force of this requirement is understood, the conscience is convicted, the sinner is condemned. The carnal mind, which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, rises up in rebellion against the holy claims of the law. But as the sinner beholds Christ hanging upon the cross of Calvary, suffering for his transgression, deeper conviction takes hold upon him, and he sees something of the offensive nature of sin. Where there is a true conception of the spirituality and holiness of the divine law, the sinner is under condemnation, and his sins stand arrayed before him in their true character. By the law is the knowledge of sin, and in its light he understands the evil of secret thoughts and deeds of darkness. God's law presents matters in a light in which he has never before viewed his life. He sees that what we speak with our tongue, what we do with our hands, what we exhibit in our outer life, is but a very small part of what goes to make up our character. The law penetrates to the thoughts and intents of the heart. It searches out the dark passions indulged in secret, the jealousies, envyings, theft, murder, malignity, ambition, and evil that lurk hidden from the eyes of men. How often do men exalt those in whose hearts are dark things that for want of opportunity to display themselves are kept from sight. But God's law registers all hidden evil. The wise man declares, "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

Many who claim to believe that the law has a binding obligation upon human intelligences, think lightly of secret sins, and carry themselves with boldness, as satisfied in their self-righteousness as if they were really doers of the word of God. Their work bears the impress of their defective character, and God cannot stand as their

helper. God cannot cooperate with them.

Character is tested and registered by Heaven more by the inward spirit, the hidden motive, than by that which appears to men. Men may have a pleasing exterior, and be outwardly excellent, while they are but whited sepulchers, full of corruption and uncleanness. Their works are registered as unsanctified, unholy. Their prayers and works, devoid of the righteousness of Christ, do not ascend before God as sweet fragrance, but they are abomination in the eyes of the Lord. To those who will open their eyes, the law presents a perfect likeness of the soul, a complete photograph of the inner man; and as this picture is unveiled before the sinner, he is constrained to acknowledge that he is sold under sin, but that the law is holy, and just, and good.

November 10, 1890

Justification by Faith

Paul declared, "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." The apostle recognized the claims of the law, and did not break out against it because it revealed to him his true situation. He acknowledged the likeness which it presented, but he did not say to the law, "Cleanse me, purify me." He turned at once to Calvary. He fell on the Rock Christ Jesus, and was broken. He knew that repentance which needeth not to be repented of. He understood that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified;" for it is not the province of law to save, but to condemn; not to pardon, but to convict. It cannot to any degree lessen the rigor of its claims. If one requirement could be set aside, the whole law might be abolished; for to change any commandment to save a defaulter would make of none effect the value of the rest. The law cannot save those whom it condemns; it cannot rescue the perishing. There is but one hope for the sinner. Is it in outward ceremonies? in rigorous performance of religious duties? is it in mourning and penance, and in devoting hours to prayer and meditation? in practicing self-denial? in giving to the poor, and in doing deeds of merit?--No, none of these things will work the salvation of the soul. The question is asked, "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"--No; no man can stand before God in his own merit. Those who are saved will be saved because Jesus has paid the full debt; and man can do nothing, absolutely nothing, to merit salvation. Christ says, "Without me, ye can do nothing." Then whose is the merit?--It all belongs to our Redeemer. All the capabilities of man come alone through Christ, and we may say of our best performances, "All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given to thee."

It is the grace of Christ that draws men unto himself, and in him alone is hope and salvation for the sinner. Man is unworthy of any favor from God; but as Christ becomes his righteousness, he may ask and receive, in his name and through his merit, the grace and favor of God. Jesus bore the just penalty of the law, that we might have his grace; but this fact does not mean the subversion of the law. Paul asks, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." The bestowal of the grace of Christ upon the repentant sinner is that he may be brought into perfect harmony with

the government of heaven. In the cross, mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

When we look to the cross of Calvary, we see that the highest claims of the law were met in the efficiency of the offering. Hence, Jesus is called "the Lord our righteousness." When we lay hold on the merit of Christ, and are able to say, "The Lord is my Saviour, my righteousness," then we are justified by faith, and have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

November 24, 1890

"God So Loved the World"

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Who can measure the love of God? Angels cannot comprehend it; it is to them a depth of mystery that they cannot fathom. Angels marvel at the divine love manifested for fallen men; but men themselves remain indifferent and unimpressed. Few respond to the love of God. Few appreciate the marvelous love of Christ in his life of suffering, in his death of shame. Behold him humiliated, mocked, sent from Pilate to Herod, and from Herod to Pilate, condemned, crucified, suspended on the cross, a reproach of men, despised of the people. The sentence of condemnation that was merited by guilty man, angels saw fall upon the innocent Son of God, the loved Commander of their hosts. Well might they be astonished at the love that sustained the Sufferer, who died that we might live. Paul writes, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." This should be the language of our hearts also. It is in the cross that our hopes of eternal life are centered; and as we look to Calvary, seeing what sin has done, how can we live any longer therein? It was our sin that caused the Son of God to humble himself unto death, even the death of the cross; and in him dwelt the fullness of the Godhead.

Christ was the Majesty of heaven; and yet behold him dying in man's stead. What love is this! "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Well might the angels forsake heaven when Christ was crucified, and behold the spectacle of the cross with sorrow and astonishment. They looked upon a sight never before seen, never to be forgotten. Beholding him upon the cross revealed to them, as it should to us, the hatefulness of sin. They saw how much it cost to free man from the terrible power of evil. And after this display of divine love, shall man exalt himself? shall man be lifted up? Shall he robe himself in the filthy rags of his own righteousness,

and presume to stand before God? Shall he reject the precepts of God, and live in rebellion against the commandments of the Lord?

In the cross is an unanswerable argument as to the immutability of the divine law. Looking to Calvary, we can see how vain are man's efforts when devoid of Christ's merit to give them efficiency. The great acquisition to an impenitent world is the cross of Calvary. Paul gloried in the cross, and well he might; for it was here that he humbled himself that he might be lifted up to true greatness. The price paid for his redemption revealed to him the value of his soul. The Son of God had to die for the sins that Paul had committed; the blood shed on the cross was for him, to save him from eternal ruin. The precious blood of Christ was of such value that a full atonement was made for the guilty soul, and this was to Paul his "glory." It was through the blood of Christ that he had redemption, even the forgiveness of sins.

Paul realized his weakness, and well he might distrust his own strength. Referring to the law, he says, "The commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." He had trusted in the deeds of the law. He says, concerning his own outward life, that as "touching the law" he was "blameless;" and he put his trust in his own righteousness. But when the mirror of the law was held up before him, and he saw himself as God saw him, full of mistakes, stained with sin, he cried out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Paul beheld the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. He heard the voice of Christ saying, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me." He determined to avail himself of the benefits of saving grace, to become dead to trespasses and sins, to have his guilt washed away in the blood of Christ, to be clothed with Christ's righteousness, to become a branch of the Living Vine. He walked with Christ, and Jesus became to him--not a part of salvation, while his own good deeds were another part, but--his all in all, the first and last and best in everything. He had the faith that draws life from Christ, that enabled him to conform his life to that of the divine example. This faith claims nothing for its possessor because of his righteousness, but claims everything because of the righteousness of Christ.

In the gospel the character of Christ is portrayed. As he descended step by step from his throne, his divinity was veiled in humanity; but in his miracles, his doctrines, his sufferings, his betrayal, his mockery, his trial, his death by crucifixion, his grave

among the rich, his resurrection, his forty days upon earth, his ascension, his triumph, his priesthood, are inexhaustible treasures of wisdom, recorded for us by inspiration in the word of God. The waters of life still flow in abundant streams of salvation. The mysteries of redemption, the blending of the divine and the human in Christ, his incarnation, sacrifice, mediation, will be sufficient to supply minds, hearts, tongues, and pens with themes for thought and expression for all time; and time will not be sufficient to exhaust the wonders of salvation, but through everlasting ages, Christ will be the science and the song of the redeemed soul. New developments of the perfection and glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, will be forever unfolding. And now there must be perfect reliance upon his merit and grace; there must be distrust of self, and living faith in him. (To be Continued.)

December 1, 1890

"God so Loved the World"

Those who depend upon their own righteousness instead of relying upon the righteousness of Christ, will lose the prize; they will be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary and found wanting. Let everyone who is striving for the precious boon of eternal life distrust his own strength, and, in much prayer, cast his helpless soul upon Christ. There is too little searching of the word of God for definite direction in the way of life. The larger number of those who profess to believe on Christ have only superficial ideas as to what constitutes Christian character. A sad awakening will come to such souls sooner or later. The thoughts of these superficial believers are not deep or strong enough to comprehend the work of the atonement, and the relation of that work to their own work and life. So terrible a deception has come upon many, so many false ideas have become inwrought in the character, that it seems necessary to tear the whole experience to pieces in order that self-dependence and self-sufficiency may be laid aside, and outward obedience deepened to inward piety and truth. Do not deceive yourself with the idea that your own inherent righteousness will bring you into harmony with God. Do not fail to look upon yourself as a sinner in the sight of God. Do not fail to look upon Jesus lifted up upon the cross; and as you look, believe and live; for by faith in the atoning sacrifice you may be justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Believe that you are forgiven, that you are justified, not in transgression and disobedience, but in submission to the will of God. If through faith you lay hold of the righteousness of Christ, then be not careless of your thoughts, your words, your works. Study much, and pray that as Christ has shown you the way, he may by his grace keep you in the way. For we are "kept by the power of God through faith;" and even faith is not of ourselves, but it also is the gift of God.

In order to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Christ, it is essential that you meditate much upon the great themes of redemption. You should ask yourself why Christ has taken humanity upon himself, why he suffered upon the cross, why he bore the sins of men, why he was made sin and righteousness for us. You should study to know why he ascended to heaven in the nature of man, and what is his work for us today.

If thoughts of Christ, his work and character, are cherished, you will be led to sink deep the shaft of truth, and you will be enabled to come into possession of precious jewels of truth. Through an appreciation of the character of Christ, through communion with God, sin will become hateful to you. As you meditate upon heavenly things, and walk with God, as did Enoch, you will lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset, and will run with patience the race set before you. We think that we are familiar with the character of Christ, and we do not realize how much is to be gained by the study of our glorious Pattern. We take it for granted that we know all about him, and yet we do not comprehend his character or mission. If we neglect to search the Scriptures, which testify of him, we shall be led from the truth into the error of the wicked one. Our building must be founded upon the Rock Christ Jesus or it will not stand the test of the tempest.

December 8, 1890

Transformation Through Christ

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.... For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

A great change takes place in the character of him who accepts Christ; for "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." When we see those who profess Christianity manifesting the old carnal desires in word and action, we may know that they are not in Christ, that the transforming grace of Christ has not touched the soul, moulded the character, and cleansed the defilement of the heart. They lack the essential elements of Christian character.

Those who have an experimental knowledge of the grace of Christ will feel their obligation to him to be representatives of his power to the world. They will realize that he who knew no sin was made to be sin for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. An appreciation of this fact will enable us to get correct views of the work of our Redeemer. True believers will realize that while they were separated from him through impenitence and sin, he did not forsake them, but rather interceded for them, that they might have the benefits of the salvation which he had purchased for them at an infinite sacrifice. In accepting Christ they know that they must come out from the world, and be separate, and touch not the unclean, that they may be the children of God. They must love Christ supremely. It is impossible for finite minds to make a just estimate of the love of God toward his fallen creatures. We are ever in danger of forgetting this great love, because we fail to meditate upon it, and allow ourselves to become absorbed in the things of this world. We permit our hearts to be divided by placing our affections on things below, and so separate from the true Source of happiness. Christ should be the theme of our thoughts, the object of our tenderest affection. We should let our minds dwell upon the precious characteristics of our Lord; we should contemplate the rich promises of his word; we should meditate upon the

glories of heaven. We should not be satisfied with but occasional glimpses of our Redeemer, but our minds should be stayed upon God by continual trust in his word. We should search the Scriptures diligently in order that we may have an understanding of the claims that Christ has upon us, and that we may have right views of the truth. Our wills must be subdued, and brought into harmony with the will of God.

Precious light has been permitted to shine upon our pathway, and around us are the angels of heaven, who are interested in our welfare. God is willing to do great things for his people, and he has promised that if we ask we shall receive; but many fail to grasp the promises of blessed assurance and help. These precious promises are to be fulfilled to those who keep the commandments of God, and who do those things that are pleasing in his sight. We should praise God for his abundant goodness, and manifest our love to him by our obedience. The love of Christ manifested toward us in his life of humiliation and self-denial, in his death on Calvary, should call forth songs of gratitude from our lips. The hope of his soon coming should fill us with sacred joy, and we should lay hold of the merits of the divine character of him who endured insult, mockery, shame, and death in our behalf. He who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

God has given us a perfect standard of character, which we are ever to keep before us. Through the strength that Christ can impart, we may keep the law of God. We should be obedient children, whatever difficulty we may have to encounter. We must not expect to enter heaven without conflict and trial, but we have the assurance that if we will not consult our own pleasure, but the will of God, we shall not be left to fight the battle alone.

There is a great work to be done in the world, and every one of us should let his light shine upon the pathway of others. We need to gather divine rays of light from Christ. We need to search the Scriptures, and dig deep in the mines of truth; for the precious jewels do not always lie on the surface; we should search for them as for hidden treasure. There is a heaven of bliss to gain, for Christ has gone to prepare mansions for us; and now is the time for us to seek a preparation for that which he is preparing for us. In order to do this, we must bring Christ into our life daily; for those who dwell in the abodes of bliss must have hearts free from all envy, jealousy, hatred, malice, and selfishness. Jesus is waiting to do great things for us, to fill us with all the fullness of God. We should believe in his promises, for "he keepeth truth forever," "and

there is no unrighteousness in him." (Concluded next week.)

December 15, 1890

Transformation Through Christ

There is a connection between earth and heaven through Christ, the mystic ladder that Jacob saw in his vision at Bethel. When we were separated from God, Christ came to reconcile us to the Father. In pitying love he placed his human arm about the fallen race, and with his divine arm he grasped the throne of the Infinite, thus connecting finite man with the infinite God; through the plan of salvation we are united with the agencies of heaven. Through the merits of a crucified and risen Redeemer, we may look up and see the glory of God shining from heaven to earth. We should be grateful to God for the plan of salvation. We have been blessed with many blessings, and in return we should give to God our undivided hearts. How sad it is that through our indifference to our eternal interests we are far from Christ, we do not keep our eyes directed above, to the eternal glory that awaits the overcomer. We do not see the glory of God shining upon every round of the ladder; we do not climb up by Christ, making advancement in the divine life. If we did this, we should reflect the image of Christ, have purity of character, and become like lights in the world. We should constantly behold him, until we should be charmed with the graces of his character; then we would not fail to talk of him and his love. We should then be in possession of rich blessings which the world cannot give or take away, and we should lose our relish for sin.

Darkness will sometimes gather about the Christian, but let the hand of faith reach up and lay hold of the arm of Jesus; for he has promised that if we follow him, we shall have the light of life. Christ is our leader; we cannot lead ourselves; but in order to obtain his help, we must believe. We should pray much; but we do not always have the spirit of prayer, and Satan takes advantage of our weakness on this point. We should never be discouraged, however, but in times of temptation and trial we should hang our helpless souls upon Jesus. We must learn to rest our case with our Redeemer; he has promised to be with us to the end of the world. We should learn to trust the word of God; for heaven and earth could easier pass away than that one of his promises could fail. When you do not feel the spirit of prayer, you should remember that feeling is not faith; you should seek to prove the pledged word of God. I have had to learn by experience that feeling is no criterion for us; we must take the word of God as the man of our counsel. If we had true faith, we could move the world; we could plead with God

and with our friends, and many conversions would be the result.

If we want our faith to grow, we must bring it into exercise; and the nearer and clearer views we get of Jesus, the more we shall see our need of him. God is willing to reveal himself to us in a remarkable manner; the reason we do not see greater manifestations of his power is that we lack faith. If God should answer some of our faithless prayers, it would astonish us. We should go to God in earnest, and mix faith with our petitions; persevering faith will bring us answers of peace. Christ says, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Our minds should be filled with the thought of our precious Redeemer, and we would become more and more like him, and thus reveal Christ to the world. We should so lift up the risen Saviour that the world may see that we are acquainted with him. Shall we not take such advance steps in the divine life that men may see that the grace of Christ has had a transforming effect upon us?

I see matchless charms in my Redeemer, I see unsurpassed loveliness in his character, and I want to be like him. But oh, how much pain Christ has to bear because of our crooked and perverse ways! Let us walk with God as did Enoch of old; then our Saviour will not be ashamed to call us brethren. But we cannot expect to receive this favor unless we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. God has given us precious advantages, that we might understand his will as revealed in his word; and in return shall we not yield our will to him, and with all the heart believe what he has said to us? If we will, our heavenly Father will bestow abundant blessings upon us, and he will say to us by and by, "My child, come up higher;" but if we neglect our duty, we have nothing but condemnation to look for. While probation lasts, we must make the most of our opportunities in seeking the Lord, and the promise is given, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you."

December 22, 1890

Are We Representatives of Christ?

The year 1890 is drawing near its close. Let us individually consider what is the record made in the books of heaven concerning our life and character, and our attitude toward God. Has our love for God been increasing during the past year? If Christ is indeed abiding in our hearts, we shall love God, we shall love to obey all his commandments, and this love will continually deepen and strengthen. If we represent Christ to the world, we shall be pure in heart, in life, in character; we shall be holy in conversation; there will be no guile in our hearts or upon our lips. Let us examine our past life and see if we have given evidence of our love for Jesus by seeking to be like him, and by working, as he worked, to save those for whom he died.

Of the zealous, self-sacrificing disciples of Christ, it is written that Jesus was not ashamed to call them brethren, so fully did they manifest his Spirit, and bear his likeness. By their works they constantly testified that this world was not their home; their citizenship was above; they were seeking a better country, even a heavenly. Their conversation and affections were on heavenly things. They were in the world, but not of the world; in spirit and practice they were separate from its maxims and customs. Their daily example testified that they were living for the glory of God. Their great interest, like that of their Master, was for the salvation of souls. For this they toiled and sacrificed, counting not their lives dear unto themselves. By their life and character they made a bright track heavenward. Upon such disciples, Jesus can look with satisfaction as his representatives. His character will not be misrepresented through them.

How is it with those who now profess to be Christ's followers? Can the Lord Jesus and the witnessing angels now look with pleasure upon his church? Our spiritual life, our zeal, our self-sacrifice, our love for sinners,--do these give evidence that Jesus can trust us to represent his character to the world? Wherein is Christ made all in all? Where are the people who are showing forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light? Will the world ever learn the melting, subduing power of the grace of Christ,--its refining, uplifting influence,--from the church in its present condition? I answer, No. Christ says, "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." And through the apostle James he declares,

"Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world"--in patterning after their pride, conforming to their selfish practices and sinful indulgence--"is the enemy of God." Christ does not acknowledge them as brethren,--laborers together with him. The lack of self-sacrifice on the part of professed Christians emboldens the worldling in his carnal security. Their self-indulgence misrepresents the self-denying life of Jesus, their pattern. While professing to be disciples of Christ, they follow the impulse of their own unsanctified hearts, and thus give the world a false conception of Jesus.

God has made the advancement of his cause in the world dependent upon the labors and sacrifices of his followers. The salvation of our souls was purchased by the infinite gift of the Son of God. Jesus left heaven, laid aside his glory, left the communion and adoration of the sinless angels, and for our sake humbled himself, even to the death of the cross. And now we, who have become partakers of his great gift, are to be partakers also of his sacrifice, extending to others the blessings of salvation.

There was not one trace of selfishness in the life of Christ. All who are laborers together with God, will have the same spirit as their Master had. They will be continually growing away from selfishness, and renouncing self-indulgence, even in things that had once appeared innocent to them.

There is now such a demand as never before for labor and money to sustain the cause of Christ, to send the gospel to the world. Everywhere there are doors open for the entrance of the word of life. Everywhere there are souls that sit in darkness, only waiting to receive the light from heaven. It is not in foreign lands alone that the need exists. Close beside your own doors there are souls that you might win for Jesus,--souls to whom your life may be the revelation of Christ. To these souls, God has set you as a light-bearer on the way to heaven. If your light burns dim, if it goes out in darkness, they may be lost. You cannot neglect these souls, you cannot refuse to become a partaker with Christ in his labor and sacrifice, and yourselves find entrance as redeemed sinners into the city of God. Those who fail to represent Christ, who have not his self-sacrificing love, and are not doing his work, give evidence that they themselves are not united to him. Whatever their profession, they do not belong to Christ.

There is a sad withholding from God on the part of his professed people. The means and efforts that should be given to Christ are devoted to self-pleasing. God is

robbed of time, money, and service. Self-love, self-gratification, exclude the love of Jesus from the soul, and this is why there is not in the church greater zeal and more fervent love for Him who first loved us. So many indulge selfish ease, while souls for whom Christ died are perishing.

This is why the Lord cannot impart to his church the fullness of his blessing as he longs to do. To honor them in a distinguished manner before the world would be to put his seal upon their works, confirming their false representation of his character. When the church shall come out from world, and be separate from its maxims and habits and practices, the Lord Jesus will work with his people. But his blessing cannot be bestowed in its fullness while they are so corrupted with the spirit and practices of the world.

Shall Christ continue to be misrepresented by his professed people? Shall the grace of God, the divine enlightenment, be shut away from the church because of her lukewarmness? Shall there not be a renunciation of the world, a turning to God with full purpose of heart? "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." Then Jesus will not be ashamed to call them brethren. They will be partakers of Christ's suffering, and when his glory shall be revealed, they will be glad also "with exceeding joy."

December 29, 1890

A Symbol of the Final Destruction

"Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah."

The destruction of Babylon pictures to some degree the final destruction of the world, of which the prophet writes, "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it." Destruction came upon Babylon while the king and his lords were engaged in feasting and revelry. Cyrus and his army marched up the bed of the river Euphrates; for trenches had been dug, and the river turned from its course, so that there was no obstruction to their entering the city, provided the gates were opened. The guardsmen were indulging in merriment and revelry, and the city was left without defense. Before the officers were aware, the enemy had entered the city, and escape was impossible. Those in one part of the city were slain or captured before those in another part knew that the city was invaded. No alarm was sounded, no cry could be raised to warn the people that the forces of Cyrus were upon them.

The monarch, his princes, and guardsmen, were given up to feasting, and, intoxicated with strong drink, they knew nothing of the peril of the kingdom. There was a noise at the palace gates, the doors were forced open, the troops of Cyrus rushed in, and in a short time the king and his guests were lying mangled in the heaps of the slain, and the drunken slept a perpetual sleep. Thus was the prophecy of Isaiah and Jeremiah fulfilled to the letter.

The prophet describes Babylon as the glory of kingdoms, and in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar it was represented by the head of gold. But although it was the greatest kingdom of the earth, the prophet had declared: "I will rise up against them, saith the Lord of hosts, and cut off from Babylon the name, and remnant, and son and nephew, saith the Lord. I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water; and I

will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts."

Through the prophet Isaiah the Lord declares what shall come upon those who pursue a course similar to that of these despisers of his word. He says: "The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together; the Lord of hosts mustereth the host of the battle. They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the Lord, and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land. Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty." He looks down the ages, and declares what shall be: "Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man's heart shall melt; and they shall be afraid; pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth; they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it." The prophet then describes the signs of the day of God, and Christ also speaks of these signs as tokens of his near coming. "For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible. I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger."

Babylon is a symbol of the world at large. When its doom was made certain, its kings and officers seemed to be as men insane, and their own course hastened its destiny. When the doom of a nation is fixed, it seems that all the energy, wisdom, and discretion of its former time of prosperity, deserts its men of position, and they hasten the evil they would avert. Outside enemies are not the greatest peril to an individual or a nation. The overthrow of a nation results, under the providence of God, from some unwise or evil course of its own. But the people who fear God, who are loyal to his laws, who carry out the principles of righteousness in their lives, have a sure defense; God will be the refuge of those who trust in him.

January 5, 1891

What is Involved in Neglect of Salvation?

To neglect to comply with the conditions of salvation is to choose a character of defection and sin, wholly unlike the character of Christ. It is to bar the only way whereby sinners may escape the wrath of God. If men show no disposition to come into communion with Christ, and through him into communion with God the Father, but hour by hour, and day by day, dare to manifest indifference to Christ by withholding the service which is due to God, robbing the Lord of their time, their reasoning powers, their co-operation, rendering back no talent improved, but rather uniting with Satan to further the influence and power of evil, can God honor them by the gift of eternal life? Can the impenitent sinner, who treats with contempt the gift of God, declaring by his words and attitude that he does not want to wear the yoke and bear the burden of Christ, does not desire that his life shall be hid with Christ in God,--can such a one enter into the kingdom of heaven? Would the sinner, who hated God and would not yield to the overtures of mercy on earth, enjoy everlasting life with Christ and the Father? Could he who despised the companionship of the Father and the Son on earth come into fellowship with them in heaven?

Satan was once an angel of light, but he was cast out of heaven when he became rebellious against God. Sin separates both men and angels from God. And "if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment," how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? God "spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly." The history of the past furnishes examples of the fate of those who persist in indifference to the provisions of salvation. God revealed his character to Moses, declaring how he would deal with the obedient and the disobedient. "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty."

Satan is the author of all doubt, all transgression. He leads men captive, binding them to do his will; in order to fulfill his purpose, he holds them in the veriest slavery. To break this bondage, the Lord, in man's behalf, has given to the world his only-begotten and well-beloved Son. Through the power of Christ, the captives of Satan may all be set free. Had there been no interference on the part of God, Satan and men would have united in an unbroken warfare against the God of heaven. When Christ came to the world, evil angels conspired with evil men, and the energies of apostasy were united to destroy the Saviour of the world. This enmity was due to the fact that Christ would not license the evil passions of the natural heart, and made a decided warfare against all lust and every form of evil.

In the great controversy between good and evil, each one of us has to choose on which side he will stand, and our life and character will make manifest who is our master. If we refuse to be obedient to the law of God, we shall make terms with Satan, and Christ will be unloved, and unhonored in our heart and life; but the heart insensible to so great salvation, closed to the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness, must indeed be hard as adamant.

The heart is like a field, and good and evil are like seeds that take root and bear their harvest, either for eternal life or eternal death. Those who refuse to be moulded by the operations of the Spirit of God, who refuse to be drawn to Christ, to stand under his banner, and to war the good warfare, educate others by both precept and example to cut themselves off from the Source of their strength, and to neglect the great salvation provided for them.

Parents who refuse the knowledge of God, influence their children against the truth by their own unbelief and hardness of heart. The Lord speaks to fathers and mothers by all the lessons of the gospel; he admonishes them by the agony and death of his own beloved Son; he warns them by the terrors of his judgments upon the impenitent nations of the past, and entreats them by all the rewards of eternity, to bring up their children in the fear and nurture of the Lord.

Christ manifested his interest in the salvation of every soul. When he endured the death of the cross, he made provision for the pardon of every soul, and to those who would obey his commandments, he promised eternal happiness in his kingdom. How is it that so few respond to this love? God is our Creator, and we are dependent upon him

for every blessing, for shelter and food and clothing, for religious opportunities, for the grace we enjoy; and yet how cold are our hearts! Many are even led to behold Calvary, they are pointed to the crucified Saviour, and yet they are unmoved by the manifestation of Infinite Love. But shall we look with stoical indifference upon all the revealing of his love? Rather, shall not our hearts be melted and subdued in fervent gratitude and love? Shall we not sing the praise of our Creator and Redeemer? God has endowed men with emotional powers, and these are to be exercised and strengthened, but many seem to be devoid of feeling. They manifest no gratitude, give no praise to God, the giver of all their mercies. They display affection toward their friends, but the great Source of all blessing, the gracious Benefactor, receives not that love to which he is entitled. All heaven looks with amazement upon this unnatural exhibition of ingratitude toward Him who sends his sunshine and rain on the evil and on the good.

An enchanting power has been at work, stealing away the senses of man, deadening all his powers, so that he might not be able to respond to high and holy things, and carry out his purposes to serve God and man. Satan, the great deceiver, has been taking possession of the human mind.

Paul said concerning those who were in this state, "Who hath bewitched you that ye should not believe the truth?" The sorcerer, Satan, has been putting his spell upon men, and they have surrendered to the powers of darkness. A beguiling infatuation controls the reason, and men do not love the Saviour, and so refuse to do his will. Heaven is astonished that the love of Christ does not awaken every power of the being, and call forth songs of adoration, and a life of obedience to God.

January 12, 1891

The Christian's Obligation

"And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, showed 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 will worship me, all shall be thine. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

Thus the possession of worldly power was offered to Christ on condition that he would pay homage to Satan. What a contrast between the way in which our Saviour met this test and the way in which men meet it. The hope of gaining power in the world by means of wealth or position brings them to the service of the god of this world. Love of gain controls their affections, and what Satan failed to secure from the world's Redeemer, he easily obtains from men. Even those whose names are enrolled on the church records, who hold positions of trust as the followers of Christ, will sacrifice principle, throw away their religious experience, simply to obtain some coveted earthly treasure.

There is no reason that man should fall a prey to the devices of the enemy. Christ has conquered in man's behalf, and if man places himself under the leadership of the Captain of his salvation, he, too, may be a conqueror. The trouble is that men will not submit themselves to Christ. They step out of the ranks of King Emmanuel, and place themselves in the ranks of the enemy. They devote all their powers to the gaining of wealth or some other earthly treasure, and they have other gods before the Lord of hosts.

The man of the world is not content when his immediate wants are supplied, or even when he has an abundance stored away for future use; but the more he gets, the more he desires to have. He wants a greater capital, a larger stock, a larger income. Every power of his mind is bent on the object of his covetous desires,--the amassing of fortune. The man of God has an entirely different end in view. He is seeking for heavenly riches, for eternal joy. As we behold the diligence and energy of those who are

seeking for temporal wealth, how it should stir us who profess the name of Christ to earnestness in the work of salvation! With how much greater zeal and perseverance should we put to the stretch every power, that we may gain the heavenly prize! We should work with as much greater earnestness as our object is higher, as our treasure is of more value. The man of the world is laying up treasure on earth, doing that which the Lord has commanded should not be done. The sincere Christian is laying up his treasure in heaven, where nothing can tarnish or destroy. How should we labor to obtain the reward offered to those who are faithful in the service of their God! Is not an eternity of bliss worth a life-long, persevering effort? Those who truly follow Christ will not be left to misdirect their efforts. They will be led to set their affections on things above, not on things on the earth. Transformed by the grace of God, their life will be hid with Christ in God. The energy of the true Christian will be employed in gaining spiritual power. He will appreciate his intrusted talents, and will feel his responsibility to use them for the glory of God. The servant of God will prize his property, but will not hoard it. He will value it only as it can be of use in advancing the kingdom of God on the earth. He will work as did Christ, to bless humanity. He will put his powers to their highest use, not to glorify self, but that every gift may be strengthened to render to God the best use. He will be "not slothful in business," but "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

God does not condemn prudence and foresight in the use of the things of this life, but he does condemn feverish ambition, undue anxiety, concerning the things of the world. This spirit of greed and lust is in the world, all about us, but it will not do for us to float along with the current of covetousness that flows on all sides. We are to be laborers together with God. God has imparted to us moral powers, and made us susceptible to the influences of his Spirit. He has given his only-begotten and well-beloved Son as a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world, that we all might be reconciled to God. He has brought light and truth to our knowledge, and we must use our powers in harmony with these saving agencies. We must with earnestness lay hold of the helps that God has provided. We must pray, we must study the Scriptures, we must believe and obey the word of God. We must make use of every opportunity and privilege God gives us, that we may make our calling and election sure. We are to be laborers together with God; for he will not complete his work without human co-operation. Jesus has made an infinite sacrifice in our behalf, and he expects far more of his followers than they give him. He looks for voluntary, zealous, disinterested effort and co-operation. The love of God has brought the treasure of heaven within the reach of man, and shall we be indifferent to such love, to such

opportunity? God is waiting, angels are waiting, to see what will be done by the people to whom have been committed the treasures of truth. Oh! if you who have been so highly favored of heaven fail to come up to the help of the Lord, what will be your doom? How will you escape? If you fail, it had been better that you had never been born, for not only will you lose heaven yourselves, but you will influence others by your example; you will scatter from Christ.

Many nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples are to be enlightened; and can it be possible that the chosen, royal people of God, those who have a knowledge of Christ, will remain indifferent to those who are dying without a knowledge of God, when this is life eternal? Oh! that all might realize what a privilege it is to become laborers together with God! Christ has said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Fidelity to Christian principle demands that each professor of Christ come into active service in his vineyard. Those who withhold their talent from the cause of God, will have no part in the reward at last. The light must shine forth from every soul that receives the grace of Christ.

But with what indifference many professed Christians look upon those in ignorance and sin. They do nothing with their money, nothing with their influence, nothing with tongue or pen. They do not even take upon themselves the burden of their own souls, but leave themselves a constant anxiety for others, and thus bring care upon the church. These would be a burden and clog in heaven itself. For Christ's sake, for your soul's sake, make diligent work for eternity. Christ has gone to prepare heavenly mansions for all who will comply with the conditions stated in the word of God. Souls for whom Christ died are dwelling in darkness and error; God has done his part to enlighten them, and is waiting for the co-operation of his followers. The plan of salvation has been fully developed. The blood of Jesus has been shed for the sins of the world. The word of God has been given, and it speaks to man in counsels, in reproof, in warning, in instruction, in promises, in encouragement. The Holy Spirit has been given to help man in all his efforts to overcome, and yet the world is perishing in darkness and sin. Who will be laborers together with God to win souls to Christ? Who will bear to dying souls the glad tidings of salvation? The people whom God has blessed with light and truth are to be messengers of salvation. Their money should flow in a channel of beneficence to bless their fellow-men, and they should devote all their powers to the cause of God, becoming laborers together with him. They should be self-denying, self-sacrificing, like him who, "though he was rich, yet for your sakes became poor, that ye

through his poverty might be rich."

January 19, 1891

Christ's Invitation to the Heavy Laden

"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.

In these words Christ invites all the weary and heavy laden to come to him and find rest. It is through Jesus alone that we can find peace and happiness, and yet men seek to find rest and satisfaction in almost everything except in Christ. All we enjoy in this life is provided for us through his merit and love, and we only can have hope of heaven through faith in his name.

Jesus sees the great mass of mankind seeking after happiness in vain, and he would turn men's attention to himself, away from the false hopes and delusive joys of the world; he would have them place their affections upon him, their mighty Helper and Deliverer.

Jesus invites all the weary and heavy laden to come to him. There is no one excluded from the school of Christ, no one debarred from the privilege of learning the precious lessons he would teach his followers. But notwithstanding the fact that Christ has promised rest to all who are heavy laden, how many of us cling to our griefs, and will not part with our sorrows, and refuse the comfort and hope he assures to those who will come to him. The condition upon which we shall find rest to our souls is in coming and in taking upon us the yoke of Christ, and in learning of him who is meek and lowly of heart. He says: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; ... and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

But instead of taking the yoke of Christ, how many bind upon their souls a galling yoke, a grievous burden. Many wear a load of care, worldly perplexities are accepted, worldly customs are followed, worldly fashions practiced, and their character is marred, their life made a weariness. Jesus would have them lay aside this yoke of bondage, and take upon them his yoke of love, that they may learn to be meek and lowly in heart. The weakest soul, wearing Christ's yoke, bearing his burden, may

become strong in his grace, and he will find the yoke easy, the burden light.

The greatest Teacher the world has ever known, says, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." The pain, the sorrow, the unrest, the disappointment, that come into every life, are evidence that there is no rest outside of Christ. Jesus has redeemed us to himself, we are his property, and he desires us to learn the path of peace and joy by learning to obey the law of God, the rule of his kingdom. All the suffering and distress of this woe-stricken life is the result of disobedience to the law of God, of refusing to come to Christ, that meekness and lowliness of heart may be learned of the great Teacher. If men would come to Christ and learn his meekness and lowliness, they would not refuse to render obedience to the law of God. But they forsake the fountain of living water, and hew out for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

But Christ is able to do all that he has promised to do for the sin-sick soul. Those who have an experimental knowledge of Christ can testify to his faithfulness and truth. We may have an appreciation of our sinfulness, and realize that we are full of uncleanness, but as the light of heaven reveals the heart's depravity, we should not become discouraged, for there is help in Jesus for the vilest sinner. The promises of God are for all who will accept them, and Jesus says, Come, and I will give you rest. He does not say, Come, and perhaps I will give you rest, but the promise is positive, "Ye shall find rest." As we take his yoke, and learn of him, we find sweet solace in his promises, and our hope of eternal life grows stronger and brighter.

I have seen persons in trouble, who, instead of looking to Jesus, kept looking at their trouble, kept talking of their discouragements, and kept dwelling upon their trials. Why did they not comply with the invitation of Jesus? Why did they not come to him? It was because they had a divided heart; but God wants the whole heart. When we are in trial and sadness, we must look to Jesus. We must take our sorrow to the Lord in prayer; for he has said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Why is it that we do not comply with the conditions upon which the promises are based? We have a precious Saviour, and he knows our trials before we present them before him. He loves us with a love that is infinite, and he will do for us all that he has promised to do. We need not walk in darkness. We need not go on in uncertainty. We are willing to believe what our friends tell us, then why not believe the word of our best Friend? Why not take God at his word? Why not "come"

and find rest unto our souls, according to the invitation and promise of Jesus?

January 26, 1891

"Learn of Me"

Jesus says, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." How can we learn the lessons he would teach us?--We can learn them by looking constantly unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. As we study the Example, as we behold the character of Christ, note his life of humility, patience, self-denial, and love, we become changed. If we do not keep the Pattern before us, we shall make a failure of the Christian life; we shall make crooked paths for our feet, and others will follow in our steps, and many be turned out of the right path.

The character of Christ is without spot or stain, and we should be like our Lord. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Do we retaliate when others injure us? Jesus did not; when he was reviled, he reviled not again. Jesus said that the world hated him, and that the world would hate those who followed him. He was a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. The Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. He knows how to succor those who are tempted now.

Jesus was meek and lowly of heart, and we must earnestly strive to be like him. If we are indeed learning of him who is meek and lowly of heart, we shall be afflicted. Trials will come upon us, but day by day we must come to Christ and find rest, for he will lift the soul above the daily sorrow and perplexity into a realm of peace. We must remember that Jesus endured insult and mockery and false accusation. He has told us that we must learn to endure suffering, as he has endured it in our behalf. When we have his Spirit, we shall bring our trials to him and find rest unto our souls. Those who are seeking peace and rest will find it alone in Jesus. We are to come to him trusting implicitly that he will give us all that he has promised. The experience I have had for the past forty years proves to me that the promises of God are unfailing.

Many think that Jesus is a great way off, high in the heavens, and far from the sound of their prayers; but he says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." When we assemble for religious service, we may be certain that Jesus is with us. However few and humble the worshipers may be, the

heavenly Guest is there. Jesus does not want you to remain away from him in order that you may make yourself more worthy of his favor and blessing, for you cannot do this. The blood of Jesus Christ is the only efficient agent for the cleansing of sin. He wants us to trust him as our best Friend, and when we do this, we shall find comfort and rest. Genuine Christians are the only really happy people in the world, and it is because they have a living faith in a living Saviour. They have the assurance that Jesus is by their side ready to help them in every time of need, and they know that he will never leave them nor forsake them while they trust in him.

Jesus says, "Take my yoke upon you." If we were bearing his yoke, we would not be wearing yokes of our own manufacturing. We would not be impatient, full of fault-finding, hateful, and hating one another. If we wear the yoke of Christ, we shall be patient, loving, and unvengeful under injury; for we shall be learning of him who is meek and lowly of heart. If we are indeed the followers of Christ, we shall be called upon to bear reproach, but if we are not understood, if we are falsely accused, we must not be discouraged, but remember that our Lord suffered mockery and scorn, and even the chief priests and rulers hedged up his way, and falsely accused him of evil. Whatever may befall us, we should look to Jesus, knowing that he is our best Friend, or Elder Brother.

In the Christian life, we must daily lift up the soul, and be in constant communion with Heaven. When we abide in Christ, and his words abide in us, our words and actions will testify to the fact that we are learning of the divine Teacher. As we learn meekness, self-control, patience, and love, from day to day our light will grow brighter, we shall go from strength to strength, and become more and more like Jesus. As the light of Christ shines upon us, we shall reflect it to others, and thus become the light of the world. Oh, if the disciples of Christ were all reflecting the light of Christ, how many who now sit in darkness would be won to his service, would praise God for his marvelous grace and love! It is the duty of every one of us to make straight paths for our feet, lest the lame be turned out of the way. We should order our steps according to the word of God, and leave a bright path heavenward. Jesus says, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

The children of God profess to be pilgrims and strangers on the earth, seeking a better country. It is not for them to set their affections on things below. They are not to

conform to the world, but to be transformed by the renewing of their mind. They are to learn daily in the school of Christ, so profiting by the lessons of the divine Teacher that they shall be able to serve God better and better, better today than yesterday, better tomorrow than today. This is the hour of probation, when opportunity is given us to perfect such characters as will fit us for a place in the mansions that Jesus has gone to prepare for those who love him. In order to perfect Christian character, we must dwell upon the perfection of Christ, and as we behold his matchless charms, we shall desire to be like him, and become changed, reflecting more and more of his spirit of love.

Jesus has prepared many mansions, he has made a place for his children in the city of God. He has not forgotten those who are upon earth. His great heart of love is open to our griefs, our sorrows, our trials; for he has loved us with an everlasting love, and with loving-kindness he has compassed us about. He invites all the weary and heavy laden to come unto him and find rest. Then come to him all ye that are heavy-hearted, who are care-worn, and bowed down beneath heavy burdens. Carry your burdens to him, and when you rise to go to your daily task again, do not gather them up, but leave them all with him. When you are tempted to gather your cares and griefs again to your heart, say, "No, I'll not do it. I have taken them to the Burden-bearer, and I will leave them with him." Keep the heart stayed upon him, and meditate upon his loving-kindness all the day long.

We have a cruel enemy ever upon our track, and Jesus bids us to watch and pray lest temptation come upon us unaware, and we be led into the snare of the evil one. Satan will seek to discourage you, he will tell you that it is of no use for you to go to Christ, that you are too sinful; but take the promise of God, and declare in his face: "It is written," "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." The blood of Jesus is able to cleanse you from all unrighteousness, and he can save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him. He has esteemed you of so great value that he has given his life for you, and will you allow anything to separate you from him? Let nothing come between you and your Lord. Come unto him in full assurance of faith, lay your every care upon him, for he careth for you. Take his yoke upon you and learn of him, for he is meek and lowly in heart, and find rest unto your soul.

February 9, 1891

Faith Manifested by Works

I will never advocate the popular theory that it does not matter what doctrine men espouse, if they only have faith. "Faith without works is dead, being alone." Genuine faith will be expressed by good works. We are looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ. We may not be living when Christ shall come in power and great glory, for all are subject to death at any time, but if we are righteous, in harmony with the law of God, we shall respond to the voice that will call the people of God from their graves, and shall come forth to receive immortality. It is only the blessed and holy who will be ready for the first resurrection; for when Christ comes, he will not change the character. The change that will take place will be that change spoken of by Paul when he says: "We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." The word of God declares that we must be found blameless, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Now we are to learn obedience, submission to the divine will, that God may work in us to will and to do of his good-pleasure, and that we may work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. But our own efforts are of no avail to atone for sin or to renew the heart. Only the blood of Christ can atone for us; his grace alone can create in us a clean heart, and enable us to obey God's law. In him is our only hope.

An infinite sacrifice has been made. Christ clothed his divinity with humanity, and came to the world to be our example. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. The prophet says: "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But 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." Jesus bore insult and mockery while he was toiling, going from place to place to save fallen men. He was hunted by the scribes and the Pharisees, and he fled from town to town, from city to city, to escape their malice, and to preserve his life till his mission should be completed. He was the light of the world, but the world knew him not. Those who professed to be devout servants of God, acted as spies, and sought to find something in him by which they might condemn

him. His life was one of self-denial and self-sacrifice for others, one of love, that reached out to the suffering and the fallen.

Behold him in the garden of Gethsemane. The burden of the sins of the world was upon him, while the powers of darkness oppressed his soul, and he poured out his prayer of agony to his Father, saying, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Great drops of blood fell from his brow and moistened the sod of the garden, and the mysterious cup trembled in his hand; the destiny of a lost world was hanging in the balance. Should he wipe the drops of agony from his brow, and go out from Gethsemane, and leave lost man in his sins?

Then came up before him the misery of the lost race, and he consented to take the cup of suffering and drink it to the very dregs. He gave himself up to the hands of his enemies. Judas betrayed him into the power of the exultant priests and rulers. He was taken to the judgment-hall, and it seemed that all humanity was lost from the hearts of these men, who professed the greatest piety. They dragged him from one tribunal to another that they might rejoice and gloat over the sufferings of their prisoner. They exulted that at last the man Jesus was in their power, and they delighted to insult, mock, and humiliate him. Thus, pale and weak and weary, he was treading the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him. But yet he was not unnoticed; angels were watching the divine Sufferer. The heavens grew dark, the earth was rent when he cried in agony, hanging between two thieves, and dying as a malefactor. And who was he?--He was the Majesty of heaven, the divine Son of God. He was suffering that sinful man might not perish in his transgression. Jesus did not endure all this that we might continue in sin, but that he might save us from our sins. He came to bring moral power to men, to unite humanity with divinity, so that through his grace man might be an overcomer. How desirous we should be to build upon Christ, to rivet our souls to the eternal Rock! The religion of Jesus is the only genuine religion, and this we should possess, cost what it may, but we should desire nothing of that cheap counterfeit of religion that has a name to live and is dead. We should seek for the converting power of God in our hearts. We should forsake sin because it is an offense to God, the transgression of his law, and turn to Christ, to love and follow him, that he may not be ashamed to call us brethren.

March 16, 1891

Words For Mothers

The king upon his throne has no higher work than has the mother. The mother is queen of her household. She has in her power the molding of her children's characters, that they may be fitted for the higher, immortal life. An angel could not ask for a higher mission; for in doing this work she is doing service for God. Let her only realize the high character of her task, and it will inspire her with courage. Let her realize the worth of her work, and put on the whole armor of God, that she may resist the temptation to conform to the world's standard. Her work is for time and for eternity.

Among the first tasks of the mother is the restraining of passion in her little ones. Children should not be allowed to manifest anger; they should not be permitted to throw themselves upon the floor, striking and crying because something has been denied them which was not for their best good. I have been distressed as I have seen how many parents indulge their children in the display of angry passions. Mothers seem to look upon these outbursts of anger as something that must be endured, and appear indifferent to the child's behavior. But if an evil is permitted once, it will be repeated, and its repetition will result in habit, and so the child's character will receive an evil mould. I have heard persons argue that their children were too young to be corrected. They said, "When the children are older, they will be ashamed of their manifestations of temper, and will overcome the habit of displaying anger."

The little ones, before they are a year old, hear and understand what is spoken in reference to themselves, and know to what extent they are to be indulged. Mothers, you should train your children to yield to your wishes. This point must be gained if you would hold the control over your children, and preserve your dignity as a mother. Your children quickly learn just what you expect of them, they know when their will conquers yours, and will make the most of their victory.

The mother's influence is an unceasing influence; and if it is always on the side of right, her children's characters will testify to her moral earnestness and worth. Her smile, her encouragement, may be an inspiring force. She may bring sunshine to the heart of her child by a word of love, a smile of approval.

The power of a mother's prayers cannot be too highly estimated. She who kneels beside her son and daughter through the vicissitudes of childhood, through the perils of youth, will never know till the judgment the influence of her prayers upon the life of her children. If she is connected by faith with the Son of God, the mother's tender hand may hold back her son from the power of temptation, may restrain her daughter from indulging in sin. When passion is warring for the mastery, the power of love, the restraining, earnest, determined influence of the mother, may balance the soul on the side of right.

The work of the mother is fraught with tremendous responsibility; but when her influence is for truth, for virtue, when she is guided by divine wisdom, what a power for Christ will be her life! Her influence will reach on through time into eternity. What a thought is this,--that the mother's looks and words and actions bear fruit in eternity, and the salvation or ruin of many will be the result of her influence.

To fashion the character after a heavenly mould is no ignoble work. Is it a little matter to develop, train, and educate the powers of your children in such a way that they shall bring glory to God? Is it a little thing to teach a child how to restrain his passions, how to cultivate his noble powers, how to use God's wondrous gifts of intellect and affection? The parents receive the child a helpless burden in their arms; he knows nothing, and he is to be taught to love God, is to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He is to be fashioned after the divine model.

When parents see the importance of their work in training their children, when they see that it involves eternal interests, they will feel that they must devote their best time and thought to this work. Amid all the activities of life, the mother's most sacred duty is to her children. But how often is this duty put aside that some selfish gratification may be followed. Parents are intrusted with the present and eternal interests of their children. They are to hold the reins of government, and guide their households to the honor of God. God's law should be their standard, and love should rule in all things.

March 23, 1891

Words for Mothers--No. 2

We hear much of the education of women, and it is a subject that is deserving of careful attention. The highest education for woman is to be found in the thorough and equal cultivation of all her talents and powers. The heart, the mind, the spirit, as well as the physical being, should be properly developed. There are many who are uncultured in mind and manners. Many are full of affectation, and the aim of their life seems to be to make a display. When we see this state of affairs, we cannot help breathing a prayer that God will bless the world with women who are developed as they should be in mind and character, women who have a true realization of their God-given responsibility.

How essential to a mother is the knowledge of the love of God. She who has children to train cannot do it successfully without the fear of God before her eyes; for in the training of her little ones she must have in view their eternal interests and the interests of society. The education of children for practical life receives far too little attention. Our girls who are blossoming into womanhood are not thoroughly educated when they simply have a knowledge of books. Mothers who hold a place in fashionable society crave for their daughters only superficial accomplishments. They desire to see them making a pleasing appearance, and when this is accomplished, they feel that their responsibility is over. But the superficial accomplishments of society will not take the place of solid acquirements, in useful branches of knowledge, and it is often found that those best versed in the ways of society are least educated. Music, painting, embroidery, are too often regarded as the most essential part of education, but these accomplishments are not sufficient either to develop the mind or to prepare one for the practical duties of life. Education should be a strengthening process, preparing its recipient for a higher, nobler life. Its object should be to fit the soul for usefulness in this life; the thought of display should be no part of the motive in obtaining an education. Mothers are committing a great mistake in confining the minds of their children to the attainment of superficial accomplishments; for the mind thus trained narrows down to the standard set before it, and instead of growing in efficiency because obstacles are met and overcome, the children manifest weakness of mind and instability of purpose.

No one who is not growing daily in capability and helpfulness is fulfilling the purpose of life. And mothers who are training their daughters for display should consider their work in the light of this thought. Let them read the instruction of the apostle. He says: "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." It is the heart that needs culture; for it is with the heart-life that women have to do. The mother should call into exercise all the purer, nobler emotions which are to be wrought into principles. The precious finer feelings are to be carefully nourished that they may bloom into actions of goodness, truth, and holiness. How carefully and prayerfully should the soil of the heart be cultivated and enriched. Precious seed should be sown, both by precept and example. The words that are spoken by a mother should be choice words. The looks, the dress, and every act, should be of such a character that its reproduction in the daughter may not in any way deface her character. If the character of the mother is pervaded with benevolence and love, the character of the children will also be pervaded, to a greater or less degree, with these noble feelings. Unselfishness, patience, gentleness, kindness, forbearance, must all be cultivated by the mother; she is a learner as well as a teacher. These precious traits must be well cultivated, for they will be found essential in the home-life of the mother. The best impulses must be encouraged, the noblest affections cherished. If the mother's heart is filled with holy love, her life and character will be a savor of life unto life to her children and friends, and will bring forth abiding fruit. She will be enabled to mould the developing minds of her children so that they may be useful in this life, and be fitted for the future, immortal life.

The same Heavenly Father who gave to woman hands to labor and a heart to love, gave her talents to be improved that she might become a home missionary. The extent to which the mind can be cultivated is little understood, but the greatest and most essential education is that which results in the formation of a true character. Children should be educated so that they will answer the purpose of God. The education essential for the performance of life's practical duties is the noblest education your children could have. In this education the judgment must be matured before the taste, principle must be cultivated before fancy and inclination. After true principles are established, and the character is given balance, the taste may be indulged, and the fancy may be disciplined. The mind that is filled with wisdom, and established in principle, will be symmetrical, and will have the inward adorning that is of great price in the sight of God. The spirit,

too, must have its proper discipline; and nothing so enlarges the soul, ennobles the mind, and enlightens the intellect, as the religion of Christ. Religion will give to him who is in pursuit of knowledge a holy purpose and a definite aim. He who is enlightened by the spirit of God will feel that he is a steward of the grace of God, endowed with gifts for whose improvement he is responsible.

Mothers, keep before your daughters the value of a true education, the worthlessness of that education that is simply acquired for display. Constantly seek to elevate the mind of your daughters, for the influence of woman in the missionary work, in the field of reform, is of vast importance. She can be a power for Christ in the world. When Christ is enthroned in the heart, his grace will appear in the life. The deportment, the good works, the tender spirit, will all proclaim their possessor a child of God. What might not women do if they would open their minds and hearts to receive the light of heaven from the Source of all truth? and then they would live up to their God-given responsibility and privilege.

March 30, 1891

Words for Mothers--No. 3

God has given to the father and mother a sacred trust, and he requires them to rule in his love and fear. Many abuse their trust, and become despots, controlling by severity and oppression. All such will see their actions reproduced in their children, and in their old age will probably reap a harvest in despotism from their misgoverned children.

The training of children puts the parents as well as the children to school. The dependent children look to father and mother to have their wants supplied, and in this is a lesson to the parents of their own dependence upon their heavenly Father. The children look to the parents for precept and example, and for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, and the parent sees himself as dependent upon God for wisdom and knowledge. The father and mother find that they have to acquire habits of self-control in order to teach the same to their children. Parents may find cause for humiliation in the manifestation of perversity in their children; for their own evil nature is reflected, and their own defects of character reproduced. Oh, what need there is that parents flee to God in order to obtain his grace and power to train their children in the way of the Lord!

Parents should ever remember that the salvation of their children is placed in their hands. They should teach their children from infancy the true aim of life. There are unnumbered dangers around the youth in this degenerate age, and parents should study how they may teach their children to avoid the perils in society and in private life. The mother should teach her children how to gain eternal life; and in training them in obedience with reference to immortal life, she will be securing for them the best happiness for this life, besides developing in them the most manly and womanly characters. Connection with Heaven will ever lead to purity, to elevation of character, to the acquirement of Christian courtesy.

The mother may be compared to a sculptor working for eternity, and she need not look upon her task as drudgery. It is her life-work, and if that work is well done, God will look with approval upon the humble worker. Angels, who have ministered to her through her days of trial and temptation, will say, "Well done." Her husband, her

children, may not have appreciated her hard conflicts with herself, her daily vexations, and may not have known how near she came to despair; but Heaven appreciated all, and her reward will be great when she kneels before the throne and says, "Here am I, and the children whom Thou hast given me."

April 6, 1891

"Sanctify Them Through Thy Truth"

"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. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." Just before his betrayal and crucifixion, during the last peaceful moments that he spent with his disciples, Christ prayed for his followers in the words I have read; and he said: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." Those who profess to be followers of Christ should seek to answer the Saviour's prayer, by becoming sanctified through the truth, the word of God. But how few see and feel the importance of knowing what is truth! How few diligently search for the truth as for hidden treasures! And yet there is power in the truth to sanctify the soul.

There are many who declare that it does not matter what a man believes, if he is sincere in his faith; but the words of Christ have a different import; the truth is the medium through which the soul is to be sanctified; therefore we should search the Scriptures diligently, that we may know what is truth. The truth received into the heart and practiced in the life will elevate, ennoble, and purify the soul. The espousal of error does not lead to this result; its influence is of a widely different character. Truth is from above, error is from beneath, and those who will not give close attention to the study of God's word will not understand the principles that should control the life, and will be inclined to accept error, because it is easier for them to do this than to search for truth. In order to know the truth as it is in Jesus, we must give ourselves to thoughtful, prayerful study of the Scriptures. We must know what the word of God is to us, what the truth is to us, and what it means to be doers of the word of God, and not followers of cunningly-devised fables. The greatest blessing bestowed upon the world is the privilege of understanding the oracles of God. The word of God should not be a dead letter to us, but spirit and life; for through the truth we are to be sanctified.

The word of God has been neglected and abused, and this is as Satan would have it, for well he knows that through a knowledge of the truth, through obedience to its

divine precepts, believers will be sanctified, fitted for eternal life. The truth, God's word, has been brought within the reach of all; and if men will but make the right effort, they may lay hold upon the knowledge of God.

Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." How many of us place a right estimate upon the word of God? Do we receive the testimony of the Scriptures as the voice of God? Through the Scriptures the voice of God comes to us as veritably as it came to Israel when he spoke on Sinai in the audience of all the people. How many of us regard it in this light? If we did regard it thus, what a change would be seen in our daily words and actions. With what reverence and awe would we search the word of God to know the truth, the medium through which the soul's sanctification is accomplished. No indifference, no carelessness, is allowed in our searching of the Scriptures. Our spiritual development depends upon our knowledge of the truth, upon our practice of its divine principles as embodied in the precepts of the law and in the teaching of our Lord.

The words of Christ were not always comprehended by the disciples; and even when they were understood in a measure, the comprehension of them did not measure their full significance. In order to understand the sayings of our Lord, we should carefully and prayerfully contemplate the words of truth, not merely to reach that comprehension of them which the people of an earlier age might have had, but to reach a deeper significance; for if our minds are illuminated by the Spirit of God, more and more of the force and meaning attached to them by the Saviour himself will come to our hearts. When Christ expounded the Old Testament to his disciples, it was to bring out deeper spiritual truths than had been understood before, even by those who had written them. The disciples acknowledged that they did not understand him when he spoke to them of his sufferings and death, quoting the prophecies of the Old Testament. He reproached them for their slowness to comprehend his words, and promised that he would send the Holy Spirit to recall his sayings to them when they were better qualified to understand. They did not clearly distinguish the spiritual from the earthly. He had left in their possession truth whose value they could not estimate, and of whose worth they had no realization. After his resurrection he opened their minds that they might understand the Scriptures, and told them the same things which before they could not comprehend, saying, "These are the things which I spake unto you while I was yet with you." We should pray that our understanding may be opened, that we may comprehend what Christ has said unto us; for we are to be sanctified through his word.

April 13, 1891

"That They May Be One"

Christ prayed for his disciples "that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." The unity of believers is to be an evidence to the world of the divine power and mission of Christ. This should be the mighty argument to convince the world that Christ is the Son of God, the Redeemer of fallen man. The love existing between believers is to be similar to the love existing between the Father and the Son. And this love in the soul is the evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We are to love God supremely, and our neighbors as ourselves. It is in the lack of this love that thousands fail, and are found transgressors of the law. Supreme love for God will lead to love for our fellow-men, and the commandment of Christ is, "Love one another as I have loved you," "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." We cannot have this love unless Jesus is abiding in the heart by living faith. The very unity of disciples, the love manifested one for another, will be evidence to the world that God has sent his Son into the world as its Redeemer. This unity and love will exist wherever the Spirit of the Lord abides; heart will be bound to heart, and works of righteousness will appear in the daily life.

Jesus saw there was constant danger that his disciples would lose the divine image, through Satan's suggestions of using policy toward one another, and he gave many lessons upon that sanctified, unselfish love that should be cherished by believers one for another. Love is the fruit of genuine sanctification. A true estimate of man is the thing that is lacking in the hearts of many professed followers of Christ. A confession of love, a profession of friendship, is not enough to meet the divine requirement; there must be deeds of kindness, feelings of tenderness, sincere sympathy and love toward our fellowmen. The fruits we bear will reveal the condition of our hearts, and give evidence of our sanctification through the truth. This sanctification takes in not only our greatest, but our smallest actions. The little things done for Christ's sake, humble acts of kindness, a cheerful disposition to do others good,--this is confession of Christ. There must be patient continuance in well doing, a wise improvement of talents. Jesus must be formed within, the hope of glory, before you can rightly represent him to the world in words and works. In every little matter of life, in your deportment, in your forbearance,

patience, long-suffering, you make known to others whether or not you are abiding in the living Vine. Jesus must be revealed in our every-day life, by the practice of the virtues that he revealed in his life.

The church is made up of persons of different temperaments and of various dispositions; they have come from different denominations; for the Cleaver of truth has separated one here and one there from the great quarry of the world, and in the church of Christ all these various members must be cemented together by the Spirit of God. If the love of Christ is in the hearts of the members of the church, through the abundant grace of Christ, there will be oneness, unity, among brethren. We must close the door of the heart to every suggestion that shall have the least tendency toward keeping us from this state of harmony. We must not hamper the soul and cripple its powers by the indulgence of selfishness. Selfishness is sin, and it grieves away the Spirit of Christ. When we cherish unkind thoughts, and harbor suspicions against our brethren, we are cutting ourselves off from the channel of God's light and love. Jealousy is as cruel as the grave, and should never be cherished in the heart, much less expressed in the actions. How cruel it is to cherish evil surmising against those who are members of Christ's body! Accusation, condemnation, and revenge are all of Satanic origin, and evil thoughts of others should be at once rejected from the mind, for these things repulse, and separate the hearts of brethren. Satan rejoices when he can create division in the church of God; for weakness follows, and the things that remain are ready to die.

Those who keep the truth will be found faithful to God and to one another. While base passions will surge in the hearts of unregenerated men, while pollution will corrupt the multitudes, those who love Christ and one another with pure, unselfish love will stand in Christ-like nobility, free from the contaminations of the age. By a life of truth and faithfulness they will confess their Lord before men. Their separation from evil will be manifested by silence as well as by words. By purity of character, by forbearance, by the manifestation of unselfish love for others, by the peace and joy of heart, the living witnesses for Christ will be made manifest, and will preach effective sermons of the power of Christ in the soul. Thus will genuine sanctification be displayed.

April 20, 1891

The Character of John

John was the disciple whom Jesus loved, because he was believing and trustful, and loved his Master with devotion. His love for Christ was characterized by simplicity and ardor. There are many who think that this love for Christ was something natural to the character of John, and the disciple is frequently represented by the artist as of a soft, languid, feminine appearance, but such representations are incorrect. John and his brother were called the "sons of thunder." John was a man of decided character, but he had learned lessons from the great Teacher. He had defects of character, and any slight shown to Jesus aroused his indignation and combativeness. His love for Christ was the love of a soul saved through the merits of Jesus; but with this love there were natural evil traits that had to be overcome. At one time he and his brother claimed the right to the highest position in the kingdom of heaven, and at another he forbade a man to cast out devils and heal diseases because he followed not with the disciples. At another time when he saw his Lord slighted by the Samaritans he wanted to call down fire from heaven to consume them. But Christ rebuked him, saying, "The Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

In the character and teaching of Christ, the disciples had both precept and example, and the grace of Christ was a transforming power, working marvelous changes in the life of the disciples. The natural traits of character, the spirit of criticism, revenge, ambition, evil temper, were all in the beloved disciple, and had to be overcome in order that he might be a representative of Christ. He was not only a hearer but a doer of the words of his Lord. He learned of Jesus to be meek and lowly of heart, to wear his yoke, to bear his burden. This was the result of companionship with his Master.

The opportunities and advantages offered to John were given to Judas also. The same principles of truth were set before his understanding, the same example in the character of Christ was his to contemplate and imitate. But Judas failed to become a doer of the words of Christ. Evil temper, revengeful passions, dark and sullen thoughts, were cherished, until Satan had full control of the man. John walked in the light, and improved the opportunities given him to overcome; but Judas chose his defects, and refused to be transformed into the image of Christ, and therefore became a

representative of the enemy of Christ, and manifested the attributes of the evil one. When Judas came into association with Christ, he had some precious traits of character that might have been used of God and made a blessing to the church. If he had been willing to wear the yoke of Christ, to become meek and lowly of heart, he might have been among the chief of the apostles; but he hardened his heart when his defects were pointed out, and in pride and rebellion chose his own selfish ambitions, and so unfitted himself for the work God might have given him. John and Peter, though imperfect, became sanctified through the truth.

It is the same today as it was in the days of Christ. As the disciples were brought together, each with different faults, some inherited or cultivated tendency to evil, so in our church relations we find men and women whose characters are defective; not one of us is perfect. But in Christ, and through Christ, we are to dwell in the family of God, learning to become one in faith, in doctrine, in spirit, that at last we may be received into our eternal habitation. We shall have our tests, our grievances, our differences of opinion; but if Christ is abiding in the heart of each, there can be no dissension. The love of Christ will lead to love of one another, and the lessons of the Master will harmonize all differences, bringing us into unity, till we shall be of one mind and one judgment. Strife for supremacy will cease, and no one will be disposed to glory over another, but we shall esteem others better than ourselves, and so be built up into a spiritual temple for the Lord.

In the work of overcoming there will be confessions to be made one to another, but the word of God forbids man to put an erring man in God's place, making confessors of frail humanity. We are to confess our faults one to another, and pray one for another that we may be healed. The appointment of men to the confessional of the Roman Church is the fulfillment of the design of Satan to confer upon men power which belongs to God only. God is dishonored by the absolution of the priest and by the confession of the soul to man. Confessions of secret sins are made to men whose own hearts may be as sinks of iniquity. There are sins which are to be confessed to God only, for he knows the whole heart and will not take advantage of the trust reposed in him; he will not betray our confidence, and if we submit ourselves to him, he will cleanse the heart from all iniquity.

The lessons given to Peter, Judas, and the other disciples are profitable to us, and have a special importance at this time. We have need of constant watchfulness, for we

are nearing the coming of Christ, nearing the time when Satan is to work "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." We must study the Pattern, and become like Jesus, who was meek and lowly of heart, pure and undefiled. We should ever remember that God is near us, and all things great and small are under his control. We must obey his law, come to Christ in faith as to him who is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek him; thus we shall be overcomers, and at last have a seat with him upon his throne.

April 27, 1891

What is Sown Will Be Reaped

The value of salvation, purchased at infinite cost, makes its neglect more terrible, and insures certain destruction to the soul who is indifferent to its provisions and benefits. The mercies of God, so inexpressibly great, will, if neglected and scorned, make the sinner's doom more sure. When man despises the love of God, he chooses the association of those who are at enmity with God and not subject to his law, and he could not be happy with God even in the kingdom of heaven. The Bible declares that "he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." Those who are at enmity with God sow to the flesh, and they cannot enter heaven; for they would be out of harmony with God, and with the spirit and joy of his kingdom.

The Bible declares that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate God. Many wonder over this statement, but it can be understood. The father who sows iniquity educates his children to sow iniquity, for through the sight of the eyes and the hearing of the ears the children will receive seed that will bear a harvest of evil, unless they yield the heart to divine influences outside of their own family. Those who set themselves to work evil may carry on their work with bold defiance of God, but the influence of their unbelief and impenitence will reach beyond their own generation. The kind of training that evil men give their children will perpetuate ungodly principles and habits; the children will be averse to religion, they will not recognize the claims of God upon them, and when they attain maturity, they will stand forth with godless characters, defiant of Christ and the claims of God's law.

The Lord cannot give those who are insubordinate a place in his kingdom of peace. Satan and the angels that united with him were expelled from heaven because of insubordination, and men who choose evil rather than righteousness, unite with the great rebel, and they can no more enter the kingdom of God with their characters wholly unlike God's, than can Satan himself become an inhabitant of heaven.

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus

Christ, whom thou hast sent." "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."

Parents whose affections are given to God, who love to meditate upon his character, who are sowing seeds of truth and righteousness, are making sure of a rich harvest; for that which they sow, they will reap. Every good deed accomplished for Christ's sake, with reliance upon his merits through personal faith in his power, places them upon vantage-ground in the family and in the neighborhood, and gives them fresh strength for the practice of virtue. They grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Their love and reverence for God are manifested in a life of obedience to his commandments. They sow love and reverence for God in the hearts of their children, and the practice of virtue and righteousness produces a harvest--to be reaped from the virtuous lives of the children.

As parents educate their children according to God's order, teaching them both by precept and example to love and reverence God, to obey every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, they educate themselves, and strengthen their own souls in the love of Christ. He who teaches the lessons of Christ sows precious seed that not only reproduces itself in the hearts of those taught, but takes new root, and springs up afresh in the heart of the teacher. In presenting the truth so that it may be comprehended by undisciplined youthful minds, the parent or teacher finds that it has new power and vividness to his own soul. In seeking to impress its importance upon the conscience of the young, we realize its value to a greater extent than before, and better appreciate the divine character of our Redeemer. By dwelling upon the character of Christ, the teacher, beholding him, will become changed; he will catch his Spirit, and diffuse the light of the Sun of Righteousness, flashing the bright beams of Christ's righteousness into the minds of his pupils, and his own soul will be refreshed, and he will realize that whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

As you lift up Christ to others, you will behold his charms in a new light, and as you teach, your faith and works will agree. Those whom you instruct will receive ideas, which will be communicated to others, and they in turn will give the lessons you have given them, and use the illustrations you have impressed upon their minds, in teaching

their children or pupils. Thus the good seed will be continually scattered, and will reproduce itself in an abundant and blessed harvest.

May 18, 1891

The Unsearchable Riches Of Christ

Jesus left the glory of heaven, laid aside his royal robes, and clothed his divinity with humanity, that he might uplift fallen man, and make him a partaker of the divine nature. The heart of Infinite Love was touched with the sorrows of man. As Jesus looked upon the lost race, his heart was stirred with pity, for he saw them bound in cruel captivity to the prince of evil. Jesus freely devoted all his power and majesty to the cause of fallen humanity, that a plan might be worked out that would make the salvation of man possible, and bring the ruined race back to allegiance to God.

Satan had misrepresented the character of God to the world, and had tempted man to rebellion; but Jesus came to make manifest in his own life and character what was the true nature of the Father. Everywhere he went, he revealed the Father as a God of infinite love and unbounded compassion.

Christ says, "I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." Through knowledge of Christ we may be brought into union with the Father. Oh, that our dull comprehension might be enlarged, that we might realize what there is in this thought of oneness with Christ! Perfection of character is offered to fallen man through the righteousness of Christ. The repentant sinner may be robed in the robe of righteousness, and God will behold in him only the unspotted purity of his Son. Then we shall be loved by the Father as he loves his Son. Jesus declares that nothing less than oneness with him and his Father will ever satisfy the divine requirement; but when we are united with Christ, our life is hid with Christ in God, and we are represented as members of the body of Christ.

Christ abides in our hearts by faith. God manifested in the flesh is the mystery that has been hidden "from ages and from generations." Oh, the depth of the riches of the love of God that hath abounded to man in the person of his Son! God in Christ, and Christ in God, and Christ abiding by faith in man, is so large a truth that the mind cannot fully comprehend it. It is so great a theme, so grand a conception, so far beyond the power of reason to explain, that, as we speak of it, we feel our insufficiency. Our

comprehension is too restricted, our language too limited, to unfold this great truth. The mind fails and sinks down weary under the effort, and we can speak of this truth only in softened, subdued tones, acknowledging our helplessness, and bowing in adoration before the infinite love that has provided so great a salvation.

We cannot explain the unsearchable riches of Christ, but we can embrace them by faith. Let us bring faith into exercise. When Paul obtained some glimmerings of the light, and the immensity of the plan of salvation, and saw something of the richness of the treasures of grace, his soul was oppressed with a sense of their overwhelming greatness. He says: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 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 5/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."

In Christ the character of the Father was made manifest, and, by contemplation of Christ, we may be changed into the same image. We are to represent Christ to the world as he represented the Father. By appropriating the righteousness of Christ, we represent not only the character of Christ, but also the character of the Father. We can have a knowledge of God only through a knowledge of Christ. Christ declared, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Christ was the brightness of his Father's glory. Turning from every other representation of God as dim and veiled in comparison, we may, with open face, behold in Christ the glory of the Lord.

The less we cherish self, and the lower we lie at the foot of the cross, the more distinct and full will be our comprehension of the excellency of our Lord and Saviour. But all the lessons that Christ has given will be lost to us unless we appropriate them and bring them into our daily life. We cannot reflect the likeness of Christ to the world unless we grow continually in love for God and man. Every power of the renewed soul must be put to the stretch that the character may be fashioned after the divine Pattern. When the image of Christ is reflected in the life and character of his followers, the church will be vocal with praise to Him who is glorious in holiness.

May 25, 1891

Faithful in Little

"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." Those who enter the city of God as overcomers will hear the words of commendation, "Well done, 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." A strong, well-balanced, symmetrical character is built by the thorough and faithful performance of duty. Joseph had an unblemished character, and as he was found faithful in that which was least, he was finally intrusted with the affairs of a nation. Daniel is another example of integrity, for he was so faithful that even his enemies were not able to point out one flaw in his performance of duty. They declared, "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." The secret of Daniel's strength was found in his conscientious attention to what the world would call things of minor importance. He was found before God three times a day in prayer and thanksgiving, and he was equally steadfast in his attention to his duties to the king. It is this conscientious attention to what the world despises that makes a strong, symmetrical character.

By indulgence in little extravagances men become careless in the use of money and form spendthrift habits, while self-denial in little things leads to self-denial in greater things. If moments are carefully treasured and put to a wise use, hours will not be wasted. If small opportunities are improved, greater opportunities will not be neglected. If limited talents are employed, larger usefulness will come; and by patient continuance in well doing, you will gain power to do well and patiently. Our work may not be noticed by men, and no credit may be given to the faithful soul; but God marks the diligent servant, and gives wisdom to do a larger work. It is faithfulness in little things that makes a man great in the sight of God.

The apostle Peter presents before us the ladder of progress that we must climb round by round in order to meet the approval of God. He says: "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." Those who would make men of honor, men of trust, men of fidelity, must begin to be faithful in the smallest matters, and they must begin at home. Everyone who would be perfect must mount this ladder of progress. Many have neglected to put their feet upon the first rounds of the ladder. They want to mount to the topmost rounds without the trouble of climbing, but the only sure way is to take the painstaking way of going up by gradual advance, round after round. Many of the youth of today are superficial in all their undertakings. At the very beginning a fatal mistake is made in their education. Their careless habits are passed over by indulgent parents who would criticise with severity the same mistakes in others. Thus many fail to lay the right foundation. Peter says, "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge." A virtuous character must precede all other acquirements. All sowing of wild oats will be followed by a harvest of the same order. "God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

The youth should remember that there is a day coming, and it is not far distant, when an account will have to be rendered for wasted opportunities, misspent hours, and neglected privileges. The nature, the effect of all our past life is registered in the books of heaven. We cannot change the figures, cannot undo the past, nor erase the record of good done or ill committed. Day by day the deeds done in the body make our record above, and in the judgment the books will reveal our evil course, unless through sincere repentance, through thorough reformation, our sins are blotted out by the blood of the atonement. We shall be judged, every man according as his works have been. Let everyone think upon the character of his works, and repent, and become transformed by the power of Christ.

In these perilous times, when a form of godliness is popular in the world, and a profession of Christianity is fashionable, only a few will discern the living way of self-denial and cross-bearing. "Watch and pray" is the injunction of Him who endured temptation in our behalf. Christ knows our danger, for he has contended with our powerful foe. He knows that our enemy is on the track of all who are striving to do the right. With all his specious arts and devices, Satan seeks to ensnare the servants of God, and turn them from Christ into the broad path that leads to destruction. He watches our going out and our coming in, and, although unseen, he works earnestly and diligently, seeking to destroy those who are ignorant of his designs. He works with agencies and instruments that will best conceal his malicious intentions.

Through the influence of the evil one, even the religion of Christ has been perverted to the minds of many who profess to know and obey the truth. But no matter how high is your profession, you will not stand the test unless you are doers of the word of God. Those only who have a living, abiding principle in the heart, who will not turn aside to do anything that has even an appearance of evil, who will not venture to tarnish the soul with impurity, are washing their robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb. The washing of the robes of character must go on from day to day, that at last we may be found without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but blameless before Him with whom we have to do. This work of purifying ourselves even as He is pure must be taken up individually. We should examine our motives, our actions, in the light of God's holy law. We should ever ask, "Is this the way of the Lord?" Every earnest, sincere seeker will be answered of the Lord. The petitions of honest inquirers are always heard by the Author of our salvation. He has promised, "The meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way." Angels of God are watching to see the development of our character; they are weighing moral worth; and may the great day of God reveal the fact that we have not been weighed in the balances and found wanting.

June 1, 1891

The Vine and the Branches

Christ said, "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. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."

The apostle John presents before us in these words the necessity of a close connection with Christ. It must be as intimate as is the connection between the vine and the branches. As the graft becomes part of the living stalk, so the Christian is to become one with his Lord. Fiber by fiber, vein by vein, the graft is identified with the vine, drawing its life from the vine, and manifesting the life of the vine by its life and fruit. If the Christian is nourished by the life of Christ, he will manifest this in his life and character. He will follow in the steps of Jesus in all things, following in the path of self-denial and sacrifice.

Christ denied himself. He did not count heaven a place to be desired while we were lost, and he left the heavenly courts to suffer a life of shame, reproach, insult, and mockery. For our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich. He lived a life of self-sacrifice and self-denial, and passed over the ground that we must travel, in order to leave us an example that we might follow in his steps. And we love him, because he first loved us. We should cultivate love for Christ by yielding obedience to all his commandments. If we truly follow our Lord, we shall depart from all iniquity, the transgression of God's law, and become loyal and true to the requirements of Heaven. The church has been made the depository of precious truth, and its members are not only to believe these truths, but to disseminate their glorious light to those who sit in darkness, that souls may be brought to the Sun of Righteousness. In this way they may represent Christ to the world.

Christ has said, "Without me ye can do nothing." A great change must take place in us before we can live a true Christian life. We must become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruptions which are in the world through lust. We must be nourished by the life of the Living Vine, and then we shall become fruit-bearing branches. Christ has said, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." The branch planted in Christ will bear the same order of fruit as he himself has borne. If we are in Christ, we shall love the things which he loved, hate the things which he hated, and be obedient unto all the commandments of God. As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so will the soul pant after the things pertaining to the Spirit of God. And we shall make manifest to the world that we are the children of God by the fruits we bear.

"Faith without works is dead." If we really believe in Christ, we shall work the works of Christ. We shall say, "Jesus is my Saviour, and I will commit the keeping of my soul to him as unto a faithful Creator." The apostle declares: "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." He who is purest, meekest, most obedient, will be most mighty upon earth. He who realizes that his strength, talent, means, all belong to God, will comprehend the meaning of the text I have quoted.

All was lost in Adam, and the race was left in hopeless misery, but "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Christ offered to become man's surety and representative. He offered man another trial, and came to bear our guilt, to suffer the penalty of our sin. He came not to please himself, but to work out the plan of redemption. He became a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Those who follow in his steps will not shun self-denial and the cross, but will imitate the example of Christ. And do you imagine in this life you will be unhappy? No; you will esteem it a privilege to be a partaker with Christ of his sufferings. You will have respect unto the recompense of the reward. Jesus will withhold nothing from those that walk in obedience to his commands; he will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly.

Jesus has promised to be our friend, to stand close at our side, and we should tell him our griefs and trials as a child would tell its earthly parent its troubles. Without

Christ you can do nothing, but with him you can do all things, for his grace will be sufficient for you. We must bring Christ into everything, and then we shall bear abundant fruit to the glory of God. Our good works cannot save us, for they are as filthy rags without Christ. Self-righteousness is as the offering of Cain. Cain brought of the fruit of the ground unto God, instead of bringing the blood of a slain lamb, the type of Christ, slain for the sins of the world. Abel brought that which God had commanded, and his faith was made manifest, his offering was accepted. These two brothers represent two classes of those who profess the religion of Christ. One are worshipers as was Cain, the other are worshipers as was Abel. How many claim to be the children of God, and yet refuse obedience to the plain commandment of God! The commandment reads: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, not thy stranger that is within thy gates." But instead of conforming their practice to the word of God, they make excuses, and offer to God the first day of the week, which he has not commanded or sanctified. Is not this offering as defective as was the offering of Cain? He who truly believes in Christ will be obedient to all of God's commandments. There is no bondage in obedience; obedience brings peace and assurance and fullness of joy. Those who complain that the Christian life is full of trial, show that they think a great deal more of their inconveniences than they do of the rich blessing of God, the reward of faithful obedience. They are not connected with the Living Vine, for he that is connected in vital connection with the Living Vine will be in a flourishing condition.

June 8, 1891

Abiding in Christ

Jesus says, "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." Those who truly come to Christ, find rest unto their souls; and is it not an evidence that you have not come to him if you find the Christian life one of hardship and perplexity? Does it not prove that you are wearing a yoke of your own manufacture? Have you not gathered up burdens that Christ never meant you to carry? We are to live a life of meekness and simplicity, following the example of Christ, our Master. Christ is close at our side to counsel and help us in every time of need.

Why do we go to others with our trials and difficulties? Why not take all our griefs and burdens to the Lord in prayer? The reason we do not bring all our care to Christ is that we have too little faith in him.

By living faith we must abide in Christ. He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The promise is positive; there is no "perhaps" about it. We need more faith; we are not simple enough to believe just what the Lord has spoken. If you did believe, you would come and say, "I take thee at thy word, Lord; I am trusting, believing in thy promise." This is living faith. We have an example of the faith that lays hold of Christ in the story of the woman who touched his garment. Christ was teaching by the seaside, and a crowd had gathered around him, and a poor woman who had suffered many years from bodily infirmity, pressed her way through the crowd, for she felt that if she could only touch the hem of his garment she should be whole. She finally came near the Lord, and reached forth her trembling hand, and touched his garment, and felt that she was made whole. Jesus recognized the touch of faith, and asked, "Who touched me?" His disciples were astonished that he should ask such a question, and said, "Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. And

he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."

The touch of living faith brings virtue from Christ to the soul; but without this faith we are like the multitude that thronged the Saviour and yet felt nothing of his saving power, because they did not bring themselves in close connection with Christ.

We must realize our need of Christ, believe in his power to supply our wants, and then come unto him. Our love is to be quickened by the love he has given us. By trusting, confiding faith, we may have joy in the midst of sorrow. I know this by experience. Affliction upon affliction has fallen upon me. When my eldest-born was taken from me by death, I found Jesus a precious helper. And when my youngest-born was laid in the grave, I rejoiced that Christ was my Saviour. When my husband was taken away by death, and we laid the faithful, worn warrior away to rest till the morning of the resurrection, I felt that it was my duty to testify to the people of the sustaining power of Jesus' grace and love. Since then I have taken up my life-work alone, and yet not alone, for Jesus has been with me.

The faith that will bring us peace in sorrow and tribulation is the faith we must all have, for it is an anchor to the soul, entering into that within the veil. In times of sorrow or joy we all need a Saviour to love us, and he is at our right hand to help and comfort in every time of trial and affliction. He says, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

When our minds are engrossed with the things of this life, we cannot bear fruit to the glory of God. Living faith, expressed by a life of faithful obedience, will avail to lift us out of this bondage to the world. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Steadfast faith gives evidence that we are closely connected with the Saviour. Let us put away everything like fretfulness, and make melody in our hearts unto the Lord. Let us talk of his love, and sing of his grace and power. Faith will connect us with him, and we shall be part of the Living Vine, and bear much fruit. We shall be patient and loving, and all the powers of our being will be devoted to God. Whatever gift you have, it is of God, and it should be given back to him; but how many devote their God-given ability to the glorification of self! Christ wants us to come close to himself, to accept the great sacrifice he has made for us. He is anxious to be our Helper, to bear our griefs and carry our sorrows. Will you let him help you? Say to the world, "Jesus is my

Saviour; he saves me today, making me his obedient child, and enabling me to keep all his commandments." If you knowingly disregard one of God's commandments, you do not have saving faith. Genuine faith is a faith that works by love, and purifies the soul. Genuine faith will lead you to seek for the salvation of precious souls for whom Christ has died. We are to reveal Christ to them in our character and life.

If we are living Christians, we shall not inquire, when some new requirement is presented to us, "Is this convenient?" but we shall render willing obedience to all the commands of the Lord. It was not convenient for Christ to come from his throne of glory to this dark world and die, but it was expedient for us; for it is through his death that we are to find life and salvation.

Christ never repulses those who would come close to him; he welcomes them. Shall we not believe his promises, and become one with the Living Vine? If we do this, we shall bear much fruit. How I long to see the people of God come up to their high privilege. Jesus says, "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 Christian's mission in the world is to reveal the character of Christ, to represent the Lord to the fallen children of men. If we are ever to enter heaven, we must bring heaven into our life here. We must be pure and holy, and if we gain heaven at last, we shall be with the Saviour throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. We shall hear him say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." The crown of glory will be placed upon the brow of the overcomer, and he will enter the city of God a conqueror. We are now upon the battleground, and Jesus will do the fighting for us, if we will only let him. He will lift up a standard for us against the enemy; for he hears our prayers, and help will come when we most need it. Then let us live for the future, immortal life, "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."

June 15, 1891

"He that Hath an Ear, Let him Hear"

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." "Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new name." "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. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

The words, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," are repeated after these promises, weighty with importance to the children of God. It is for our eternal interest to know and understand what the Spirit saith unto the churches, and we should search carefully for light and knowledge that we may not be in ignorance of what God has commanded and promised in his precious word. We have souls to be saved or lost, and with the greatest earnestness we should inquire, "What shall I do in order to obtain eternal life?" At the best, life is but short, and it is necessary that we should live this short life in harmony with the law of God, which is the law of the universe. We must have ears to hear, and hearts to understand, what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

The angels of God attain unto no higher knowledge than to know the will of God; and it is their greatest delight to accomplish the perfect will of the Heavenly Father. Fallen man has the privilege of becoming intelligent in regard to the will of God. While probationary time is granted us, we should put our faculties to the very highest use, that

we may make of ourselves all that it is possible; and while we endeavor to reach a high standard of intelligence, we should feel our dependence upon God, for without his grace, our efforts cannot bring lasting benefit. It is through the grace of Christ that we are to be overcomers; through the merits of his blood we are to be of that number whose names will not be blotted out of the book of life. Those who are final overcomers will have the life that runs parallel with the life of God, and wear the crown of the victor. When such great and eternal reward awaits us, we should run the race with patience, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

We have no hesitancy in telling you that in order to obtain the immortal inheritance and the eternal substance, you must be overcomers in this probationary life. Everything that blots and stains the soul must be removed, must be cleansed from the heart. We must know what it means to be a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruptions that are in the world through lust. Are you willing to wage war against the lusts of the flesh? Are you ready to battle against the enemy of God and man? Satan is determined to enslave every soul if he can; for he is playing a desperate game to win the souls of men from Christ and eternal life. Will you permit him to steal from you the graces of the Spirit of God, and plant in you his own corrupt nature? or will you accept the great provision of salvation, and through the merits of the Infinite Sacrifice made in your behalf, become a partaker of the divine nature? God has given his only-begotten Son, that through his shame, suffering, and death, you might have glory, honor, and immortality. Are you not willing to lay hold on the gracious hope set before you in the gospel? Is it humiliating to seek to win a crown of immortal glory?

Christ was one with the Father from the beginning; he shared the glory of the Father; and yet he consented to become fallen man's substitute and surety, to stand in man's place, that he might bring hope and salvation to every soul who would receive him as a sin-pardoning Saviour. With his human arm he encircles the lost race, and with his divine arm he grasps the throne of the Infinite, connecting man with God, and earth with heaven. It was impossible for man, who had weakened his moral power through transgression of God's law, to keep the commandments of God; but Christ came to save his people from their sins, and by faith the soul is clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and brought into the favor of God. Christ stepped down from his exalted throne, left the royal courts, clothed his divinity with humanity, and became a man among the children of men; he humbled himself even to the suffering and death of the cross, that man might be exalted, that man might become a partaker of the divine nature, be an

overcomer, and have a place with Christ upon his throne in glory.

June 22, 1891

A Talk on Temperance

Satan was the first rebel in the universe, and ever since his expulsion from heaven he has been seeking to make every member of the human family an apostate from God, even as he is himself. He laid his plans to ruin man, and through the unlawful indulgence of appetite, led him to transgress the commandments of God. He tempted Adam and Eve to partake of the forbidden fruit, and so accomplished their fall, and their expulsion from Eden. How many say, "If I had been in Adam's place, I would never have transgressed on so simple a test." But you who make this boast have a grand opportunity of showing your strength of purpose, your fidelity to principle under trial. Do you render obedience to every command of God? Does God see no sin in your life?

Would that the fall of Adam and Eve had been the only fall; but from the loss of Eden to the present time, there has been a succession of falls. Satan has planned to ruin man, by leading him away from loyalty to the commandments of God, and one of his most successful methods is that of tempting him to the gratification of perverted appetite. We see on all sides the marks of man's intemperance. In our cities and villages the saloon is on every corner, and in the countenances of its patrons we see the dreadful work of ruin and destruction. On every side, Satan seeks to entice the youth into the path of perdition; and if he can once get their feet set in the way, he hurries them on in their downward course, leading them from one dissipation to another, until his victims lose their tenderness of conscience, and have no more the fear of God before their eyes. They exercise less and less self-restraint. They become addicted to the use of wine and alcohol, tobacco and opium, and go from one stage of debasement to another. They are slaves to appetite. Counsel which they once respected, they learn to despise. They put on swaggering airs, and boast of liberty when they are the servants of corruption. They mean by liberty that they are slaves to selfishness, debased appetite, and licentiousness.

A great controversy is going on in the world. Satan is determined to have the human race as his subjects, but Christ has paid an infinite price that man may be redeemed from the enemy, and that the moral image of God may be restored to the fallen race. In instituting the plan of salvation, God has made it manifest that he values man at an infinite price; but Satan is seeking to make this plan of no effect, by keeping

man from meeting the conditions upon which salvation is provided.

After His baptism, Christ was led of the Spirit into the wilderness. He had taken humanity upon himself, and Satan boasted that he would overcome him, as he had overcome the strong men of the past ages, and he assailed him with the temptations that had caused man's downfall. It was in this world that the great conflict between Christ and Satan was to be decided. If the tempter could succeed in overcoming Christ in even one point, the world must be left to perish. Satan would have power to bruise the head [heel] of the Son of God; but the seed of the woman was to bruise the serpent's head: Christ was to baffle the prince of the powers of darkness. For forty days Christ fasted in the wilderness. What was this for? Was there anything in the character of the Son of God that required such great humiliation and suffering?-No, he was sinless. All this humiliation and keen anguish were endured for the sake of fallen man, and never can we comprehend the grievous character of the sin of indulging perverted appetite except as we comprehend the spiritual meaning of the long fast of the Son of God. Never can we understand the strength and bondage of appetite until we discern the character of the Saviour's conflict in overcoming Satan, and thus placing man on vantage ground, where, through the merit of the blood of Christ, he may be able to resist the powers of darkness, and overcome in his own behalf.

After this long fast, Christ was in a famishing condition, and in his weakness Satan assailed him with the fiercest temptations. "The devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread." Satan represented himself as the messenger of God, claiming that God had seen the willingness of the Saviour to place his feet in the path of self-denial, and that he was not required to suffer further humiliation and pain, but might be released from the terrible conflict that was before him as the Redeemer of the world. He tried to persuade him that God designed only to test his fidelity, that now his loyalty was fully manifest, and he was at liberty to use his divine power to relieve his necessities. But Christ discerned the temptation, and declared, "It is written, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God."

When tempted to the unlawful gratification of appetite, you should remember the example of Christ, and stand firm, overcoming as Christ overcame. You should answer, saying, "Thus saith the Lord," and in this way settle the question forever with the prince of darkness. If you parley with temptation, and use your own words, feeling self-

sufficient, full of self-importance, you will be overcome. The weapons which Christ used were the words of God, "It is written;" and if you wield the sword of the Spirit, you also may come off victorious, through the merit of your Redeemer. (To be continued.)

June 29, 1891

A Talk on Temperance

The three leading temptations by which man is beset were endured by the Son of God. He refused to yield to the enemy on the point of appetite, ambition, and the love of the world. But Satan is more successful when assailing the human heart. Through inducing men to yield to his temptations, he can get control of them. And through no class of temptations does he achieve greater success than through those addressed to the appetite. If he can control the appetite, he can control the whole man.

There are but two powers that control the minds of men,--the power of God and the power of Satan. Christ is man's Creator and Redeemer; Satan is man's enemy and destroyer. He who has given himself to God will build himself up for the glory of God, in body, soul, and spirit. He who has given himself to the control of Satan tears himself down. Many a man sells reason for a glass of liquor, and becomes a menace to his family, his neighborhood, and his country. His children hide when he comes home, and his discouraged wife fears to meet him, for he greets her with cruel blows. He spends his money for strong drink, while his wife and children suffer for the necessities of life.

Satan leads the victims of appetite to deeds of violence. The liquor drinker is a man of fierce and easily-excited passions, and any trivial excuse is made a cause for quarrel; and when under the influence of passion, the drunkard will not spare his best friend. How often do we hear of murder and deeds of violence, and find that their chief source is the liquor habit.

There are those who call themselves advocates of temperance who will yet indulge in the use of wine and cider, claiming that these stimulants are harmless, and even healthful. It is thus that many take the first step in the downward path. Intoxication is just as really produced by wine and cider as by stronger drinks, and it is the worst kind of inebriation. The passions are more perverse; the transformation of character is greater, more determined and obstinate. A few quarts of cider or wine may awaken a taste for stronger drinks, and in many cases those who have become confirmed drunkards have thus laid the foundation of the drinking habit.

For persons who have inherited an appetite for stimulants, it is by no means safe to have wine and cider in the house; for Satan is continually soliciting them to indulge. If they yield to his temptations, they do not know where to stop; appetite clamors for indulgence, and is gratified to their ruin. The brain is clouded; reason no longer holds the reins, but lays them on the neck of lust. Licentiousness abounds, and vices of almost every type are practiced as the result of indulging the appetite for wine and cider. It is impossible for one who loves these stimulants and accustoms himself to their use, to grow in grace. He becomes gross and sensual; the animal passions control the higher powers of the mind, and virtue is not cherished.

Moderate drinking is the school in which men are receiving an education for the drunkard's career. So gradually does Satan lead away from the strongholds of temperance, so insidiously do wine and cider exert their influence upon the taste, that the highway to drunkenness is entered upon all unsuspectingly. The taste for stimulants is cultivated; the nervous system is disordered; Satan keeps the mind in a fever of unrest; and the poor victim, imagining himself perfectly secure, goes on and on, until every barrier is broken down, every principle sacrificed. The strongest resolutions are undermined, and eternal interests are too weak to keep the debased appetite under the control of reason. Some are never really drunk, but are always under the influence of mild intoxicants. They are feverish, unstable in mind, not really delirious, but as truly unbalanced; for the nobler powers of the mind are perverted.

Those also who use tobacco are weakening their physical and mental power. The use of tobacco has no foundation in nature. Nature rebels against the narcotic, and when the tobacco user first tries to force this unnatural habit upon the system, a hard battle is fought. The stomach, and, indeed, the whole system, revolt against the abominable practice, but the evildoer perseveres until nature gives up the struggle, and the man becomes a slave of tobacco.

If salvation were offered to man on terms as hard to endure, God would be looked upon as a hard master. Satan is a hard master, and requires his subjects to undergo severe tests, and to make themselves the slaves of passion and appetite; but God is consistent in all his requirements. And asks of his children that only which will work for their present and eternal happiness.

"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." This is the

command of God, and yet how many, even of those who profess to be the servants of God, are the devotees of tobacco, and make it their idol. When men should be out in the pure air, with sweet breath, praising God for his benefits, they are polluting the atmosphere with the fumes of pipe or cigar. They must go through the ordeal of smoking, in order to stimulate the poor relaxed nerves as a preparation for the duties of the day; for if they did not have their smoke, they would be irritable and unable to control their thoughts.

As an illustration of the inability of tobacco users to command their senses when without the stimulant, I will relate an occurrence that came to my notice. An aged man who was at one time my next-door neighbor was a great user of tobacco; but one morning he had not taken his usual smoke when I went in to get a book I had lent him. Instead of getting the book I had asked for, he handed me a bridle. In vain I strove to make him understand what I wanted; I had to go away without the book. Next day I went again the made the same request, and he immediately handed me the book. Then I asked him why he had not given it to me the day before. He said: "Why, were you in yesterday? I do not remember it. Oh, I know what was the trouble, I had not had my tobacco!" This was the effect upon his mind when he was without the stimulant. His physician told him that he must cease its use or he could not live. He did give it up, but all his life after he suffered from the constant longing for the accustomed stimulant; he had to fight a continual battle.

When ninety years old, he was one day seen searching for something. When asked what he wanted, he replied, "I was looking for my tobacco." He suffered without it, and yet it would have been death to him to continue its use.

God requires that his children shall keep themselves free from such unnatural and disastrous habits. But when men are bound in these chains, is there no way of deliverance?--Yes, the Lord Jesus has died that through the merits of his life and death men may be overcomers. He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him. He came to earth that he might combine divine power with human effort, and by co-operation with Christ, by placing the will on the side of God, the slave may become free, an heir of God and joint heir with Christ.

July 6, 1891

A Talk on Temperance

In the days of Israel, when the sanctuary service was instituted, the Lord directed that only sacred fire should be used in the burning of incense. The holy fire was of God's own kindling, and the fragrant smoke represented the prayers of the people as they ascended before God. Nadab and Abihu were priests of the sanctuary, and although it was not lawful to use common fire, these priests, when they went in before God, presumed to kindle their incense with unconsecrated fire. The priests had been indulging in the use of wine, and their moral sensibilities were benumbed; they did not discern the character of their actions, or realize what would be the fearful consequences of their sin. A fire blazed out from the holy of holies and consumed them.

After the destruction of Nadab and Abihu, the Lord spoke to 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 [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 priests and judges of Israel were to be men of strict temperance, that their minds might be clear to discriminate between right and wrong, that they might possess firmness of principle, and wisdom to administer justice and to show mercy.

What an improvement would there be in our own land if these injunctions were carried out, if men in sacred and judicial positions should live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Does not God, who made man, know what is best for him, what is most conducive to his spiritual and eternal interests? God is working for the highest good of his creatures. If men were strictly temperate, we should not have a tithe of the deaths we now have, and physical and mental suffering would be greatly diminished. There would be far fewer accidents by land and sea. It is because man will do as he pleases, instead of submitting to God's requirement, that so much evil is in the world.

How can men trust the decisions of jurors who are addicted to the use of liquor

and tobacco? If they are called to decide on an important case when deprived of their accustomed stimulants, they cannot exercise their minds in a healthful way; they are in no condition to render an intelligent judgment; and what would their decision be worth?

Men in responsible positions should be men of temperance and integrity, and especially should those who are intrusted with judicial functions be men of sober habits, that they may render justice, and be unbiased by bribe or prejudice. But how widely different is the condition of our judicial and governmental affairs from that made possible through obedience to the commands of God. Liquor, tobacco, low morals lead men to deal treacherously with their fellow men.

On every hand there is temptation for our young men, as well as for those of mature years. In both America and Europe the places of vice and destruction are made attractive by exhibitions and music, that unwary feet may be led into the snare. Everything possible is done to lure the young into the saloon. What shall be done to save our youth? Christ made an infinite sacrifice, he became poor that we through his poverty might become rich and have a life that measures with the life of God, and shall we make no sacrifice to save those who are going to ruin about us? What are we doing for the cause of temperance, to save our youth today? Who is standing by the side of Christ, as a laborer together with God?

Parents, are you teaching your children to overcome? Are you seeking to check the tide of evil that threatens to overwhelm our land? Mothers, are you doing your work as educators? Are you teaching your children in their childhood habits of self-control and temperance? Do not wait till passion holds them in its iron bands, but now take them to God, teach them that Jesus loves them, that Heaven has claims upon them. In their youth put their hands into the hands of Christ, that he may lead them up. Mothers, rouse to your moral responsibility, and work for your children as those who must give an account. We must do something to stop the tide of evil, that the children and youth may not be swept down to perdition. We must be overcomers, and must teach our children to overcome.

In the wilderness of temptation, Christ passed over the ground where Adam fell. He began the work where the ruin began, and on the point of appetite he overcame the power of the evil one in our behalf. Satan left the field a vanquished foe, and no one is excused from entering the battle on the Lord's side, for there is no reason why man may

not be an overcomer if he trusts in 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."

Through the merits of Christ we are to be purified, refined, redeemed, and given a place with Christ on his throne. Could any greater honor be conferred upon man than this? Could we aspire to anything greater? If we are overcomers, Christ declares, "I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."

July 20, 1891

Results of Refusing to Walk in the Light

"Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.... Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone." While they were engaged in this sacrilegious feast, a bloodless hand traced opposite the king, characters of writing that could not be read or interpreted by any of the magicians or wise men of the court. "Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him." But if they could not understand the writing, why were they so troubled? The writing on the wall gave evidence that there was a witness to their evil deeds, a guest not invited or welcome to their idolatrous feast, and his presence convicted of sin, and foretold doom and disaster. Before them passed, as in panoramic view, the deeds of their evil lives, and they seemed to be arraigned before the Judgment, of which they had been warned.

Belshazzar was most terror-stricken of them all; for great had been his opportunities for knowing the God he had blasphemed and derided. He knew the history of his grandfather; how, because of his exaltation of self, his wisdom and reason had been taken away, and he had gone forth to be a companion of the beasts of the field. But Belshazzar disregarded the lesson as completely as though these things had never occurred, and made himself guilty of the very sins for which his grandfather had been condemned. He was guilty because he had had the privilege of knowing and doing the right, and of leading others in the way, and yet refused to heed the light that God had permitted to shine upon his pathway. He had every opportunity of becoming acquainted with God and with his truth, but he would not deny himself in order to know and do righteousness. Now in the midst of his most pronounced idolatry and defiance of God, the bloodless hand writes his doom.

Daniel is remembered, and brought to the banqueting hall. The servant of God sees the evidences of the degradation and idolatry of the feast, so suddenly brought to an end; but Daniel was not disconcerted in the presence of the king and his lords.

"I have even heard of thee," said the king, "that the spirit of the gods is in thee, and that light and understanding and excellent wisdom is found in thee.... And I have heard of thee, that thou canst make interpretations, and dissolve doubts; now if thou canst read the writing, and make known to me the interpretation thereof, thou shalt be clothed with scarlet, and have a chain of gold about thy neck, and shalt be the third ruler in the kingdom. Then Daniel answered and said before the king, 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." Then Daniel reviewed the past, bringing before Belshazzar the light which he had received from the history and judgment of Nebuchadnezzar. God had given his grandfather a kingdom, majesty, glory, and honor; but instead of feeling gratitude to God Nebuchadnezzar had taken the glory to himself, and his mind was lifted up and his heart hardened. God deposed him from his throne, and took his glory from him. Daniel faithfully repeated the story of Nebuchadnezzar's renown and degradation, and set forth the mercy of God in granting him another opportunity of acknowledging God as the Supreme Ruler in heaven and earth, the One to whom kings and nations owed allegiance. "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; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know; and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified."

Then the writing on the wall was read and interpreted. Belshazzar heard the irrevocable sentence: "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." Belshazzar was without excuse, for abundant light had been given him to reform his life. He had had opportunity for knowing the truth; but he lost all the benefits of the knowledge by his course of self-indulgence; he did not meet the mind of God, as a man or a king, and because of this the kingdom had been taken from him. He who has power to set up and to tear down, gave the kingdom to another.

In the history of Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar, God speaks to nations of today. We are to take to heart the lessons he sought to teach these rebellious kings; for if Belshazzar had pursued a course in harmony with the instruction given to his grandfather, he would have retained not only his kingdom but his life. He disregarded

the lessons, and went on in rebellion against God, committing the very sins for which his grandfather had been reproved and punished. He, too, lifted himself up in pride and exaltation, and the final judgment of God fell upon him and his house. His great sin was that, notwithstanding God had given him light, he refused to walk in the paths of righteousness.

July 27, 1891

Results of Refusing to Walk in the Light--No. 2

The condemnation that will fall upon the nations of the earth in this day will be because of their rejection of light, and will be similar to that which fell upon the kings of Babylon; it will be because they have failed to make the most of present light, present opportunities for knowing what is truth and righteousness. Our condemnation in the judgment will not result from the fact that we have lived in error, but from the fact that we have neglected heaven-sent opportunities for discovering truth. The means of becoming conversant with the truth are within the reach of all; but, like the indulgent, selfish king, we give more attention to the things that charm the ear, and please the eye, and gratify the palate, than to the things that enrich the mind, the divine treasures of truth. It is through the truth that we may answer the great question, "What must I do to be saved?"

On every page of God's word the injunction to obedience is plainly written, and yet how often his commands are lightly regarded or wholly set aside! The command for the observance of the holy Sabbath of the Lord is placed in the very bosom of the decalogue, and is so plain that none need err as to its import, and yet it is treated with as great profanation as were the sacred vessels at the feast of Belshazzar. God sanctified and blessed the seventh day, setting it apart to be observed as holy time. Yet the Sabbath of the Lord has been used as a common working day, while a day which possesses no sanctity whatever has been put in the place of God's sanctified day. The religious world has accepted error for truth, and many who claim to be the children of the light are the children of darkness. The condemnation of those who trample upon God's holy Sabbath, and exalt a Sabbath instituted by the man of sin, will not come because they have conscientiously observed the first day of the week, but because they neglected opportunities for searching the Scriptures and learning, not what man has said, not what the ministers say, not what the fathers have said, but what saith the infinite God? What day has God specified as his holy day? What did he command men to honor when he spoke with an audible voice from Sinai? That voice is to be obeyed above every other; the edicts of kings and nations are void before a command of God. The Lord of hosts commands our obedience.

If ministers would search their Bibles, they would know what saith the Scriptures; but the voices of false shepherds cry, "Lo here! or, lo there!" but we are safe only in following Him who said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." The Lord declares, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

In the transgression of Eve there are important lessons for us to learn. Eve was deceived by a strange voice telling a story that contradicted the plain statements of the word of God, and she accepted the words of the deceiver as the words of truth; she believed a lie, and suffered the consequences of her deception and transgression. So it is with the sons and daughters of Eve in our day; they believe the same strange voice. It is not the voice of God or of Christ which declares to you that the law of God is not binding; for Jesus has said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven." He said again, "I have kept my Father's commandments."

You should turn from those who promise you wonderful liberty in breaking the commandments of the Lord, and should avail yourself of every opportunity for becoming acquainted with the truth. The fact that you conscientiously believe a lie will not save you from ruin, when the truth might have been yours. You can be saved in honest obedience to the truth; but if God vouchsafes to you the privilege of knowing and obeying the truth, and you neglect so great salvation, your very privileges will be recorded against you, to appear for your condemnation in the judgment. God has sent his ministers, his light-bearers, who hold forth the word of life; he has given you his word, he has sent his Son to be your Saviour and example, and you will be without excuse if you fail to appropriate the promises of God and become his obedient child.

August 3, 1891

Genuine Religion

"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." "He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer." All who are in living connection with Jesus, will be imbued with his Spirit, and will work the works of Christ.

"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. 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." "Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body." Angels in the form of men have come as strangers to the dwellings of the righteous, to preserve them in times of peril, to protect them from the plans the enemy had laid to destroy them. Angels, as travelers, visited Abraham, and his courtesy to them, whom he supposed to be men like himself, was rewarded with the promise from God that Sarah should have a son. Lot, also, urging the strangers to abide with him because it was unsafe to remain in the street, entertained angels, and was blessed by being delivered from the city that was doomed to destruction.

But there is a fulfillment of this scripture in a broader sense. No child of God, however poor or oppressed, is neglected or passed by; for heavenly angels minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. As you open your doors to the children of God, whether high or low, rich or poor, and extend to them your hospitality, you invite these unseen visitors with them. Could your eyes be opened, you would see that you were not only entertaining the guests who needed the comforts and attentions you could bestow,

but that guests from heaven were also partakers of your hospitality, you were entertaining angels unawares.

You are not controlled by the Spirit of Christ when you select a few associates congenial to your own mind, and lavish favors upon them, while you neglect those who most need the help you can give them. Yet how often the encouraging words, the kindly acts, are all given to a few whom you estimate by your finite judgment to be worthy of them; while the very ones whom the Lord would have you regard and bless receive no particular favor, no words of sympathy or compassion. These things need to be considered. The admonitions of God should be heeded in our every-day life. "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

The reason why many walk apart from God is that they do not choose to do his words and keep his way. They do not follow the example and teachings of Christ. They misrepresent his character. Professing to be Christians, they lie against the truth. Jesus came from heaven to earth that he might, through association with humanity, by precept and example, reveal to men the character they must possess if they would be admitted to the family of heaven. He brought light and life, richness and fullness of good, that men might be partakers of his divine nature. He is the living vine, and every branch "in him" partakes of the life and fatness of the vine. The dry, leafless twig is grafted into the vine stock, and, fiber by fiber, vein by vein, becomes united to it. The adopted branch becomes one with the vine; it is nourished by the parent stock, and buds and blossoms and bears fruit.

The sinner who comes to Christ in faith, is joined soul to soul with his Redeemer, united in holy bonds with Jesus. Then he has love and benevolence through his constant union with Christ. And through faith and experience he has confidence that Jesus not only will but does save him to the uttermost. This confidence brings to his soul an abiding trust, a peace, a joy, that passeth understanding. Christ is to him an all-sufficient Saviour; he clings to Christ, receiving of his Spirit, until he works as Christ worked, is compassionate as Christ was compassionate, having an unselfish love, giving disinterested service, not to a few who are most congenial, but to those who most need

the help he can give.

If Christ had waited for man to make himself worthy of the divine presence and love, not a soul could have been a partaker of the divine nature. All must have perished. But there is hope for our world, for Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost; and this is exactly the work that must be done by every branch of the True Vine. Cherishing likes and dislikes is not Christ's way, but according to the principles and sentiments of the natural, unrenewed heart, and the fruit borne is in accordance with it. (Concluded next week.)

August 10, 1891

Genuine Religion

Christ and his obedient children love one another. Their tastes are identical. The true followers of Jesus are so abiding in him that they love that which he loves, and hate that which he hates. One spirit pervades the whole body. How then can the branches of the True Vine bear anything but good fruit? If Christ's words abide in the Christian, how can he do otherwise than work the works of Christ? He lives, he abides, in Christ, and like Christ ever has an eye single to the glory of God. "If ye keep my commandments [not profess to regard them, and then work contrary to them], ye shall abide in my love." You shall be united with One superior in vital power and wisdom, the weaker depending on the stronger, "looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of your faith."

"Without me ye can do nothing." It is at the peril of the soul that so many feel able to work in their own finite wisdom. Without Christ we cannot subdue a single sin nor resist the slightest temptation. It is connection with a power that is almighty which will make us overcomers. Then let everyone who comes to Jesus walk humbly, and feel daily that he needs a power out of and above himself, to soften his stony heart; that he needs to be melted over, that the dross of self may be consumed. The same power that turned the water to wine at the marriage feast of Cana is able to eradicate all evil from our nature, and to make us partakers of the divine nature. The very same power that made the leper clean can make the heart pure, fit for the society of God, of angels, and of the redeemed host. Holy obedience will be found only in the righteousness which Christ imparts to the believing soul. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." And every soul that abides in Christ and has Christ abiding in him, is as dear to God as is his own beloved Son. Accepted in the Beloved, he is an object of the Father's tender care, and he will bear much fruit as the result of his union with the True Vine.

Sanctification of the soul, body, and spirit is the sure result of this union with Christ. What is the character of the fruit?--Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. Wherever there is union with Christ, there is love. This is the crowning grace of the divine attributes. If love is not the abiding principle in the heart, whatever other good qualities we may possess will profit nothing.

"If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And if I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing. Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own." "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; 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." "Is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth."

Obedience to all the commandments of God is the sure result of supreme love to God, and love to our neighbor. This is Christianity. Have we this love? Christ is asking us each, "Lovest thou me?" Can we answer from the heart, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee?" If you love Jesus, you will love him for whom Jesus died. Oh, that all could look on Jesus, and learn what is love! Purity and divine compassion shine forth in his character. The meekness and lowliness of Christ made his influence fragrant among the poor, the fatherless, the widow, and the oppressed. Oh, how many who claim to be Christians need the pruning knife of God! Unless by looking to Jesus, the perfect standard of character, they learn their own defects, they become lifted up when in prosperity, and flaunt the world's colors; luxury, pride, and selfishness mark their footsteps. They study their ease, they seek to benefit themselves, to the neglect of their fellow-men. And they go on in this way until the Husbandman, seeing the unproductive branches, with his pruning knife cuts the tendrils and the stray offshoots. "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."

August 17, 1891

Missionary Work

The cross of Calvary is to be a constant reminder of the future, nobler world, the mansions that Jesus has gone to prepare for all who love him. We are to be enthusiasts. And as we by faith view the glories within the temple of God, we shall seek to awaken enthusiasm in others, a desire to behold things unseen. Our work is to attract minds away from earth to heaven; to take others with us as companions, to walk the path that is cast up for the ransomed of the Lord. The children of the Heavenly King are to move among men, not as citizens of the world, but as citizens of the kingdom above. We are pilgrims and strangers in this world, seeking a better country, even a heavenly. "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."

We do not realize the claims of redemption. Christ has purchased us by his own precious life. His tender care has been over us every moment of our existence. Then has he not a right to our service? He has the claims of redemption, but we have lost the sense of what it means. Redemption has been accepted in a vague way by us, but it seems like a long-past transaction, when we were lost to heaven, lost to God, condemned by the law, without hope. But here we are with the bright rays of the Sun of Righteousness shining upon us. Look at the cross of Calvary. Shall its solemn mysteries fade from our minds? It is a theme that should quicken us into gratitude, that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." How can the church look upon these words, and yet be slothful servants?

The Lord has work for all to do. God intends that men shall be laborers together with him. He has laid fathers and mothers under tribute to him, to begin the work in their homes in a decided, Christ-like spirit, that the love of Christ win their children. They must do everything possible to save their loved ones. Christ is constantly making intercession for the fallen race. He will furnish the grace, the Holy Spirit, if human agencies will become his channels to communicate the same to the world. The benevolence of Christ, his yearning love for souls, is deep and full. Where are the workers to help him? Where is the money to sustain them in their fields of labor?

The cross of Christ is to be the great center round which everything must revolve. Everything else must be in subordination to it. The cross is planted midway between divinity and humanity, between heaven and earth. It never moves nearer the earth. All things concerning the salvation of man must lie in the shadow of the cross. Heavenly intelligencies, uniting with the earthly, bow to this central attraction, and voices from heaven and earth unfold to the universe the plan of redemption. The cross is not to lose its significance to either world. All property, all wealth, that finds its way into the Lord's treasury, finds its true place in the arrangement of God.

The truth must ever struggle with error in order to lift high the standard of God's law, and to exalt Christ, because he bore its penalty that he might save man, and yet vindicate the immutability of the law. If Christians are like Christ, they will not hoard their Lord's money, or bind it up in worldly projects, but will invest their all in the cause of God and bring an ample revenue of glory to lay at the feet of their Redeemer.

Brethren and sisters, will you work for selfish purposes? Will you let the world with its selfish aims and principles come between you and your God? Will you serve mammon? Christ plainly declares that you cannot serve God and mammon. Will you subscribe your name on the pages of the world's record, or will you relate yourself to God, and let him write your name in the record books of heaven, to be immortalized in the universe of God? Christ has the first claim on you. "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.["]

I entreat you, spring into action at once, and be all that the name Christian signifies. You will then have no desire to live for self. You will have the high distinction of living wholly for Christ. By his mediatorial right all things belong to Christ. For him and by him all things were created. But when man sinned, the Son of God chose to assume human nature, and come to our world to die for the guilty race. By the cross of Calvary was revealed to the sinless universe the character of Satan. In putting to death through human agencies the Lord of life and glory, Satan made manifest the wickedness of his deceptive character. Christ had cast up the immeasurable sum of guilt to be canceled because of sin, and he gathered to his dying soul this vast responsibility, taking the sins of the whole world upon himself. Human nature was to him a robe of suffering; and when the crisis came, when he yielded himself a victim to

Satan's rage, when he hung agonizing upon the cross, dying the cruelest, most ignominious of deaths, the hosts of evil exulted, but man was saved.

While we contemplate the cross, the Son of God assuming the mass of human guilt, the mystery of redemption seems wonderful. Jesus points us to the love of God; the Father provided this propitiation because he loved us, that there might be a medium through which he could be reconciled to man and man to him. And our Lord, having committed himself to the wonderful work of redemption, would withhold nothing necessary to the completion of his plan. He poured out all heaven to man in that one great gift. And then he completed the work by surrounding man with unlimited blessings, favor upon favor, gift upon gift, opening to our view all the treasures of the future world.

But what of man? Is he so palsied with sin that he is incapable of appreciating the elements of a divine life? Christ draws man, but, alas! how few respond to the influence. Human selfishness is the barrier to eternal life. How can Heaven look upon any disloyalty or rebellion against the authority of God? It is stirred with indignation at the greatness of the guilt of man, the widespread rebellion that would turn all things created by him for the benefit of man, into weapons of war against him, exalting human wisdom above God's, and human achievements above the works of God. Wherever we may go, into business places, into national councils and government offices, God is there to assert his original claims. He declares, "I made all things; all are mine." The cross was planted midway between heaven and earth in order that Christ might reach both ways, and bridge the gulf that sin had made between God and man.

August 24, 1891

Christ our Hope

"This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." The knowledge of God and of Christ is the only knowledge which can lead to true and eternal happiness. This knowledge all may obtain; all may win the crown of glory, and the life which measures with the life of God.

Sin, that cost Adam beautiful Eden, exists everywhere in our world. Evil triumphs wherever God is not known or his character contemplated. We could not commit sin if we realized the presence of God, and thought upon his goodness, his love, and his compassion. Satan knows that if he can obscure the vision so that the eye of faith cannot behold God, there will be no barrier against sin. It is necessary to know God in order to be attracted to him. And the perception of his image as represented in Christ changes the sinner's views of evil. The shadow of Satan obscures the character of Jesus and of God; but if we by faith gain a knowledge of God, and hold steadfastly to Jesus, we shall be changed. In Jesus is manifested the character of the Father, and the sight of him attracts. It softens and subdues, and ceases not to transform the character, until Christ is formed within, the hope of glory. The human heart that has learned to behold the character of God may become, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, like a sacred harp, sending forth divine melody.

What benefit to the world are those professed Christians who have nothing to say about Jesus? Are they indeed standing under the banner of Prince Emmanuel when they are not doing him the service of faithful soldiers? Has your study of the law of God, the standard of all righteousness, led you to exclaim with Isaiah: "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts"? Has the sight brought you to see that your only hope is in Christ, the sin-pardoning Saviour? Has the sight of Jesus on the cross, dying for the guilt of man, brought you in contrition to the foot of the cross, so that you can say with Job, "Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes"? Have you made an entire surrender of your will to God's will, your ways to God's ways? Have you renounced self-confidence, self-boasting, and accepted

Jesus, who is made everything to you,--wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption? Do you see Christ as the anti-type of all the types, the precious, glorious substance of all the shadows, the full signification of all the symbols? The types and shadows were instituted by Christ himself, to transmit to man an idea of the plan devised for his redemption.

When Moses was feeding his flock in the pastures of Midian, the Lord was preparing him for a position of great responsibility; he was to be a laborer together with God. Educated in the court of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, he was imperfectly qualified to take his place as the leader of a suffering, tempted people, to help them in their oppression, sympathize with their sufferings, and conduct them through a rough and dangerous desert to the land of promise. The Lord in his providence took Moses from the king's court, and gave him the humble work of a shepherd, that, while caring for the sheep in the desert, he might be trained for the trials and hardships and perils of the wilderness, and qualified for the office of a shepherd of his own flock, for a church whose God was the Lord.

Forty years was Moses in this training school in the mountains. At Mount Horeb the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. "He looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither; put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God."

How many today see evidences of God's work, but their attention is not arrested! The enemy has cast his hellish shadow over them, so they do not perceive that God would have them pay special attention to his requirements, and be prepared to answer at any time as did Moses, "Here am I."

In the Jewish service, under the special direction of God the sacrifices were to be offered only at the tabernacle, through the medium of the priest. If he who wished to make an offering was negligent, and failed to carry out the specified arrangement of

God, he was to be cut off from his people. "What man soever there be of the house of Israel, that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat, in the camp, or that killeth it out of the camp, and bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the Lord before the tabernacle of the Lord; blood shall be imputed unto that man; he hath shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people."

This was strictly enjoined in the typical service, in order to give it its fullest significance. The object was to impress the minds of the people with the great truth that man can have access to God only through Christ. The Saviour says, "No man cometh to the Father but by me."

All religious service, however attractive and costly, that endeavors to merit the favor of God, all mortification of the flesh, all penance and laborious work to procure the forgiveness of sin and the divine favor,--whatever prevents us from making Christ our entire dependence, is abomination in the sight of God. There is no hope for man but to cease his rebellion, his resistance of God's will, and own himself a sinner ready to perish, and cast himself upon the mercy of God. We can be saved only through Christ. Not by any good works which we may do, can we find salvation. There is no mercy for the fallen race except that which comes as the free gift of God. There is no blessing we receive but that which comes through the mediation of Christ. It is ever to be borne in mind that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him" as his personal Saviour, able to save to the uttermost all who come unto him, "should not perish, but have everlasting life." The Father gave his well-beloved Son, that through this divine channel his love might reach to man. The Father loves those who believe on Christ, even as he loves the Son, for they are made one with Christ. Jesus encircles the race with his human arm, while with his divine arm he lays hold upon infinity. He is the "daysman" between a holy God and our sinful humanity,--one who can "lay his hand on us both."

The terms of this oneness between God and man in the great covenant of redemption were arranged with Christ from all eternity. The covenant of grace was revealed to the patriarchs. The covenant made with Abraham four hundred and thirty years before the law was spoken on Sinai was a covenant confirmed by God in Christ, the very same gospel which is preached to us. "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed

with faithful Abraham." The covenant of grace is not a new truth, for it existed in the mind of God from all eternity. This is why it is called the everlasting covenant. The plan of redemption was not conceived after the fall of man to cure the dreadful evil; the apostle Paul speaks of the gospel, the preaching of Jesus Christ, as "the revelation of the mystery, which hath been kept in silence through times eternal, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known unto all the nations unto obedience of faith." (Revised Version.)

September 7, 1891

Soldiers of Christ

We are Christ's soldiers, and we must have an abiding faith in our great Leader, looking unto him as the Author and Finisher of our faith. We have a common enemy also, even our adversary the devil. There is the greatest necessity for wisely-laid plans and careful management in the cause and work of God, that all may fight the good fight with faith and courage, and never suffer defeat.

The privates in an army must obey orders. They often have to perform duties, the purpose of which they cannot see. They are sometimes brought into places of danger when no reason for the move is given them. So in the army of Christ; we must have confidence in our great Commander, we must rely implicitly upon his guidance, and he will bring us safe out of every danger, victorious through every conflict.

The best soldiers are those who are trained, who are intelligent, faithful, courageous, true. A soldier needs to think. Through right discipline he should acquire habits of carefulness and painstaking. The training of all the faculties, whether mental or physical, the ability to use every power, are essential to those who would obtain the victory. If this is so in earthly warfare, how much more essential is such a preparation for those who are soldiers of Christ. They must realize that they are not their own, that they belong to God.

The warfare in which we are engaged is largely mental, and the mind that is the most thoroughly trained will do the most acceptable work. Poor soldiers will they be whose powers have, through long disuse, become well-nigh incapable of exercise. It is a most dangerous thing for one who professes to be a soldier of Christ to be inexperienced, inefficient, and unable to render real, earnest, sincere service to the Lord. The servants of Christ should seek to understand the requirements for this time. The conditions of warfare are not what they were years ago, because increased light has been shining upon us, and great and solemn warnings have come to us. Unless we have an understanding of the times in which we live, we may, even with the best of intentions, make great mistakes, and stand in the way of the advancement of the work. The claims upon the Christians are the same now as ever,--perfect obedience,--but

Satan's attacks are more deceptive. His manner of warfare is so different from that expected that, unless the senses are sharpened to comprehend his plans, we shall not be prepared for defense. Satan has many wily agents who will avail themselves of every means to assault those who vindicate the claims of God's law. They may not meet them in open warfare, with arguments, but will work with all their power to press them into difficult places, to restrict their privileges and liberties, and to annoy them in other ways.

Of all men on the face of the earth, the servants of Christ should not, under any circumstances, leave their faculties uncultivated. The greater the work, and the more worthy the Master we serve, the more efficient should be his workers. Those who wish to honor God will render to him the very best and most thorough service in their power. God requires every faculty to be in its highest state of culture and vigor. Under the old dispensation men were not allowed to lay on his altar the maimed, or the halt, or the blind; and shall men and women in the Christian age be content to offer him defective service, which is the result of uncultivated intellects, and faculties crippled and dwarfed from disuse or idleness? God calls for better service and higher work than we give him. Christ says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

Soldiers engaged in battle have to meet difficulties and hardships. Coarse food is given them, and that often in limited quantities. They have long marches, day by day, over rough roads and under burning suns, camping out at night, sleeping on the bare ground, with only the canopy of heaven for a covering, exposed to drenching rains and chilling frosts, hungry, faint, exhausted, now standing as a target for the foe, now in deadly encounter. Thus they learn what hardship means. Those who enlist in Christ's army are also expected to do difficult work, and to bear painful trials patiently for Christ's sake. But those who suffer with him shall also reign with him. Then who of us have entered the service to expect the conveniences of life, to be off duty when we please, laying aside the soldier's armor and putting on the civilians' dress, sleeping at the post of duty, and so exposing the cause of God to reproach? The ease-loving ones will not practice self-denial and patient endurance; and when men are wanted to make mighty strokes for God, these are not ready to answer, "Here am I; send me." Hard and trying work has to be done, but blessed are those who are ready to do it when their names are called. God will not reward men and women in the next world for seeking to be comfortable in this. We are now on the battle field. There is no time for resting, no

time for ease, no time for selfish indulgence. After gaining one advantage, you must do battle again; you must go on conquering and to conquer, gathering fresh strength for fresh struggles. Every victory gained gives an increase of courage, faith, and determination. Through divine strength you will prove more than a match for your enemies.

In spite of all the good qualities a man may have, he cannot be a good soldier if he acts independently of those connected with him. Occasional and uncertain movements, however earnest and energetic, will in the end bring defeat. Take a strong team of horses. If, instead of both pulling together, one should suddenly jerk forward and the other pull back, they would not move the load, notwithstanding their great strength. So the soldiers of Christ must work in concert, else there will be a mere concourse of independent atoms. Strength, instead of being carefully treasured to meet one great end, will be wasted in disconcerted, meaningless efforts. In union is strength. A few men and women who unite together, having the glory of God in view, will be growing in strength and wisdom, and gaining new victories. There is much hard work to be done for the Master, and much wisdom must be brought into the work. It is the unconquerable perseverance, the never-failing endurance, which will bring the victory. Many have a theory of truth, but know scarcely anything of the sweet victories through that faith which overcometh the world. An experience must be gained by each one for himself, or we shall never sit down with the suffering Man of Calvary. It will cost us all we have, but as a reward we shall inherit all things.

Our enemy may appear to have the advantage of us in number, in the variety of resources, and in position; but we must not be discouraged, nor turn cowards. We have Christ with us, and he is continually going forward, leading to advanced truths and greater light. Those who will follow must go forward in spite of manifold foes, powerful and difficult to resist because they work in a subtle, underhand manner. We shall have to meet, not only human power, but the principalities of the kingdom of darkness,--"wicked spirits in high places." Even our friends will oppose us, and we shall have to meet scornful sneers, because we venture to choose the better way. Our motives will be misjudged, and even our character and habits maligned. But "ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." We have an incessant strife, but is not the reward at the end of the conflict worthy of all the labor? Will not the eternal weight of glory more than compensate for every wound, every grief, every sorrow? Will not every sacrifice bring returns in treasures that are without price?

September 28, 1891

"Ye are the Light of the World"

"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." Those who walk in darkness are following another leader than Jesus. Darkness is the atmosphere of Satan. "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." There is light for the willing and obedient. You are to "show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." No words of complaint, no murmuring at hardship and trial, will escape the lips of him who is walking in the light as Christ is in the light. He will rejoice in the light, and will enjoy the pure atmosphere that surrounds the Light of the world. The light shining from Christ upon his obedient children, will be reflected from their lives into the darkness of the world. The Light giver makes them light bearers. "Ye are the light of the world."

How many who profess to believe the word of God are, day by day, with earnest faith and prayer, gathering the precious light from Jesus, and letting it shine forth to the world so brightly that the darkness and evil are rebuked, and the world is forced to give glory to God? Are you bringing the purity, the patience, and the love of Jesus into your life? Is your light shining in clear, steady rays? If not, your profession is only mockery. Have the mists of worldliness gathered about your soul, so that your light is growing feeble and obscure? Come close to the great Source of light, that they may be dispelled. Why remain in darkness? Why talk gloom? "Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart."

When Jesus was to leave the disciples, he said to them, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." These words were spoken to all who should be disciples of Christ to the end of time. The Master has given to his servants talents, "to every man according to his several ability." He knows the capacity of every man, and he bestows his gifts according to the capability of each person to use them. God's whole family, from men in humble stations to those in high positions of trust, are made responsible moral agents. All are intrusted with the goods of heaven. Our work is to trade upon the capital intrusted to us, and by use to multiply the gifts of God. Some have talents of wealth, some of influence, others

of intellect; and every capability and power is from God, and should be appreciated. With God's blessing, and unwearied diligence in putting out to the exchangers the intrusted talents, there will be a constant gain to the faithful stewards, and they will have more talents to use for the Master.

The word of God is to be our meat and our drink. No earthly consideration should be allowed to absorb the mind and affections so that the Lord will be crowded out of our thoughts and knowledge. We are to keep the Lord ever before us. He is at our right hand, to help us in every emergency.

Christ plainly defines the duty of every believer. We are to exercise repentance toward God for having transgressed his holy law; to receive the truth into the heart; to give ourselves to Christ, and with genuine faith make him our personal Saviour; to obey his commandments, cherishing his love, which will lead to unity and peace. No one will be excusable for so managing his business that he must be a slave to the world, and have no time for missionary work. Faithful, spiritual workers will show in their own life and character the power of the grace of Christ. They will shine as lights in the world.

Every professed Christian who has not the missionary spirit, will be a missionary for the enemy; for by precept and example he gives the impression that the work of the Lord is of secondary importance, not worthy of consideration, and that it can be set aside at his own pleasure or convenience. Such persons are false lights in the church, beguiling others to follow them away from the path of self-denial, away from the cross of Christ, into careless indifference. All who continue in this course will make shipwreck of faith.

There is a work for every one of us to do in this world. There are great responsibilities to be borne, and there are small duties to be done. With deep regret we see many who have physical strength and mental capabilities, devoting those God-given powers to unworthy objects. They have no time, no vital energy, to give to eternal things. This is because they choose to follow their own inclinations, and do not ask, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" A large number of Christ's professed followers choose the work that is most gratifying to themselves. What is life if it is not devoted to the service of God? Everyone who has enlisted under the banner of Christ has pledged himself to become a missionary for God. Is there any work that can compare in importance with that which the Lord of glory has undertaken in man's behalf? He left

his honor, his riches, his high command, to lift up fallen man, to enlighten him, to refine him, to ennoble his life. The Majesty of heaven has evinced how highly he values man formed in the image of God. He who reigns supreme in the heavens, who created the world, who made man in his own likeness, who weighs the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance, came to our world as a missionary, to bring back to God the fallen sons and daughters of Adam. And he has taken man into his confidence and service, and given to everyone his work, that all may be sharers with him in the joy of seeing souls redeemed. He has condescended to make fallen men laborers together with him. The thought is almost beyond belief,--that Jesus looks to his followers, to you and me, to be helpers in the great work of saving sinners for whom he has given his own precious life. Now is a precious and important time for us, when we can be channels of light to others.

Let not one who has named the name of Christ refuse to take up the work God has given him to do. Let no one indulge the thought, "I have no influence; I am too insignificant to be a light to others." If you have reasoning powers, you will have an influence, either for good or for evil. You will be Christ's missionary, gathering with him, or you will scatter from him. By doing nothing you will encourage in others a spirit of indifference and slothfulness. Our life always exerts an influence, whether consciously or unconsciously. You may not occupy a prominent position, yet you must associate with some who will be affected by your example, either being led away from devotion and self-sacrifice, or being encouraged to work with all the ability they have, for the conversion of souls. Listen to the words of the apostle: "In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works." In this world we shall never know the result of our words and example, but when the judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened, then all secrets will be revealed. Our only safety is in closely following the Pattern. While we present Jesus to the world, our example should correspond to the doctrines we advance; but if our daily life is unlike that of Christ, we are only helping on the cause of the enemy; we are representing the character of the great deceiver. (Concluded next number.)

October 12, 1891

"Ye Are the Light of the World"

We must daily and hourly press close to the side of Jesus, to receive strength and grace to do that which he has given us to do. We may be laborers together with God. Our precious, golden moments must not be wasted in self-pleasing, but they must be given to glorifying God.

Our missionary work should begin with our own hearts, to set them in order. If we have unkind thoughts and feelings toward others, we must put them away. Nothing of this kind should be cherished. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." We must ourselves be faithful Christians if we expect to do the work of a missionary. Our words must be like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

The first missionary that Jesus sent to the region of Decapolis was the man out of whom he had cast the legion of devils. The man had begged to accompany Jesus constantly, but Jesus "suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." This man bore in his own person the evidence that Jesus was the true Messiah. He related his own experience, telling how great things God had done for him, and thus the way was prepared for the message of truth from the lips of Jesus himself.

We all have an important work to do for God, and we should watch for opportunities of presenting Jesus to those who know him not. And opportunities will not be lacking if we are prepared by the grace of Christ to be workers together with God. Your example in living for Christ, in showing that you have the mind of Christ, will be far more impressive than any words you may utter, any profession you may make.

"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." "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." Through the grace given us, we must control our thoughts and feelings, and have the mind that dwelt in Christ. He has sent each one of us to be a missionary to the world; and if you partake constantly of

his Spirit, by earnest prayer and faith, you may live as he lived. Then what good you might do in your own family, in the church, in the world! The bright beams of light from Jesus would be reflected from his light-bearers into the darkness, and many who are longing for light and truth would come to Christ for the pardon of their sins. As we do the work committed to us, an invigorating power will come to our own life, and we shall better comprehend the unsearchable riches of Christ.

You must not become discouraged. The minister may have only a few to hear him, but how do you know that among the few hearers there is not one with whom the Spirit of the Lord is striving, and that by your message he may not be led to give his heart to God? God may give you a message for that very soul. That one, if converted, may become a missionary, and may bring the light to many more hearts. The one for whom you labored may become as a thousand. You may be disappointed in numbers, but not in the result. Therefore do not look at the empty seats, but tell the few what the Lord is doing in bringing the truth before the world. Speak with all the earnestness and faith and assurance that you would have if thousands were before you.

The messenger is to speak the truth in all simplicity, bringing before his hearers the unsearchable riches of Christ. Sow beside all waters, and when we can do no more for him, can bring no more sheaves into the garner of the Lord, when every man shall receive as his works have been, all the efforts made in behalf of souls will be remembered. Christ has left his work to be carried forward to completion by his true followers, while he goes before them as he did before Moses, guiding them in the way.

There is great need of personal influence. The influence of God-fearing men and women is wanted as workers for the Master, as devoted missionaries. Jesus will bestow his grace in rich abundance upon those who let it flow out to others. He who left heaven to save fallen men, sends none forth to work in his vineyard at their own charges. He says, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end." "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth." We are to feel our dependence, that we can do nothing without him, and then when we call, he will answer us. We must have hearts full of faith, having God's glory constantly in view. We need to be aroused upon one point,--that God has made us stewards; and we need to pray constantly for tact and a clear conception and heavenly wisdom to use his gifts of speech, of influence, aright for the Master, who has said, "Occupy till I come." All the blessings we enjoy are from the Lord, granted to us because of his great goodness.

We must have faith in the Scriptures. All who are pressing forward to the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, will see and feel the necessity of having humble thoughts of themselves, and praying earnestly for wisdom from Jesus, that they may have an understanding heart to believe and live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. As this faith does not originate with ourselves, but is the gift of God, it will be constantly given to all who seek for it earnestly and prayerfully.

There are those who have only a nominal faith; they draw nigh to God with their lips, while the heart is far from him; but the true wrestler for the victory has a real, living faith, which is implanted in his heart by the Holy Spirit, and it makes every difference in the world with his life and words and actions. He has an aim in life, a living purpose, which shapes the character. This hope is not vague; it rests on a solid basis, which is the truth. It braces the soul for trial, and nerves it for duty, irrespective of inconvenience or inclination. A stubborn, willful spirit is not of Christ, but of Satan; hence, it will not be cherished by him who has the mind of Christ. All impurity of thought will be overcome, and the mind will be trained to pure and holy thoughts. Backbiting and evil speaking will be put away. Jealousy and selfishness will be overcome, for they are Satanic, and not Christlike. Bitter are the fruits of self-indulgence, of unsanctified traits of character. There is no rest or happiness in a life of opposition to God. But sweet is the joy and peace experienced by those who close the door to Satan, and open it to Christ.

The one who has struggled day by day for the victory, and conquered, knows how to help others. He has patience to try to strengthen the faint-hearted who have been overcome again and again. By precept and example the one who has had to watch and pray and fight the battles against self, can reveal to others the preciousness of faith and hope, which give light amid the darkness, joy in the midst of sorrow.

November 9, 1891

Christian Homes

Suppose that because some ship had disregarded his warning beacon and gone to pieces on the rocks, the lighthouse keeper should put out his lights, and say, "I will pay no more attention to the lighthouse;" what would be the consequence? But that is not the way he does. He keeps his lights burning all night, throwing their beams far out into the darkness, for the benefit of every mariner that comes within the dangerous reach of rocks and shoals. Were some ship to be wrecked because the lights went out, it would be telegraphed over the world that on such a night, at such a point, a ship went to pieces on the rocks because there was no light in the tower. But if some ships are wrecked because they pay no attention to the light, the lighthouse keeper is guiltless; they were warned, but they paid no heed.

What if the light in the household should go out? Then everyone in that house would be in darkness; and the result would be as disastrous as though the light were to go out in the lighthouse tower. Souls are looking at you, fellow-Christians, to see whether you are drunken with the cares of this life, or are preparing for the future, immortal life. They will watch to see what the influence of your life is, and whether you are true missionaries at home, training your children for heaven.

The Christian's first duty is in the home. Fathers and mothers, yours is a great responsibility. You are preparing your children for life or for death; you are training them for an abiding place here in the earth, for self-gratification in this life, or for the immortal life, to praise God forever. And which shall it be? It should be the burden of your life to have every child that God has committed to your trust receive the divine mould. Your children should be taught to control their tempers and to cultivate a loving, Christlike spirit. So direct them that they will love the service of God, that they will take more pleasure in going to the house of worship than to places of amusement. Teach them that religion is a living principle. Had I been brought up with the idea that religion is a mere feeling, my life would have been a useless one. But I never let feeling come between heaven and my soul. Whatever my feelings may be, I will seek God at the commencement of the day, at noon, and at night, that I may draw strength from the living Source of power.

Mothers, you have no right to spend time in ruffling, and tucking, and embroidering your children's dresses for display. Has not your time been given you for a higher and nobler purpose? Has it not been given you to be spent in beautifying the minds of your children, and cultivating loveliness of character? Should it not be spent in laying hold of the Mighty One of heaven, and seeking him for power and wisdom to train your children for a place in his kingdom, to secure for them a life that will endure as long as the throne of Jehovah?

But how many mothers there are who are so far from God that they devote their time to their own gratification, and leave their children to be cared for by unconsecrated hands. Or perhaps the mother sits at her work night after night, while her children go to bed without a prayer or a good-night kiss. She does not bind their tender hearts to her own by the cords of love; for she is "too busy." And is this as God would have it?--No, indeed! Something has taken away the mother's reason, and what is it? Is it not a desire to meet the world's standard and to conform to its customs?

Some may wonder why it is that we say so much about home religion and the children. It is because of the terrible neglect of home duties on the part of so many. As the servants of God, parents, you are responsible for the children committed to your care. Many of them are growing up without reverence, growing up careless and irreligious, unthankful and unholy.

If these children had been properly trained and disciplined, if they had been brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, heavenly angels would be in your homes. If you were true home missionaries, in your daily life exemplifying the teachings of the word of God, you would be preparing yourselves for a wider field of usefulness, and at the same time fitting your children to stand by your side, as efficient workers in the cause of God. What an impression it makes upon society to see a family united in the work and service of the Lord. Such a family is a powerful discourse in favor of the reality of Christianity. Others see that there is an influence at work in the family that affects the children, and that the God of Abraham is with them. And that which has such a powerful influence on the children is felt beyond the home, and affects other lives. If the homes of professed Christians had a right religious mould, they would exert a mighty influence for good. They would indeed be the "light of the world."

A well-ordered Christian household is an argument that the infidel cannot resist. He finds no place for his cavils. And the children of such a household are prepared to meet the sophistries of infidelity. They have accepted the Bible as the basis of their faith, and they have a firm foundation that cannot be swept away by the in-coming tide of skepticism.

Then, Christian friends, fathers and mothers, let your light grow dim--no, never! Let your heart grow faint, or your hands weary--no, never! And by and by the portals of the celestial city will be opened to you; and you may present yourselves and your children before the throne, saying, "Here am I, and the children whom thou hast given me." And what a reward for faithfulness that will be, to see your children crowned with immortal life in the beautiful city of God!

November 16, 1891

Christ the Power that Draws Men to God

The Spirit of inspiration addresses those who refuse to be drawn to Christ, "Despise thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" How is this? Divine agencies are constantly at work to bring men into harmony with God. Every means in heaven and in earth is employed to draw men to the great Center of the world's hope. And as they fasten their eyes upon the dying Man of Calvary, they are led to exclaim, "Why, oh why, is all this suffering?" And the answer comes, "It is the revelation of the goodness of God, to lead thee to repentance."

Christ suffered the penalty of man's transgression of the holy law of God. The mercy and love of God, so full, so rich, so free, breaks down every barrier, and the soul is surrendered to God. Such agony, such humiliation of the Son of God, leads the sinner to repent of the sins that have cost such a sacrifice. He has repentance toward God, because his holy law has been transgressed; and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, the sinner's only hope, the One who can save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him. The sinner's position before God is then that of one whose sins are forgiven, whose transgressions are covered, and he becomes a partaker "of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." A new element of life and power is imparted, which cannot be accepted and received by man until he views Christ as his only hope; then through Christ he discerns the magnitude of his guilt in transgressing the law of Jehovah.

Man must be emptied of self before he can be in the fullest sense a believer in Jesus; and when self is subdued, then the Lord can make of man a new creature. New bottles can contain new wine. Truth will be received into the heart, the character will be transformed into the likeness of Christ; the Son of God will be revealed to the world by his followers, as the Father was revealed to the world by the Son. And all who reveal Christ, are revealing the Father also.

The word of inspiration pronounces judgment against all who pass by the wonderful exhibition of the love of God, and refuse the gift that the Father has given to

the world, even his only-begotten Son. "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life." Mark the terms; for it is essential for everyone to know the conditions on which we are called to the service of Christ, to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. We are "laborers together with God." And we should desire most earnestly to know, and we must know or die in our sins, what terms or conditions he requires in this partnership. You cannot trust to the multitude, because they walk in a false way. You must learn for yourself what are God's requirements, and know whether you are obeying them.

Is not the reward of obedience rich and full? What more can we ask? Has not the Lord Jesus opened for us the gates of paradise? Has he not, in doing this, given the faithful seeker all the treasures of the eternal world? "But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth [the commandments of God], but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first [for he has the greatest light, and his guilt will be proportioned to the knowledge which he might have had, had he followed on to know the Lord], and also of the Gentile; but glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; for there is no respect of persons with God."

Mark the words of Christ: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." In keeping his commandments there is "great reward." It is in obeying the commandment that man is called a worker together with God. "Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot [but Judas the brother of James], Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" Mark the answer: "If a man love me, he will keep my words." There will be no betraying of sacred trust, no disrespect or careless inattention to the words of Jesus, but the commandments of God will be revered. Human enactments and requirements may lead men away from God. The "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not" of earthly laws often interpose obstacles in the way of obeying God's holy requirements.

Every idol that men raise--their own ideas and opinions--obscures the true commandments of God, and then the only progress made will be into error and

darkness. Those who are doers of the words of Christ will exemplify their love for him; and when the church is living, not in profession merely, but in spirit and in truth, by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, they will keep the commandments. Their words and example will reflect light to the world, because they work the works of God. Their light will shine clear and distinct amid the moral darkness, for it is the light of the gospel, which "is the power of God unto salvation."

"And my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." "Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning [the law of Jehovah, the ten commandments]. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life."

"He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings; and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." God has made known his truth to the world through his Son. Christ taught his apostles, and they have given to us his words. The words of Christ are to dwell in his followers, and thus the truth is to be made manifest to the understanding and conscience of men. The aggressive power of the gospel is more dependent upon the personal piety of its disciples than upon any other means; and the world has a right to expect the highest virtue and the purest, Christlike works from them. Christ abiding in the soul by faith will enable us to represent his character in all meekness and gentleness, in true goodness and love. Thus, through the consistent lives of the people of God, the world will see the Father and the Son.

"These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." The Holy Spirit is ever waiting to do its office work upon the human heart. Those who desire to learn can place themselves in close connection with God, and the promise that the Comforter shall teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance, whatever Christ had said to his disciples when he was upon the earth, will be fulfilled. But if we disconnect from God, we can be no longer students in the school of Christ. Then we shall feel no special burden for the souls for whom Christ has died.

It was most difficult for the disciples of Christ to keep his lessons distinct from

the traditions and maxims of the rabbis, the scribes and Pharisees. The teachings which the disciples had been educated to respect as the voice of God, held a power over their minds and moulded their sentiments. The disciples could not be a living and shining light until they were freed from the influence of the sayings and commandments of men, and the words of Christ were deeply impressed upon their minds and hearts as distinct truths, as precious jewels, to be appreciated, loved, and acted upon.

Jesus came to the world, lived a holy life, and died, to leave to the church his legacy in the valuable treasures he intrusted to them. He made his disciples the depositaries of most precious doctrines, to be placed in the hands of his church unmixed with the errors and traditions of men. He revealed himself to them as the light of the world, the Sun of Righteousness. And he promised them the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father was to send in his name.

After his resurrection he said unto them: "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off,

even as many as the Lord our God shall call." The glorious promise is unto us who live in the last days: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you; whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

November 23, 1891

The Comforter

"I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you." The divine Spirit that the world's Redeemer promised to send, is the presence and power of God. He will not leave his people in the world destitute of his grace, to be buffeted by the enemy of God, and harassed by the oppression of the world; but he will come to them. The world cannot see the truth; they know not the Father or the Son, but it is only because they do not desire to know God, they do not wish to look upon Jesus, to see his goodness, his love, his heavenly attractions. Jesus is inviting all men to accept him; and wherever the heart is open to receive him, he will come in, gladdening the soul with the light and joy of his presence.

"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own [the Jewish nation], and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth. John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me. And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by [or through] Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more." The world will be pleased that they are no more to have their feelings disturbed by the solemn warnings and forcible truths that he set before them in symbols and parables; for whenever they looked at the things of nature, the objects with which he illustrated his instructions, the lessons he had taught them, were brought to mind. Christ held the key to all the treasures of wisdom, and he could diffuse knowledge as no other one could. He was indeed more than a teacher come from God; he was the only-begotten Son of the Father, the one sent into the world to save those who should believe on him.

How terrible a thing it is to reject the Saviour! how perilous to neglect the great salvation! Christ would fill the world with his redeeming power, he would scatter abundantly the imperishable seeds of truth in all hearts, if the world was only prepared to receive them. Kings and nobles marveled at the gracious words that proceeded from his lips. Many of the priests and rulers were convinced that he was the promised Messiah, but they dared not acknowledge him for fear of being thrust out of the synagogue. They could not consent to join themselves to Jesus and his disciples, and be in the minority.

Christ saw that that which prevented the truth from reaching many hearts was their misconception of the nature and claims of the law. They neglected to cultivate spirituality. They did not know the Lord whom they professed to serve and obey. They did not discern the relation of Jesus to the Father, neither did they know by experience the paternal character of God, or understand that his law requires us to love God supremely, and our neighbor as ourselves. If they would have emptied the soul of selfishness, pride, and self-love, and humbled their hearts to be instructed by the greatest Teacher the world ever knew, they would have recognized the grace of God in the gift of Jesus to our world to save those who were ready to perish.

It was difficult to make any permanent impression upon the minds of even the disciples in regard to the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom. If they had only comprehended this, they would have received his teachings as a precious treasure. The necessity of prayer, of repentance, and of having a forgiving spirit toward one another, was often urged. The necessity of confessing faults, of walking in humility, was faithfully presented to the disciples of Christ. But because of the blindness of their minds and the hardness of their hearts, many of his lessons seemed almost lost upon them. But now, as he is about to leave them, he promises to send the Holy Spirit to bring to their remembrance all things that he had said unto them. And lest they should sink down in discouragement, as they look at the warfare in which they are to engage, he promises the Holy Spirit to enlighten and renew them, and purify the soul from all defilement.

After declaring that the world should see him no more, Jesus added, "But ye see me; because I live, ye shall live also." He referred to his living after his resurrection. He would not leave them comfortless; he revealed himself to them after his resurrection, that they might not look upon him as dead, lying in Joseph's new tomb, but as a living

Saviour, one who could lay down his life and take it again. "Because I live, ye shall live also." "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.... Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." He died, that whosoever would believe on him might have life eternal; for "all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." "Because I live, ye shall live also;" for I will bring you from your graves; for this power is given unto me.

"At that day ye shall know," without a dimming veil to obstruct your view, "that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." How many read this promise, so rich, so glorious, and yet do not grasp its preciousness! Jesus virtually says to all such, "Your faith is feeble; you do not discern my oneness with the Father; neither do you comprehend the fact that I am identified with all who believe in me, that they are one with me, their interest is my interest, my interest and work is theirs." The perfect oneness of Christ with his obedient believing children is the same as that which exists between the Father and the Son.

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Here is the word plain and decided: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." For every sacrifice we make in Christ's service, he has given us his word as a guarantee that he will reward us, but not as though he was in any way indebted to us; for the most solemn obligations rest upon us to devote to God all our powers, they belong to him as our Maker, yet the returns made to man for obedience are a hundred-fold in this life, and in the world to come, life everlasting.

The Lord knows our weakness. He valued man, even though finite, and incapable of any good in and of himself; and for this reason he sent Jesus. Every struggle of the human mind against sin, every effort to conform to the law of God, is Christ working through his appointed agencies upon the human will; and if the will is submitted to God, we shall not transgress the holy principles of his law. Every power we have is the Lord's, and men are laid under tribute to him, whether they obey or disobey his

requirements. God will surely require the past. "For God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Those who work the works of God, which can be done only by accepting Christ as our only hope, will, through the rich promises made, be sharers in the recompense awarded to the just.

Oh, if we only knew and could comprehend what Jesus is to us, what an amount of needless worry would be forever laid aside! Unbelief would be swept away. Then the Lord Jesus could unfold to us the value of the human soul. Then would every voice be heard, as was the voice of John, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us." Wonderful statement! Let the souls who have been undecided and hesitating, trust in God, and no longer cherish doubt and unbelief; for they have the assurance that Christ identifies his interest with ours. Take courage, only believe, and do not give up the struggle.

True as the love of a mother to her child, is the love of Jesus to us. It abides unchangeable as himself. The dear Saviour does not fail, neither is he discouraged; and if we are one with him, our faith will be of the same enduring nature. We shall cling to Jesus with unyielding faith, surrendering our will and way to his, binding up our hearts with his great heart of love. We shall live as he lives, work as he works, and because we depend on him as our helper, we shall not fail or be discouraged in the great work of saving our own souls or the souls of others. Oh, what love, what matchless love! He will not fail or be discouraged in watching over our interests, in summoning us to arise to a nobler, purer life. We must draw nearer to the throne of God, where we may breathe the atmosphere of heaven, and through the mercy of God be permitted to glorify Him who is the One "altogether lovely," the "Chiefest among ten thousand."

November 30, 1891

Results of the New Birth

Christ said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." But Nicodemus could not understand this, because he, like the rabbis and scribes and Pharisees, looked at the natural law instead of the spiritual. No man can explain it, because it is supernatural, but the new birth shows practical results. As "the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth," so will it be with everyone that is "born of the Spirit." One of the strongest evidences that the new birth has taken place is that the new-born soul is not self-centered.

The Spirit of God operates differently with different individuals. All have the peace of Christ, and fervent, joyous gratitude ascends as incense to heaven. And as the deep movings of the Spirit of God are felt on one's own heart, there is awakened a desire that others shall be born again. The love of God constrains him to labor most earnestly, with tears and prayer, that his relatives and friends may be reconciled to God.

Every truly-converted soul is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary. All such have implanted in them an earnest zeal and longing to turn many souls to righteousness. They do not wait for these souls to come to them, but they go forth to seek and save those that were lost. They have the heavenly anointing; a new spiritual strength is imparted to them; for this is the work of the Comforter. They know by their own experience, and through the Spirit of God, how to reach the people. They know how to be patient, and how at all times to manifest the meekness and gentleness of Christ. Through the Spirit of Christ they reach souls in darkness and rebellion against the holy law of God, presenting the truth as it is in him. They are not silent partners, but laborers together with God, longing to bear their testimony for Christ, that they may comfort others with the consolation wherewith they are comforted. If they fall into discouragement, and lose their fervor, because those who have been long in the faith are so indifferent, then they need to pray more and work harder, that they may not fall into the same lethargy, and become unfaithful and disappoint the Master, who has given to every man his work.

The atmosphere in many churches is oppressive, because they do not let in the

pure air that comes from the throne of God. Their life is not hid with Christ in God. They are not constantly submitting to the discipline of Christ, seeking to acquire his virtues and obtain that wisdom which the Comforter is ever ready to impart. Without a constant, growing interest in the cause of Christ, they will not, cannot, be laborers with God.

Those who are self-centered are losing most precious opportunities. "Ye are the light of the world." A clouded sky does not awaken pleasant feelings; but when the clouds part, and the cheerful beams of the sun shine forth, we say it is as the smile of God. And when the mournful countenance lights up, sending forth the pleasant beams of cheerfulness, we feel comforted. If not a word is spoken, we see the light of Jesus in the human face.

The light that shines upon us is not to be hoarded, but to be given to others in clear, steady rays. It is to be an attractive light. The mind is to be stored with the "all things" that Christ will teach us, and the things he will bring to our remembrance, that will strengthen, bless, and console us, and give us his peace; but this great blessing can be retained and increased only by dispensing to others. The attractions of heaven are our light, the words and promises of Christ are our assurance. On these we must rely, and reveal Christ to our world. We must keep the sunny side of our religion in view, instead of becoming a shadow by talking doubts. Murmuring and complaining will never give the right impression of what Jesus has promised to all who will believe on him, accept his word, and be doers of it.

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." "Be careful [that is, unduly anxious] for nothing." "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid;" "but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts."

"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." The disciple of Christ is not to bear a troubled, anxious countenance, as though he were comfortless. Said Christ, "I will not leave you comfortless."

There is in these rich promises the pledged word of One who has evinced how much he loves and values man, and we should ever remember that we are co-workers with God. And as we are thus linked with Jesus, we must manifest the spirit of Christ at all times; we must not fall into discouragement, because of Christ it is said, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged."

Unexpected disappointments will come. Jesus was often grieved at the hardness of heart of the people, and you will have a similar experience. Your prayers, your tears, your entreaties, may fail to awaken a response. Hearts are dead in trespasses and sins. There seems to be no penitence, but only indifference and opposition, and from some even contempt, when you looked for certain victory. But you are not to relax your efforts. If one refuses, turn to another. Have faith that the Comforter will do the work which it is impossible for you to do. Have faith in all the blessed promises which Christ has given you. Work with charity and invincible courage, for you must do this if you would succeed. "Let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

"You do not have to follow your own way, to plan and devise in your own wisdom; if you did, you would certainly fail. But place yourself as a learner in Christ's school. He will teach you; he will discipline and train you in his manner of working. And the Comforter will bring all things to your remembrance. You will find, as you submit to the educating process, that you are becoming spiritually efficient. Even your memory will be strengthened. The words of Jesus will flash into your mind when you need them, and you can repeat the rich promises of God to your own heart and to others. When perplexed, you will not burden others, but will go to the help provided--the Comforter. In this way you will grow, looking unto Jesus, trusting in him, believing him. You will cast all your care on him. And while you move in God's order, carrying on the aggressive warfare, and are personally useful in co-operating with Jesus, you will grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Growing Christians are always working Christians. No one should be idle now. The thought of being laborers together with God in turning sinners from the error of their ways, should spur us on to diligent efforts. One soul saved for whom Christ has paid the purchase money of his own blood, will give joy to the Redeemer.

The Comforter is to abide with you forever, aiding in every effort. The Holy Spirit is promised to every soul who will be a follower of Jesus. Shall we who profess to love Jesus, profess to have this great hope, which is big with immortality and full of glory, go with disconsolate hearts and mournful countenances? Why are we not all alive with love for Jesus? Why are not our hearts joyful in God, even amid trials and temptations? "My peace I give unto you." Then why do you not take it, and show that you are indeed doers of the words of Christ? "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Shall we not be joyful in God?

December 7, 1891

Relying Upon God's Word

"Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father; for my Father is greater than I." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." The faith here brought to view is not a casual faith, it is a living, earnest, active faith, that takes God at his word, and relies upon his pledged promises. This faith brings peace, and constitutes the children of God the light of the world. They live in the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. It is enough to make the soul joyful to have such assurances,--a Comforter always with us, and we revealing to the world in hopefulness, in joyfulness, that we have been called out of darkness into his marvelous light.

Christ said, "I am the Light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." The quickening, sanctifying influence of the Spirit of God is given to every member of the church who is joined to Christ as the branch is united to the vine. We must show that we believe the words of Christ that he has gone to the Father to be an advocate in the courts above for every humble child of God.

If we truly love Jesus, we shall encourage cheerfulness and warmth of love, as we consider our opportunities and privileges. Jesus must go away in order to come again. It is a cause of rejoicing that we have an advocate with the Father, that our prayers ascend to the Father in his name, and that he is there to prepare mansions for those who love him, and also to prepare a people for those mansions. He gives us the assurance that it is because he loves us that he has gone away, because he can, by the side of his Father, better represent our cases. He hears our prayers, and knows our needs, and has sent his Spirit in his name, to do even greater things than he did when he was on the earth.

"Now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe." When the Holy Spirit should be manifested to them on the day of

Pentecost, they would then see that, although Christ was removed from them, he was ever working in their behalf; and that if they believed on him, his representative, the Comforter, would act in his name, to be a present help in every time of need. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

The enemy is at work to draw men and women into the attractive amusements of the world, and to eclipse their views of Jesus and heaven. Here is where Christ's living agents, those who have tasted and found that the Lord is good, should reveal him in words, in actions, in cheerfulness, in patience, in long-suffering, in hopefulness, in joyousness. "Blessed are your eyes, for they see" the marvelous love of God; "and your ears, for they hear" the precious words of him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. And we must see to some purpose, that we may present the glad tidings,--show that it is glad tidings. Put off the spirit of heaviness. Speak of the mercy, the goodness, and the love of Jesus; for "we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." Keep your face heavenward. Look at the heavenly attractions, and then you may in truth "show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." With all the precious promises given us from the lips of Jesus, let us act our thankfulness. Let us contemplate our duty in the light of the commandments of God.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, ... and thy neighbor as thyself." We are altogether too indifferent to God's blessings. We share his loving care through Jesus Christ, and then forget how much it has cost the Father and the Son to make us fallen mortals sharers of his paternal sympathies. We are made the depositaries of rich blessings, and have monopolized them, as if they were wholly our own; but all who are enlightened by the grace of Christ should communicate the same to others. For God, through the Comforter, will work with every effort made in sincerity and truth, with his glory in view. He has paid the redemption price for a lost world, the world that Jesus loved, the world for which he died. Let the compassion and love of Jesus urge us to earnest efforts to reveal Christ to the world.

"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself."

December 14, 1891

The Vine and its Branches

Jesus, with his disciples, was on his way to Gethsemane, and, as his custom was, he used the things of nature to illustrate his lessons to them. He varied his messages of mercy to suit his changing audience. He had tact to meet the prejudiced minds, and to surprise them with figures and illustrations that exactly met their case. Thus his lessons struck conviction to the heart. He ever had a message for the illiterate, who could not read the Scriptures for themselves; and by voice and look and the expressions of human sympathy, he made the heathen to understand that he had a message for them. His character and the expression of his countenance brought warmth to all hearts, a yearning desire to know more. He himself was the living embodiment of the truth he taught, the essence of all spiritual life, an example of the peace which he promises to all who come to him.

But this is a very solemn moment for his disciples. They are receiving the last lesson from his lips. Jesus does not allow his mind to dwell on the suffering that is just before him; he has a purpose,--to give his disciples a lesson that will be a benefit to them after he shall be removed from them. He would impress it upon their minds that, if they are successful, they must be constant partakers of the Spirit of Christ, whose blessing alone can make them fruitful in good works, in the conversion of souls.

From the beautiful symbol of the vine is drawn one of the most important lessons which Christ gave to his disciples. Whenever their eyes henceforth shall look upon the vine, this lesson of Christ's will be repeated. When they see an unproductive branch, they will know that that branch must be taken away; and when they see the fruit-bearing branches, they remember that such must be pruned, that they may bear more fruit. And all this brings vividly to mind the warning and instruction conveyed in the Saviour's words: "I am the True Vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away."

"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." True faith will be revealed; for it works by love and purifies the soul. There is the renunciation of self, of

pride, of all sin, and an entire reliance upon the merits of the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour. There is evidence that the soul has communion with God, is constantly seeking his grace, and imparting that grace to others.

But there may be an appearance of being united to Christ when no vital union exists. If you have not faith in him as your personal Saviour, you are symbolized by the withered branch, which will be taken away because it is fruitless. An appearance of Christianity and a profession of piety may place you in the church, but it cannot unite you to Christ. There is no virtue in having our names registered on the church books, if we have no vital connection with Jesus. If you have not a union with Christ, you will produce no fruit to his glory. Your unfruitfulness will bear testimony that you are not abiding in Christ, and that your formality is but a stumblingblock to sinners. You must draw life from the True Vine in order to bear fruit.

It is impossible to tell just when the useless branches will be taken away. God will give everyone a chance to repent, and will set all the human and divine influences to work to attract minds and hearts to Jesus; but if these influences are resisted, the time will come when a voice is heard from heaven, saying, "He is joined to his idols; let him alone." He did not represent Christ, he made no growth in grace, he had no genuine Christian experience, and gave no light to bless and benefit the world.

How carefully should we compare our life and character with the true standard! Are we individually fruit-bearing branches? If, after trial, we do not bear fruit to the glory of God, he will take us away. "But he answered and said, Every plant, which my Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." Growth in the knowledge of Jesus is essential. "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." "But if any man love God, the same is known of him." There can be growth in grace only by a vital union with Jesus, represented by abiding in Christ, making advancement in religious experience, and becoming more and more intelligent in the knowledge of God and of Christ.

"Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The entire Christian experience, from its beginning to its close, is marked with temptations and conflicts. But the more we look to Jesus, the more we think of him and love him, the more we shall grow into oneness with him; and the more our former lusts in our ignorance will be purged from us. The Lord Jesus has received power to impart

his wisdom and blessings, that every soul may make improvement. There is no possibility of being in Christ as the branch is in the vine, and yet bearing no rich clusters of fruit.

"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." This he said, referring to the lessons he had just given them. They were without excuse if they missed the way or became discouraged; for he had promised them the Comforter. He had told them he would not leave them comfortless, but that if he went away, he would prepare mansions for them, and would come again and take them to himself. If they loved him, they would show it by obeying his commandments. He told them he would give them whatsoever they should ask in his name. He could say no more to them in the line of promises than he had spoken. Everything depended upon their obedience.

December 21, 1891

Abide in Me

"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." These are statements of the highest consequence to every one of us. Everyone who is indeed a child of God will be doing something in the great and solemn work of saving souls. Said Christ, "He that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Let each one of us ask himself: "What am I doing for Christ? Am I winning souls for his kingdom?" If you are not interestedly at work in the service of Christ, your interest and work are reckoned on the side of the prince of darkness. There are professed Christians who, by wrong words, deportment, and spirit, are doing a great deal to counteract the work that others are seeking to do for the Master.

Satan can so associate himself with a certain class who are weak in moral power that, by leading them to make a careless remark about being so particular, so over-righteous, so wonderfully conscientious, or by a careless laugh, he can create impulses for evil. Even the most secret whisper of an evil thought, a suggestion of wrongdoing, will be passed from mind to mind, growing in force, extending and widening, and all the time exerting its deleterious influence to separate souls from God, until the branches that bear no fruit are taken away.

Satan was a beautiful, exalted angel, and would have remained so forever had he not withdrawn his allegiance from God. From the moment when he ceased to exert his influence for good, he became an influence for evil. He might have been the center of a hallowed influence, loyal and true, being good, and doing good, but he would not. In separating himself from God, he became a power for evil. Each act of selfishness exerts an influence on others.

In the hands of Satan, temptation has become a science. He is the god of this world because the world has chosen him as its master. In Satan's hands, the world is a treasure house of evil, upon which he can draw for his weapons and help to do him service. It is dangerous for the followers of Christ to walk on Satan's ground, or place themselves in his power; for if they do this, they do a work in connection with him that

will extend down through the ages, and be as lasting as eternity. In his temptation of our first parents, Satan could not force them to transgress, but he could suggest allurements to sin, and the mind that is open to his suggestions is the medium through which he works to allure other minds. That first sin is at work still; it is constantly being reproduced, as one mind is brought to bear upon another for evil. Satan is the root of all evil. Every evil branch draws its sustenance from him, and presents its unholy, poisonous fruit for others to taste.

How striking is the power of influence as here presented! And how necessary it is for each of us to know the character of our influence, when that first sin could bring such a flood of woe upon our world! Not an evil deed has been performed but an unseen witness has marked it, and followed its influence from one person to another, and a faithful record has been made of it. If men could only read the record of the past, a most solemn impression would be made upon their minds. The record of the future would be altogether changed in its character. They would see that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and that their life experience must be in keeping with the way of the Lord. What a scene will be presented when Jesus shall open the book of remembrance, and read from its unerring pages the history of every soul!

It is for our well-being, for our eternal interest, to heed the words of Christ, "Abide in me, and I in you." This work is mutual. You must choose to abide in Christ, and then Christ will choose to abide in you. The soul must feel its dependence on Christ, and that only in entire dependence can we receive strength to work the works of Christ. All who have lived to themselves, self-centered, should know that they are not abiding in Christ, and that Christ is not abiding in them. Let these souls, so full of self and self-esteem, determine now, in these last hours of probation, that they will take Christ as all and in all, and then in and through him they may exclaim, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"

In giving Christ to our world for the redemption of the human family, God planned to change the destructive tendencies of man's influence, and he lays special claim upon that influence, seeks to press it into his service, and by his Holy Spirit sanctify the ability. He wants to make man a chosen vessel unto honor, to be a coworker with him in suppressing evil, and extending righteousness in the earth. Christ, co-operating with human agencies, will restore man to favor with God. Satan planned to draw men's minds away from God, that the knowledge of God might become extinct,

and that the human agency might, through his power, become a means of destruction; but Christ, the Restorer, came to counteract the work of Satan, to set in operation plans of the highest order, and by giving man a glimpse of the future world, and the exceeding great reward, to make him see things in their true light. With the golden chain of his matchless love, he would bind men to the throne of God. The plan of God was that the highest influence in the universe, emanating from the Center of all power, should be brought to bear on human minds. The goodness and love of God subdues the heart, and then man becomes a channel to communicate these divine impressions to his fellow-men. Thus in Christ he is a fruit-bearing branch. No man, saint or sinner, liveth to himself.

Christ sets in operation all good influences to oppose sin and evil. For every supposed sacrifice we make in his service, he has promised to requite us, but not as if he were in debt to man, as the magnitude of the gift shows. He has pledged his word to repay us a hundred-fold in this present life, and in the world to come to give us everlasting life. But that which to us bears the appearance of a sacrifice is not so in reality; for whatever Christ asks us to give up for his sake is only that which it would be to our injury to retain. And in its place he gives us that which is of the highest value. Every struggle against sin, every victory over evil, every holy principle exerted for God, he registers as a good work, and he who does it will be a claimant for his grace at the recompense of the just.

"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." Is this the test? Then is not here given a reason why so little is accomplished by so many laborers? They have not a living connection with Christ. The dry branch is to be united to the living vine, grafted into it. Fiber by fiber, vein by vein, the graft grows into the vine stock, until the life of the vine becomes the life of the branch, and the branch buds and blossoms, and matures its clusters of rich fruit. Jesus says to all, whatever their riches, their learning, their talents, their position, "Without me ye can do nothing." There is the soul dead in trespasses and sins, and how is that soul to be made a partaker of the divine nature?--By coming to Christ and connecting with him, as the dry, sapless branch connects with the vine, and thereby lives. The sinner may unite his ignorance to Christ's wisdom, his weakness to Christ's strength, his frailty to Christ's enduring might; and in this union there is confidence, love, and dependence. When this union is formed, the principle of the law of association takes effect, the will is surrendered to Christ's will, and the sinner

has the mind of Christ. The humanity in Christ has touched our humanity, and our humanity has touched divinity. Thus, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, man becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus. He then abides in Christ, living by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. New and heavenly principles are received through mental, moral, and spiritual association with Christ.

Satan has tried to prevent men from receiving a correct view of God. Our ideas of God have become perverted. The true ideas have been lost, and the mind has been thrown into confusion in regard to him. Passion has taken the place of reason. To see God as he is, is to love and reverence him as supreme. To know God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, is eternal life. Satan knows that if the attention of men is turned to Christ, they will believe on him.

The greater the efforts of Satan to accomplish our destruction, the greater is the victory achieved in overcoming them. The world's Redeemer presents the plan of the battle, with all the difficulties, and bids us count the cost. He does not wish his followers to be ignorant of Satan's devices. They must know what they will have to meet, and the preparation they must make in order to counteract his devices. He shows them the vast confederacy of evil arrayed against himself and his followers, but he makes it plain to them that they shall have the help of the Holy Spirit in the battle. Angels of God, unseen by mortal sight, will mingle in their ranks. As soldiers of Jesus they must put on the armor, for they "wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." They could do nothing against such formidable foes without Christ to direct the warfare.

December 28, 1891

"If My Words Abide in You"

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you," are the words of Christ, which, abiding in the heart of the believer, transform his character. They are not a dead letter, but they are spirit and life. They are motive power to all action. If they are lightly regarded, nominally received, without working in us, they are useless, and will only condemn us in the judgment. We shall grow no better under their influence, but shall continually become worse in character, more careless, more self-willed, more filled with self-esteem, puffed up in our own conceit; so that we are worse off than if we had no knowledge of them. Christ's words are to a purpose, to lead men to will and to do. They are an impelling power, causing men to resolve and to act. But none are forced against their will. God's grace will not supply the place of man's co-operation. No amount of light, conviction, or grace can transform the character, only as man shall arouse to co-operate with God. The Holy Spirit puts forth its energies to break the power of Satan's attractions and temptations upon the human mind; but the will must yield, human co-operation must be enlisted, for this is the indispensable condition of salvation.

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." What! must man do this work of himself unaided?--No, no. This is his part in the action, but hear the conclusion: "For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good-pleasure." Your will must blend with the divine will, and you must submit to the divine working. Your energies are required to co-operate with God. Without this, if it were possible to force upon you with a hundred-fold greater intensity the influences of the Spirit of God, it would not make you a Christian, a fit subject for heaven. The stronghold of Satan would not be broken. There must be the willing and the doing on the part of the receiver. There must be an action, represented as coming out from the world and being separate. There must be a doing of the words of Christ. The soul must be emptied of self, that Christ 5/ pour his Spirit into the vacuum. Christ must be chosen as the heavenly guest. The will must be placed on the side of God's will. Then there is a new heart, and new, holy resolves. It is Jesus enthroned in the soul that makes every action easy in his service. He is the fountain of all righteousness, the source of all happiness, the reservoir of all power. There must be a full trust in Christ's words, and Christ must be all in all to the receiver. Grace, truth, and joy will fill the soul.

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Christ abiding in the heart will prompt right desires. Then we may press to the mercy seat, and in the name of Jesus, our Advocate, in the full assurance of faith, claim all that the soul needs. What a hold on heaven has everyone who complies with the conditions Christ has given! He surely is not left comfortless. He need despair of nothing; he may hope for everything; for he has a right, a guarantee from Christ to call at every step of the way for the divine agency to work with his effort, and to bless with that effort all with whom he associates.

"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples." This is evidence of our being indeed sons and daughters of God, because we do the will of our Heavenly Father, and work the works of Christ. We have the mind of Christ. We do not devote our God-given powers to needless things, and so fill our minds and hearts with worldly cares and activities, that a sense of the great work to be done in connection with the Holy Spirit, is excluded. We realize our dependence on his aid in reaching those who are out of Christ, who know not the saving power of the truth.

The indolent professed Christian may well be startled by the words of Christ, "Why stand ye here all the day idle? Go ye also into the vineyard." Work while the day lasts, for "the night cometh, when no man can work." Let not the night find you belated, your work negligently done.

The worker is not to follow inclination, or to live day by day merely to amuse himself. God has intrusted you with talents, to be wholly consecrated to him. If he has given you but one, use that one, and you will certainly have two or even more to render back to the Master.

Active Christian influence Christ expects of us. We are to educate and train ourselves in the service of Christ, by constant activity, becoming efficient in work for the Master. "It is your Father's good-pleasure that ye bear much fruit;" not the least possible amount. Day after day is passing into eternity with its burden of record. What fruit are we bearing?

"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love." Here Christ places us in the same position toward himself that he occupies toward the Father.

With this intimate connection we should have much power in the work of saving souls. Nothing can be so valuable as this intimate communion with Christ. He identifies his interest with that of the hearers and doers of his word, as the Father identifies his interest with that of the Son, and this union with Christ means everything to us. "Continue ye in my love."

The True Witness says to the church of Ephesus: "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly; and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." We must continue in the love of Christ. We must keep that love aglow on the altar of the heart, and this love, thus kept burning, will increase our love for one another.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." This is a wonderful requirement, to love one another as Christ has loved us. If we are doers of the words of Christ, we cannot harbor pride or selfishness. The purifying blood of Christ alone can purge away everything of this character,--all envy, all evil surmising, all thinking evil and practicing evil toward one another.

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." Here again the Lord Jesus presents his relationship to the Father as the exact counterpart of our relationship to himself. Let these lessons, so full of instruction, be carefully considered. Nowhere else can be found such large and comforting assurances. Nothing shows so much as this how the Lord Jesus estimates the souls he came to save, and his purpose in exalting them to the closest, most elevated and sacred companionship with himself. He identifies man with himself before the Lord and the whole universe.

What a favor, what mercy, what inexpressible love, is thus revealed! This intimacy of Jesus with man can be brought about only through his taking upon himself our sins and imputing unto us his own righteousness.

"He hath made him to be sin for us, ... that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." If Christ is abiding in the soul, our prayers and works are wholly acceptable to God. Through obedience to all the commandments of God, we are

accepted in the Beloved. We enter into the rights and privileges of Jesus, and the victories which he achieves.

All those who say, "I am saved! I am saved!" but do not obey God's commandments, are resting their salvation on a false hope, a false foundation. No one who has an intelligent knowledge of the requirements of God, can be saved in disobedience. Just so far as men have a knowledge of the words of Christ, so plainly laid down in the Bible, they will be held responsible.

In the fourteenth chapter of John much is said about keeping the commandments of God. "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings; and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." No one can abide in Christ and treat the law of God with indifference and disrespect; for this would be arraying Christ against Christ. In a heart renewed by the Spirit of truth there will be love for all the commandments of God. Jesus declares, "I have kept my Father's commandments;" and all who love Jesus will live in communion with God and with the Son. Those who make so much show of rejoicing, saying they are in Christ, but do not obey the commandments of God, do not partake of the nourishment of the living vine. All who are grafted into the parent stock will have a vital union with the living vine. They will love that which Christ loves; their taste will be identical with his. Jesus plainly stated that when we treasure up his words and do them, we give evidence that we have that genuine love which makes us one with the Father. We are one in taste and inclination. The Spirit of Jesus fills the Christian with his love, his obedience, his joy. "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love."

Man has voluntarily departed from God. Jesus came to do a work which no other could do,--to bring man back to his allegiance to God. How unreasonable it is for fallen man to say that Christ's great work of redemption was for the purpose of making it possible for man to be saved in transgression of the law of God! If one precept of God's law could be changed, then Christ need not have died; but it was because the law of God was unchangeable, and would hold the sinner in its claims, that Jesus came and died, to reconcile man to God. His death shows the immutability of the law. The law of God is as changeless as his own character. Man's only hope was in the death of Christ. And in

his death Christ bore testimony to the whole universe that Satan's efforts to change the law were an utter failure. Now it is demonstrated that even for the human beings that have been deceived by Satan and made to transgress the law, there can be no pardon except through the death of the only-begotten Son of the Infinite God himself, who suffered the penalty of man's transgression. And this is the testimony that in the judgment will condemn every transgressor.

Was such an infinite sacrifice made by the Son of God for the purpose of perpetuating sin?--No; it was not possible. There was no possibility that man, who had estranged himself from God, would be able to keep God's holy law. Christ died that he might, by virtue of his own righteousness, elevate humanity. He gave man another trial. Man, weak, sinful, ignorant, must look to Jesus if he would live. "Without me ye can do nothing." He has learned to be obedient to all the commandments of God, through Jesus Christ, who is made to him wisdom, sanctification, and righteousness.

February 8, 1892

"Ye are Complete in Him"

"As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me." He who is united to Christ is accepted in the Beloved. That soul is dear to the heart of God. The benefits of this union will be manifest. The child of God, abiding in Christ, will have the character of Christ. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Wherever a soul is united to Christ, there is love. Whatever else the character may possess, it is valueless without love, not love that is soft, weak, sentimental, but such love as dwells in the heart of Christ. Without love, everything else profiteth nothing; for it cannot possibly represent Christ, who is love.

"For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh; that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words. For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him; rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. 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. For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the godhead bodily." Now mark the following words: "And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power."

"Ye are complete in him." Is not this a wonderful statement? Notwithstanding all our various temperaments, our different defects and imperfections, notwithstanding the attacks of the enemy, his grievous temptations and suggestions, we are said to be complete in Him who is the head of all principality and power. Very much has been presented before you in the words which I have read, but we shall be able to notice but few of the points contained in this scripture, in the short address which I shall give. But

I desire that you should be able in some measure to comprehend the possibilities to which we may attain in our Christian life. We are to walk even as Christ walked, or the words of inspiration would not so present the course of the follower of Christ: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him."

In order to attain to this high calling of God in Christ Jesus, you must begin the day with your Saviour. The very first outbreathing of the soul in the morning should be for the presence of Jesus. "Without me," he says, "ye can do nothing." It is Jesus that we need. His light, his life, his Spirit must be ours continually. We need him every hour. And we should pray in the morning that, as the sun illuminates the landscape and fills the world with light, so the Sun of Righteousness should shine into the chambers of mind and heart, and make us all light in the Lord. We cannot do without his presence one moment. The enemy knows when we decide to do without our Lord, and he is there ready to fill our minds with his evil suggestions, that we may fall from our steadfastness; but it is the desire of the Lord that from moment to moment we should abide in him, and thus be complete in him, accepted in the Beloved. God designs that every one of us shall be perfect in him, so that we may represent to the world the perfection of his character. He wants us to be set free from sin, that we shall not disappoint the heavenly intelligences, that we may not grieve our divine Redeemer. He does not desire us to profess Christianity and yet not avail ourselves of that grace which is able to make us perfect, that we may be found wanting in nothing, but unblamable before him in love and holiness.

"Well," I hear one say, "if that is what I must be, I might as well give up, for I can never reach that standard." But this is what you must be, or you will never enter heaven, and heaven is our desire and aim. But we desire to enter heaven, for there there is no disappointment, no sorrow, no sin, no one who shall say, "I am sick." There, there is no burial train, no mourning, no death, no parting, no broken hearts; and Jesus is there, peace is there. Oh, we must be with him, for in his presence is fullness of joy, at his right hand there are pleasures forevermore! And it is here that we must behold him, and become changed into his image. "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Oh, it is important that we behold him here by the eye of faith, that we may be made like him, but what will it be to behold him as he is without one dimming veil between?

And who is he?--He is the One who has made an infinite sacrifice in our behalf, the One who has brought eternal redemption to our view; and should we behold in him all he is to us, how gladly would we yield our hearts to him, to love him and obey him! Can we not do it now? Is there not need that we behold him by faith, and become changed into his image, when the world is covered with moral darkness like the pall of death, that we may reflect light into the gloom, that as we flash the light of heaven along the pathway of those who are in perplexity and error, they may see that there is brightness and attractiveness in the Christian's hope? But all this depends upon your reception of the Holy Spirit. It is your privilege to be anointed from on high, or you cannot represent Jesus as he is, and the world cannot take knowledge of you that you have been with him, and have learned of the Divine Teacher. You are to walk in him, to love him, because he first loved you.

Jesus did not seek you and me because we were his friends, for we were estranged from him, and unreconciled to God. It was while we were yet sinners that Christ died for us. But he has promised to give us his Holy Spirit, that we may become assimilated to his nature, changed into his image. Therefore we must put away everything like passion, impatience, murmuring, and unrest, and find a place for Jesus in the heart. We must have the buyers and the sellers cleared out of the soul temple, that Jesus may take up his abode within us. He stands at the door of the heart as a heavenly merchantman; he knocks there, saying, Open unto me, buy of me the heavenly wares, buy of me the gold tried in the fire, which is faith and love, the precious, beautiful attributes of our Redeemer, which will enable us to melt our way into the hearts of those who do not know him, those who are cold and alienated from him through unbelief and sin. He invites us to buy of him the white raiment, which is his glorious righteousness, and the eyesalve, that we may discern spiritual things. Oh, shall we not open the heart's door to this heavenly voice? He says, "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 everyone who is Christ's, who has tasted of the powers of the world to come, has crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts. As the physical nature is sustained by the food we eat, so the spiritual nature must be sustained by the word and Spirit of God. God desires us to have a healthful experience. We shall be feeble and dying Christians if we have the experience described by the apostle as fashioned after "the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." It is Christ abiding in our hearts by faith

that we must have, and then we shall manifest the fruits of the Spirit, which the word of God declares are "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

But sometimes those who profess to be followers of Christ will say, "You must not be surprised if I am rough, if I speak bluntly, if I manifest temper, for it is my way." You ask us not to be surprised. Is not heaven surprised at such manifestations, since the plan of salvation has been devised, since an infinite sacrifice has been made on Calvary's cross, that we might reflect the image of Jesus? Will your way enter heaven? Suppose one comes up to the pearly gates and says, "I know that I have been rude and unkind, and it is my disposition to lie and to steal, but I want an entrance into the heavenly mansions." Will that way find an entrance into the portals of the heavenly city?--No; it is those who keep Christ's way that will enter there. He says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." If anyone thinks he can climb up some other way, he will find that it will not lead him to the mansions of glory. We want Christ's way, His life must be in us. Jesus has said, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.... He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." We should study to understand the meaning of these words, for they are of vital importance to us. Jesus has explained their significance. He says, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

We should take time to study the Bible, for we must know what saith the Scripture. The Bible is the garden of God, and as we see the lovely flowers of promise, we should gather them to our souls, for "exceeding great and precious promises" have been given unto us, that by these we might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. (Concluded next week.)

February 8, 1892

Faith and Works

God will work for us just in accordance with our faith. At the slow rate our people in many States are working, it would take a temporal millennium to warn the world. The angels are holding the four winds that they should not blow until the world is warned, until a people has decided for the truth, the honest of heart have been convicted and converted. Their power, their influence, and their means will then flow in the missionary channel. This is putting out the money to the exchangers, that when the Master shall come, his stewards may present the talents doubled in the ingathering of souls to Jesus Christ. But the wealthy farmers are some of them acting as if in the day of God the Lord only would require of them to present to him enriched, improved farms, building added to building, and they say, "Here, Lord, are thy talents; behold, I have gained all this possession." If the acres of their farms were so many precious souls saved to Jesus Christ, if their buildings were so many souls to be presented to the Master, then he could say to these men, "Well done, good and faithful servant." But you cannot take these improved farms, or these buildings, into heaven. The fires of the last days will consume them. If you invest and bury your talents of means in these earthly treasures, your heart is on them, your anxiety is for them, your persevering labor is for them, your tact, your skill is cultivated to serve earthly, worldly possessions, and is not directed or employed upon heavenly things. And you come to look upon the means invested for larger plans in extending the work as so much means lost which brings no returns. This is all a mistake, because the earthly is exalted above the eternal. While the heart is on earthly treasures, it can only estimate such; it cannot appreciate the heavenly treasure. It is fully occupied just as the devil wants it should be; and the eternal is eclipsed by the earthly.

Burying Talents in the Earth

Now there are many diligently at work just as though their salvation depended upon their wonderful economy in investing means in the cause of God, as though the least money they consumed in plans and efforts to broaden and build up the work of God was a virtue. And money is held in farms and in business as though their salvation depended upon the improvements to be made upon their earthly property. Do these men

know that they are bound up in selfishness? Do these men know that they are robbing God every day of their lives? Do they know that they are devoting their time, their physical and mental talents, in laying upon the foundation, hay, wood, and stubble? All the improvements of years will be consumed with the fires of the last day, and if they themselves are saved, it will be only as by fire. Their whole life work is in ashes. The reward that they might have gained if they had been faithful stewards, is lost, eternally lost. A host of souls that they might have saved are not saved, because of their neglect. All their powers God had given them to prove them as probationers, whether they are worthy to be intrusted with eternal riches. And there are many whose testimonies have been heard in meetings in continual cautions, lest some advance move shall be made calling for some of their means to reflect light to the world. They are found so buried up with earthly things that they have no right estimate of the eternal riches, and would not prize heaven if it were given them. Their taste, their appetite, their pursuits, their inclinations, are all of an earthly, worldly character; they are unfitted for heaven; they perish with their treasures. All our talents are to be used to the utmost. We are required to develop our abilities by exercise until they have reached the highest standpoint in doing--your farming? your building?--No; but God's work, as stewards of the grace of God.

Your powers are to be used as a blessing to the world. To take God's intrusted talents and employ them for earthly, selfish, worldly purposes, and neglect the work of God in winning souls to Christ,--unfaithful servants is charged upon all who do this and neglect a sacred responsibility. It is a fearful thing to take the powers of the body and of the mind, given you to be employed to be a blessing to the world, and use them in such a way that God is not honored. It is also a fearful thing to fold up the talent in a napkin, and hide it in the earth, or world, for fear God would demand it of you. This will be the cutting off of our own hopes of an eternal reward; it is the forfeiting of the crown of life, and showing that we have no esteem for an eternity of bliss.

Transformation Necessary

God calls upon you who have the precious light of truth to no longer have your time and talents devoted to selfish purposes, and thus lost to humanity, and lost to God, by folding up your talents and hiding them in the earth. All these talents must be employed to bring glory to the Giver. Accept your God-given responsibilities and take up your cross, denying yourself, or you cannot be disciples of Christ. God did not

design that you should devote brain, bone, and muscle to earthly employments; he intended you should improve your talents to fill some grand and noble place in God's plans, in saving of souls, and in doing God's work. The selfish thoughts and feelings have dried up your souls. The moisture of heaven is not upon many of you. You are as dry as the hills of Gilboa, that were not visited by dew nor rain. Grand opportunities are being lost, and you are shriveled and dying spiritually of non-use of your talents. You cannot fulfill your solemn responsibilities to God unless you are transformed in character. Your unconscious influence in your spiritual attitude of selfish love of the world is saying to the world, "My Lord delayeth his coming." Your guilt is similar to that of the inhabitants of the old world. You are planting and building, and your works testify that you are not looking and watching and waiting for our Lord's appearing.

Accountability to God

How can you, who are men and women blessed with so great light, so high and sacred privileges, render an account to God why you have done so little as his servants? why you have fulfilled life's grand works so unworthily? God lays responsibilities in your hands to do his work, to educate, to train all your powers to do his work with that efficiency which shall earn for you the, "Well done, good and faithful servant." Wherein does this faithfulness consist? in your withdrawing your interest, your time, your influence, from the work of God, and devoting all your powers to earthly, selfish purposes?--No, the blessing will be pronounced upon those who yoke up with Christ in doing his work. Ye are laborers together with God. You will reveal to the world all the faith you have.

You are not all compelled to go to heathen lands; there are souls just as precious in the sight of God and valuable as your own soul right within your own borders. And how few, very few, workers are employed in giving the message of warning in the large cities? What excuse will you have prepared to offer to God for this terrible neglect of your God-given responsibilities? These souls unsaved within your reach, I was shown, will confront you in the day of judgment. You worshiped your farms, you worshiped your money, you prided yourself upon your wisdom as wise financiers in worldly affairs; but how does all this weigh with God? He said of the rich man, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? Now the application: "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." The Lord has given you light in testimonies of warning, of

reproof, and counsel, but you do but little in accordance with the light given. The words of Christ are explicit, but you are not doers of his words, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Do you contemplate that Christ sacrificed his majesty, his honor and glory, to bring salvation within your reach, and save every son and daughter of Adam? He for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich.

"We are laborers together with God." When he ascended on high, he left his work in the hands of his followers to carry it forward, as he has given us an example in his self-sacrificing life. He went about doing good. Do you follow his example in this? Does your own business seem of greater importance than the precious souls Jesus came to the world to save? Oh, that I could open many eyes that Satan has blinded. Oh, that pen and voice could have an influence to arouse you from your paralysis. Oh, that you could see that you are doing nothing while all heaven is engaged in intense activities to prepare a people to stand in the great day of God.

February 15, 1892

"Ye are Complete in Him"

"Wherefore 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." Does this mean that we are not to associate with the world?--No, for how then can you bring to them the light of truth if you do not come in contact with them? But you cannot do them good if your association with the world leads you to beg the world's pardon for your faith in Christ, for then you do not mould the world, but the world moulds you. Jesus has signified what is to be your position in the world. He says: "Ye are the light of the world." "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Since God has given us this assurance, why is it that we see so many clouded, mixed experiences?--It is because many of the professed followers of Christ have given heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. It is because they have not responded to the drawing of Christ. When you respond to the drawing of Jesus, you draw others to him by your consistent life and Christian example, for by faith you become rooted and grounded in the truth. You must search the precious word of God, that you may know what is truth.

Jesus prayed that his disciples might be sanctified through the truth. Let no one think that he can permit himself to indulge in any sin, however secret it may be, for God requires truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part wisdom. You need not feel complacency because you are sure that your brethren do not know of your misdeeds. Does not One who is acquainted with your brethren know all about your life? Does not he read your heart as an open book? You cannot indulge in sin and still be a witness for the Lord, for in works you deny him. Where is the holy boldness that should characterize your faith and prayers because you are not under condemnation before man or God? Where is your ringing testimony on the side of truth?

If you are indulging in any known sin, you cannot utter words to the glory of God, because there is something in your heart that condemns you. The Spirit of God is not in your soul. But let the heart, with all its affections, be surrendered to God, and you

will have joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. Your intellect, your ability, your soul, body, and spirit have been purchased at an infinite price by the Son of God, and all belong to him. And yet, though Christ has redeemed men, how few render to him that which is his own. How many rob him in thought. Oh, shall we not gird up the loins of our minds, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, and hope unto the end for grace that shall be given unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ?

We cannot enter heaven with any deformity or imperfection of character, and we must be fitted for heaven now in this probationary life. We want the deep movings of the Spirit of God, that we may have an individual experience, and be complete in Him who is the fullness of the Godhead. Through the power of the righteousness of Christ, we are to depart from all iniquity. There must be a living connection of the soul with its Redeemer. The channel of communication must be open continually between man and his God, that the soul may grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord. But how many do not pray. They feel under condemnation for sin, and they think they must not come to God until they have done something to merit his favor or until God has forgotten about their transgressions. They say, "I cannot hold up holy hands before God without wrath or doubting, and therefore I cannot come." So they remain away from Christ, and commit sin all the time in so doing, for without him we can do nothing but evil. Just as soon as you commit sin, you should flee right to the throne of grace, and tell Jesus all about it. You should be filled with sorrow for sin, because through sin you have weakened your own spirituality, grieved the heavenly angels, and wounded and bruised the loving heart of your Redeemer. When you have asked Jesus, in contrition of soul, for his forgiveness, believe that he has forgiven you. Do not doubt his divine mercy, or refuse the comfort of his infinite love.

If your child had disobeyed you, and committed wrong against you, and that child should come with a breaking heart to ask your forgiveness, you know what you would do. You know how quickly you would draw your child to your heart, and assure him that your love was unchanged, and his transgressions forgiven. Are you more merciful than your merciful Heavenly Father, who "so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"? You should go to God as children go to their parents. Ask your Heavenly Father to forgive your errors, and pray that, through the grace of Christ, you may be able to overcome every defect of your character.

Jesus came to this world to save his people from their sins. He will not save us in our sins, for he is not the minister of sin. We must respond to the divine drawing of Christ, and repent of our sins, and unite ourselves to Christ as the branch is united to the vine. Jesus says, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Jesus is drawing all men, and who will respond to this drawing? Many will be greatly influenced by the life and example of those who profess to have responded to this divine love that is drawing the hearts of men. Many will watch you who profess his name, to see whether it makes you better men and better women. They will watch to see if you are Christlike, kind and courteous in your family. The Lord has said, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Your home life will be an index to your Christianity. A man's religion before God is no more or less than the religion that is manifested in his family. Those who profess to be followers of Christ will reveal in the home circle just what is their attitude toward Christ. As the mothers brought their children to Christ that he might place his hands upon them, and bless them, so parents should take their children to him today.

Talk to your children as though you would have them Christ's children. The agencies of heaven will co-operate with you in your work of drawing the children to Jesus. God is a lover of the beautiful, but that which he most loves is a beautiful character. These lovely flowers on the desk today are an expression of the love of God for us and for what is beautiful. Flowers are the adornments that God has made for the earth. Christ has said, "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." Jesus tells us that there is something higher for our consideration and aim than what we shall eat, and what we shall drink, and what we shall wear, and that is beauty of character, that shall last as long as eternity.

Jesus would have the fathers and mothers teach their children of this beauty of character. He would have them teach their children that God loves them, that their natures may be changed, and brought into harmony with God. Do not teach your children that God does not love them when they do wrong; teach them that he loves them so that it grieves his tender Spirit to see them in transgression, because he knows they are doing injury to their souls. Do not terrify your children by telling them of the wrath of God, but rather seek to impress them with his unspeakable love and goodness, and thus let the glory of the Lord be revealed before them. (Concluded next week.)

February 22, 1892

"Ye are Complete in Him"

When Moses prayed, "Lord, show me thy glory," the Lord took this atom of humanity, and yet this mighty man of faith, and placed him in the cleft of the Rock, and covered him with his hand, and the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." He first puts Moses in the cleft of the Rock, and this is where each one of us must be placed before we can see the glory of the Lord, for no man knoweth "the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." The glory of the Lord is his goodness and love. Then do not teach your children that God frowns upon them, but that when they sin they grieve the Spirit of Him who always loves them. Draw your children to Jesus.

But if you would draw your children to Jesus, you must not enter your home with cross words, with a frown upon your brow. If you come from your business weary and worn, just plead with God for his grace, for his restful Spirit, that your heart may be melted into tenderness, that your lips may be filled with words of kindness and comfort. Bind your children to your heart. Recommend your religion to them by its pleasantness. Your children are a part of you, and you do not want to have them separated from you in the day of Christ's coming. Give them a representation of the character of Christ, and let your home be as a heaven upon earth. Do not live in such a way that your children will feel that they do not want to go to heaven if father is to be there. Do not live in such a way that your wife will think heaven is an undesirable place if you are to be there, and let not the wife manifest such a spirit that husband and children will feel a relief in being away from her presence.

The religion of Christ will take away all the ruggedness of the character, and will melt and subdue the soul. It is the Spirit of God that we need, and we are looking for its revelation among us, even at this conference, and if this is to be, we must now begin the work of reformation by turning unto the Lord with full purpose of heart. Let the work begin, that the heart may be softened, and that Christ 5/mould and fashion you after his own divine image. But many feel that they cannot go to Jesus in confidence. They say:

"It does not seem as if God heard my prayers. I have tried and tried to rid my soul of sin, but I cannot do it." Then say, "Lord, I am powerless, and I cast my helpless soul on thee." That is what Jacob did. All night long he had been wrestling with One whom he supposed was his enemy, but it was the great I AM, the mighty God, the Prince of peace, and just as long as he continued his wrestling, he found no comfort, no hope. It was a life-and-death question with him, and his strength was almost exhausted. Then the Angel touched his thigh, and he knew that he wrestled with no common adversary. Wounded and helpless, he fell upon the One with whom he had wrestled, just as you and I must do, just as any soul does when he falls upon the Rock and is broken. "Let me go, for the day breaketh," pleaded the Angel, but Jacob ceases not his intercession, and Christ has to make terms with this helpless soul. He cannot tear himself away from a soul wounded and helpless, and crying unto him for help. And Jacob pleads, with determined spirit, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." Who was it that inspired his spirit of persistence?--It was He who wrestled with him, it was He who gave him the victory, who changed his name from Jacob to Israel, and said, "As a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

But many of you say, "The nearer I seek to come to Christ, the worse I feel." Did not Jacob have this very experience? Will you not be bruised and wounded as you see the wounds and bruises that sin has made in you and in your divine Redeemer in your behalf? Have you not felt distressed again and again as you have looked to yourself for merit? I have. And now the question is, What will you do? You can say, "I cannot wash away one stain of sin from my soul, I must come to Jesus--

'Just as I am, without one plea, But that thy blood was shed for me.' I can only come, saying:-- 'Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to thy cross I cling.'"

You might say, "I'll give all my goods to feed the poor; I'll give my body to be burned," but that would not better your case. Man can do nothing to merit the favor of heaven. That which avails for the sinner is to accept with gladness the sacrifice that Christ has made, to appreciate his love, and to lay hold of his righteousness by faith. You are to realize that he loves you, and that you love him because he first loved you. Then you will feel that every power belongs to him. You take his free gift to you, and then come to him and give yourself freely to him. Say, "I come to present myself to God in the name of Him who has died for me. I give my heart to Jesus, and I desire his blessing and his Spirit;" and the power of God will come upon you.

But when you ask God for his blessing, do not mark out a way in which you think the Lord must give you that blessing. You will not always receive the blessing in just the way you think it will come. Just ask the Lord to give you the very blessing you need, in the very way in which he sees it will be for your best good. Let your prayer be, "Give me that which my soul needs in order that I may be a faithful sentinel for God."

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Can we not believe the promise of God, and know that he will do just that for us which he has declared. That which we need is the vital touch of faith, that we know that the mercy of God is extended toward us. God accepts us through Christ, and we are not to feel that we are of no value in his sight. He sent his only-begotten Son into the world to die for us, and we are to value ourselves in the light of the cross of Calvary. Jesus declares, "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir." And we may all be made precious in Christ, for he says, to those who feel their own weakness, "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me."

If the life of Jesus were in you, you would be filled with vital energy. The church would not be in a cold, backslidden state, but we should see the revival of the missionary spirit. You would not rest in ease, taking the privileges of the gospel as if they were meant exclusively for you, but you would seek to extend the glad tidings of salvation to this and that relative, to this and that neighbor or friend. You would go to them, not in a Pharisaical spirit, but in the spirit of love, seeking to break down all opposition. You would melt your way into their hearts by telling them of the love of Jesus. You would select those for whom you carried a burden to present to the Lord in prayer, praying him to give you this or that soul as a precious sheaf for the heavenly garner, to bring to the feet of the Master.

We are all to be missionaries, and we are now on missionary soil, and it is essential for every one of us that we have the righteousness of Christ to go before us, and the glory of the Lord to be our rearward. My heart is lifted up as I think of the blessings that are in store for those who rightly relate themselves to God, and it causes a hope to spring up within me that we may be baptized with the Holy Ghost in this place. Jesus is holding out his precious gift to you, and will you receive it? It is the Comforter

that he promised should come and abide with you forever. Thank God for this precious promise.

I want to glorify him by my words and in my character. I want to reveal to others that do not know him what a Savior I have found, that they too may love him. How important it is that we reveal the fact that we have been with Jesus and learned of him. Do any of us who profess to know him indulge in light, trifling conversation? Oh, do not permit your lips to utter that which will be as a stumbling-block to those who are looking to see what benefit you have received by your faith in Christ. Lift the minds of those around you to dwell upon eternal realities. God will work with the church, but not without their cooperation. "Ye are laborers together with God." May every soul of you who has tasted of the good word of God, "let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

The Father knows how you represent him to the world. He knows just what impression you make upon those around you. Your words and actions are all written in the books of heaven, and in order to rightly represent Jesus to the world, the converting power of God must be felt upon your own heart from day to day. When you go forth to the people, in the market-place, as you walk the street, in whatever occupation you are engaged, you are to have a living connection with God, and represent the character of Christ to the world. Jesus said, "As the Father hath sent me, so have I sent you." As Christ was to represent the Father, so the followers of Christ are to represent their Lord to men. Your life is to be hid with Christ in God.

Self must be hidden in Christ. There is to be no great I in heaven except the great I AM, and we must learn to lift up Christ before the people, realizing and rejoicing in the fact that he must increase and we must decrease. I would glorify his name before you, for I want you to be like him, to love him. Jesus says, "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." The saving salt, the savor of the Christian, is the love of Jesus in the heart, the righteousness of Christ pervading the soul. If the professor of religion would keep the saving efficacy of his faith, he must ever keep the righteousness of Christ before him, and have the glory of God for his rearward. Then the power of Christ will be revealed in life and character.

Oh, when we come to the pearly gates, and have an entrance into the city of God,

will any who enter there find room to regret that they devoted their lives unreservedly to Jesus? Let us now love him with undivided affections, and co-operate with the heavenly intelligences, that we may be laborers together with God, and, partaking of the divine nature, be able to reveal Christ to others. Oh, for the baptism of the Holy Spirit! Oh, that the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness might shine into the chambers of mind and heart, that every idol might be dethroned and expelled from the soul temple!

Oh, that our tongues might be loosed to speak of his goodness, to tell of his power! If you respond to the drawing of Jesus, you will not fail to have an influence on somebody through the beauty and power of the grace of Christ. Oh, let us behold him and become changed into the image of Him in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the godhead, and realize that we are accepted in the Beloved, "complete in Him which is the head of all principality and power."

February 29, 1892

Christ's Manner of Teaching

When Jesus spoke the words of truth and life to the people, they were astonished at his doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. There was not an endless repetition of fables and maxims and customs, trivial ceremonies, to which they had been accustomed to listen. The object and limit of his instruction appears to have been to present the character of his kingdom, and the qualifications essential for those who would enter therein. He sought to enlarge their perceptions, that they might feel their dependence upon divine power, the work of the Holy Spirit to produce the change in them, that they might be the children of the light and the day.

Jesus was to reveal the Father in himself. He said to Thomas, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." While he spoke of his meekness and lowliness as that which all must learn, he sought to direct the minds of his hearers to himself as the center of attraction. He assured them that he was the bread of life. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life." "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." Then, lest they should not discern the spiritual meaning of his words, he states definitely: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

Dullness of apprehension on the part of the disciples hindered the freedom of his communication. He could not unfold to them, as he desired, the spiritual truths connected with his work of salvation. The Lord's words have a depth, a breadth, and height of meaning that none but those who eat his flesh and drink his blood can comprehend. His sayings were to the disciples as a new revelation; but they were not new. He was but unfolding the old truths, long obscured. His teaching were to simplify the truth, to enlighten the understanding, to open blind eyes to the wonderful works of redemption, the divine revelation in regard to the doctrines of grace. By his own practice Christ substantiated every doctrine. He appealed to the Old Testament Scriptures, laying open in a clear light the spiritual bearing of truths that had become

obscured through tradition and misinterpretation.

The Lord requires the same manner of teaching on the part of all his servants. All who are laborers together with God should instruct the people that a life of personal piety, by simple repentance and belief in Jesus as the Savior of the world, prepares the soil of the heart for the reception of truth. The Holy Spirit makes us capable of apprehending the doctrines, and giving the true importance to every statement of truth, receiving it in the sense which Christ himself attached to it.

The apostle Paul says: "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves, your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." If the love of God is abiding in the soul by faith, if the mind and heart are brought under the discipline of truth, Jesus will be magnified, self will be hidden, and Christ will appear as all in all. When, in all our efforts for the presentation of truth, Christ is made to appear as the great central light, the work will be conducted in meekness and lowliness of heart, and Christ will be with us to convict and convert souls.

We should not feel that it is necessary to work ourselves up into a highly emotional state before we can reach hearts. We need not seek for something sensational to suit the appetite of the people, for something new and strange to startle them. Christ Jesus is the old and the new. His self-sacrificing love for man dates back before the creation of our world, yet it is ever new. It is the most marvelous theme that can ever be unfolded to human minds. Infinite condescension led him, with unchanging purpose, to advance to the cross of Calvary to die a shameful death, revealing to man what love such as Jesus possessed can do. God in Christ gave himself for the saving of the world, and the presentation of this truth will do more to convert sinners than any other argument.

The reason why more are not turned from sin to obedience and holiness, from the service and power of Satan to the service of God, is that the teachers do not work in the same lines with Christ. They do not dwell sufficiently upon Christ's self-denial in lifting the cross and bearing it in behalf of man. As did the Master so must his servants do. His self-sacrifice in becoming the substitute and surety for man led him in the path of

humiliation; and this was the appointed way for humanity. He was our example in all things. In Christ are the cross and crown united; and all who are partakers with him in his sufferings and humiliation here will, if they hold fast their confidence to the end, be partakers with him in his glory hereafter.

These are truths that the people need to have presented before them. They may plead before God the righteousness of Christ, the love of God in giving to our world his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Lift up Jesus; talk more, a great deal more, of this only way whereby man may be saved. Dwell much more on the unselfishness of Christ. Present his love before the people. Teach men that their life is complete only when hid with Christ in God.

March 7, 1892

Workers With Christ

From the very opening of his public ministry to his last prayer for his disciples Jesus kept it constantly before them that they were to be one with him in his work for the recovery of the world from the slavery of sin, from Satan's dominion. When he sent forth the twelve and then the seventy to proclaim the kingdom of God, he was teaching them their duty to impart to others what he had made known to them. In all his work he was training his church for individual labor, to be extended as their numbers increased, and eventually to reach to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Just before his ascension he bade them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." This obligation was urged upon them again and again. On the day of his resurrection, in that meeting with his disciples in the upper chamber, he opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures. And he said: "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in this name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." And he added, "Ye are witnesses of these things." This great work required great efficiency. The tide of iniquity was strong. A mighty leader was in command of the agencies of evil, and Christ's followers could resist and overcome the powers of darkness only through the help that God should give them. Jesus assured them, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Here is the only boundary to their labor; it is to extend to the whole world. But first there is home missionary work to be done. Those who are nearest are to receive the first attention. Jerusalem would be the very hardest field of labor for the disciples. The most unpromising places are those where much light has been given, but where it has been neglected or despised. Here peculiar dangers would assail the disciples, as with the lamp of life in their hands they should go forth to remove the rubbish of tradition and reveal the hidden jewels of truth.

"Go," said Christ, "and ye shall move under the shield of Omnipotence. First labor among those that are nigh. Here you will gather some souls, who will strengthen your forces to push the work in the regions beyond. But you must work as one, even as I

and my Father are one." "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

Thus the Lord Jesus makes provision for the aggressive work, and takes upon himself the whole responsibility of conducting the warfare, of supplying the needed qualifications, and he promises success.

His last act on earth was to bless his disciples, and while his hands were outstretched in benediction, he ascended to heaven, surrounded by the angelic host. The last lesson he gave his followers was that they held in trust the conveyance of his gospel to all the world. In harmony with this was his first work in heaven. On the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit was poured out on the praying disciples, and they testified of its source to all wherever they went. Here the missionary spirit was poured out in unlimited power upon those who should testify of Christ and convince the world of sin.

The apostles obeyed the directions of Christ. They began the work in Jerusalem, where was the deepest prejudice against Jesus, where he had been crucified as a malefactor. Thousands received the message and were converted. The malice of the enemies rose high. Some of the disciples were imprisoned, but they were not intimidated. Even in the prison evidence was given that angels of heaven were in the army in which they were enlisted. When the high priest and the Sadducees "laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison, ... the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." And when Peter was held in prison, to be offered next day as a sacrifice for his faith, angels came to open the strong-barred gates, and set the Lord's servant at liberty. The disciples continued to speak with all boldness the words of truth, setting forth Jesus, his ministry, his crucifixion, his resurrection and ascension; and daily "believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women."

As success attended the ministry of the word, there was danger that the disciples would linger too long in Jerusalem and Judea, forgetful of the Saviour's commission to go to all the world. Then he allowed persecution to come with such violence that the disciples were forced to flee from Jerusalem. They were "scattered abroad," and so widely was the gospel preached that Paul declared, even in his day, it had been made known to every creature.

The commission given to the first disciples is given to us also. When Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel." He said also, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." We are to begin, as they did, with the home field, and to extend our labors to all the world.

The mission of Christ--how little it is understood! His infinite condescension in descending from the throne of heaven to the cross of Calvary--how little is it appreciated! Yet here is the source of every other mission. The messengers of the gospel receive their inspiration at the cross. Then, reaching out through all the circles nearest them, they are to encompass the world.

All the followers of Christ are to be laborers together with God. Filled with the Spirit, having the mind of Christ, in perfect sympathy with him, they are, in their sphere, to bend every energy to the salvation of souls. Christ expects, yes, requires all who claim discipleship to make this work their first consideration. Here all will show their real estimate of the claims of Christ, and their sympathy with him who gave his life for the saving of the world.

All who have received the message are to repeat it, and to all whom they have opportunity to reach. Christ would lift us from the narrow circle that our selfishness prescribes; he abolishes all territorial lines and artificial distinctions of society. He makes no difference between neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies. He teaches us to look upon every man who needs our aid as our neighbor, and the world as our field.

And the time to work is now. "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." Look out over the earth. See the vast multitudes of human beings in the darkness of error. Many there are who are longing and weeping for light, praying--to whom they know not. Multitudes who think they know God are yet in ignorance of him. There is need for the voice of Christ's messengers to be heard, as Paul's was heard in Athens; "whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you."

All the members of the church, as reapers in the great harvest field, are to be earnestly praying and diligently working. Not once should they think or speak of failure.

They are not to rely on their human ability, but wholly on the divine agency. If you are in the way of the Lord, his promise is yours, "Thy righteousness shall go before thee." We have no righteousness but that imparted by Christ. "And the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward." Angels of God will go before you, preparing hearts to receive the divine message; and the promised power, which is the glory of the Lord, shall be your rearward.

The Lord Jesus is our example and our efficiency in all things. Our means of doing good are never exhausted. Our source of power is the fullness of Christ. Upon this we may draw, and draw again. There is no limit to the supply. "Without me," says Christ, "ye can do nothing." But he also says, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." Therefore we are to pray without ceasing, for we have the promise, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do." When you make God your trust, and call upon him with your whole heart, he will be found of you.

On every hand there are sheaves to be gathered for the garner of God. But where are the reapers? The field is wide, and there is a place for everyone to work, according to his ability. He who fails to do something manifests indifference to the claims of Christ. If we are not, as faithful stewards, working for him, we are serving another master. Jesus says: "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Inaction in Christ's service is an evidence of positive hostility against him.

Professed Christians, Jesus is speaking to you: "Why stand ye here all the day idle? Go work in my vineyard." Work while it is called day, for the night cometh, when no man can work. We are never to set a limit to our efforts in his service, saying, "This will I do, and no more." It is enough for us to know that we are Christ's servants. The ransom money has been paid for our souls, and every jot of power or ability we have is the gift of God, not inherent in ourselves, and hence not to be employed to please or glorify self.

It is an exalted privilege that Christ offers to men, of being connected with him in the great work of salvation. And he who feels that he is not his own, and keeps his eyes fixed on Jesus, will grow into the likeness of the Saviour, his will becomes one with Christ's, and his influence for Christ is constantly increasing.

God does not require of the man with one talent the improvement of two or five. But he does require of every man, not merely the talent intrusted, but also that which might be gained by its right improvement.

The obligation which Christ lays upon us is so broad and deep that in fulfilling it we shall lose sight of self. There is no place for self-gratification in the work of Christ. He says, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Jesus does not present to his followers worldly glory, earthly riches, and a life free from trial, but he asks them to walk in the path where he has led the way. He denied himself, he endured suffering, he was despised and rejected, because the world knew him not.

Our Lord does not deceive his followers. He shows us the confederacy of evil arrayed against us, Satan, the mighty prince of evil, leading his hosts. But the Saviour tells us we are not to fight alone; all the heavenly intelligences will come to our help. Amid the darkness of the world we are to catch the radiance from the throne of God, and diffuse it, not merely to irradiate the surrounding gloom, but, as a church, we may unitedly shed a light that will extend to the uttermost part of the earth.

March 14, 1892

"Judge Not"

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Christ does not here teach that members of the church who are unworthy shall not be dealt with according to the rules that he himself has given. And in this same chapter he warns us to beware of false prophets, and says, "By their fruits ye shall know them." But Christ puts his rebuke upon those who are criticising others, upon those who are self-sufficient, presumptuous, and censorious, judging the motives of others, and seeking to condemn them. This class give evidence that they are looking for failings in others, and these are what they will see and comment upon. They pass by many estimable qualities, to dwell upon and distort and magnify seeming inconsistencies.

The practice of passing judgment upon others is common, indeed, it is almost universal, even among those who claim to be Christians. Many regard it as a mark of superior discernment to criticise the motives of others. But in the light of the Saviour's words it is a very serious thing thus to sit in judgment upon another. The wisdom displayed in discerning stains upon the character of others is that described by the apostle James, which "descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish."

When one by his words or deeds gives occasion for unfavorable judgment, the consequence must come upon his own soul. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." But it is not safe for finite man to take upon himself the responsibility of judging others, for we cannot read the heart. Self-centered human beings are inclined to judge according to appearances, and hence make grave mistakes. More than this, they are themselves imperfect, and for this reason are not qualified to sit in judgment on others. The Saviour says: "How wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me cast out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." When one is very forward to criticise and try to correct others, it is too often the case that he himself has faults, of which he may be all unconscious, that are far more serious than those that he condemns, and thus even when he tries to correct others, his efforts may do far more harm than good. How much more when he sits in

judgment to criticise and condemn!

If men could see themselves as God sees them, they would have such a sense of their own weakness and defects, and would see such a work to be done for themselves, they would have such a sense of their own need of the long-suffering mercy of God, and the forbearance of their fellowmen, that they would have no disposition to judge and condemn others.

We need to put a restraint upon ourselves in this matter of making the faults of others the theme of conversation, or even making mention of them. It fosters in us an unhappy disposition, a habit of looking for evil, magnifying trifles. The habitual fault-finder looks at everything through a distorted medium, and, finally, nothing will look good, or amiable, or sincere in the life or character of others. When anything is said in their favor, he will stand ready with some accusation of evil.

Some excuse this habit of judging and condemning on the ground that they are nervous; and the nervous system has to bear the responsibility of a heart that is not garrisoned against the temptations of Satan. Pride is hurt when another receives confidence or respect which they do not. They have a high estimation of themselves, and this leads them to think they do not receive the attention which is their due. The grace of God is the only remedy for these maladies of the soul. The work of the Holy Spirit will be far more effectual in correcting this evil disposition than will the skill of the physician who treats the nervous system. The trouble is in the heart.

When Miriam and Aaron accused Moses, they were doing the very work that Christ here condemns. They were jealous of Moses, and this jealousy led to the exhibition of selfishness, bitterness, and almost hatred. They censured Moses because he did not consult them, and move according to their judgment. "And they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us?" Moses did not seek to vindicate his course, but God interposed. "And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam; and they both came forth. And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold; wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my

servant Moses? And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and he departed. And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow." Numbers 12:5-10.

He who spoke to the disciples in the sermon on the mount is the same that spoke to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, and let the signal marks of his displeasure rest upon Miriam for her censure of one through whom God had chosen to communicate his will. God had laid the burden of his work upon Moses, and when others presumed to heap upon him the burden of their censure and condemnation, the Lord declared them guilty of a great sin. He judged and condemned her who had unjustly judged and condemned his servant. He to whom the hearts of all men are as an open book, read the hidden motives. He saw that the heart was leprous with sin, and he caused the plague of the heart to be revealed in the dreadful judgment of physical leprosy. As leprosy was sure death if permitted to take its natural course, so the leprosy of sin would destroy the soul unless the sinner received the healing of the grace of God.

Since we cannot read the heart of another, let us beware of ascribing wrong motives to any man, lest we find ourselves involved in guilt similar to that of Miriam,--condemning those whom the Lord is teaching and guiding,--and thus bring upon ourselves the rebuke of God.

And yet how many there are who place the worst possible construction on the words and acts of others. By these would-be judges every little thing is scrutinized in the light of their own perverted understanding; and instead of considering that they themselves may be in error, as were Aaron and Miriam, they repeat their suspicions to others, who take up the reproach; and thus the very work is wrought that Satan desires to accomplish. This work is what is called "rejoicing in iniquity." Love "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things; love never faileth." This is the Christ side of the question. The opposite spirit has already been described. It leads one to dwell on all the faults of others, and overlook their good qualities. When an error is committed, it looks back to gather up all the similar deeds, and treasures up all these, to confirm the darkest suppositions and attribute the worst motives. (Concluded next week.)

March 21, 1892

"Judge Not"

The Lord has brought his children into church relation that they may be benefited and blessed by associating with one another. All have not had the same education and training. Widely different circumstances have had an influence in forming the character. Everyone has his own ideas and habits, his own stamp of character.

We are in a school where there is need of constant watchfulness, not to mark the things that do not please us in another, but to guard ourselves, lest we, by word or deed, come in collision with our brethren or our neighbors. If love dwells in the heart, the feelings and words will be kind. There will be no harsh criticism or censure. Love must be nurtured as a tender plant if it grows to perfection.

Comparing ourselves among ourselves is not wise. Let not the difference be made prominent. There are imperfections in human nature, and if one chooses the work of magnifying little things and becoming irritated over the faults of others, he will always find occasion. Until we cease to demand in others perfection which we do not possess ourselves, we shall find time to do little else than dwell upon the mistakes and disagreeable things. But it will be found that these are very poor food for the soul. Those who feed upon it are doing the greatest injury and injustice to themselves. They are developing character that will unfit them to enter the family of God in heaven; for if permitted to enter there, they would carry on the same work which has been their meat and drink here in this life.

There is a depth of meaning in the Saviour's words, that but few appreciate: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Paul says, "Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." And God declares by the prophet: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings."

When we condemn or criticise others, we declare ourselves guilty; in the very act of judging them, we are breaking God's law. Our own character is revealed in the way we treat others. He who is censorious, self-sufficient, in judging others, shows that he himself is devoid of the grace of Christ. It is those that are blinded by the enemy to their own defects of character who are forward in criticising and condemning. Their own lack of the spirit of forbearance and love leads them to make a world of an atom. He who is watching for the defects of others, ready to accuse and condemn, is doing the same work in which Satan has been engaged since his rebellion. He links himself with him who is the accuser of the brethren.

Thus in accusing others we are passing sentence upon ourselves, and God declares that this sentence shall stand. Remember this, you who are so ready to criticise others. The sentence which you think to pass upon them you are passing upon yourselves, and thus it stands in the records of heaven. God accepts the sentence, your own verdict against yourselves. Are you willing to abide by it in the final day?

God declares that he has committed all judgment unto the Son. Not to finite men, who can judge only from the outward appearance, but to Him who reads the heart, who knows the secret springs of action, and who deals tenderly and compassionately,--to Him it is given to decide the case of every soul. And those who take upon themselves the work of passing judgment or pronouncing upon the motives of another, are assuming the prerogatives of the Son of God. Are they not thus also linking themselves with Satan, the usurper?

Jesus did not come to the world as a judge, but as the Friend and Saviour of sinners. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

When the Samaritans refused to receive Jesus, because he was on his way to Jerusalem, the disciples filled with indignation, said: "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, 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."

With this example before them, how can the professed followers of Christ

manifest so little of the tender mercy and compassion of their Lord? If there is in their number one even of perverse disposition, one who makes them trouble, how can they feel at liberty to cut him off from the church so readily, and treat him as an alien and an outcast? Let us be careful how we hurt and bruise the souls of men and women for whom Christ died. Suppose that one has erred, do not therefore thrust him into the dungeon of despair; do not pass him by with a harsh word, or with positive neglect. Let everyone who is charged with wrong have ample opportunity to explain himself, but do not bring him before a set of hard-hearted judges, who stand ready to magnify the wrong, and to pronounce condemnation. Do not take the testimony of one or two against him without thoroughly sifting that testimony. See whether the accuser is not, by his own unadvised course toward the accused, a sharer in his guilt, if guilt there be. Only those whose hearts are filled with sympathy, those who love as Christ loved, who realize the value of the precious souls for whom he paid the ransom of his own life, are qualified to deal with the erring.

When a man fails in business, not because he is dishonest, but through misfortune, or lack of judgment, do not seek to humiliate him, or to crowd him into the hardest places. Do not sit down and make no effort to help him. He is a soul for whom Christ has given his precious life. Many a man has been driven to desperation, and has given up in despair, because of the spirit of distrust and censure manifested toward him by his brethren, and these perhaps the very ones who did their part in bringing about the train of circumstances that helped or drove him into the hard place.

Even if you cannot help the man, do not condemn him; you yourself may sometime have a similar experience, and what you have meted out to your brother may be meted out to you. Remember that those with whom you deal have sensibilities just as keen as your own. A kind word, a helping hand, an arm thrown around them in compassion, may save them from ruin.

"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercy, 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 love, which is the bond of perfectness."

March 28, 1892

Tribulation Worketh Patience

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." I would that we all could continually bear in mind what Christ is to us, and what we are to him. If we could constantly realize this relation between Christ and our souls, we would rejoice in hope of the glory of God, even in the midst of tribulation. But when tribulation comes upon us, how hard it seems to rejoice; for we are like Peter, and look upon the troublous waves about us instead of keeping the eye fixed upon Jesus. But I would have you see the importance of keeping the eye fixed upon him who is the Author and Finisher of our faith; for when we take our eyes off the difficulties and trials and fix them upon our Helper, we shall see his matchless charms, and know that "all things work together for good to them that love God."

The Lord would not have us depreciate ourselves, or think that he has forsaken us, when tribulation comes upon us; for we are of value in his sight. He declares, "I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir." He places upon us a value equal to the sufferings of Christ, who died for us upon Calvary's cross; he clothes us with his righteousness; and when trial comes upon us, his eye is upon the purchase of the blood of his only-begotten Son. In this we are to rejoice.

The Lord will have a tried people. We are to be tested and proved, to see whether we are worthy of an entrance into the city of God, to have right to the tree of life. If we gain eternal life, we gain everything; and if we lose it, we lose everything; it would be better for us had we never been born than to lose heaven. It is only as we depend upon the strength and righteousness of Christ that we can stand the testing of God. We shall have to educate the mind, and again and again bring to our remembrance the fact that Christ has his hand upon us. With his own divine lips he has said, "Without me ye can do nothing," but through Christ we can do all things. It is not for us to mark out the way

in which we shall walk; but if we take everything that comes to us as in the providence of God, even our tribulation will work patience, and we need not sink in discouragement while we look by faith to Jesus. When the fogs and mists rise here in Oakland, you cannot see the sun, but you do not despair of ever seeing the sun again. You know that behind the clouds the sun is still shining. And by and by the mists roll back, and the sun shines forth, and gladdens the hearts of men by its radiant beams. Then why should we despair when our spiritual sky is clouded? Can we not have faith that the Sun of Righteousness is still shining? Can we not say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth"? We should let our faith penetrate the darkness. It is Satan that casts his dark shadow between our souls and God so that we may not see Jesus; but by living faith we may keep him in view, and let nothing interpose between the soul and God. Then you will be in a position where you can rejoice in tribulation.

If I had given way to the attacks of the enemy, I should long ago have been out of the work; for Satan has been on my track ever since I started in the service of the Lord. But after all the trials and conflicts through which I have had to pass, I have only this testimony to bear: There is help for every soul in God. There is no respect of persons with God; for every soul for whom Christ has died is precious in his sight. Jesus loves every soul, from the least to the greatest. The entire family circle is precious before him, and whatever he permits to come upon us is for the purpose of perfecting our characters. He desires that we shall bring the solid timbers into our character building in this life, that nothing may mar our religious experience, or unfit us for the future immortal inheritance. We are to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent."

We may gain a better knowledge of God through tribulation than through any other experience; for we may then learn to trust God in the dark. Paul says: "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." Can we measure such a reward as is promised in these words, an exceeding and eternal weight of glory?

We are living in the last days, and we read that "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." The powers from beneath are moving the people to take the measures that will bring the people of God into tribulation. Satan is ever seeking to weaken the church by bringing in dissension and discord, that we shall not fulfill the words of Christ, and be one as he and the Father are one, and so bear a decided testimony to the world of the divinity of Christ. But we must look by faith to Jesus, and the trial will lose its force, and no art of the enemy can avail to cripple our hope in Christ; for we shall realize that we have a Saviour who is mighty to save. Through the darkness of trial and sorrow, we shall be able to distinguish the marks of the crucifixion in his hands and feet and side, and shall hear the voice of the Lord of glory saying: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." Our whole future eternal life depends on whether we shall so live that our names may remain graven upon the palms of his hands.

March 28, 1892

The Father in the Family

We are to follow our Lord in the path of self-denial and self-sacrifice. We are not to choose the easiest path. The way that we shall be required to walk will necessitate the exercise of living faith; for it is by faith that we are to rejoice in tribulation, and send forth steady beams of light into the moral darkness that surrounds us. There are about us many who have not an experience in the things of God, and we are to be to them as living epistles to be known and read of all men. The Lord would have us receive that mould of character which will make us fit to be living members of the heavenly family. We are to shed forth light to those who are in darkness and the shadow of death. We are to put out our talents to the exchangers, using, to the best of our ability, the power that God has given us. Jesus is looking to see how you behave yourselves now, that he may judge you worthy of a place in the mansions above; that he may gather you home as children of his family, subjects of the Heavenly King. You are to clothe yourselves now with the garment that has been woven in the loom of heaven, even with the glorious righteousness of Christ, that you may be prepared to stand at his appearing, and be found worthy of a place at his right hand.

The meaning of "husband" is "houseband." All members of the family center in the father. He is the lawmaker, illustrating in his own manly bearing the sterner virtues of energy, integrity, honesty, patience, courage, diligence, and practical usefulness.

His children are the younger members of the Lord's family,--brothers and sisters intrusted to his care by his Heavenly Father, to be trained and educated for heaven.

He should never correct his children while impatient or fretful, or while under the influence of passion. If correction is demanded, he should punish them in love, manifesting the unwillingness he feels to cause them pain. He should never raise a hand to give them a blow unless he can, with a clear conscience, bow before God and ask his blessing upon the correction he is about to give. He should encourage love in the hearts of his children, ever presenting before them high and correct motives of self-restraint. He should not give them the impression that they must submit to his control because it is his arbitrary will, because they are weak and he is strong, but because it is for their

highest and lasting good and happiness.

The father is in one sense the priest of the household, laying upon the altar of God the morning and evening sacrifice. The wife and children should be encouraged to unite in this offering, and also to engage in the song of praise. Morning and evening the father, as priest of the household, should confess to God the sins committed by himself and his children through the day. Those sins which have come to his knowledge, and also those which are secret, of which God's eye alone has taken cognizance, should be confessed. This rule of action, zealously carried out by the father when he is present, by the mother when he is absent, will result in blessings to the family.

April 4, 1892

The Christian a Guardian of Sacred Trusts

God wants every member of the church to stand faithfully at his post of duty, to realize his responsibility, and create a heavenly atmosphere about his soul by continually gathering the bright rays of the Sun of Righteousness to shed upon the pathway of those about him. When you do this, you will be holy in all manner of conversation. You will not indulge in jesting and joking and in trifling conversation, because Christ will then abide in your hearts by faith, and you will have a realizing sense of his sacred presence.

We are to be representatives of Christ, as Christ was a representative of the Father. We want to be able to attract souls to Jesus, to point them to the Lamb of Calvary, who taketh away the sin of the world. Christ does not clothe sin with his righteousness, but he removes the sin, and in its place he imputes his own righteousness. When your sin is cleansed, the righteousness of Christ goes before you, and the glory of the Lord is your reward. Your influence will then be decidedly on the side of Christ; for instead of making self a center, you will make Christ a center, and will feel that you are a guardian of sacred trusts.

When you remember that Christ has paid the price of his own blood for your redemption and for the redemption of others, you will be moved to catch the bright rays of his righteousness, that you may shed them upon the pathway of those around you. You are not to look to the future, thinking that at some distant day you are to be made holy; it is now that you are to be sanctified through the truth. The prophet exhorts: "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." And Jesus says, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me ... unto the uttermost part of the earth." We are to receive the Holy Ghost. We have had an idea that this gift of God was not for such as we are, that the gift of the Holy Spirit was too sacred, too holy for us; but the Holy Spirit is the Comforter that Christ promised to his disciples to bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever he had said unto them. Then let us cease to look to

ourselves, but look to him from whom all virtue comes. No one can make himself better, but we are to come to Jesus as we are, earnestly desiring to be cleansed from every spot and stain of sin, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. We are not to doubt his mercy, and say, "I do not know whether I shall be saved or not." By living faith we must lay hold of his promise, for he has said, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

We are to be witnesses for Christ, reflecting upon others the light which the Lord permits to shine upon us. We are to be as faithful soldiers marching under the bloodstained banner of Prince Emmanuel. There is to be no indifference, no stupidity among the followers of Christ; for they are to reflect Christ to the world, to serve God with the whole heart, to be watching, waiting, and praying, and not to be ignorant of Satan's devices. The Captain of our salvation knows the plan of the battle, and we shall come off more than conquerors through him.

Do not continue to talk of your weakness; for Jesus came to bring moral power to combine with human effort, that we might advance step by step in the heavenward way. Let your faith lay hold on the promise of God, and if clouds have encompassed your path, the mists will begin to roll back. Let us not lose sight of the fact that the angels of God are ready to help us in every emergency. What could we do if we were left to battle with the powers of darkness unaided? But God has not left us as a prey to the mighty, for he has provided that his grace shall be our support.

To every one of us is committed some sacred responsibility; for we are to show by both precept and example that the Lord is our strength and our Redeemer. By our lives we are to make confession of Christ; but you cannot do this unless you are crucified to self and to the world. The carnal affections and lusts must be denied, or you will never be able to endure the struggle and obtain the victory. You must be able to give the right testimony, and say, "We are abundantly able to go up and possess the goodly land." What is your condition? Are you putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, and making no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof? Or are you settling down into hopeless lethargy and death?

The enemy is working with an increasing intensity, and the powers of darkness are uniting with evil men to form a confederacy against the people of God. Shall we be able to meet every assault of the enemy with the sword of the Spirit? Can we follow the

example of our Lord at every step, and when tempted to disloyalty to God, say, "It is written." Our adversary is acquainted with the Bible, and he knows that if you are to stand his fierce assaults of temptation, you will have to wear the armor of Christ's righteousness. We are not safe in placing ourselves on the ground of the enemy, we must keep our feet in the way that is cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, that we may not be as false lights along the shore. The Saviour has commanded, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." You should never rest until you know how to win souls to Christ, and give all the praise and honor and glory to God for your success.

Let us humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may lift us up. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. We must have the Holy Spirit, or we shall not be able to represent Christ to the world. The Lord has said: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

Let those engaged in the office of publication remember that they are handling sacred things. Let them remember that the angels of God are round about them. Let them plead that the light of God's Holy Spirit may shine into the chambers of their heart and mind. Through the power of Christ they may be victorious over every besetment. Jesus says: "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." "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."

How strange it seems that with all the assurances of God's love, with all the manifestation of his power in our behalf, many are cold and indifferent, even among those who profess to believe the truth for this time. They do not bear a ringing, living testimony to the praise of God, for their faith and love have diminished to a feeble flame. Oh, that we all might be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Oh, that we might be as vessels unto the Lord. We want to see all the folly weeded out of the hearts of those

who profess to be followers of the Lord, that the joy of the Lord may come in. Jesus has said: "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." I desire that you shall be saved with an everlasting salvation. I want you to be around the great white throne triumphant conquerors, to sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain" and lives again. I want you to be with Jesus, in whose presence there is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures forevermore. There, there will be no sin, no sorrow, no sickness, no death, no burial train, no sound of mourning. Oh, I want to see the King in his beauty. I want to praise him with an immortal tongue. I want to give glory to God, who has provided for us the richest blessings of heaven; for when he gave his Son, he gave all. Heaven's resources were exhausted in Christ, and all the treasures of eternity are at our command through the infinite merit of our Redeemer.

April 11, 1892

The Knowledge of God is Life Eternal

Jesus saw how Satan had control of the souls and bodies of men, how he had cast his shadow athwart the path of humanity, so that men could not discern the love of the Father toward the fallen race. Satan claimed to be the prince of this world, and he held men under his power, and Jesus came to break this bondage. The mission of Jesus is set forth in his words by the prophet Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

From the time when Jesus entered into the world Satan was upon his track. The evil one was determined that the power of Christ should not be exercised to break men's bondage, and Satan and his angels, in league with evil men, were united against Christ and his work. But Jesus was not to fail nor be discouraged, and he steadily went forward to accomplish his mission. He worked his works of mercy, and rolled back the shadow of misrepresentation that Satan had cast athwart the pathway of humanity that they might not behold the love of the Father. Satan had filled the minds of men with heresy, and the truth of heaven was obscured by human opinion, superstition, and tradition. Jesus came to bring to light the precious jewels of truth, and to place them in their proper setting in the framework of truth, where their true luster might appear. He came to represent the Father. He said, "I and my Father are one." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

The enemy is continually seeking to misrepresent the character of God to us, and we should have the words of Christ abiding in us, so that when the enemy comes in like a flood the Spirit of the Lord may lift up a standard for us against Satan. We want to have the precious jewels of truth to adorn our knowledge. We should prize the truth above everything else, and be like the man who sold all that he had to buy the field that contained the treasure. We need the light and peace of Christ in our hearts, we need to have our souls barricaded with truth, that we may know God and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent; for the knowledge of God is life eternal. If we have a correct knowledge of the character of God, Satan will not be able to overwhelm our souls with doubt and

discouragement. The enemy will come to you and say: "It is of no use for you to pray. Did you not do that evil thing? Have you not transgressed against God? and have you not violated your own conscience?" Answer him, "Yes; but Christ has bidden me to pray." He has said, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Do not listen to the enemy's suggestion to stay away from Christ until you have made yourself better, until you are good enough to come to God. If you wait till then, you will never come. You might wait till the judgment, but you would not be fit to come to Christ. It is today that you are to yield to the drawing power of Christ, and come to him as you are. He will continue to draw you as you come, until every thought shall be brought into captivity to him. When the enemy seeks to keep you from your Saviour, tell him that Jesus has said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." And why does Christ draw you to himself?--It is that he may make you more precious than the golden wedge of Ophir. One soul is of more worth to Jesus than the whole world.

Then if we are so precious to Jesus, shall we not seek to come into as close relation to him as is the branch to the vine? Shall we not abide in him as he has commanded us to do? The moment we separate from Jesus, the enemy knows it, and he begins to cast his shadow across our pathway, that we may lose sight of Jesus. Satan presents his specious temptations, that we may fall into sin, and then when we yield to his allurements, he has more power over us, and will keep the mind in darkness. Oh, let the tempted soul rise up, and in the strength of Jesus say: "I will have no more connection with the enemy. I stand under the blood-stained banner of the Prince Emmanuel."

Satan will point to the filthy garments of those who have been in his power when they seek to come to the Saviour. But let the repenting soul repeat the promise of Jesus, "Him that cometh to me, I will in nowise cast out." Let him tell the enemy, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Tell the enemy that you know your garments are stained with sin, but that by faith you claim the righteousness of Christ. Turn to Jesus, and tell him all your trouble. Christ sees all your circumstances, and knows all your temptations and sorrows. He says, "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." What is it that is expected of you?--You are expected to open the door of the heart, that your soul may be illuminated with the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness, that you may be all light in the Lord.

When the enemy tells you that you are a sinner, tell him, "Yes, I know it." The accuser of the brethren told the repenting publican that he was a sinner, and he dared not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but cried, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner," and he went down to his house justified. If you are a sinner, you need to seek Jesus. Your coming will not be unwelcome to him, for he invites all those that are weary and heavy laden to come to him, and find rest unto their souls. In the days when Christ was upon earth, certain Greeks came, saying, "Sir, we would see Jesus." All about the Master were those who were cruel and vindictive, who were seeking an opportunity to put Jesus out of the way, who rejected the Lord of glory, and how welcome was the request to see Jesus. The Master's heart warmed with satisfaction that someone wanted to see Jesus. When the voice of God speaks to the heart, and the heart responds to it, we shall hear the inquiry, "Sir, I would see Jesus." Heaven is all ready to receive those who would see Jesus. And now let us come to him, asking for the very things we need, believing that we shall receive them. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

There are many who desire an evidence from the Lord as to what course they shall pursue. They want some tangible proof that they are in the path of duty. When the General Conference advised that I should visit Australia, I wanted an evidence that it was my duty to make the journey. In a few days after boarding the steamer I should be sixty-five years old, and it seemed like a great undertaking for a woman of my age to come across the ocean; but no evidence came, so I took my journey, trusting in the Lord, and wholly by faith. I had no evidence but the word of God, for Christ has declared, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me ... unto the uttermost part of the earth." I knew that if God had directed me to this land, it was that I might give the message that he had given me, and I have every reason to praise God, for he has preserved me in health on the voyage. Thank God for that.

The best evidence that we can have is the word of God. There are many who, like the Jews, are ready to cry out, "Show us a sign, work us a miracle." But is there not a miracle performed every time a soul who is at enmity with God is converted, and learns

to love God and to keep his commandments? Is it not a miracle that we can break from the bondage of Satan? Enmity against Satan is not natural to the human heart. It has to be put into the heart by the manifestation of divine power. It is a miracle when the heart is changed, and we love Jesus, and desire to do those things that please him. We then want to come into close unity with him, and be connected with him as is the branch with the vine. How closely the branch adheres to the vine, drawing sap and nourishment from the stock, until it blossoms and bears fruit. Those who truly know the Lord do not regard it a task to serve their Master. They do not count it a hardship to deny self for his sake, and to be colaborers with him for the salvation of souls.

Let us elevate our souls by faith in Christ, for he alone can cleanse us from sin, and purify us from all unrighteousness. Without him we can do nothing. Let us be true to God; let us pray that the Holy Spirit may be poured out upon us. The Lord has said, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." The Holy Spirit is the gift of God; will we take it? Will we say, "I will place my hand in the hand of Jesus; I have no power, no merit, of my own"? "Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to thy cross I cling."

I point you to the cross of Calvary. The cross is everything to us. It is the pledge of our salvation, the pledge that we shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away. It is to be our support in every trial, our refuge in every sorrow. It is the assurance to us that the Father loves us, and has given his Son for us. It is the assurance to us that our joy may be full.

Oh, shall we go mourning along the way to Mount Zion?--No; let us make melody in our hearts unto the Lord. There is a path cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, and we are on our way to the haven of rest. Let us go forward united to Christ as closely as is the branch to the vine, with our life hid with Christ in God.

April 18, 1892

The Conditions of Fruit Bearing

The Saviour said: "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. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

What great reason we have to praise God for the wonderful promises contained in these words; and shall we not let gratitude spring up in our hearts as we meditate upon the provisions that have been made for our salvation? Shall not all distrust and doubt be banished from our souls, that we may give evidence that we have indeed been grafted into the living Vine? Jesus says, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." In all the teachings of Christ he seeks to unfold to us the relation he sustains to us, and the relation we should sustain to him, by revealing his relation to the Father, and the Father's love to him.

"These things," said Christ, "have I spoken unto you," that you should be sad and discouraged, wavering and distrustful?--No; but "that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." Christ desires that we should be happy, and he points out the way in which we may have fullness of joy. Is there anything more that we can desire? Is not this completion of joy, the joy of Christ, fulfilled in you? God has made provision that this joy may be yours.

Jesus saw that man was plunged in sin and misery, and had not moral power to overcome in his own strength, so Jesus gave himself, that he might unite man with himself, and make provision that sinners might lay hold of his strength and make peace with God. When Adam and Eve transgressed, Jesus said: "I will take upon me the sin of the fallen race. I will bear the penalty of sin, that I may impart to men my strength and righteousness." When Jesus came to the world it was as our substitute and surety. He passed through all the experiences of man, from the manger to Calvary, at every step

giving man an example of what he should be and what he should do. Behold him on the banks of the Jordan, asking for baptism at the hands of John. "But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

What does this scene mean to us? How thoughtlessly we have read the account of the baptism of our Lord, not realizing that its significance was of the greatest importance to us, and that Christ was accepted of the Father in man's behalf. As Jesus bowed on the banks of Jordan and offered up his petition, humanity was presented to the Father by him who had clothed his divinity with humanity. Jesus offered himself to the Father in man's behalf, that those who had been separated from God through sin, might be brought back to God through the merits of the divine Petitioner. Because of sin the earth had been cut off from heaven, but with his human arm Christ encircles the fallen race, and with his divine arm he grasps the throne of the Infinite, and earth is brought into favor with heaven, and man into communion with his God. The prayer of Christ in behalf of lost humanity cleaved its way through every shadow that Satan had cast between man and God, and left a clear channel of communication to the very throne of glory. The gates were left ajar, the heavens were opened, and the Spirit of God, in the form of a dove, encircled the head of Christ, and the voice of God was heard saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

The voice of God was heard in answer to the petition of Christ, and this tells the sinner that his prayer will find a lodgment at the throne of the Father. The Holy Spirit will be given to those who seek for its power and grace, and will help our infirmities when we would have audience with God. Heaven is open to our petitions, and we are invited to come "boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." We are to come in faith, believing that we shall obtain the very things we ask of him.

Christ would have his joy fulfilled in us. He would have us abide in him, that we may bring forth much fruit. The only thing for which each should have anxiety is to know how it is with his soul. The question to put to ourselves is, "Am I fighting the

good fight of faith? Am I a living graft in the True Vine? Am I a branch of the parent stock, drawing sap and nourishment from Jesus?" How shall we know how to answer this question? Jesus has said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." And our fruits are dependent upon our abiding in Christ. Jesus says, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

What is it to bear fruit? It is not all comprised in coming to meeting once a week, and bearing our testimony in prayer or social meeting. We are to be found day by day abiding in the Vine, and bringing forth fruit, with patience, at our home, in our business; and in every relation in life manifesting the Spirit of Christ. There are many who act as though they thought an occasional connection with Christ was all that was necessary, and that they can be accounted living branches because at times they make confession of Christ. But this is a fallacy. The branch is to be grafted into the Vine, and to abide there, uniting itself to the Vine fiber by fiber, drawing its daily supply of sap and nourishment from the root and fatness of the Vine, until it becomes one with the parent stock. The sap that nourishes the Vine must nourish the branch, and this will be evident in the life of him who is abiding in Christ; for the joy of Christ will be fulfilled in him who walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Our professions are worthless unless we abide in Christ; for we cannot be living branches unless the vital qualities of the Vine abound in us. In the genuine Christian the characteristics of his Master will appear, and when we reflect the graces of Christ in our lives and characters, the Father loves us as he loves his Son. When this condition is fulfilled in those who profess to believe the present truth, we shall see a prosperous church; for its members will not live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and they will be flourishing branches of the living Vine.

If Jesus is with you, all the heavenly intelligences will minister unto you. The apostle says, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" All heaven is interested in the salvation of men. Jesus says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Then when we bow in prayer, let us remember that Jesus is with us. When we go into the house of God, let us remember that we are not going into the place of worship alone. We bring Jesus with us. If the people of God could have a realizing sense of this fact, they would not be inattentive hearers of the word. There would not be a cold lethargy upon hearts, so that those who profess his name cannot speak of his love. If we had a

realizing sense of the fact that all heaven is bending over us, anxious to bless us, we would not see the indifferent, listless worship that so much characterizes the service of our churches in this day. We have altogether too low ideas of what it means to be Christians, of what the service of God requires. Jesus came to be our example, to teach us that the Father seeketh those to worship him who worship him in spirit and in truth.

Jesus came to the world not as an angel of light; we could not have endured his glory if he had come thus. One angel at the tomb of Christ was of such exceeding brightness that the Roman guard fell powerless to the ground. As the angel came from the heavens, he parted the darkness from his track, and the sentinels could not endure his glory; they fell as dead men to the earth. Suppose that Jesus had come in the glory of an angel, his brightness would have extinguished the feeble life of mortal men. For our sake Jesus emptied himself of his glory; he clothed his divinity with humanity that he might touch humanity, that his personal presence might be among us, that we might know that he was acquainted with all our trials, and sympathized with our grief, that every son and daughter of Adam might understand that Jesus is the friend of sinners. But he left not his divinity without a witness. Again and again in his sojourn on earth, divinity flashed through humanity, and the glory of God was manifested among men. At one time the priests and rulers, who hated Christ and who were studying how they might put him to death, sent the officers to take Jesus; but when the officers came into his presence, they were spellbound at his words. They listened entranced to the gracious utterances of his lips, and when they returned without taking him prisoner, the priests and rulers asked, "Why have ye not brought him?" The officers replied. "Never man spake like this man." They had been charmed with his words, which had seemed to them as precious jewels. They had listened in utter forgetfulness of their errand, and had returned pondering his teaching. Divinity had flashed through humanity, and they had been deeply impressed, and would not lay hands upon him.

This was the Saviour who had come to fight our battles for us; for he alone could conquer the powers of darkness. "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 an 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. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in

time of need."

April 25, 1892

The Purpose and Plan of Grace

The purpose and plan of grace existed from all eternity. Before the foundation of the world it was according to the determinate counsel of God that man should be created, endowed with power to do the divine will. But the defection of man, with all its consequences, was not hidden from the Omnipotent, and yet it did not deter him from carrying out his eternal purpose; for the Lord would establish his throne in righteousness. God knows the end from the beginning; "known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." Therefore redemption was not an afterthought--a plan formulated after the fall of Adam--but an eternal purpose to be wrought out for the blessing not only of this atom of a world but for the good of all the worlds which God has created.

The creation of the worlds, the mystery of the gospel, are for one purpose, to make manifest to all created intelligences, through nature and through Christ, the glories of the divine character. By the marvelous display of his love in giving "his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," the glory of God is revealed to lost humanity and to the intelligences of other worlds. The Lord of heaven and earth revealed his glory to Moses, when he offered his prayer to Jehovah in behalf of idolatrous Israel, and pleaded, "Show me thy glory." And the Lord said: "I will make all my goodness to pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.... And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock." "And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." Moses was hidden in the cleft of the rock when the glory of the Lord was revealed to him, and it is when we are hidden in Christ that we obtain some view of the majesty and love of God.

The prayer of Moses was heard and answered, and we also may present our

earnest petitions to God, and receive of his grace and power. Jesus has said: "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." The promises of God are not yea and nay, but yea and amen in Christ. If we would importune God, laying before him our needs in simplicity, with unfaltering confidence, in the name of Christ, we should receive of the abundance of the blessing of God. Tell the Lord exactly what you want in the way of spiritual blessings; and you need not fear to lay before him your temporal needs and perplexities. He has said: "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." He has said: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." "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." "Him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out."

It is the privilege of every follower of Christ to behold the glory of God, to understand his goodness, and know that he is a God of infinite mercy and love. Jesus has said, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." Jesus came to reveal the Father, to make his glory known before the children of men. No one was excluded from the privileges of the gospel. Jesus stooped from infinite greatness, from indescribable glory, and assumed the nature of man, and to him who had known such exaltation, who had suffered such humiliation, the rank and caste and distinctions of human society seemed trivial and unworthy. The exaltation of the great had no influence upon his mind. Christ had come to deliver man from the terrible power of the enemy, and to him who had so great a mission to accomplish, poverty and humiliation, discomfort and reproach, seemed insignificant. When one came to Christ, thinking that the Saviour was to establish a temporal kingdom and would have honors to bestow upon those who advocated his cause, Jesus said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." Jesus made the worlds; for "without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.... He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

Indulgence and ease and luxury were unknown to the Son of God. Had he presented himself to the world in worldly pomp and state, it would have been out of harmony with his lowly birth and humble life. Jesus chose to take the position of the lowly, and not the state of those who had power and wealth and influence. He did not design that outward display should attract men to him; the power of celestial truth was to be the drawing power. Sinless and exalted by nature, he consented to take the habiliments of humanity, to become one with the fallen race. In the nature of man he took the risk of meeting the temptations of the fallen angel, permitting himself to be tried on every point wherewith man was tempted.

Satan gloried in the opportunity of thus besieging the Son of God. Because he had taken upon him the nature of man, Satan deemed that the victory was certain, and with every malignant device in his power, he strove to overcome Christ. The issues at stake were beyond the comprehension of man, and the steadfast resistance of Christ to the temptation of the enemy brought the whole confederacy of evil to war against him. In an un pitying confederacy, men and evil angels united their forces, and arrayed themselves against the Prince of peace. The temptations that assailed Christ were as much more intense and subtle in their character than those which assail man as his nature was purer and more exalted than is the nature of man in its moral and physical defilement. In his conflict with the prince of darkness in this atom of a world, Christ had to meet the whole confederacy of evil, the united forces of the adversaries of God and man.

How Satan and his angels triumphed as they discovered that the Son of God had taken upon him the nature of man, and had come to be man's substitute, to engage in the conflict in his behalf.

The human family had been overpowered by the deceptions of the enemy; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, and it was the enemy's hope that Christ also would be a victim to his seductive wiles; but at every point he met the tempter and put him to flight. Christ was the conqueror over the powers of darkness. We do not comprehend the infinite condescension of Christ in consenting to war with the enemy, or the infinite risk he ventured in engaging in the great controversy in our behalf.

The mystery of the gospel had been spoken in Eden when the lost pair were first in the guilt of transgression, for God said to the serpent, "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." If Satan could have touched the head with his specious temptations, the human family would have been lost; but the Lord had made known the purpose and plan of the mystery of grace; 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."

May 2, 1892

The Fullness of Christ's Grace

Although the Saviour had no wealth, displayed no outward grandeur, came with no worldly pomp, yet his words of promise, of command, of reproof, were uttered with the dignity of goodness, greatness, and power. The people listened with wonder and admiration, and the impression made upon their minds was expressed by the officers who came to take him, in obedience to the command of the rulers and priests. They listened entranced to his words of heavenly wisdom, and, forgetting their errand, they returned without their prisoner. The priests and rulers asked, "Why have ye not brought him?" and they answered, "Never man spake like this man."

No one could listen to his gracious words and escape the conviction that he was a being of superior goodness and wisdom. The emotions of his listeners changed from admiration of his eloquence to desire to attain to the lofty character which he presented, both by precept and example. As he discoursed on themes of eternal interest, they hung upon his words as if spellbound under their power. Those who were thus attracted to the vital truths which Christ presented, were standing on holy ground, near to the rivers of the water of life. With what deep, impressive power he called to the multitudes on the last day of the feast, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." At another time he declared, "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

Christ is an open fountain, an inexhaustible fountain, from which men may drink and drink again, and ever find a fresh supply. But none will ever come to him save those who will respond to the drawing of his love. None will feed on the bread of life which came down from heaven, no one will drink of the water of life flowing down from the throne of God, save those who yield to the pleadings of the Spirit. Since God has given the treasures of heaven in the gift of his only-begotten Son, how shall the sinner escape who neglects so great salvation, and sets at naught the great provision of God? The justice of God is manifested in the condemnation of all who are finally impenitent and unbelieving. There will be no excuse for the sinner who willfully rejects and neglects so great salvation.

The gift of life has been freely, graciously, joyously offered to fallen man. Through Christ we may become partakers of the divine nature, and obtain the gift of eternal life; for it has been abundantly provided for all who will come and receive it through God's appointed means. When Paul beheld the wonders of redemption and the foolishness of those who did not comprehend its nature, he exclaimed, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?"

Jesus said, "Ye also have seen me, and believe not." How had they seen him?--By the eye of faith, by the witness of the Holy Spirit, by the revelation of Christ to their souls. But they had resisted the work of the Holy Spirit, until the impression of the precious truth of Christ wore away their hearts. They did not give heed to their convictions. They did not cultivate their faith, but indulged in questioning and caviling until they were hardened in unbelief and rebellion.

Those who go on to know the Lord know that his goings forth are prepared as the morning, and everyone who receives the precious jewels of truth will hasten to impart the knowledge of his riches in Christ to those who are around him. When men respond to the drawing of Christ and view Jesus as the royal Sufferer on the cross of Calvary, they enter into oneness with Christ, they become the elect of God, not by works of their own, but through the grace of Christ; for all their good works are wrought through the power of the Spirit of God. All is of God, and not of themselves. The Lord chose us by his Spirit. Jesus says, "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."

The fruit we are to bring forth is the fruit of the Spirit. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Your fruit is to remain, to be of such a character that it shall not perish, but reproduce after its kind a harvest of a precious order.

The grace of Jesus Christ alone can change the heart of stone to a heart of flesh, and make it alive unto God. Men may perform great deeds in the eyes of the world; their achievements may be many and of a high order in the sight of men, but all the talent, all

the skill, all the ability of the world will fail to transform the character and make a degraded child of sin a child of God, an heir of heaven. Men have no power to justify the soul, to sanctify the heart. Moral disease cannot be healed save through the power of the great Physician. The highest gift of heaven, even the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, is alone able to redeem the lost. What gratitude, what love, should fill our hearts as we contemplate the love of God! The heart should be softened and subdued as we meditate upon the risk that Jesus took in order that man might be elevated and restored. The world's Redeemer endured sufferings commensurate to all the guilt of a lost world. The sacrifice of Christ on Calvary's cross is a consideration that surpasses all the overwhelming power of sin; and when a sense of sin presses upon the heart of the sinner, and the burden seems intolerable, Jesus invites him to look to him and live. There is power in Christ to cleanse the soul. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

How the wondrous provision of the plan of God for the salvation of men widens and exalts our ideas of the love of God! How it binds our hearts to the great heart of Infinite Love! How it makes us delight in his service, as our hearts respond to the drawing of his loving-kindness and tender mercy! John calls upon men to behold the marvelous love of God. He exclaims: "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. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

This is the work that is before us. We are to have the faith that works by love, and purifies the soul. Through faith our lives are to be hid with Christ in God. We shall then be God's hidden ones; for the value of Christian character is not discerned by the world. The world admire honesty, and the manifestations of the virtues and graces of Christian character; but at the same time they make a jest of true Christian conscientiousness, because it is a rebuke to their own lives of sin. The living stones that shine in the spiritual temple of the Lord are a great annoyance to Satan, and he ever seeks to cut off the light, and eclipse the Sun of Righteousness, by interposing his shadow between the soul and God.

But Jesus says unto us: "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." The Lord would save us from the corruptions of the world; for he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Jesus, our precious Saviour, has redeemed us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and has clothed us with the garments of salvation, even in his own robe of righteousness. Christians are to be clothed with humility as with a garment, and not to be prominent in the world, seeking for position or popularity. If heaven has sent you to be indeed light bearers amid the moral darkness, you will be content to shine in any place which God may assign to you. The praise of men, the attraction of the world, its pleasures, its amusements, its bribes, will all be powerless to win the true Christian from his allegiance to God. Neither will threatening, persecution, loss of liberty or life, induce him to turn from the commandments of God, to obey the dictates of men. He will fill his appointed place, and let his light so shine before men that they may see his good works, and glorify his Father who is in heaven.

Before men and angels, Christians are required to show by precept and example the value of Christian character. Those who receive Christ as their personal Saviour will be able to do this, and for them Christ has gone to prepare mansions in heaven. There are some who declare that all men are entitled to a place in heaven, and in the same breath they acknowledge that all men are not fitted for that heavenly abode. If all men would but accept the truth as it is in Jesus, and give it a place in the inner sanctuary of the soul, that they might become sanctified through it, they would be fitted for heaven.

A title to a possession in this world must be without flaw, or it is valueless, and the right of inheritance is not given. And will heaven be given to those who have a faulty title? The apostle reveals the line through which the heavenly inheritance is to come. He says: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." If we are Christ's, our title to the heavenly inheritance is without flaw, for we are then under the only saving covenant, the covenant of grace; and through grace we shall be able to make our calling and election sure by putting on the excellency of Christ in faith, in spirit, in character; for no one will be entitled to the heavenly inheritance who has not been purified, refined, ennobled, elevated, and wholly sanctified. Those whose lives are hid with Christ in God, who have been clothed upon with his righteousness, will have a right to the inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that

fadeth not away.

May 9, 1892

The Beatitudes

I want to speak to you today from the words of the Saviour found in Matthew the fifth chapter. "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him." As far as possible we should try to bring before us the scene of our Saviour's labors, that we may fasten our attention upon the occasion of the lessons which our Lord addressed to the people. The words of our lesson are from the lips of no other than the Majesty of heaven. They are not the words of man, that may be criticised, but are the words of Him who was equal with the Father, one with God. In these words we recognize the voice of the highest authority that ever spake to man.

"And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are"--those who are filled with joyful emotion? who are highly elated? who feel that they are rich in spiritual attainment?--No; "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Do you ask what it means to be poor in spirit? The next verse is of a like character, and says, "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." To be poor in spirit means that we feel our deficiency and need because we have sinned and come short of the glory of God. It is this that causes us to mourn. But because the Saviour says, "Blessed are they that mourn," are we to come to the conclusion that he would have us always lamenting our poverty of spirit, our lack of spiritual grace? Is it necessary to make it manifest that you are mourning, in order to be counted among those whom the Saviour pronounces "blessed"?--No; for by beholding we become changed, and if we talk of our poverty and weakness, we shall only become more poverty-stricken, more feeble in spiritual things. If we talk darkness, we shall have darkness. To be poor in spirit is to be never satisfied with present attainments in the Christian life, but to be ever reaching up for more and more of the grace of Christ. The poor in spirit is one who looks upon the perfection of Jesus' character, and sees his own unlikeness to him who is glorious in holiness. The poor in spirit is one who is ever responding to the drawing of Christ, and who is obtaining nearer and nearer views of the perfect righteousness of Christ, and in contrast sees his own unworthiness and unlikeness to his Lord.

He is poor in spirit, but he is not making a parade of his poverty; he shows that he is of this class by manifesting humility and meekness, by not depreciating others that he

may exalt himself. He has no time for doing this; he sees many defects in his own character which demand his attention, and he knows that he cannot afford to be found criticising others. As he beholds the infinite love and mercy of God towards sinners, his heart is melted. He feels his poverty of spirit, but instead of calling attention to his weakness he seeks continually for the richness of the grace of Christ, for the robe of his righteousness. The language of the heart of him who is poor in spirit is, "Less of self and more of Thee." He desires Jesus. He knows that there is nothing in him whereby he can procure the freedom which Christ has purchased for him at the infinite price of his precious blood. He sees that the good works which he has done are all mingled with self, and he can take no glory to himself because of his attainments in the Christian life. He realizes that there is merit in naught else but the blood of Christ. But it is because of this very realization that he is blessed; for if he did not feel his need, he would not obtain the heavenly treasure.

When Christ was upon earth, the Pharisees made bitter complaint against him because he was the friend of publicans and sinners. They said to his disciples: "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." The Pharisees felt that they were whole; they felt that they were rich and increased with goods and had need of nothing, and knew not that they were poor and miserable and blind and naked and wretched. They were satisfied with their moral condition, but Jesus said, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." It is the needy that Jesus is seeking. Brethren and sisters, do you feel that you are needy? Are you saying, as did the Greeks that came to Jerusalem, "We would see Jesus"? The Greeks came to seek Jesus at the time when the Pharisees were upon his track, trying by every possible way to find something whereby they could accuse and condemn him. How grateful to the Master was the sincere desire and confidence of the Greeks at this time of trial and sorrow. The Greeks wanted to see him because they had heard of his mighty works, they had heard of his wisdom and truth, and they believed on him; for they knew that he was the desire of their hearts.

The great danger with the people who profess to believe the truth for this time is that they shall feel as if they were entitled to the blessing of God because they have made this or that sacrifice, done this or that good work, for the Lord. Do you imagine that because you have decided to keep the Sabbath of the Lord, God is under obligation to you, and that you have merited his blessing? Does the sacrifice you have made look

of sufficient merit to you to entitle you to the rich gifts of God? If you have an appreciation of the work that Christ has wrought out for you, you will see that there is no merit in yourself or in your work. You will see your lost condition and become poor in spirit. There is but one thing for the poor in spirit to do, and that is to look continually to Jesus, to believe in him whom the Father hath sent.

When the people came to Jesus, they asked him at one time: "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." Now the question is, Are we doing this? Do we feel our need? God has committed to us sacred trusts. The hereditary trusts of patriarchs and prophets have come down along the lines to us, and with them precious light has shone upon us. We have received divine enlightenment, and yet we have not made the advancement in the pathway of holiness that we should have made. Our obligation and responsibility have been faithfully pointed out, but we have not taken hold upon the strength of God, that we might fulfill our obligations to him. Throughout all the churches there is one subject of vital importance that has been neglected. We have failed to make the Holy Spirit the theme of our thought and instruction. Light has come to us concerning the offices of the Spirit of God, and with burdened heart some have presented to the church the great provision that God has made for the people in the gift of his Holy Spirit.

Jesus said to his disciples: "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." The Comforter is to come as a reprove, as one who is to lay open before us our defects of character, and at the same time to reveal to us the merit of Him who was one with the Father. Jesus says, "He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." In Christ dwelt all the fullness of the God-head bodily, and we are to be complete in him. With all our defects of character, we are to come to him in whom all fullness dwells.

But many of you say, "I have prayed, I have tried, I have struggled, and I do not see that I advance one step." What is the trouble? Have you not thought you were earning something, that you were by your struggles and works paying the price of your redemption? This you never can do. Christ has paid the price of your redemption. There is only one thing that you can do, and that is to take the gift of God. If you feel that you

are poverty-stricken in spirit, you can come in all your need, and plead the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour. But you cannot come expecting that Christ will cover your wickedness, cover your indulgence in sin, with his robe of righteousness. He has come to save his people from their sins. The people of God are to be as branches grafted into the living Vine, to be partakers of the nature of the Vine. If you are a living branch of the True Vine, Jesus will prove you by affliction, that you may bring forth fruit more abundantly.

The reason why we have not more of the Spirit and power of God with us is that we feel too well satisfied with ourselves. There is a marked tendency among those who are converted to the truth, to make a certain measure of advancement, and then settle down into a state of solidity, where no further progress is attained. They stand right where they are, and cease to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But the religion of Christ is of a character that demands constant advancement. The Lord does not design that we shall ever feel that we have reached to the full measure of the stature of Christ. Through all eternity we are to grow in knowledge of him who is the head of all things in the church. If we would draw upon his grace, we must feel our poverty. Our souls must be filled with an intense longing after God, until we realize that we shall perish unless Christ shall put upon us his Spirit and grace, and do the work for us. (To be Continued.)

May 16, 1892

The Beatitudes

But as we come to feel our utter reliance upon Christ for salvation, are we to fold our hands and say, I have nothing to do, Jesus has done it all?--No; we are to put forth every energy, that we may become "partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." We are to be overcomers, to overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil. We are to be continually watching, waiting, praying, and working. But do all that we may, yet we can do nothing to pay a ransom for our souls. But while we see our helplessness, we are to be continually looking unto Jesus, who is the Author and Finisher of our faith. We can do nothing to originate faith, for faith is the gift of God. Neither can we perfect it, for Christ is the Finisher of our faith. It is all of Christ.

All the longing after a better life is from Christ, and is an evidence that he is drawing you to himself and that you are responding to his drawing power. You are to be as clay in the hands of the potter, and if you submit yourself to Christ, he will fashion you into a vessel unto honor, fit for the Master's use. The only thing that stands in the way of the soul who is not fashioned after the divine Pattern is that he does not become poor in spirit; for he who is poor in spirit will look to a higher Source than himself, that he may obtain the grace which will make him rich unto God. While he will feel that he cannot originate anything, he will say, "The Lord is my helper."

The Lord has commanded us, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." But what does this mean? It means that you feel your necessity, that you are poor in spirit, that you rejoice with trembling. It means that you know that in the very words you utter you may make a mistake, that in the very best of your work self may be so mingled that your efforts may be valueless, that you realize that your efficiency is in Christ. Oh, let the cry of the soul continually be--

"Hangs my helpless soul on Thee."

Look to Jesus when you come in and when you go out, and pray without ceasing. You should realize that temptation is on every side. Around you are those whose

conversation is only chaff and nonsense. In the world pride and vanity are displayed, and you will be tempted to feel poverty concerning these things that the world admires, which can never satisfy the soul's hunger. Oh, then pray, "Lord, make me a jewel for thy kingdom."!

This is the meaning of working out your salvation with fear and trembling. If you do not work out your salvation in this spirit, your righteousness is of as much worth as was the Pharisee's who went into the temple to pray, who exalted and extolled himself, and thanked the Lord that he was not as other men were. He was rich in spirit, or thought that he was; for he knew not that he was poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked. But at the same time a poor publican entered the temple, and he would not so much as lift up his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, and cried, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner." The Pharisee saw this man, and thanked God that he was not as this publican, and he went down to his house feeling satisfied with himself--feeling rich in spirit and lifted up in spiritual pride. But he who had so exalted himself in his own eyes was not exalted in the sight of God, for Jesus says that the publican went down to his house justified rather than the other.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The humility that Jesus speaks of in the text is not a humility on stilts, as was the Pharisee's, parading itself before the eyes of men, that his righteousness might be seen and praised of men. Humility is before honor. The apostle exhorts the followers of Christ: "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Fear lest you shall make a mistake, and bring dishonor upon the name of the Lord. Cry unto him, believing that he has power to save. This is the humility that we want. We need a physician and restorer for our souls, and when we come unto Christ petitioning for his grace, the Comforter will breathe his words into our souls, "My peace give I unto you." "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." We are to come as little children to God; and as we realize our poverty, we are not to tell it to men, but to God. Do not tell your weakness to those who can give you no strength. Tell it to God; for he will know just what to do for you. Jesus said: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; ... to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of

heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord that he might be glorified."

How thankful we should be that we have a heavenly Intercessor. We may be clothed in Christ's righteousness, that the Father may bestow his favor upon us. Jesus presents us to the Father robed in his righteousness. He pleads before God in our behalf. He says "I have taken the sinner's place. Look not upon this wayward child, but look on me. Look not upon his filthy garments, but look on my righteousness." When we are forgiven for our sins, when our filthy garments are taken away, then we are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling; but we are not left to do the work alone, "for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." God works and man works, and as this co-operation is maintained, the richest blessings will come upon those who labor together with God. The Lord says, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (To be Continued.)

May 30, 1892

The Beatitudes

"Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." But although the Lord says the mourner shall be comforted, it is not that he shall exalt himself as did the Pharisee. He who has mourned for his sin knows that there is nothing in him whereby he has merited the returns that God has bestowed. He beholds in Jesus "the Chiefest among ten thousand" and "the One altogether lovely," and he centers his affections upon Christ. If Jesus were the center of attraction to you, the One on whom your affections were placed, would you hide this love in your heart, and never let it out?--No; you would tell of his love, you would catch his spirit, and imitate his example.

"Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." But the earth promised to the meek will be a better one than this. It will be purified from all sin and defilement, and will bear the image of the divine. Satan has placed his throne in the earth; but Jesus says where the usurper has set up his throne, there will I place my throne, and there shall be no more curse. The glory of the Lord is to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Jesus is working for us. He desires to give his children a home where there will be no more sin, no more sorrow, no more death; but all will be joy and gladness. He says: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God."

The Lord desires to take every son and daughter of Adam, and purify them from their iniquity, and lift them up from their state of misery and degradation and wretchedness, and write upon them his divine superscription. But it is man's sin and unbelief that oppose the work that God would do for humanity. Jesus died for the whole world, but in stubborn unbelief men refuse to be fashioned after the divine pattern. They will not yield themselves to Christ to be molded after the heavenly model. Oh, shall we not submit, and give up our own way, that the Lord may have a chance to do the work for us?

How tenacious are men of their own way. They try to excuse their sinful habits

by saying, "Oh, this is my way." But will your way be acceptable to God? Will you present your way at the gate of the city into which nothing that defileth shall enter, and expect to have an entrance there? The Lord will say: "I know your way, and it is a wicked way. You would not permit me to rule over you on earth, and you are not prepared for an entrance here. You refused to be led by my spirit, you rejected my counsel, and set at naught my grace, and heaven would not be heaven to you, for nothing that defileth can enter here. We emptied sin from heaven when we cast out the great deceiver, and we cannot have sin here again." Then let us yield our wills to God, that he may mold and fashion us after the Divine Pattern.

How blessed will be the lot of those who enter into that glorious abode where there will be no more sin, no more suffering. What a prospect is this for imagination. What a theme for contemplation. The Bible is full of the richest treasures of truth, of glowing descriptions of that heavenly land. We should search the Scriptures, that we may better understand the plan of salvation, and learn of the righteousness of Christ, until we shall exclaim in viewing the matchless charms of our Redeemer, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." In the word of God we shall see the infinite compassion of Jesus. The imagination may reach out in contemplation of the wonders of redeeming love, and yet in its highest exercises we shall not be able to grasp the height and depth and length and breadth of the love of God, for it passeth knowledge. In Christ was the fullness of the Godhead bodily. In him every treasure of heaven was given, and he has it in trust for us. Oh, then why do we not trust him? why do we doubt his tender mercy and love? Do you think that he who died for you, cares not whether you are saved or not? Do you imagine that he cares not for the bereaved, the mourning ones, that he looks not with pity on the poor in spirit, who are under the bondage of Satan? The tender, compassionate Jesus, who died for the sins of the world, will not turn away from the cry of the needy. He asks: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me."

Jesus invites the needy to come to him and find completeness in him who is the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The Saviour of men designs to cleanse his children until no particle of selfishness shall remain. While we feel our poverty, we are to eat of the flesh and drink of the blood of the Son of God. We are to co-operate with Christ in working out our own salvation with fear and trembling. The heavenly intelligences are

waiting to co-operate with the most helpless, the most sinful soul who feels his need. Those who are great sinners may find great grace.

Jesus said to Simon, "I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? And Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.... To whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."

In view of our weakness, how does it become us to indulge in criticism of others? Do not fault-finding and picking flaws in the character of those with whom you associate make it evident that you are stricken with spiritual poverty? You are feeding on the faults of others, instead of growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We are to be laborers together with him in bringing souls to the knowledge of the truth. But we must not expect that souls are to be converted simply by hearing a sermon. We are to bring them one by one to Christ, and all that have ever tasted of the good word of God and of the powers of the world to come are to be missionaries for God. When you become engaged in the work of Christ, seeking to bring in those who are lost, you will not have time to look for the defects in the character of your brethren. You must now build yourselves up in the most holy faith, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. You are not to stand to one side as a spectator, looking on to see what this one or that one is doing; your business is to see that you are making straight paths for your feet, that the lame be not turned out of the way. When a follower of Christ turned to one of his brethren and asked, "Lord, what shall this man do?" Jesus answered, "What is that to thee? follow thou me." The follower of Christ is not to look to any man. He is to look to a crucified and risen Saviour. (Concluded next week.)

How thankful we should be that we have a heavenly Intercessor. We may be clothed in Christ's righteousness, that the Father may bestow his favor upon us. Jesus presents us to the Father robed in his righteousness. He pleads before God in our behalf. He says "I have taken the sinner's place. Look not upon this wayward child, but look on me. Look not upon his filthy garments, but look on my righteousness." When we are forgiven for our sins, when our filthy garments are taken away, then we are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling; but we are not left to do the work alone, "for it is

God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." God works and man works, and as this co-operation is maintained, the richest blessings will come upon those who labor together with God. The Lord says, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (To be Continued.)

June 6, 1892

The Beatitudes

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." All through this sermon on the mount is a line of advancement for Christian experience. The angels of darkness are to stand back, that the soul purchased by the infinite sacrifice of Christ 5/attain unto perfection of character. The word is sounded: "Stand back, this soul is not yours, it has been purchased by the precious blood of Christ. Stand back, I and my Father are one, and we have come to draw this soul to righteousness." If the soul is not drawn to Christ, it is because the will is not on the side of God's will, but on the side of the enemy. If man will but cooperate with God, God will work in him to will and to do of his good pleasure, and man will work out his own salvation with fear and trembling. The reason you do not realize the help of the Lord to a far greater degree is that you are so self-centered, your will is not on the side of God's will. The Lord would have you make it manifest in your manners, in your dress, in your spirit, that you are blessed. He would have you show that the line of demarkation between the world and the followers of Christ is a distinct line, so decided that the difference between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not is always discernible. If the people of the world do not see that you are different from those around them, they will not be influenced by your profession of religion; for you will not be a savor of Christ, and you will win no soul to the service of God.

Yet there will be no one saved in heaven with a starless crown. If you enter, there will be some soul in the courts of glory that has found an entrance there through your instrumentality. Then why not entreat the Lord to put upon you his Spirit, that you may be able to awaken an interest in the truth in the minds of those around you? Think of your neighbors and friends and relatives who are out of Christ. Think of those you have left in various foreign lands; how much do you care for their souls? You should be so filled with love for the lost that you cannot forbear working for the salvation of souls. What you need is Jesus. He says, "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." If the rich blessing of Jesus is in your hearts, you will be able to refresh others.

How many have their names upon the church books who know not what it means to have Christ abide in their hearts by faith. There are many who make a profession of Christianity who will have to be born again or they cannot see the kingdom of heaven. They will have to become partakers of his love and grace before they can present to others the great salvation that has been provided for those who are dead in trespasses and sins. But the promise is given to those who feel their want, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." God has promised the fullness of salvation, and yet the world is full of those who are hungering and thirsting after the pleasures, the fashions, the applause of the world. Many are hungering and thirsting, that they may have their own way. But those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness are directing their desires along the channel where the fullness of heaven shall be given. Why not determine that you will place your will on the side of God's will, that you may become a laborer together with God. Jesus says, "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me." Then is there any excuse for our weakness, for our coldness, for our lethargy? There are many who seem to think that when they have acknowledged that they are full of weakness, they have put a plaster over their sins. But we are not to talk of our inefficiency, but to find in Christ a full salvation. He says, "Him that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out."

When our weakness becomes strength in the strength of Christ, we shall not be craving for amusement. These holidays that are considered so indispensable will not be used simply for the gratification of self, but will be turned into occasions in which you can bless and enlighten souls. When weary, Jesus sought for a place of rest in the desert, but the people had had a taste of the heavenly manna, and they came out to him in large companies. In all their human woe and suffering and distress, they sought his retreat, and there was no rest for the Son of God. His heart was moved with compassion, for they were as sheep without a shepherd, and his great heart of love was touched with the feeling of their infirmities, and he taught them concerning the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus has presented to us precious truth full of spiritual light and vitality. But has this truth been brought into the inner sanctuary of the soul? Does Christ abide in your hearts by faith? If Christ is in you, you will make him manifest to others. We must have more of Jesus, and less, far less, of self. The prayer of our hearts should be, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." Jesus must abide in the heart; and where he is, the carnal desires will be subdued and be kept in

subjection by the operation of the Spirit of God. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

I feel like mourning that the image of Christ is not clearly discernible in those who profess to be his followers; for I know that Jesus is disappointed, that the heavenly intelligences are disappointed, and those who are seeking for the truth are disappointed. Unless Christ is formed within, the hope of glory, you cannot rightly represent him to those with whom you come in contact.

June 13, 1892

"Blessed is He that Considereth the Poor"

The Lord Jesus said, "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy." There never was a time when there was greater need for the exercise of mercy than today. The poor are all around us, the distressed, the afflicted, the sorrowing, and those who are ready to perish. Those who have acquired riches have acquired them through the exercise of the talents that were given them of God; but these talents for the acquiring of property were given to them that they might relieve those who are in poverty. These gifts were bestowed upon men by Him who maketh His sun to shine and His rain to fall upon the just and the unjust, that by the fruitfulness of the earth men might have abundant supplies for all their need. The fields have been blessed of God, and "of his goodness he hath prepared for the poor." In the providence of God events have been so ordered that the poor are always with us, in order that there may be a constant exercise in the human heart of the attributes of mercy and love. Man is to cultivate the tenderness and compassion of Christ; he is not to separate himself from the sorrowing, the afflicted, the needy, and the distressed. Job declares: "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me; because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy."

How many there are who claim to be followers of Christ, yet who do not follow him in truth. They do not manifest the sympathy and love of Christ by being merciful and compassionate. They do not make the widow's heart sing for joy; they treat the fatherless with coldness, indifference, or contempt. Said Job: "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my judgment was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor; and the cause which I knew not I searched out." This was an evidence that Job had righteousness that was after Christ's order. Through Jesus men may possess a spirit of tender pity toward the needy and distressed. They may have the mind of Christ. He was the Son of God, rich in heavenly treasures, yet for our sake he became poor, he descended to the lowest humiliation and was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, that he might exalt us to be joint heirs with himself. The whole world was in need of that which Christ alone could give

them. He did not withdraw himself from those who called upon him for help. He did not do as many now do, say, "I wish they would not trouble me with their affairs, I want to hoard up my means, to invest it in houses and lands." Jesus, the Majesty of heaven, turned from the splendor of his heavenly home, and in the gracious purpose of his heart he demonstrated the character of God to men throughout the world. The requirement of God from those who claim to be his children is that they be doers of his word, that they follow his example, represent the life of Christ in tender, pitying love to the world; that they reflect his image.

Jesus says, "Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father which is in heaven is merciful." To pursue the course that Jesus did, to follow in his divine footsteps, is not in harmony with the feelings of the natural heart; but if we are Christians, we shall practice the words and works of Christ, who gave himself in order to ransom an apostate race. The root of selfishness has a firm growth in many hearts, and worldliness and pride spring from this root; but selfishness is not a Christian characteristic; it is an attribute of the great apostate. No one can live for himself and at the same time be united with Christ. Conformity to the world, attachment to the world, manifests a decided denial of Christ.

The rich are not to be favored above the poor. How inconsistent is it to make favorites of men because the Lord has intrusted his goods to them to be wisely dispensed to those who are needy. Unless the rich manifest the spirit that moved Christ to come to our world to seek and to save that which was lost, they are none of his. They are training under another general. The important question is not, "Is a man rich?" But the important question is, "What use does he make of his riches?" The value and character of a man is determined by the use to which he puts his intrusted talents. Does he do good in this life? Does he seek to bless humanity, to build up the kingdom of Christ in the world? Shut away the rich from the poor in large and costly dwellings, make churches too splendid for the entrance of the poor, so that the rich man may not be brought in contact with the distressing needs of the fatherless and the widow, and the result will be that his sympathies will be withered, mercy will not be exercised, and the rich man will be in imminent danger of losing his soul.

Christ says, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." Unless the grace of Christ controls the heart, the tendency of the rich man is to grow more proud, more self-sufficient, more self-righteous. He acts as if he were made

of better flesh and more costly blood than his poorer brother. But Christ looks on, and says, "All ye are brethren." There is no respect of persons with God. The rich man has plenty, and makes no effort to put himself in the poor man's place; but because he does not consider the poor, he becomes unfeeling, indifferent, and hard-hearted. He does not try to understand the conflicts, temptations, and struggles of his poor brethren, and mercy dries up in his heart.

The poor are robbed daily of the education and training they should have concerning the tender mercies with which the Lord would have them regarded; for he has made ample provision that they should be comforted with the necessities of life. They are compelled to feel the poverty that narrows life, and they are often tempted to become envious, jealous, and full of evil surmisings. Their sympathies are alienated from their more prosperous neighbors; but when men are born again, when they are truly converted, old things pass away, and behold, all things become new. A new moral taste is created, and he that was exalted because God had intrusted him with means will seek to aid and exalt others. His responsibilities will seem weighty upon him and will humble his heart before God; for he will realize that his goods are intrusted of the Lord, that he may relieve the needy, comfort the distressed, feed the fatherless, and make the widow's heart sing for joy.

But instead of using their means for the Master, how many embezzle it, invest it for themselves, furnishing their homes with rich carpets, fine furniture, and multiplying lands and houses to glorify themselves in the earth, while the needy call upon them in vain. If they do anything for the poor, they call them paupers, and look upon them with contempt. They do not consider from whence comes their intrusted capital, and that they are all the time receiving unnumbered blessings from God. If he should withhold his beneficence, they would be numbered with the poor. We are all dependent upon the benevolence of a gracious God. The day will come when those who have cherished selfishness and covetousness, who have defrauded the poor, who have withdrawn mercy and love from them, will be made manifest. (Concluded next week.)

June 20, 1892

"Blessed is He that Considereth the Poor"

God has placed property in the hands of men in order that they may learn to be merciful, to be his almoners to relieve the suffering of his fallen creatures. Further than this, they are to consider the wants of the cause of God, and keep his treasury supplied according to the gifts bestowed upon them. Satan has had power to make men haughty and like himself in character, so that the money given them of God has been used for the gratification of self, and the cry of the poor has reached unto God against them; for they have been unmerciful in their conduct toward the needy. Whatever we spend for that which is not necessary for health and godliness will be charged as robbery against God; because all that was spent for the gratification of self someone needed to obtain necessary food and clothing.

Those who have the Spirit of Christ will see all men through the eyes of divine compassion. No matter what may be the social position, no matter what his wealth or how high his education, if a man is in Christ, he will not be unkind, uncourteous, hard-hearted, and merciless. Since every soul is entirely dependent upon God for every blessing he enjoys, how patient, how merciful, we should be to every creature. God looked upon man in his lost condition, in his degradation and guilt, and paid the same price for the ransom of the poor and the outcast that he paid to ransom the rich with all his intrusted talents. There is no respect of persons with God. All are candidates for heaven or hell. All need to be taught every hour of God, to be diligent students, that in their time they may make a wise use of their intrusted ability, that they may be living agencies to cooperate with the heavenly intelligences for the saving of men's souls, that with tender hearts, overflowing with mercy and true goodness, they may work as Christ worked. The apostle says, "Ye are laborers together with God." You are to look after the poor, you are to look after the fatherless ones, who need your wisdom, your care, your love, and help. You are to look after the widow. You are to look after those who go in want, in hunger, in rags, who are depraved in principle; for Jesus came to seek and to save that which is lost. God cares for the outcast, and do you think yourself too good, too honorable, to bear the yoke with Christ, in seeking to save the perishing? Will you despise your fellow-men? Will you become an offense to God by slighting and despising his image in man? In distinct lines Christ has revealed the relation of man to

his fellow-man. Jesus, the only-begotten Son of God, has settled that question forever in the example he has set to the world. Ask yourself: Am I my brother's keeper? And who is my neighbor?

There is in society an increasing tendency to separate the rich from the poor, to set them apart in distinct, definite classes; but this is not at all after God's order, but after the policy of Satan. Heaven looks with pain and amazement upon the scenes that are daily enacted among those who are called Christians. Many cannot read the meaning of the great plan of redemption because Satan has cast his shadow upon their pathway. Many who could be as lights in the world, as the salt of the earth, who command great resources for doing good to their fellow-men, are not in union and sympathy with Christ, that they may be laborers together with God. They have felt that a high value was set upon them, that they were placed above their brethren, and even above their own flesh and blood. They have expended their Lord's goods in lifting up their souls unto vanity, in cultivating pride, envy, self-exaltation. They have surrounded themselves with costly luxuries, and placed themselves in a position which it was impossible for their brethren to reach, and they have left the poor in their poverty to get along as they could without sympathy and love. God looks down from heaven, and hates all these pretensions. He calls for men who have intellect, men who have property, men who have moral worth, to change this order of things.

Let every leader of the people associate with the people; for they really need his help, so that sympathy shall not congeal in the human breast.

No church should become so lifted up that its members shall feel above the poor, and the poor feel that they cannot enter freely into the house of God. A church that is too rich for the poor to feel at home in is too aristocratic for Jesus to make one in its assembly. This narrow exclusiveness that shuts man away from his brother is an abomination in the sight of God. When men are converted, they will have an abiding sense of the fact that they have been bought with a price. Whatever may be the sum of our talents, whether one, two, or five, not a farthing of our money is to be squandered upon vanity, pride or selfishness. Every dollar of our accumulation is stamped with the image and superscription of God. As long as there are hungry ones in God's world to be fed, naked ones to be clothed, souls perishing for the bread and water of salvation, every unnecessary indulgence, every overplus of capital, pleads for the poor and the naked. It is no light thing to be intrusted with riches, although men treat their position and

property as though they were not accountable to any one, as though it was by their own virtue that they had these things. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." Those who consecrate themselves to God, with their riches, becoming laborers together with him, are the only ones to whom the King of glory will give the benediction: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

June 27, 1892

Christ's Mission to the World

Christ came into the world to represent the Father to man; for Satan had presented him before the world in a false light. Because God is a God of justice, of terrible majesty, who has power to destroy as well as to preserve man, Satan caused men to regard him with fear, to look upon him as a tyrant. Jesus had been with the Father from the everlasting ages, before the creation of man, and he came to reveal the Father, declaring "God is love." Jesus represented God as a kind Father, who careth for the subjects of his kingdom. He declared that not a sparrow falls to the ground without the notice of the Father, and that the children of men are of more value in his sight than many sparrows, that the very hairs of their head are all numbered.

The Lord is represented in the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament not only as a God of justice but as a Father of infinite love. The Psalmist says: "The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.... The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.... He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.... But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them. The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all."

Satan had clothed the Father in his own attributes, but Christ represented him in his true character of benevolence and love. In the character in which Christ presented him to the world it was as if he gave a new gift to man. Jesus said in his prayer to the Father: "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." "Neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."

The Son of God declared in positive terms that the world was destitute of the knowledge of God; but this knowledge was of the highest value, and it was his own peculiar gift, the inestimable treasure which he brought into the world. In the exercise of his sovereign prerogative he imparted to his disciples the knowledge of the character of God, in order that they might communicate it to the world. The only nation who claimed to be worshipping the true God at the advent of Christ had not a proper conception of his character. They were sitting in Moses' seat, but they did not present God as Moses presented him, but after the distorted representation of Satan. The character of God was falsified before the people. Truth was so overlaid with tradition, religion was so burdened with man-made tests and commandments, that the purity and luster of truth were completely hidden, and virtue was considered unattainable. The existing religion left man without God and without hope in the world. But the Sun of Righteousness shines forth into the midnight darkness of superstition and error, and rolls back the cloud, and presents himself as the one in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, as the exact representation of the Father. This is his message to the world: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

As a transgressor of the law man was condemned as hopelessly ruined; for he was the enemy of God, without strength to do any good thing; but Christ came to reveal to him the justice and love of God, to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins. When the sinner beholds Jesus lifted up upon the cross, suffering the guilt of the transgressor and the consequences of sin, he beholds God's abhorrence of evil in this fearful manifestation, and sees his love for fallen man: "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."

The Lord could have cut off the sinner and utterly destroyed him; but the costlier plan was chosen. In his great love he provides hope for the hopeless in giving his only-begotten Son to bear the sins of the world. Since God has poured out all heaven in that one rich gift, he will withhold no needed aid from man. All the agencies of heaven are at the command of the believing soul, that he may be successful in the warfare against the powers of darkness. He who believes in Jesus Christ as fully able to save his soul, believes the gospel, and hath eternal life. This is the point to which every soul must come, and everyone who believes the message of God should lift up Jesus, point men to

Christ, and say, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." This is the message that everyone will bear who believes in Jesus Christ as his Saviour. This is the message we are to bear to warn the impenitent, encouraging those who love and fear God, inducing souls to look to the cross of Calvary, to behold the Lamb of God. The soul imbued with the love of Christ is one with him; he communes with Christ, Christ is formed within, the hope of glory, and the Christian goes forth to represent the Father and the Son to the world.

July 4, 1892

Accepted in Christ

"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." This message is for the world, for "whosoever" means that any and all who comply with the condition may share the blessing. All who look unto Jesus, believing in him as their personal Saviour, shall "not perish, but have everlasting life." Every provision has been made that we may have the everlasting reward. Christ is our sacrifice, our substitute, our surety, our divine intercessor; he is made unto us righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."

The intercession of Christ in our behalf is that of presenting his divine merits in the offering of himself to the Father as our substitute and surety; for he ascended up on high to make an atonement for our transgressions. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

From these scriptures it is evident that it is not God's will that you should be distrustful, and torture your soul with the fear that God will not accept you because you are sinful and unworthy. "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." Present your case before him, pleading the merits of the blood shed for you upon Calvary's cross. Satan will accuse you of being a great sinner, and you must admit this, but you can say: "I know I am a sinner, and that is the reason I need a Saviour. Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 'The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.' 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' I have no merit or goodness whereby I may claim salvation, but I present before God the all-atoning blood of the spotless Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is my only plea. The name of Jesus gives me access to the Father. His ear, his heart, is open to my faintest pleading, and he supplies

my deepest necessities."

It is the righteousness of Christ that makes the penitent sinner acceptable to God and works his justification. However sinful has been his life, if he believes in Jesus as his personal Saviour, he stands before God in the spotless robes of Christ's imputed righteousness.

The sinner so recently dead in trespasses and sins is quickened by faith in Christ. He sees by faith that Jesus is his Saviour, and alive forevermore, able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him. In the atonement made for him the believer sees such breadth, and length, and height, and depth of efficiency,--sees such completeness of salvation, purchased at such infinite cost, that his soul is filled with praise and thanksgiving. He sees as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and is changed into the same image as by the Spirit of the Lord. He sees the robe of Christ's righteousness, woven in the loom of heaven, wrought by his obedience, and imputed to the repenting soul through faith in his name. When the sinner has a view of the matchless charms of Jesus, sin no longer looks attractive to him; for he beholds the Chiefest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely. He realizes by a personal experience the power of the gospel, whose vastness of design is equaled only by its preciousness of purpose.

We have a living Saviour. He is not in Joseph's new tomb; he is risen from the dead, and has ascended on high as a substitute and surety for every believing soul. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." The sinner is justified through the merits of Jesus, and this is God's acknowledgment of the perfection of the ransom paid for man. That Christ was obedient even unto the death of the cross is a pledge of the repenting sinner's acceptance with the Father. Then shall we permit ourselves to have a vacillating experience of doubting and believing, believing and doubting? Jesus is the pledge of our acceptance with God. We stand in favor before God, not because of any merit in ourselves, but because of our faith in "the Lord our righteousness."

Jesus stands in the holy of holies, now to appear in the presence of God for us. There he ceases not to present his people moment by moment, complete in himself. But because we are thus represented before the Father, we are not to imagine that we are to presume upon his mercy, and become careless, indifferent, and self-indulgent. Christ is not the minister of sin. We are complete in him, accepted in the Beloved, only as we

abide in him by faith.

Perfection through our own good works we can never attain. The soul who sees Jesus by faith, repudiates his own righteousness. He sees himself as incomplete, his repentance insufficient, his strongest faith but feebleness, his most costly sacrifice as meager, and he sinks in humility at the foot of the cross. But a voice speaks to him from the oracles of God's word. In amazement he hears the message, "Ye are complete in him." Now all is at rest in his soul. No longer must he strive to find some worthiness in himself, some meritorious deed by which to gain the favor of God.

Beholding the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world, he finds the peace of Christ; for pardon is written against his name, and he accepts the word of God, "Ye are complete in him." How hard is it for humanity, long accustomed to cherish doubt, to grasp this great truth! But what peace it brings to the soul, what vital life! In looking to ourselves for righteousness, by which to find acceptance with God, we look to the wrong place, "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." We are to look to Jesus; "for we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory." You are to find your completeness by beholding the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Standing before the broken law of God, the sinner cannot cleanse himself; but, believing in Christ, he is the object of his infinite love and clothed in his spotless righteousness. For those who believe in Christ, Jesus prayed: "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth: ...that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one." "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."

Who can comprehend the nature of that righteousness which makes the believing sinner whole, presenting him to God without spot or wrinkle or any such thing? We have the pledged word of God that Christ is made unto us righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. God grant that we may rely upon his word with implicit trust, and enjoy his richest blessing. "For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved

me, and have believed that I came out from God."

July 11, 1892

By their Fruits Ye shall Know them

"Therefore 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." At the beginning of the chapter from which this verse is taken, Jesus says: "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." To the repenting sinner, God is ever ready to show his mercy and truth; he is ready to bestow upon him forgiveness and love; and he requires that those who have been blessed by his compassion, shall reveal the same mercy and love toward their fellowmen; for this is doing the works of Christ, this is keeping the commandments of God. Those who show true gratitude glorify God by loving him supremely and their neighbors as themselves. They manifest the fact that they have received not the spirit which is of the world, but the Spirit which is of God. By an experimental knowledge they know what are the good things freely given them of God; for they are illuminated by the Holy Spirit. They work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that it is God who worketh in them to will and to do of his good pleasure. Christ abides in the soul of the believer, a well of water springing up unto everlasting life.

When we look upon ourselves as the purchased possession of Christ, we shall more clearly realize our need of his constant presence in order that we may represent him by manifesting sympathy and love to all who are brought within the sphere of our influence. Our life is charged with solemn responsibilities, and it is only when we are fully consecrated to God, only when he cleanses us, and puts his own life and spirit upon us, that we can rightly represent him to others. Our accountability extends to our thoughts, words, and acts, as well as to our larger transactions among our fellow-men.

In order to fulfill the law, we are to carry out the golden rule, and do unto others as we would have them do unto us. Our influence must be sanctified by the Holy Spirit of God, if it is to be a blessing to humanity. We are not to be anxious as to what we will do for weeks or months or years ahead; for the future does not belong to us. One day alone is ours, and during this day we are to live for God, beautify our characters by faith in the righteousness of Christ. This one day we are to place in the hands of Christ in

solemn service, in all our purposes and plans to be guided by him. This one day we are to do unto others exactly as we wish them to do unto us. We are to be ready to speak kind words from hearts full of sympathy and love. We are to manifest patience, revealing to the world what it means to be a practical doer of the words of Christ, ever remembering that our life is bound up with the life of Him who died for us. Christ and the child of humanity become one, so that the Spirit and character of Christ are represented in his followers day by day and hour by hour. By faith Christ becomes unto the believer righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

Jesus says, "Enter ye 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, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." It is not enough to talk about the strait gate, to point to the strait gate, to preach sermons about the strait gate; the only safe thing for every soul to do is to enter in at the strait gate. The only safe thing for the sinner to do is to respond to the drawing of Christ's love, to repent, and come to Jesus, asking him with a penitent heart for the gift of his righteousness, whereby he may obtain wisdom and grace to abandon sin. It is not safe to wait for a flight of feeling, to wait to make yourselves better before entering the strait gate; the only safe thing to do is to obey the invitation, "Come, for all things are now ready."

Excitement will not avail to save any soul. To have faith in Christ, to become a child of God, it is not necessary to be stirred with powerful emotion. You are to come to Jesus just as you are, for you know it is the only right thing to do. You know that it is at the peril of your souls that you refuse to enter the strait gate. You manifest saving faith when you respond to the drawing of Christ, and join yourself with him. The Saviour says to the sinner: "Come; I am thy salvation. No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Will you forsake all for Christ? Will you learn of Jesus, who is meek and lowly of heart? Will you enter in at the strait gate? If you cling to any besetting sin, you will find the way too narrow for you to enter. Your own ways, your own will, your evil habits and practices, must be given up if you would keep the way of the Lord. He who will follow Christ cannot follow the world's opinions or meet the world's standard.

The road to death is broad, and the gate is wide. The whole fallen race may go in thereat, with all their worldliness, all their selfishness, all their pride, dishonesty, and moral debasement. The gate is so wide, the road is so broad, that there is room for every

man's opinions and doctrines, space for everyone to follow his inclinations, to do whatever his self-love would dictate. The covetous, the spendthrift, the infidel, the profligate, the gambler, the murderer, the hypocrite, and the self-deceived, all find paths suited to their taste, in which to walk. Divided in their opinions, they yet find one point for purpose and action; for they all agree in opposing the counsel of God.

There are many in the broad way who are not fully satisfied with the path in which they walk. They long to break from the slavery of sin, and seek to make a stand against their sinful practices in their own strength. They hear the warning call to repentance. They hear that the only hope of the sinner is found in Christ. They look toward the narrow way and strait gate; but selfish pleasure, love of the world, unsanctified ambition and pride, place a barrier between them and the Saviour. They realize that all their idols must be expelled from the soul, that every sinful indulgence must be given up, all worldly encumbrances must be laid aside, in order to enter the strait gate. Jesus says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (To be Continued.)

July 18, 1892

By their Fruits Ye Shall Know Them

In order to walk in the narrow way the believing one must follow the leader, turning not to the right hand or to the left. On every hand waits the enemy to present before the soul the attractions of the world. Jesus presents the attractions of the eternal world; but many who see that they cannot enter heaven and indulge themselves in this world, turn away from the eternal realities and choose the broad way that leads to destruction. The Lord saw the danger incurred by his followers in mingling with the world, and he entreats them to examine themselves, and see that they make no mistake as to which road they will travel. The line of demarkation between the church and the world has become sadly obliterated because many professors of religion have thought they could please themselves, and meet the world's standard, and at the same time have their names upon the church book. Even in the pulpits of the land there are many false shepherds who cry to those who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, "Peace and safety," when there is no peace or safety. Jesus gives a positive warning against these false shepherds. He says: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

In every age false prophets have been the most dangerous enemies Christianity has had. Men have appeared who claimed to be champions of truth, professing to have a great burden for the souls of their fellow-men. But they taught false doctrines, and perverted the truth. The spirit they manifested, the work they wrought, testified to the character of their religion. Such men have arisen and do arise, and will continue to arise, in our own day. They will criticise, judge others, will be always ready for controversy, and will resist the truth. They will put false interpretations upon the Scriptures. They will misstate the words of those who advocate truth, and some who listen to them, who do not have spiritual discernment, will be misled by these false teachers, and be found fighting under the black banner of the adversary of God and man.

There are many who profess to know Christ, "but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear; clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots." There are many who can make excellent speeches, speak smooth things, and prophesy deceit; but they are not to be received simply because of their smooth words and fair speeches. It is an easy matter to talk. The question is, What fruit do they bear unto holiness? It is the fruit that testifies to the character of the tree. To say and to do not is to be as a tree full of pretentious leaves, yet barren and fruitless. The punishment that awaits the hypocrite will be unmingled with mercy. Those who profess to know Christ, and in works have denied him, have passed themselves off as gold, but in the sight of God they have been as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. In professing faith in the gospel, the hypocrite may gain the confidence of men, but nothing short of doing the sayings of Christ will give him an entrance into the strait gate, into the way cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in,--the only way that leads from earth to heaven.

Those who profess to have light from the Lord, who win the confidence of men, and lead souls to ruin, will bring swift destruction upon themselves. They are represented as that class who "destroy the way of my paths, saith the Lord." Wearing the insignia of Christ, they serve the Lord's worst enemy, and heed not the injunction, "Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Christ plainly states that this class of teachers are as wolves in sheep's clothing. They talk of grace, they preach of grace, apparently they pray for grace; but they have not the grace of Christ in their hearts. In the pulpit such ministers may appear to be excellent; but they destroy the force of their words when out of the pulpit by such a course of iniquity that they prove themselves to be ministers of sin, wolves in sheep's clothing.

Christ came to teach us how to live. He has invited us to come to him, to learn of him to be meek and lowly of heart that we may find rest unto our souls. Because Jesus has lived our example, we have no excuse for not imitating his life and works. Those who profess his name and do not practice his precepts are weighed in the balances of heaven and found wanting. But those who reflect the image of Christ will have a place in the mansions which he has gone to prepare.

Jesus will reward every man according to his works. He says, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Jesus calls upon me to judge him by his actions. He said, "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not." He does not ask men to take him for their Saviour if they can find anything in his life and character contrary to his claims. Men are to be known in the same way; for a profession of Christianity does not make a man a Christian. If his words, his deportment, his business transactions, are not of a Christlike order, he denies his profession. As Christ was in the world, so his followers are to be. The world notices every inconsistency in him who professes to be a Christian. The sun may shine day after day in pure splendor, and call forth no remark; but let an eclipse take place, and everyone's attention is attracted to the darkened orb of the day. So it is with a Christian; for he is a spectacle unto the world, to angels, and to men. Satan is constantly on the alert to cause the Christian to stumble, that he may point the world to the inconsistency of the follower of Christ. Men may not have observed you in your consistency, but in your waywardness, in your unchristlikeness of character, how the world subjects you to criticism. How Satan delights to taunt the ministering angels, unseen by human eyes, by presenting the inconsistent Christian in all his deformity before them, by pointing to the garments spotted with the flesh, for to Satan this is an occasion of triumph. Then let us walk carefully and prayerfully before the Lord, knowing that the world will judge us by our fruits.

July 25, 1892

The Necessity of Receiving the Holy Spirit

"Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." This was the promise that Jesus made to his disciples just prior to his ascension, and he bade them tarry in Jerusalem until they should be endowed with power from on high. Jesus had said: "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.... I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

The disciples were unable to comprehend the meaning of the words of Christ, and needed the heavenly enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. This is the condition of the followers of Christ in these days just before his coming in the clouds of heaven. The things of earth have the supreme place in the heart, while the things of heaven are held in subordination. The people of God need the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, that the instruction of Christ may be brought to their remembrance. They need to have their understanding enlightened, that they may understand the Scriptures.

After the crucifixion of our Lord, two of his disciples were traveling towards Emmaus, and as they walked together, they noticed a man toiling along the road with them; but they had no thought that it was their risen Lord. Jesus drew near, and joined himself to them, and asked, "What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?" And they answered: "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and has not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people;

and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel; and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulcher; and when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulcher, and found it even so as the women had said; but him they saw not. Then he said unto 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 enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went; and he made as though he would have gone further. But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and break, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures? ... Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures."

What was it that made their hearts burn within them as they talked by the way?-- It was the illumination of the Holy Spirit. When we take hold of the Scriptures as truth, the word will kindle within us the love of God, and our hearts will burn within us. Have we not experienced this when we have studied the word of God? Have we not found out that faith in the word of God brought gladness to the heart? We need to be touched with the enthusiasm that is kindled by love of God in the heart. Why is it that we do not manifest more of this enthusiasm in the service of God?--It is because those who profess to love God do not serve him with undivided heart.

Christ has said, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." No man can serve two masters. No matter how long you have been a Christian, if you do not seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, you do not know Christ or the power of God. If you do not make the service of God your first business, you commit robbery toward God. The question you should ask your soul is: "What right have I to rob God of intelligent service? What right have I to take God's gifts of strength and intellect and devote them simply to advancement of self?" You may have a position of trust and

responsibility, and be crowded with work and care, but should you permit yourself to be so burdened that you cannot take time to understand what is your relation to God? Jesus says, "Without me ye can do nothing." Then of what benefit are you to your fellow-men unless you have a connection with Christ? When you become absorbed in the temporal things of life, eternal things are dropped out of your reckoning, and because of your interest in the fleeting things of earth, you rob God of your ability to serve him in sending the gospel to all the world. "Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field? or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken? Because my people hath forgotten me, they have burned incense to vanity, and they have caused them to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths, to walk in paths, in a way not cast up."

The disciples asked: "Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." "Enter ye 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, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." In order to go in the path of destruction, there is no necessity for searching for the way; the gate is wide, and the way is broad, and the feet naturally turn in the path that leads to death. Those who go in this way are intoxicated with the spirit of the world, and how sad it is to see those that profess to be children of God walking in the road that leads to perdition.

The line of demarkation between the church and the world has been well nigh obliterated; and unless there is reformation, unless the eyes of those who have been blinded by the enemy are opened, they will be lost. Jesus has given us a warning for this time. He says: "Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

We need to watch that the enemy may not steal a march upon us and allure us away from allegiance to Christ by attracting us to the things of the world, that the things of eternal interest shall be looked upon as of minor importance, so that we shall make an

atom of a world and a world of an atom.

The enemy leads those who do not yield entirely to God to exalt self, to seek for supremacy and power. When the eye is not single to the glory of God, eternity is dropped out of your reckoning. Oh, we need to pray for the vitalizing influence of the Spirit of God. Unless the professed people of God yield themselves to the influence of God's Holy Spirit, they will be overcome by the temptation of Satan; they will have a name to live and be dead, be a curse to the world; for while professing to be the children of God, they will lead men in the path to death. Their record in the books of heaven will be hard to meet. Souls are to be saved. The messengers of God are to fulfill the words of the prophet: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins."

What we need is a conscience quickened by the Spirit of God; for with many, conscience has been stupefied by indulgence in sin and unbelief. We must know what religion is, and realize that we must have a living connection with the God of heaven; for "this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

Why do we devote so little time to prayer? Would you not be surprised if you should know God when you do not seek his face? The message to you is, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." You have often been taught of the love of God, and you know that it was a whole Saviour who died on Calvary's cross; but the fact that so great a sacrifice was made in our behalf will condemn our poverty and lukewarmness before God. What excuse can you offer to God that you have had a murmuring spirit, that you have represented your Saviour to the world as a hard master, that you have been exacting and severe with others, domineering over those who were under your control? What excuse can you give to God for manifesting cruelty to dumb creatures that were provided for your use? The spirit of unkindness, of pomposity, of complaining, is not the manner of spirit that will find an entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

Religion is a personal matter. We are not to be saved as churches, but as individuals who have appropriated the merits of Christ. The question each one should ask is: "Is it well with my soul? Has the transforming grace of Christ renewed my heart?"

Have I a kind, tender, compassionate spirit? Am I like Him who, though he was rich, yet for my sake became poor, that I through His poverty might be made rich? What sacrifice have I made for Him who died for me?" (To be Continued.)

August 1, 1892

The Necessity of Receiving the Holy Spirit

"For he shall grow up before him," says the prophet Isaiah, "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. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But 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."

Jesus did not come to the earth in the glory that belonged to him in the courts of heaven. He covered himself with the habiliments of humanity, that he might reveal unto many the mercy and compassion of the Father by coming into the closest relationship with the sons of men. Clothing his divinity with humanity, he took step after step in the path of humiliation, that he might save unto the uttermost all who would come unto God by him.

If he had come in the glory of an angel, men could not have endured his brightness; but he came taking upon him the form of a man, in all things made like unto his brethren, tempted in all points like as we are, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God.

In view of what Jesus has borne for us, have we any cause for pride? Have you great talents? Who gave them? It was Christ; he gave them that you might employ them in his service. We need the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, that we may realize what is our obligation, and have power from on high to carry out our purposes to serve God and him only. But how little is said concerning the Holy Spirit, although it is a divine influence whereby we are to reach the souls of men. We should study upon this subject. We should talk of it in our families, in our meetings, and pray that we may be baptized with the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit will not come upon the man whose mind is a highway for sensuality. We cannot afford to make a mock at sin. We cannot afford to say to the sinner, It shall be well with thee. We can only point the transgressor to the

Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

When the heart is emptied of self, it will be ready for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and then you will be fitted to strengthen the sheep and lambs of the flock of Christ; for self will be hid with Christ in God. The Spirit of Christ will be manifested in your daily life. The apostle says, "Be ye holy in all manner of conversation." You are to be found without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Your whole body, soul, and spirit are to be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord. What we need is the deep movings of the Spirit of God; for the standard of Christian life is expressed in these words: "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.... Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

In order to fulfill this divine requirement, we need to look upon Him whom our sins have pierced, and become changed into His image. We need the endowment of the Holy Spirit.

Those who profess to be waiting for the coming of Christ, are represented in the parable by the five wise and the five foolish virgins. The wise virgins had oil in their vessels with their lamps; they had their lamps trimmed and burning, and were ready to go out and meet the bridegroom. But the foolish virgins had no oil in their vessels; and when the solemn cry was sounded, they were found unprepared, and could not go forth to meet the bridegroom. Many profess to be wise; but have they the Holy Spirit? As a people, we profess to know the truth, but of what avail will this be if we do not carry out its principles in our life? How many say, "Oh, yes, the coming of Christ is at the door. The end is so near that there is no time to carry the message to those who sit in darkness. There is no need of spending money on foreign work; for the end will come before it will be accomplished." Is this the way that you carry out the injunction of your coming Lord, to preach the gospel in all the world for a witness to all nations? It is your business to be ready for the coming of the Lord, and you cannot be ready while failing to carry out his commands. There are some who seem to feel no responsibility concerning paying their tithes into the treasury of the Lord. They withhold from Him who has given them everything else, the small portion He has named as His own. They say they cannot see that it is their duty to pay tithes; but there is no reason why they should not see it, except that self is before their eyes.

May God help you that you may repent, and pay your honest debts to God,

saying, "Of thine own have we given thee." God has given us everything, providing for us the rain, the sunshine, the dew, and all the bounties of nature, and can we be hard-hearted, ungrateful, and selfish? Would you not think that you would naturally be glad to give back to God his own? If anyone is robbing God, he may see by studying the Bible that he should repent and make restitution; for his case has been presented in the word of God. He should fear to continue in blindness of mind, lest for his selfishness he should lose eternal life, which Christ died to obtain for him.

The Lord says concerning those who withhold their tithes, "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee?" And the answer is: "In tithes and offerings.... 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 nations shall call you blessed; for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts."

Jesus says, "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." God asks for his portion; he knocks at the door of the heart. We are to divest ourselves of everything that separates our souls from him. When this is done, we shall see of the salvation of God.

The soul is of more value than the whole world. Jesus has said: "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?" There are souls to be saved. The gospel is to be preached in all the world for a witness, and may God help us to fulfill all our God-given responsibility. If we had a realizing sense of the worth of souls, would we be found expending money and time in the needless decoration of our persons or our homes? Would we be satisfied in serving self alone? We should open our Bibles to those around us. The work of warning the world does not all devolve upon the minister. Every Christian has a work to do, and let everyone resolve to be clear from the blood of souls. If you were consecrated to the Master, your prayers, like sharp sickles, would follow the laborers in the harvest field, and you would be workers together with God. Rise above the world and fix your eyes upon Him who is chiefest among ten thousand, the one

altogether lovely.

All heaven has been poured out in the one rich gift of Christ. When God gave his Son, he gave the choicest gift of heaven. The treasures of heaven are at your command. We are not to go in our own strength, but in the strength of the Lord, for he has said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." There is no limit to the power that may be vouchsafed to the worker for God. Jesus says, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Do you believe that promise? Our minds have been so engrossed with earthly things that we have lost sight of heavenly things, and may God help us to arouse before it is eternally too late.

In seeking to reform our lives, let us not look at the defects of our brethren; we are to copy the Pattern. When Peter was charged with a certain duty by the Master, he pointed to John, and asked, "Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me." You are to keep your eye single to the glory of God. A saint on earth is to be just what a saint in heaven is. A man in the church will be the same sort of a Christian there as he is in his family. If he is a Christian in his home, he will be a Christian in heaven. How is it with you? Do you stand the test? The Lord will bring circumstances to bear upon you that will lead you to make manifest your true character. You will be tested upon one point, and then upon another, until it is made manifest whether or not you have the spirit of a true Christian.

If those who handle the word of God will come to God as little children, they will see of his salvation, and Jesus will walk among them to make them vessels unto honor. Those who follow in the light need have no anxiety lest that in the outpouring of the latter rain they will not be baptized with the Holy Spirit. If we would receive the light of the glorious angel that shall lighten the earth with his glory, let us see to it that our hearts are cleansed, emptied of self, and turned toward heaven, that they may be ready for the latter rain. Let us be obtaining a fitting up to join in the proclamation of the angel who shall lighten the earth with his glory. Let us be colaborers with Christ. Now is the time for us to let self die, to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts, to deny the cravings of appetite and passion. The minds of many are channels for impure thoughts. They do not have a realizing sense of the offensive character of sin. I call upon you to clear the King's highway. Weighty responsibilities are resting upon you; for you are to represent the character of your Lord to the world. Faith without works is dead. There

must be corresponding works, or the faith is worthless, a mere pretension, an empty profession. You are to manifest your faith by a life of integrity, making it evident that Christ is abiding in the heart, and that you are able to show forth what is the hope of his calling.

Then ask yourself: "Am I a Christian? Am I looking unto the Author and Finisher of my faith? Is my hope of eternal life centered in him? Have I fallen upon the rock and been broken?" God help us that we may surrender all to him, seek him as never before, that he may be found of us, and that we may love him with all the heart.

You may well be alarmed for your soul if you allow cares to supplant the truth of God in your heart. If your associates are worldlings who flatter you, telling you how smart you are, and what great things you can do, and you love this unhallowed nonsense, you may well feel that you are in peril; for your moral taste is perverted, your perceptions are blunted. Mrs. E. G. White

August 8, 1892

The Necessity of Receiving the Holy Spirit

In repenting of our sins, we need not go into a cell, as did Luther, and scourge ourselves as a punishment for our iniquity, thinking by so doing to gain the favor of God. The question is asked by the prophet, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" The Scripture says, "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." "But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and savest such as be of a contrite spirit." "Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

You are to die to self, to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts. You need not devise ways and methods of bringing about your own crucifixion; self-inflicted penances are of no avail, and will be found worthless when the test comes upon you. We are to surrender the heart to God, that he may renew and sanctify us, and fit us for his heavenly courts. We are not to wait for some special time, but today we are to give ourselves to him, refusing to be the servants of sin. Do you imagine that you can leave off sin by your own human power a little at a time? You cannot do this; Jesus was treated as a sinner when he assumed the likeness of sinful flesh, that the sinner might be treated as righteous. The Father loves us who believe in Christ as he loves his only-begotten Son. Thus by faith we can grasp the righteousness of Christ, and our Saviour saves us from all sin. The converted soul will hate the thing that Christ hates, and love the thing that Christ loves. Has he not by his death and suffering made provision for your cleansing from sin? You must take the blood of Jesus and apply it to your heart by

faith; for that alone can make you whiter than snow. But you say, "The surrender of all my idols will break my heart." This is what is needed. In giving up all for God, you fall upon the rock and are broken. Give up all for him without delay, for unless you are broken, you are worthless.

Why wait any longer? Why not take God at his word and say, "I give myself to thee; it is all that I can do." If Satan comes to cast his shadow between you and God, accusing you of sin, tempting you to distrust God and to doubt his mercy, say, "I cannot allow my weakness to come between me and God; for he is my strength. My sins, which are many, are laid upon Jesus, my divine sacrifice." Satan desires to keep you in the lowlands of sin, but will you not decide that you will go free? Will you not say:--

"Nothing in my hand I bring,

Simply to thy cross I cling"?

Jesus wants all there is of you. He has paid an infinite price for your soul; all that you have and are belongs to him. May God help you to look and live. Christ is coming in a little while. He has been our brother in suffering, and what joy it brings to hope that we shall soon see him as he is! We shall suffer here but a few days longer, and then enter into an eternity of happiness; for there is rest in the kingdom of God. For those who fight the good fight of faith, there is reserved the glory of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Let the determination of every soul be, "I must run the race with patience; I must overcome." If we do not overcome, we lose the crown; and if we lose the crown, we lose everything; there is eternal loss for us. But if we attain to the hope of our calling, we gain the crown, we gain all things; we become heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

What greater reward could we desire than that presented in the word of God? The invitation is extended to all, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." We are to live by the day for God, and not take upon us the burdens of tomorrow. We are to fight the good fight of faith today; and when tomorrow comes, strength for its duties will be given. The question today should be: "Am I the Lord's? Have I the witness of the Spirit today? Does my name come into the lips of the divine Intercessor today? Am I a coworker with heavenly intelligences today? Am I laboring together with God today? Am I a watchman upon the walls of Zion today, sounding a note of alarm to the people,

saying, The morning cometh, and also the night?"

When the watchman sounds the alarm, do the people have no part in the work of warning the world? Do they hear the watchman's voice only to go on indifferently, and act as though they heard nothing? No; they are to catch the message of warning and hope, and sound it again, following the injunction of Scripture, "Let him that heareth say, Come." The people are to be ready to hear the word, and then they are to call to others to catch the divine message from the throne of glory, and send it on to those who sit in darkness. If this were the attitude of the church, do you think that there would be division and discord, evil surmising, evil speaking, and criticising among the professed followers of Christ? May God help us that we may all become converted, and be alive to the importance of the times in which we live. The lower lights must be kept burning.

You say that you want heaven. How much do you want it? What is your faith worth? You will act out all the faith you have. What will be the verdict of the judgment if you go to your farm, to your family, to your earthly affairs, and care not for the message of heaven? There is a world to be warned, and while you sleep, Satan is sowing tares. All heaven is interested in the work that engages the attention of Christ and his angels in the heavenly court, and will you be indifferent who have been purchased at infinite cost? What we need is elevation of character, nobility of soul. Thank God it is not too late for wrongs to be righted. We may still find pardon; we may still find a hiding-place in the Rock of Ages, that has been cleft for us. We may still accept the light, and grow up into Christ, our living head. Jesus says to the trembling, repenting soul, "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me." "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Will you let him reason with you? Will you commit to him the keeping of your soul as unto a faithful Creator? Come, then, and let us live in the light of his countenance, and pray, as did David: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.... Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.... O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise."

August 15, 1892

"Ask and Ye Shall Receive"

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." We need have no fear that we shall run into extremes on the right hand or on the left in seeking the Lord. We are to go forward, inquiring at every step, Is this the way in which the Lord would have me go? We are to consecrate ourselves to him, in order that we may render him acceptable service. Whatever may be our calling in life, we may do our duty with an eye single to the glory of God. We are called to do our daily tasks with exactness and fidelity, realizing that Jesus has his eyes upon us, and that we are doing our work for his sake. Whether pleasing or unpleasing, we are to do the duty that lies directly in our pathway. If the Lord would have us bear a message to Nineveh, it will not be as pleasing to him to have us go to Joppa or to Capernaum. The Lord has reasons for sending us to the place in which our feet are directed. There may be souls pleading with God for light in the very place to which the Lord calls you, and God would have you make plain unto them the way of salvation.

When we are called to work for those we love, however hard may be the work, however unpleasant, we can still do it with ease and grace. When the heart is full of love for Jesus and those for whom he died, all our service will become easy; for his sake the burden will be light. We are surrounded with responsibilities, and we feel that it is necessary to exert our influence wholly on the Lord's side. When we realize what is involved in our service to Christ, we are driven to the throne of grace to ask the Lord for the very things we need. He whose eyes are anointed with spiritual discernment feels that it means something to be a worker together with God. He will realize that it is perilous to trust in self; for self-confidence is vain. It is only when we accept solemn responsibility, relying upon God and distrusting self, that we can become efficient workers in his cause. To be clothed with humility does not mean that we are to be dwarfs in intellect, deficient in our aspirations, and cowardly in our lives, shunning all burdens for fear we shall not carry them successfully. In the strength of Christ we are to take up our responsibilities, bearing them for his sake, and ever going to him for rest.

Jesus says: "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." We are to come to the Lord with all our burdens, seeking wisdom from above to guide us at every step.

We need not walk stumblingly, or in uncertainty. If we ask guidance of the Lord, the promise is, "Ye shall receive." The promise is yea and amen in Christ Jesus. "Seek and ye shall find." This is what we need to do every hour of our life; for if we seek the right way in sincerity, we shall find it. We must feel the need of help from the Lord, and seek for it in humble prayer. There is need of dependence upon God; for Christ has said, "Without me ye can do nothing."

However active you may be, if Jesus is not in all you do, your work will savor of self; dishonor his holy name, work injury to others, and be accounted as worse than nothing. A service that springs from self cannot be sanctioned with the presence of Christ, and will bring no reward to the toiler, but give his name a place upon the losing side. It is vain to ask the Lord to assist you to do a work that will have an injurious influence upon others, and bring disgrace upon his cause.

How many are seeking to gain heaven in their own way. They go to the Lord with hypocritical prayers, and do as did the Pharisee, present their merits before the God of heaven, and make themselves an offense before God. It is not to such knocking that the door will be opened. To the earnest, humble seeker, the promises of God are full of hope and assurance. The asking, the seeking, the knocking, are the things to which we are to give our first attention. The world, our temporal and personal affairs, are not to be placed first, and our spiritual interest to be considered second. The Lord says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Through the name of Jesus, the divine advocate, you are to come as a repentant sinner to a merciful, forgiving Father, believing that he will do just as he has promised to. Let those who desire the blessing of God knock, and wait at the throne of mercy with firm assurance, saying, "For thou, O Lord, hast said that everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." To leave no chance for unbelief or misunderstanding or misinterpretation of his word, the Lord repeats his promise; he makes assurance doubly sure. He longs to have those who would seek after God believe in him who is able to do all things. Jesus looked upon those that

were assembled to listen to his words, and earnestly desired that that large mixed multitude might understand their privileges and appreciate the mercy, the beneficence, and loving-kindness of God. He sought to make the matter clear to their darkened understanding by the use of the most familiar and commonplace occurrence. He says, "What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" Christ makes an appeal to them on the ground of their natural parental love. The father would not turn from his son who is hungry asking for bread; and should anyone dishonor God by imagining that he would not respond to the appeals of his children? Would they think him capable of trifling with his child, of tantalizing him by raising his expectations only to disappoint them? Would he promise to give him good and nourishing food, and then give him a stone? If ye, then, being human and evil, give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? The Lord assures those that ask him that he will give them the Holy Spirit. (To be Continued.)

August 22, 1892

"Ask and Ye Shall Receive"

If Christians give the impression by a mournful attitude that they have been disappointed in the Lord, they misrepresent their Heavenly Father, and put arguments into the mouth of his enemies. How false is such an impression when the gifts of God are freely bestowed upon those who seek, who ask, who knock! The Lord specifies no conditions except that you hunger for his mercy, desire his counsel, and long for his love. "Ask." The asking makes it manifest that you realize your necessity; and if you ask in faith, you will receive. The Lord has pledged his word, and it cannot fail. That you feel and know that you are a sinner is a most efficient argument to present to God in asking for his mercy and compassion. The conditions upon which you may come to God are not that you shall be holy, but that you shall ask God to cleanse you from all sin, and purify you from all iniquity.

The words of Jesus in connection with the promise of receiving upon presenting your petition to God have an application to every soul. He says, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" Or, as Luke says, "How much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" In the teachings of these verses there is not a place in which to put a peg to hang a doubt upon. In the relation chosen to represent the love of God, the beseeching soul is brought close to the heart of Jesus. The Holy Spirit imparts love, joy, peace, strength, and consolation; it is as a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. The blessing is free to all: "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." With overflowing heart you may say:--

"In my hand no price I bring, Simply to thy cross I cling." Then come, and seek, and find. The reservoir of power is open, is full and free. Come with humble hearts, not thinking that you must do some good thing to merit the favor of God, or that you must make yourself better before you can come to Christ. You can never do anything to better

your condition. In the name of Jesus, come with full assurance of faith, because you are a sinner; for Christ said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. You are to ask, to seek, to knock, and to believe that you are accepted through Christ Jesus, trusting him alone to do those things for you which you can never do for yourself.

No man can look within himself and find anything in his character that will recommend him to God, or make his acceptance sure. It is only through Jesus, whom the Father gave for the life of the world, that the sinner may find access to God. Jesus alone is our Redeemer, our Advocate, and Mediator; in him is our only hope for pardon, peace, and righteousness. You must trust him, saying:

"Just as I am, without one plea, But that thy blood was shed for me, And that thou bidst me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come, I come." Jesus is our atoning sacrifice; we can make no atonement for ourselves, but by faith we can accept the atonement that has been made. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, ... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." It is by virtue of this precious blood that the sin-stricken soul can be restored to soundness. While you are putting up your petition to God, the Holy Spirit applies the faithful promises of God to your heart. In moments of perplexity, when Satan suggests doubt and discouragement, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up as a standard against him the faithful sayings of Christ, and the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness will flash into your mind and soul. When Satan would overwhelm you with despair, the Holy Spirit will point you to the intercession made for you by a living Saviour. Christ is the fragrance, the holy incense, which makes your petitions acceptable to the Father. When the light of Christ's righteousness is fully understood and accepted, love, joy, peace, and inexpressible gratitude will pervade the soul, and the language of him who is blessed will be, "Thy gentleness hath made me great."

Importunate Prayer

In coming to God the prayer of importunity should be offered, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." You are invited to spread out all your perplexities before the Lord; but do not gratify the enemy by pouring them into the minds of others, lest they

stumble over them to their ruin. Jesus knows how to cure all the maladies of the soul. When we beseech the Lord to pity us in our weakness and distress, to guide us by his Holy Spirit, that we may understand his word, he will no more turn away from the prayer of the humble suppliant than the parent will turn away from the hungry child who comes to him for bread. When you turn away from the broken cistern that can hold no water, and in the name of Jesus, your Advocate, come directly to God, asking for the things you need, difficulties will disappear, the righteousness of Christ will be revealed as your righteousness, the virtue of Christ as your virtue. You will then understand that justification can come alone through faith in Christ; for in Jesus is revealed the perfection of the character of God; in his life is the revelation of the genuine principle of true holiness. Through the atoning blood of Christ, the sinner is set free from bondage and condemnation; through the perfection of the sinless Substitute and Surety, he may run in the race of humble obedience to all of God's commandments. Without Christ he is under the condemnation of the law, always a sinner, but through faith in Christ he is made just before God, and loving God, he keeps his commandments, and realizes through an experimental knowledge that the Father loves him, and takes up his abode with him.

August 29, 1892

"They That Have Done Good"

"Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." It is those that have done good who will come forth to the resurrection of life. The question of most importance to us is, How can we do good? The greatest good that we can do is to help one another to become earnest followers of Christ, and in the day of God we shall be able to render no excuse for not doing good to those around us. We are to love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves, and the Lord Jesus Christ has provided means by which we may fulfill the conditions upon which we may obtain eternal life. We cannot do evil, and work wickedness, and yet stand justified before God at last. Now is our day of probation, and we are now to perfect characters that will stand the test of the judgment. When Christ comes, there is to be no change of character; this mortal shall put on immortality, and this corruption shall put on incorruption; and those who are alive and remain upon the earth will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, if their characters are blameless and pure. Transformation of character must take place during the precious hours of probation.

There are many who in their hearts murmur against God. They say, "We inherit the fallen nature of Adam, and are not responsible for our natural imperfections." They find fault with God's requirements, and complain that he demands what they have no power to give. Satan made the same complaint in heaven, but such thoughts dishonor God. And the Lord knoweth our thoughts afar off. He speaks to his people, saying, "O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me." The complainers have an opportunity to bring their accusations against him; their Maker gives them an opportunity to speak. What charge have you to bring against Him that ruleth in the heavens? What have you to say against His dealings with you? What against His government? What against His law? If you have any excuse to offer for your neglect to comply with the conditions upon which your salvation is based, now make them known. If you have any excuse for sin, for impenitence, for covetousness, or for sensuality, you are permitted to give your reasons. Those who would justify themselves in wrongdoing, and lay the blame of their disobedience upon God, will be heard. They

argue that they are born with strong passions and appetites, and are surrounded with objects that solicit to sin, and under such circumstances how is it just to condemn them? But God answers: "I did all that could be done for your forefather Adam; I gave him the noblest qualities and the highest powers; my requirements were light upon him. It was because he did not believe my word, did not choose to stand the simple test I imposed upon him, but believed the word of my enemy, that he fell from his holy estate. But in his fallen condition did I not send help? I sent my Son, who was equal with myself, that he might live an example upon earth, and die for man's transgressions, that you might make no mistakes or failures in obtaining eternal life."

Since such ample provisions have been made for our salvation, shall we be excusable if we put forth no effort to obtain eternal life? God has given his beloved Son to die that we might be saved. What an infinite condescension on the part of the God of heaven! By the death of Jesus Christ life and immortality are brought to light. What a hope we have! And with such a hope as this shall we cling to sin? Shall we not consent to be purified from every spot and stain? It is for us to search the Scriptures; for said Christ, "They are they which testify of me." And while we have the precious testimony of the word of God before us, we can be both hearers and doers of the word. As we see the weakness of human nature, instead of trying to justify ourselves in wrongdoing, let us become more familiar with the word of God. It will strengthen our minds in the time of temptation. We do not think half enough upon the Bible. The ministers may explain the Scriptures, but this is not enough; we must practice their teaching in our lives. We must be fortifying our souls with the precious promises of Jesus. We are to avail ourselves of all the help God has provided for us, that we may not fall at last. If it is not in accordance with your inclination to study the word of God, I beg of you to plead with God for his divine Spirit; for those who love Jesus take comfort in communion with him.

Our Heavenly Father paid an infinite price that we might come to him; and if our past life has been full of sin, we can now repent and come to God. The promise is that all who repent and turn from their transgressions shall be forgiven. None need be discouraged because their past life has been marked with objectionable characters. Hear what the God of heaven says: "When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it. Again, when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do

that which is lawful and right; if the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him." "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." I am so grateful today that we have a living Saviour. There are many who go about as mournfully as though Christ were still in Joseph's tomb with a great stone rolled before the door. Our hearts should be full of hope and joy, and we should be able to say with grateful tongues, Christ is risen, and is at the right hand of God to make intercession for us. He has carried his blood into the sanctuary, and will cleanse us from every sin.

Since Jesus has made such an infinite sacrifice for us, how cruel it is that we should remain indifferent. Individually we have cost the life of the Son of God, and he desires us to walk out by living faith, believing in him with all the heart. He would have you bring the truth of God into the inner sanctuary, to soften and subdue the soul; for when Christ is dwelling in your heart by faith, you will love those for whom he died. Suppose that the trump of God should sound tonight, who is ready to respond with gladness? How many of you would cry, "Oh, stay the chariot wheels; I am not ready"? Of how many would it be written, as it was written of Belshazzar, "Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting"? To be wanting in that day is to be wanting forever; for when Christ shall come in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, we must be all ready to be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Your only safety is in coming to Christ, and ceasing from sin this very moment. The sweet voice of mercy is sounding in your ears today, but who can tell if it will sound tomorrow? How precious will be the appearing of Christ to those who have done good upon the earth. Jesus, our Redeemer, is coming back to the world, and all those who believe in him, who love him, and keep his commandments, will be able to say, "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us."

September 5, 1892

Righteousness Through Christ

The holy law of God is both brief and comprehensive; for it is easily understood and remembered; and yet it is an expression of the will of God. Its comprehensiveness is summed up in the following words: "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.... Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "This do, and thou shalt live." "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments; which if a man do, he shall live in them; I am the Lord." "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen." "But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee."

If the transgressor is to be treated according to the letter of this covenant, then there is no hope for the fallen race; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. The fallen race of Adam can behold nothing else in the letter of this covenant than the ministration of death; and death will be the reward of everyone who is seeking vainly to fashion a righteousness of his own that will fulfill the claims of the law. By his word God has bound himself to execute the penalty of the law on all transgressors. Again and again men commit sin, and yet they do not seem to believe that they must suffer the penalty for breaking the law. They parade their good intentions before the Lord, and soothe their consciences by pleading his mercy; but the only ground of hope for the fallen sons and daughters of Adam is to turn from their sins and accept the righteousness of Christ, giving up all hope of salvation on the ground of self-righteousness. The Lord can save no man because of his good works.

In the gospel of Christ Jesus, proclaimed by the angels as glad tidings of great joy, the terms of salvation were fully revealed. The law stands in all its original force and purity; not one jot or tittle was to be set aside or altered; for the law is the transcript of the character of God. But the Lord made a covenant of grace whereby his mercy is extended to fallen man, and provision is made so ample and powerful that souls ruined by the fall may be uplifted to glory, honor, and immortality. "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." Encircling the throne of God is the rainbow of the covenant, a symbol of the pledged word of God that he will receive every sinner who gives up all hope of eternal life on the ground of his own righteousness, and accepts the righteousness of the world's Redeemer, believing that Christ is his personal Saviour, able to save him from his sin, and to keep him from falling. Unless Christ is the ground of our hope, we shall not inherit eternal life.

The provision made for the salvation of men through the imputed righteousness of Christ, does not do away with the law, or lessen in the least its holy claims; for Christ came to exalt the law and make it honorable, to reveal its exceeding breadth and changeless character. The glory of the gospel of grace through the imputed righteousness of Christ, provides no other way of salvation than through obedience to the law of God in the person of Jesus Christ, the divine substitute. In the old dispensation believers were saved through the grace of Christ, as presented in the gospel, as we are saved today. The only means of salvation is provided under the Abrahamic covenant.

The condescension of God in extending his mercy to the sinner is described by Zacharias as a salvation come unto us "through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." This salvation comes to us not as a reward for our works, not bestowed because of the merits of sinful man, but it is a gift unto us, having its foundation for bestowal in the spotless righteousness of Christ. It is when the sinner realizes that he is without hope, lost, condemned to eternal death, incapable of doing anything to redeem himself, and believes in Jesus as his righteousness and salvation, that the word of God is fulfilled toward him. The Lord says, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

The Psalmist says, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." The apostle declares, "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Then for what reason should the Lord set aside his law to provide an escape for the sinner, or to make it possible for him to transgress with impunity? There is no reason, and the law of the Lord "endureth forever." In his sermon on the mount Jesus said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy,

but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Under the covenant of grace God requires from man just what he required in Eden,--perfect obedience. The believing sinner, through his divine Substitute and Surety, renders obedience to the law of God. Christ kept the law perfectly, and through him the believer shall not perish, but have everlasting life. He says, "I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." Mercy granted to man is the reward of the merit of 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." Through the plan of salvation, God can be just, and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

The apostle says: "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." Now mark what the apostle says of those who cherish this hope. He continues: "Faithful is the saying, and concerning these things I will that thou affirm confidently, to the end that they which have believed God may be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men." (Revised Version.) Good works will follow as the blossoms and fruit of faith. Appropriation of the righteousness of Christ will be manifested in a well-ordered life and godly conversation.

September 12, 1892

The Promise Verified to Faith

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." How many who ask a blessing of the Lord would be surprised should they receive their request. Of what is this want of expectation that our prayers will be answered, a proof?--It proves that we have no definite belief that the blessing will be granted, that we have no genuine faith that God will hear, that we do not watch for the answer, so that when it is received, we may connect it with the prayers we have offered. The Lord said: "What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" Luke says: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

If we would only believe, we should receive the Holy Spirit. The question is asked, "Is the Lord's arm shortened that it cannot save? is his ear heavy that he cannot hear?"--No, he now works in the hearts of those who ask, who believe that God is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. We must not be discouraged if Satan seeks to leaven the mind with subtle unbelief while we are engaged in prayer, and our hearts are impressed with the high standard of holiness to which we would attain. The enemy will suggest that the Lord will not keep us from sinning, and make us obedient to all his requirements. He will direct our mind to our past imperfections, to our sins, failures, and mistakes, and tell us we need not expect to come off conquerors at last. We are not to listen to the suggestions of the enemy, or think that our unaided efforts can save us, but we are to believe that Jesus does the work for us. At times when we have exercised a little faith, we have experienced a little help, and we have hoped to be victorious overcomers. But have we had faith that through Christ we should be able to overcome every temptation as he overcame? We have not generally exercised this quality of faith.

Many think that they have not time to pray, or that it would be useless to pray if

they had time; for they have an inheritance of unchristlike traits of character that are strong by heredity, and stronger by cultivation. The least crossing of their will arouses their combativeness and upsets their temper. I am describing not simply the experience of children and youth, but of men and women, fathers and mothers, who have had a limited experience in the Christian life. They have allowed secular interests to divert the mind and to engage the attention. They have indulged a strong passion to meet the world's standard, and have been filled with a desire for human praise. While they are thus unemptied of self, they cannot expect to receive answers to their prayers; for evil tempers and corrupt inclinations will make prayer of none effect. The Psalmist says, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." The tremendous load of evil upon these souls must be rolled off into the sepulcher, that they may believe, not from impulse, but from calm assurance, that God is true, knowing that whatever he has promised he will fulfill.

The Lord has promised to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him, and as an illustration of our need and his willingness to give, he presents before us a hungry child asking his earthly parent for bread. The question is asked, "What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?" He appeals to the strong, natural affection of the parent for his child, and then says: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Is it any wonder that we receive not, when we believe not? Should we receive in our faithless condition, we would not appreciate the grace given us of God, or render glory to him for the benefits. "Taste and see that the Lord is good;" this is asking and receiving. Those who have tasted of the goodness of God cannot keep the knowledge of this blessing to themselves; for Christ is in them a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. Those who are most blessed of God have the most constant indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and they diffuse the light of heaven to others. Wherever there is distinguishing mercy, there is always distinguishing duty. Jesus said to his followers: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

To none will it be granted to enjoy the presence of Christ in the paradise of God if they do not enjoy his presence and love in this probationary life, if they do not have a likeness of character to him on earth. Since nothing short of Christlikeness is expected

of the followers of Jesus, God has left abundant promises whereby this expectation may be fulfilled. The apostle says: "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." The storehouse of unlimited resource is opened to all who knock in faith.

Unbelief is the sin that so easily besets us; and this sin is obnoxious to God. However secret is its working in the heart, the guilty one stands revealed and convicted before heaven. The Redeemer of the world has pledged his word, saying, "Ask, and it shall be given you." Is it any marvel then that the blessing of God is withheld when you dishonor his name by your unbelief? Who is it that has made to you these promises? It is He who "so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Who is it that says, "Ask, and it shall be given you"? Who is it that stands before the great multitude holding forth the divine promise?--It is He who came into the world to rescue us from the bondage of Satan, and make us free men and women in Christ Jesus.

Then come to God with full assurance of faith, knowing that he who hath promised is faithful, and will fulfill his word. Like Habakkuk, say, "I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me." Having asked the Lord for good things, as a hungry child asks his parent for bread, believe from your heart that the Heavenly Father giveth not the Spirit by measure unto you; for to them that ask in faith the Holy Spirit will be given in its fullness, as free as the river that proceedeth from the throne of God, slaking the thirst of all who will come and drink. Come, then, feeling that all Heaven invites you. Come, then, in steadfast faith, knowing that all Heaven welcomes you. Fasten your soul on the blessed assurance, God has spoken this promise, God has invited me, not to mock me, not to disappoint me, for before I knocked, he was unlocking the door for me; while I was yet speaking, he answered, "Here I am." Then put away this distrust of God; come to him now, and let all the angels of God have occasion for rejoicing, as they see those who are athirst partaking of the waters of life.

September 19, 1892

No Man Putteth New Wine into Old Bottles

"And he spake also a parable unto them: No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the new agreeth not with the old. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. No man also having drunk old wine straightway desireth new; for he saith, The old is better."

At the time Jesus uttered this parable, the old typical service was soon to pass away, and the temple courts were to be left desolate. Christ, the great Antitype, both Sacrifice and High Priest, clothed in his own spotless righteousness, was soon to be slain as a lamb without blemish, for the sins of the world. But both his disciples and the disciples of John misapprehended the relation of his teaching to the doctrine of the scribes and Pharisees. The disciples of John had sought to unite the teaching of the reformer with the doctrines held by the Jewish leaders; but the teaching of scribes and Pharisees was fast hastening to decay, and to unite the truth with their jargon of tradition would make confusion worse confounded.

The principles presented by Christ, the manner of observing feasts, of praying to God, could not be properly united to the forms and ceremonies of Phariseeism. Instead of closing up the breach that had been made by the teachings of John, the teachings of Christ would make the separation between the old system and the new more distinct, and to attempt to unite the two would only result in making the breach wider. Jesus illustrated this fact, saying, "No man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish." The bottles to which he refers in his illustration were made of skins, and, after once being used as vessels in which to place the new wine, they were worthless to serve the same purpose again. In this familiar illustration Jesus presented the impossibility of making those who are satisfied with a legal religion the depositaries of the living truth of heaven.

Those who would not receive the light and grace of Christ, who rejected the truth he came to bring them, were compared to old bottles, to worthless and worn-out

garments. Rejecting the truth themselves, they were ever seeking to sow the seed of doubt and questioning in the mind of the disciples, in order that the truth unfolded to them by Christ should not make its impression on heart and spirit. They exalted ceremonies, human exactions, and the commandments of men, as more essential than the teachings of Christ. The difference between the fresh, pure doctrines of heaven and the lifeless teaching of the Pharisees made manifest the fact that the vital truth of God could find no place for expansion in the old religious rites that were ready to vanish away.

As a result of intercourse with Christ, the disciples were led to behold the precious gems of truth recovered from systems of error, and reset in the framework of truth. As their minds expanded to comprehend the doctrines of Christ, they saw that the faith which works by love and purifies the soul could find no place for union with the old religion of the Pharisees, which was made up of ceremonies, injunctions, and the traditions of the elders. An effort to unite the teachings of Jesus with the established religion would have shown the utter mistake of such a course. For the new doctrines, like fermenting wine, would have burst the old decaying bottles of the Pharisical tradition. To the Pharisees the teaching of Jesus was new in almost every respect, was unrecognized and unacknowledged as truth. They professed to have respect for the religion of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Moses. But, although Christ taught the original truths that had been committed to the fathers, his teaching was new to the Pharisees, because they had perverted, and misinterpreted, and burdened down the requirements of God, until the truth had lost its original significance and beauty.

The Pharisees opposed the teachings of Jesus with all their force, and Jesus turned from the recognized religious leaders to find in others new bottles for the new wine. In the untutored fisherman, in the publican at the market-place, in the woman of Samaria, in the common people who heard him gladly, he found his new bottles for the new wine. Priests and scribes and rulers were fixed in a rut of ceremonies, observances, and traditions. For long years they had lost their vitality, and their hearts had become contracted, like the old withered, dried-up bottles to which he had compared them; but in the fishermen, the Samaritans, the publicans and sinners, Jesus found hearts that he could impress and make receptacles for his divine truth.

God's people must go on from light to a greater light, or they will become, as did the Pharisees, unwilling to receive additional light. They will find themselves in the

condition represented by withered, dried-up bottles. In their religious faith they will be unmovable, inflexible, like the withered fig tree dried up by the roots. Those whom Jesus chose for his work were people to whom the world gave little attention; the fishermen, the despised publicans and Samaritans, had no connection with the schools of the scribes and Pharisees; but Christ saw in them the requisite qualifications for the work of God. The Pharisees looked upon his association with publicans and sinners as a matter that merited their condemnation; for it was in marked contrast to their habits, customs, and traditions. But Christ taught his disciples lessons concerning the broad character of his kingdom, which was to be perpetuated through eternal ages.

The lessons which Jesus taught in the parables should be carefully studied; they contain instruction for his people in these last days, that we may not make the mistakes which the Jewish nation made in the time of Christ. The gospel was first preached to the Jews; but they felt whole and in no need of a physician. Christ came to minister to the sin-sick soul; for only those will be converted who feel and know that they are sinners. Christ came holding forth precious truth for the acceptance of men, presenting heavenly principles to be woven into the life, bestowing spiritual benefits to be passed on to others. Christ, the consolation of Israel, had come unto his own, but his own received him not. He must find new bottles to contain his new wine.

Why could not the old bottles contain the new wine? Why were the lessons of Jesus refused? The life of Christ should have been a constant inspiration. But the scribes and Pharisees refused him, because they allowed pride, ambition, and bigotry to stand in their way. Jesus did not follow the teachings of the schools; he did not copy any living model, nor draw his lessons from any earthly source. His teachings were simplicity itself, so clear that a child could understand them, so deep that the prejudiced Pharisees and priests could not comprehend them. No one but a heavenly teacher could present so lofty a morality in such simple words, making his sayings applicable to the necessities of all. The brightness of the Father's glory was revealed in the face of Jesus Christ. But the old bottles could not contain the precious new wine. The bigoted Pharisees, scribes, and rulers had no preference for the new wine; they were filled with the old, and, until emptied of the old traditions, old customs, old practices, they had no place in mind or heart for the truth of Christ.

In the question, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" the attitude of scribes and Pharisees is set forth; for the question meant, What shall we do to

deserve heaven? Mark the answer of Christ: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom he hath sent." The price of heaven is the Messiah. The way to heaven is Christ. "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom he hath sent. "But the Pharisees scoffed at his doctrine, and the Sadducees derided him. The most precious truth could find no harmony with the false theories and commandments of men. But the common people, who were not filled with the wine of superstition and tradition, heard him gladly. They recognized the heavenly power of his teaching, and were charmed with the new truth concerning his kingdom. Many, many, found the living Bread that came down from heaven, and drank of the living Water. Their hungry souls were satisfied with heavenly manna, and refreshed with the streams of salvation. In their acceptance of his doctrine, they proved the truth of his words, "My sheep know my voice, and they follow me."

Let it not be with us who are living in the last days as it was with the Pharisees. Let it not be said of us, as it was of them, that new wine cannot be put into old bottles. Let not those who have been long in the truth, who have been made the depositaries of the law of God, exalt the ideas and opinions of men above the advancing truth of heaven, lest they be left as old, withered bottles, whose place will be filled by new bottles which the Lord shall select for the new wine. We must be in a position where we shall ever have an appetite for the fresh manna, for the new wine of heaven.

Let all beware lest they imitate the example of the Jews, and, fearing they must give up some cherished idea, or discard some idol of opinion, refuse the truth which cometh down from the Father of lights. It was adherence to tradition that proved the ruin of the Jews, and will prove the ruin of many, many souls in every age. Let us fear to become satisfied, with that which we already have acquired, but ever advance with the light, that Jesus may not have to cast us aside as worthless bottles, when he would present to us new truth.

September 26, 1892

"Ye Must be Born Again"

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." This man was a ruler, and held in high esteem by the people, and he thought it was a condescension for him to admit as much as he had to Christ. Thinking himself righteous, he was astonished at the answer of Jesus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The blindness of Israel in discerning spiritual things closed their senses to the mission and work of Christ. This change represented as a new birth they would have to experience before they could take in the meaning of what constituted the kingdom of God. Their whole conception had been perverted. All they could see was a temporal kingdom, established in Jerusalem, and they would not change these ideas, because they wanted this kind of a kingdom. Jesus had lessons of highest importance to give to the ruler in Israel, and the lesson which Christ gave to him is of the highest consequence to every soul. It is neither profound learning nor high positions nor professions that give character to the man. The question to be answered is, Is the man quickened into spiritual life? Is he a new man in character? In proportion as the spirit and life of Christ are in us, in that proportion is man enlightened and can discern spiritual things. There is greater indulgence in sin than many dream of, and he who commits sin will seek for all kinds of excuses to palliate sin.

Churches are represented as having faith in Christ for salvation; but do they have faith in Christ? Christ has said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." This vital union with Christ is represented by the union of the vine and the branch. Jesus says: "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. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. 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." "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." Here is represented the same vital connection with Jesus Christ as is represented by eating his flesh and drinking his blood.

Christ overcame every temptation of the enemy, because in him divinity and humanity were combined; but there is no safety for any soul who has merely a legal religion, a form of godliness, a round of ceremonial exactions. To attend services on the Sabbath, to pray occasionally or regularly, makes no one a Christian. The important thing is to become united to Christ, to believe in Christ as a personal Saviour, to live by faith in the Son of God. The question to ask the soul is, "Am I a partaker of the divine nature, represented as being born again? Has a new moral taste been created? If not, the soul is in deadly peril. He who is born of God is a new man. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The old imperious will is gone. The pride is cleansed from the soul. Selfishness is uprooted. The quick, passionate temper no longer masters the man; for Jesus Christ has brought the thoughts into captivity to himself. Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let no arrogance come out of your mouth; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by his actions are weighed. "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not everyone 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."

"Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward." Why, then, do not men exercise themselves unto godliness? Why do they bear thorn berries? it is because they are not grafted into the tame olive tree. They are not converted. Their works testify of them that they do not abide in Christ. They do not, as is represented by

Christ, eat his flesh and drink his blood. If they did, they would through faith have a vital connection with Christ, and work the works of God. The character is transformed, not by a slight change in some customs and practices, but by a work divine; for the Lord says, "A new heart will I give thee." This is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. "I live," said Paul; "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Has the dry branch been grafted into the living vine stock? Then has the graft taken connection with the vine fiber by fiber? Is it one with the parent stock? If it is, then will it bear the fruit of the vine. If we are one with Christ, we shall be Christlike. This is the great power of God. And yet we are commanded: "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." The great privileges of the Christian have been opened before us. He who daily depends upon Christ will work out Christ in spirit, in words, in actions. He may be compelled to rebuke sin, to reprove, to exhort, to rebuke with all long-suffering and doctrine. On special occasions his spirit may be stirred within him to expose sin and wickedness; but in it all he has the Spirit of Christ. It is a work that must be done. We may live a life of close connection with Jesus, of oneness with Christ. The mind should be kept in a prayerful frame, looking to Jesus moment by moment, asking at every step, "Is this the way of the Lord?" This is the way Enoch walked with God. We are to be learners of one another, and doers of the word of God.

Let those who believe in Jesus show their saving faith in a well-ordered life and a godly conversation. "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come." That means you and me. "And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

October 3, 1892

Faith Brings Light

Jesus hath said: "I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works." We should be thankful that the Lord knows our circumstances and experiences. Jesus is near, close to us, and he has given the precious promise, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" What reason we have for encouragement! We are assured that the Lord hears our prayers. The promise is, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Who is this that speaks? Is it one whose word is doubtful, one who does not know what he is talking about?--No, it is the world's Redeemer. He who so loved us that he died on Calvary, that "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Shall we take his pledged word as truth? The Lord hears our sincere prayers, and knows how to answer; for nothing is hidden from him. The Psalmist says: "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." The Lord looks upon the heart; he seeth all its workings, and he "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us."

The Holy Spirit indites all genuine prayer. I have learned to know that in all my intercessions the Spirit intercedes for me and for all saints; but his intercessions are according to the will of God, never contrary to his will. "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities;" and the Spirit, being God, knoweth the mind of God; therefore in every prayer of ours for the sick, or for other needs, the will of God is to be regarded. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." If we are taught of God, we shall pray in conformity to his revealed will, and in submission to his will which we know not. We are to make supplication according to the will of God, relying on the precious word, and believing that Christ not only gave himself for but to his disciples. The record declares, "He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy

Ghost."

Jesus is waiting to breathe upon all his disciples, and give them the inspiration of his sanctifying spirit, and transfuse the vital influence from himself to his people. He would have them understand that henceforth they cannot serve two masters. Their lives cannot be divided. Christ is to live in his human agents, and work through their faculties, and act through their capabilities. Their will must be submitted to his will, they must act with his spirit, that it may be no more they that live, but Christ that liveth in them. Jesus is seeking to impress upon them the thought that in giving his Holy Spirit he is giving to them the glory which the Father has given him, that he and his people may be one in God. Our way and will must be in submission to God's will, knowing that it is holy, just, and good.

John says, "This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us; and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." Let us dwell much upon these points before the people, that their ideas may be enlarged, their faith increased. They should be encouraged to ask largely, and expect without a doubt the riches of his grace; for through Jesus we can come into the audience chamber of the Most High. Through his merits we have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Oh, that we may have a deeper experience in prayer! With confidence we may come to God, knowing what it is to have the presence and power of his Holy Spirit. We may confess our sins, and right there, while asking, know that he pardons our transgressions, because he has promised to forgive. We must exercise faith, and manifest true earnestness and humility. We can never do this without the grace of the Holy Spirit. We must lie low at the feet of Jesus, and cherish no selfishness, reveal no self-uplifting, but in simplicity seek the Lord, asking for his Holy Spirit as a little child asks bread of his parents.

We should act our part, take Christ as our personal Saviour, and, standing under the cross of Calvary, "look and live." God sets his children apart for himself. And as they connect themselves with him, they have power with God, and prevail. Of ourselves we can do nothing; but through the grace of his Holy Spirit, life and light are imparted, and the soul is filled with longing, earnest desire for God, for holiness. Then it is that Christ leads us to the throne of grace, and clothes us with his righteousness; for the Lord God of heaven loves us. We would be willfully blind and stubborn to doubt that his heart is toward us. While Jesus, our Intercessor, pleads for us in heaven, the Holy Spirit

works in us, to will and to do of his good pleasure. All heaven is interested in the salvation of the soul. Then what reason have we to doubt that the Lord will and does help us? We who teach the people must ourselves have a vital connection with God. In spirit and word we should be to the people as a wellspring, because Christ is in us a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. Sorrow and pain may test our patience and our faith; but the brightness of the presence of the Unseen is with us, and we must hide self behind Jesus.

Talk courage to the church; lift them up to God in prayer. Tell them that when they feel that they have sinned, and cannot pray, it is then the time to pray. Many feel humiliated at their failures, that they have been overcome by the enemy in the place of overcoming. Worldliness, selfishness, and carnality have weakened them, and they think it is no use to approach unto God; but this thought is one of the enemy's suggestions. Ashamed they may be, and deeply humbled; but they must pray and believe. As they confess their sins, He who is faithful and just will forgive them their sins, and cleanse them from all unrighteousness. Though the mind may wander in prayer, be not discouraged, bring it back to the throne, and do not leave the mercy seat until you have the victory. Are you to think your victory will be testified by strong emotion?--No; "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." The Lord knows your desire; by faith keep close to him, and expect to receive the Holy Spirit. The office of the Holy Spirit is to control all our spiritual exercises. The Father has given his Son for us that through the Son the Holy Spirit might come to us, and lead us unto the Father. Through divine agency, we have the spirit of intercession, whereby we may plead with God, as a man pleadeth with his friend.

October 10, 1892

Draw from the Source of Strength

Angels, cherubim, and seraphim bow in holy reverence before God. "Ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands" of angels are round about the throne, and are sent to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. The ruling principles of God's throne are justice and mercy. It is called the throne of grace. Would you have divine enlightenment?--Go to the throne of grace. You will be answered from the mercy seat. A covenant has been entered into by the Father and by the Son to save the world through Christ. "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." No power save that of Omnipotence could make such a covenant. The rainbow above the throne is a token that God through Christ binds himself to save all who believe in him. The covenant is as sure as the throne, and his throne is established in righteousness. Then why are we so unbelieving, so distrustful? Why doubt so frequently, and trust God so fitfully? Whenever we come to the throne of God to ask his mercy, we may look up, and behold the rainbow of promise, and find in it assurance that our prayers shall be answered.

But let no one flatter himself that he may transgress the commandments, and yet receive the favor of God. In the government of God, justice and grace stand side by side. The law cannot be transgressed with impunity. Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne. In Christ mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Christ himself gave the law from Mount Sinai, and he has not lessened a jot or tittle of its claims. He has given his own life to atone for man's transgression of the law, and to enable him to obey its precepts. Justice is satisfied with the divine sacrifice. Through the merits of Christ God can be just and justify the sinner who believes in Jesus.

Christ knows the sinner's trials; he knows his temptations. He has taken upon himself our nature; he was tempted in all points like as we are, and he knows how to succor those who are tempted. He has wept, and he knows our sorrows, he has experienced all our griefs. To all who believe and trust in him, he will be a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest. As a man, Christ ascended to heaven. As

a man, he is the substitute for humanity. As a man, he liveth to make intercession for us. He is preparing a place for all who love him. As a man, he will come again with kingly power and glory to receive his children. And that which should cause us joy and thanksgiving is that God "hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained."

Those who claim that it was not possible for Christ to sin, cannot believe that he took upon him human nature. Christ was actually tempted, not only by Satan in the wilderness, but all through his life, from childhood to manhood. In all points he was tempted as we are; and because he successfully resisted temptation under every form, he gave man a perfect example, and through the ample provisions Christ has made, we may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Jesus says, "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." Here is the beginning of our confidence, which we must hold steadfast unto the end. If Jesus resisted Satan's temptations, he will help us to resist. He came to bring divine power to combine with human effort.

Jesus was free from all sin and error; there was not a trace of imperfection in his life or character. He maintained spotless purity under circumstances the most trying. True, he declared, "There is none good but One, that is God," but again he said, "I and my Father are one." Jesus speaks of himself as well as the Father as God, and claims for himself perfect righteousness.

In Christ dwelt the fullness of the God-head bodily. This is why, although tempted in all points like as we are, he stood before the world untainted by corruption, though surrounded by it. Are we not also to become partakers of that fullness? and is it not thus, and thus only, that we can overcome as Christ overcame?

We lose much by not dwelling constantly on the character of Christ. "Believe me," he says, "that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake." "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth." Jesus said to Thomas, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." And he says of the Spirit of truth, "Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him;

for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you." "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 ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."

Why are we so dull of comprehension? Why do we not cling to Jesus, and draw from him by faith the strength and perfection of his character, as the vine branch draws the sap from the living vine? We are to look to Jesus, and as temptations close us about, climb up step by step in the work of overcoming. Abiding in Christ, we become one with him. Then we are safe, entirely safe, against all the assaults of Satan. Christ living in the soul is revealed in the character. Man is nothing without Christ. But if Christ lives in us, we shall work the works of God. We shall represent Christ in our life, we shall talk of Christ because we meditate upon him. We shall grow up into Christ to the full stature of men and women in spiritual understanding. (Concluded next week.)

October 17, 1892

Draw from the Source of Strength

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." The eternal Word became flesh, and dwelt among us. This theme will quench unbelief; and yet, sad to say, Jesus has been dropped out of many discourses that have been preached by Seventh-day Adventist ministers. And why?--Because the ministers had not Jesus abiding in the heart by faith; they were not clothed with Christ's righteousness. Jesus could not lead them by the side of still waters, and into the green pastures of his matchless love, because they would not be led. They had not the love of Jesus in their hearts, and it is the love of Jesus that, as a golden chain, binds our hearts in tenderest sympathy with humanity, and brings us into complete unity with every soul who believes. The Spirit of Jesus in my heart will recognize Jesus in the hearts of my brethren and sisters. Our prayers and hopes are one.

Christ said to his disciples, "Love one another, as I have loved you." Is this commandment obeyed? Do we love one another with that unselfish love which Jesus has manifested for our souls? If we are Christ's, we shall be one, even as he is one with the Father. His grace will unite the hearts of his disciples. Jesus took the nature of humanity in order to reveal to man a pure, unselfish love, to teach us how to love one another.

The power of an ever-abiding Saviour is greater now than ever before, because the emergencies are greater; and yet we are weak in spiritual life and experience. Oh, how much we have lost as a people by our lack of faith! We have suffered loss to our own souls, and have failed to reveal to others, by our words and in our character, what Christ is and will be to everyone who comes to him believing. He is "made unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." To give glory to God is to reveal his character in our own, and thus make him known. And in whatever way we make known the Father or the Son, we glorify God.

False views of God, and hence of Christ, are largely entertained today. Well may we offer the prayer of Moses, "Show me thy glory." What did the Lord answer?--"I will make all my goodness pass before thee." God might have answered Moses: "Why do

you ask this question? Have I not revealed to you my glory in the deliverance of my people from Egyptian bondage? Did I not deliver you by the right arm of my power, and lead you dry shod through the midst of the Red Sea? Did I not reveal my glory in giving you bread from heaven? Did I not bring you water out of the flinty rock? Have you not looked upon my glory in the pillar of fire by night, and the cloud by day?" Moses might have answered that all this only kindled his desire for greater manifestations of God's power. The Lord granted the prayer of Moses, and he desires to answer us in the same way. We need to have our perceptions quickened, our hearts enlarged, that we may comprehend his glory--his goodness, his forgiveness, his forbearance, his inexpressible love.

"And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful"--precious ray of light from the Sun of Righteousness--"and gracious"--another bright beam from the Light of the world--"long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth"--oh, what flashes of his glory!--"keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." Bring all these precious rays together, and talk of them, shed their light upon the path of him who walketh in darkness. Look to Christ, behold the attractive loveliness of his character, and by beholding you will become changed to his likeness. The mist that intervenes between Christ and the soul will be rolled back, as we by faith look past the hellish shadow of Satan, and see God's glory in his law, and the righteousness of Christ.

Satan is seeking to veil Jesus from our sight, to eclipse his light, for when we get even a glimpse of his glory we are attracted to him. Sin hides from our view the matchless charms of Jesus; prejudice, selfishness, self-righteousness, and passion blind our eyes, so that we do not discern the Saviour. Oh, if we would by faith draw nigh to God, he would reveal to us his glory, which is his character, and the praise of God would flow forth from human hearts, and be sounded by human voices. Then we would forever cease to give glory to Satan by sinning against God and talking doubt and unbelief. We would no longer stumble along grumbling, and mourning, and covering the altar of God with our tears. If we would behold Jesus, believing his words, we would reflect the image of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, and what a wave of glory would flow back from earth to heaven!

The word of God must be exalted with pen and voice; neglect it not; it is the highest folly to keep out of sight the manna for which the world is starving. It is not

God's plan that his word should be given a secondary place in our system of education. We want the word of God as our guide. It is our light; without its divine rays we grope in darkness. Its study affords discipline that strengthens and elevates and enriches the soul. It furnishes us unto all good works, and guides into safe and high enterprises. It is the wisdom of God.

The Holy Spirit is given to all who will heed its voice; it is a purifier, a sanctifier. Not a soul is safe without it, for all are struggling with natural defects of character, with sinful tendencies. Who will be so foolish as to think they can struggle single-handed with enemies that have overmatched them again and again? The heart needs to be constantly softened and subdued by the Spirit of Christ. In contact with the world, or even with that which has to do with the advancement of God's cause, the heart grows hard and selfish, unless constantly brought in contact with the heart of Infinite Love. The conscience grows callous and feeble when we neglect to receive the rays of the Sun of Righteousness. Those who flatter themselves that they can safely occupy their time in business, having no special seasons of prayer either in public or private, drawing no spiritual strength from the Source of all light and power, are under a delusion of the enemy.

All should fear to accept and hold responsible positions, without daily and hourly consecration to Christ, an entire surrender of the will to God. They should fear to encounter temptations unless their souls are under the transforming grace of Christ and they are determined to inquire at every step, "Is this the way of the Lord?" to ask, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

October 24, 1892

Christ's Use of Parables

"The disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables; because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive; for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Jesus said to his disciples, "It is given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." He did not mean by mysteries the things that could not be understood; but those things that could be comprehended by the human mind when enlightened by the Spirit of God. To those who were humble of heart, who trusted not in their own wisdom or righteousness, the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven could be revealed. "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent [the worldly wise,] and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him."

"Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, he taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in man. For all things are yours." Nothing is withheld from him who earnestly and sincerely seeks for truth and wisdom. For "ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

"Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God; even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints; to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory; whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ; in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

In his instruction to his followers the Lord used scenes from nature, occurrences from life, the habits and customs of the world, as illustrations whereby to convey to the minds of men the significance of truth. If they desired to understand divine things, they might have perceived the import of his words; for the divine Teacher was ever willing to explain what he taught, to the honest inquirer after truth. In figurative language he brought before the multitudes that which pertained to their eternal interest. He pictured before them the perils of the times, and made plain the way of escape to those who had ears to hear, eyes to see, and a heart to understand.

It is only the honest seeker after truth who can be benefited by the presentation of truth. Those who have not a heart to receive the truth, be it ever so plainly presented, will find a way whereby they can misinterpret its plainest portrayal, and evade its evident conclusions. Jesus had to meet this class in his day, as we have to meet them today. They perverted his word, distorted his utterances, and presented his teaching in a false light, declaring that the mission he proclaimed he had come to accomplish, was needless and would not be fulfilled. "Without a parable he spoke not unto them." In this way he could present the plainest truths, and the Pharisees and Sadducees were placed at a disadvantage; for they could not find fault with his words, or bring an accusation against him. His warnings, rebukes, and denunciations were spoken in the language of parables. In figures and symbols he presented the principles of truth, and those who had a heart to understand were not left in doubt as to the meaning of his words; for the Holy Spirit was ever present to make the right impression upon heart and conscience.

This characteristic of the teaching of Jesus is presented in the words of the Psalmist when he says, "I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things which have been kept secret since the foundation of the world." The words of Christ were necessarily clothed in mystery, in order that those who would have made him an offender for a word should have no opportunity to take advantage of his plain speaking. Christ had to deal with many who would hear, and not understand, who would have eyes, and not perceive, and hearts that stubbornly refused to admit one ray of heavenly light. They clung tenaciously to their old traditions and superstitions, and they could not consent to give up the customs and habits handed down to them by their fathers. They were fortified against truth by their proud self-righteousness. They would not admit that they were in need of a Saviour, or consent to alter the character of the instruction which they had been giving to the people. Christ taught the precious truth of redemption through faith in himself, through the unmerited favor of God bestowed upon men because of the merits of his only-begotten Son. His mission to the world was to reveal to men the character of God, and by the revelation of his love win men to the Father.

Christ came to teach men of God, and he made manifest the fact that everything in nature teaches of spiritual and eternal things. To the eye that is not dimmed, the ear that is not closed, the heart that is not gross through selfishness, prejudice, and pride, the glories of nature unveil the things of the Father. "For the invisible things of him from the beginning of the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." To illustrate heavenly truth, Jesus employed the things of nature, and imparted to man divine enlightenment. He harmonized science and the word of God, leading the mind from nature to nature's God, and blending the spiritual with the natural. So wide was his view of truth, so extended his teachings, that every phase of nature was employed by the great Teacher in illustrating truth. The scenes upon which the eye daily rests are all connected with some spiritual truth, so that nature is clothed with the parables of the Master. Through familiar objects he attracted the minds of his hearers to his subject, and impressed upon them solemn, eternal truth.

The Lord Jesus was the maker of the things in heaven and earth, and the expositor of his own truth, and he called upon nature to reflect the light of the glory of God. The birds of the heaven, the flowers of the field, the trees of the forest, the fruitful fields, the barren land, the grain ripe for the sickle, the fruitless tree, the goings forth of the morning, the setting of the sun, the sowing of the seed, the gathering in of the harvest,--

all were employed as emblems of divine truth. He connected the visible works of the Creator with the words of life, and led the mind up from nature to nature's God. Every humble shrub and delicate flower bears testimony to the heart of the love of God. If the eye is not closed, if the ear is not heavy, if the heart is open to receive the impressions of the divine Spirit, nature will speak of the harmony of the natural with the spiritual. Through illustrations drawn from the natural world, Christ has taught lessons of vast importance to the soul; and in thinking of his words while contemplating the object with which he associated his lessons, the divine significance becomes clearer to the mind, and the truth of God enlightens the understanding like a flash of light. Mysteries grow clear, and that which was hard to grasp becomes evident.

The heart that has not become hardened through error, and has not been perverted through false theories,—the heart that honestly desires to know what is truth, will joyfully accept the message which Christ brings to the soul. Great multitudes listened with attentive ear to the precious words that fell from the lips of Christ. Many among them were wayside hearers, many were stony-ground hearers; but many were hungering and thirsting for a knowledge of spiritual things, such as they failed to receive from the religious teachers of the time. In the exposition of truth by these Jewish leaders were mingled the doctrines and commandments of men, and their injunctions were burdened with exactions which the people could not bear. The people were as men lost on a highway, where the sign-boards were placed above their reach, and the directions were written in a language they could not understand. But Jesus, the greatest Teacher this world ever knew, looked with compassion upon the people, as on sheep that had no shepherd, and invited them to come to him. He said: "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." Who is it that makes this gracious announcement, that extends to men this precious invitation?—It is he who is one with the Father. "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men.... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

November 7, 1892

Christ's Use of Parables

The Lord has momentous truths to reveal to those who would understand the things of the Spirit. His lessons are for all, and adapted to the needs of all. While his lessons are clothed in language so simple that a child might understand them, the truth is so deep that the most learned may well be charmed, and worship the Author of matchless wisdom. Though the wiseST 5/find abundant food for thought in his simplest utterance, the humbleST 5/comprehend his truth, and appropriate his promises to the need of the soul. Jesus taught men for the purpose of arousing desire to understand the things of God, that they might behold the excellence of the divine character, and make application for the righteousness of Christ, in which they might stand accepted before the Lord Jehovah. Have you a sense of want in your soul? Do you hunger and thirst after righteousness? Then this is an evidence that Christ has wrought upon your heart, and created this sense of need in your soul, in order that he may be sought unto to do for you, through the endowment of the Holy Spirit, those things which it is impossible for you to do for yourself.

Among the multitudes that listened to the words of Christ, were scribes and Pharisees, Sadducees and elders, rabbis and priests, Herodians and rulers. Most of this class were proud, world-loving, bigoted, ambitious men, who loved the praise of men more than the approval of God; for they were ignorant both of the Scriptures and of the power of God. In their ignorance they did not scruple to supplant the teaching of the prophets with their own expositions of the word of God. They wrested the Scripture from its relation to truth, and made it serve the cause of error. But they were exceedingly jealous of their position as teachers of the people, and looked with hatred upon the divine Teacher, who taught as one having authority. Above all things they desired to find something whereby they might bring accusation against him; and for this purpose they set spies upon his track to see if they could not catch something from his lips that would cause his condemnation, and forever silence him who seemed to draw the world after him. But Jesus knew the hearts of all, and understood the character of the men who watched him with malignant looks from the multitudes that gathered to hear his words, and he presented truth in such a way that they could find nothing whereby they might bring his case before the Sanhedrin. In parables he exposed the hypocrisy

and wicked works of those who occupied high positions, and clothed in imagery truth of so cutting a character that had it been spoken in direct denunciation, they would have put an end to his ministry. But while he evaded the treacherous spies, he made truth so clear that error was manifested, and the honest in heart could readily discern what was truth.

The parables of Christ have been placed on record, and to the honest, diligent searcher after truth, their meaning will be made plain, their mystery unveiled. Those who will not seek for truth as for hidden treasure, make manifest the fact that they do not sincerely desire to know what is truth. Christ still says to his true followers, "It is given to you to know the mystery of the kingdom of heaven." "Whosoever hath to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance." He who responds to the drawing of Christ, will be found inquiring as to what is truth, that his feet may be directed into the way of righteousness. Christ is drawing all men, but all do not respond to his drawing. Those who yield their will to God's will, who are willing to follow where the Spirit of God may lead, who receive the light and walk therein, will seek for still more of heavenly enlightenment, and "shall have more abundance." But whoever resists the drawing of the Spirit of God, and refuses to walk in the light, choosing to walk in the path of his own selecting, will not be compelled to yield his stubborn will, or be forced to walk in the path of peace and holiness. Those who follow this course are of those who, having eyes, see not, but are blind to the terrible results of their choice, and walk in sparks of their own kindling, and shall lie down in sorrow.

Isaiah prophesied of the moral darkness that would enshroud those who were lifted up in their own esteem; he said: "Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed." The Jewish leaders had corrupted their hearts with vain imaginations, with earthly, sensual, and devilish knowledge; and although they professed to believe in the typical sacrifice that had prefigured the Lamb of God through all the centuries since the fall of man, they set themselves in opposition to Christ, and rejected the Light of the world. As a pall of death they covered their souls with error; and though Christ presented to them the inner meaning of the Jewish economy, that they might discern that he was the great Antitype, they closed their eyes, that they might not perceive, and hardened their hearts, that they might not understand.

Jesus was the originator of the religion of the Jews, and how clearly could he open to the mind the significance of every shadow and symbol, and reveal the relation of the whole system to himself. That which had been misinterpreted, he set before them in its clear connection with truth, and made plain the glory of the Levitical service. He sought to open to men the fact that the Jewish system of religion presented in types and shadows the whole mystery of the gospel. The service of the past was in no way to be held in contempt; for in Christ, type met antitype, and shadow substance.

The lessons that Christ presented in his words of truth are like precious pearls; for in them he bestowed upon men an inestimable possession. Much that he taught is still but dimly understood, and the rubbish of error covers many a glorious gem of truth. These jewels of truth should be searched for with as great diligence as men search for hidden treasure. Those who know the love of Christ should regard it as did the man who found the hidden treasure, and for joy thereof went and sold all that he had, that he might buy the field, and dig over every inch of it to discover the rich veins of gold and silver. The teaching of Christ is more precious than any mine of earth can be, and it demands more zeal on our part to seek for the gems of truth than does any possession we can secure in the world. We should put forth most strenuous efforts to understand the full meaning of the truth he would convey to the mind in parables or maxims. Let him who would comprehend spiritual things, dig deep in the mines of truth.

November 14, 1892

The Sacred Duties of Home Life

"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." "And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.... Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

If we are doers of the word, we shall daily bear the cross after Jesus, subdue self, and thus bring harmony into the home life. The sweetest type of heaven is a home where the Spirit of the Lord presides. If the will of God is fulfilled, the husband and wife will respect each other, and cultivate love and confidence. Anything that would mar the peace and unity of the family should be firmly repressed, and kindness and love should be cherished. He who manifests the spirit of tenderness, forbearance, and love, will find that the same spirit will be reflected upon him. Where the Spirit of God reigns, there will be no talk of unsuitability in the marriage relation. If Christ indeed is formed within, the hope of glory, there will be union and love in the home. Christ abiding in the heart of the wife, will be at agreement with Christ abiding in the heart of the husband. They will be striving together for the mansions Christ has gone to prepare for those who love him.

Those who are constantly at disagreement in the home life, who do not practice

the words of the Lord, will not enter into the heavenly mansions, because they would find that which did not suit their taste even in heaven. Heaven is to be the home of those only who are sanctified, refined, and made meet for the society of the saints in light. If we manifest the character of Christ here, keeping all the commandments of God, we shall be cheered and blessed with glimpses of the pleasant home in the mansions Jesus has gone to prepare. Those who, through the grace given us, represent, not their own crude ideas, their own peculiar, hereditary, and cultivated objectionable traits of character, but the character of Christ, will be fit inhabitants for the heavenly city. Our ways, our will, are to be under subjection to God's will, to be disciplined by his Holy Spirit. If we are courteous and gentle at home, we shall carry the savor of a pleasant disposition when away from home. If we manifest forbearance, patience, meekness, and fortitude in the home, we shall be able to be a light to the world. All murmuring, all complaining, will be put aside by the true Christian.

We are children of the Heavenly King, members of the royal family, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. The mansions Jesus has gone to prepare are to receive only those who are true, who are pure, who love and obey his words. In the mansions above we shall meet to part no more. We shall know each other in our heavenly home. But if we would enjoy eternal bliss, we must cultivate religion in the home; for the home is to be the center of the purest and most elevated affection. Peace, harmony, affection, and happiness should be perseveringly cherished every day, until these precious things abide in the hearts of those who compose the family. The plant of love must be carefully nourished, else it will die. Every good principle must be cherished if we would have it thrive in the soul. That which Satan plants in the heart,--envy, jealousy, evil surmising, evil speaking, impatience, prejudice, selfishness, covetousness, and vanity,--must be uprooted. If these evil things are allowed to remain in the soul, they will bear fruit by which many shall be defiled. Oh, how many cultivate the poisonous plants, that kill out the precious fruits of love and defile the soul! Some of these who cherish evil, think they have a burden for souls. They make public profession of their love to God, and yet see no necessity for weeding the garden of the heart, for uprooting every unsightly, unholy weed, for letting the beams of the Sun of Righteousness shine into the soul temple. They do not know Jesus. They have no knowledge of what it is to be a practical Christian, that is, to be Christlike.

There is need of prayer, of genuine faith, of patient, untiring effort to war against every evil disposition, so that even our thoughts may be brought into subjection to

Christ. That which will make the character lovely in the home is that which will make it lovely in the heavenly mansions. The measure of your Christianity is gauged by the character of your home life. The grace of Christ enables its possessors to make the home a happy place full of peace and rest. Unless you have the Spirit of Christ, you are none of his, and will never see the redeemed saints in his kingdom, who are to be one with him in the heaven of bliss. God desires you to consecrate yourself wholly to him, and represent his character in the home circle.

When religion is manifested in the home, its influence will be felt in the church and in the neighborhood. But some who profess to be Christians, talk with their neighbors concerning their home difficulties. They relate their grievances in such a way as to call forth sympathy for themselves; but it is a great mistake to pour our trouble into the ears of others, especially when many of our grievances are manufactured, and exist because of our irreligious life and defective character. Those who go forth to lay their private grievances before others might better remain at home to pray, to surrender their perverse will to God, to fall on the Rock and be broken, to die to self that Jesus may make them vessels unto honor. When self is crucified, and Christ lives in the soul, they will cherish sincere and noble affections, such as will give fragrance to the character, and be revealed to the world in consistent words and actions. Let us all heed the words of the Lord,--"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."

In many families there is a great lack in expressing affection one for another. While there is no need of sentimentalism, there is need of expressing love and tenderness in a chaste, pure, dignified way. Many absolutely cultivate hardness of heart, and in word and action reveal the Satanic side of the character. Tender affection should ever be cherished between husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters. Every hasty word should be checked, and there should not be even the appearance of the lack of love one for another. It is the duty of everyone in the family to be pleasant, to speak kindly. Children are to respect and reverence their parents, and parents are to manifest patience, kindness, and affection for their children. Each one should seek in every possible way to please and make happy the members of the family circle.

Our words and actions in the home bear testimony to our true character, and they are recorded in the books of heaven. The daily acts of life tell the measure and mould of our disposition and character. Where there is a lack of home religion, a profession of faith is valueless. Then let no unkind words fall from the lips of those who compose the home circle. Make the atmosphere fragrant with tender thoughtfulness of others. Only those will enter heaven who in probationary time have formed a character that breathes a heavenly influence. The saint in heaven must first be a saint upon earth. The habits of speech, the character of our actions, put a mould upon us; and that which we cultivate in our association with others in this life, goes down into the grave with us, and will be unchanged when we come up from the grave. Many are deceiving themselves by thinking that the character will be transformed at the coming of Christ; but there will be no conversion of heart at his appearing. Our defects of character must here be repented of, and through the grace of Christ we must overcome them while probation shall last. This is the place for fitting up for the family above.

Then, fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, do not educate yourselves in the line of vulgarity of action, word, or thought. Coarse sayings, low jests, lack of politeness and true courtesy in the home life, will become as second nature to you, and will unfit you for the society of those who are becoming sanctified through the truth. The home is too sacred a place to be polluted by vulgarity, sensuality, recrimination, and scandal. Silence the evil word, put away the unholy thought; for the True Witness weighs every word, sets a value on every action, and declares, "I know thy works." Then let love, truth, kindness, and forbearance be the precious plants that you shall cultivate in the garden of the heart. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

November 21, 1892

Make All Things According to the Pattern

When the sanctuary was to be built, the Lord directed Moses, saying, "Look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount." Moses was full of zeal to do God's work. The most talented, skillful men were at his command to carry out his suggestions; and yet it was not given to him to make a bell, a pomegranate, a tassel, a fringe, a curtain, or any vessel of the sanctuary, except according to the pattern shown him as God's ideal. God called him into the mount, and revealed to him the heavenly things. The Lord covered him in order that he might see God and live, and behold the things that God would have made according to the pattern. Forty days he was in direct communication with God; and when he descended the mount, his face shone with glory, and he was ready to give directions as to how the sanctuary should be made according to the pattern shown him in the mount.

It is in neglecting to follow the exact directions of the word of God that many err. They turn away from God's plans, to follow their own ideas. Christ himself declared, "The Son of Man can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." So utterly was he emptied of self that he made no plans for himself. He accepted God's plan for him, and day by day the Father unfolded his plans. If Jesus was so wholly dependent, declaring, "I do nothing of myself," how much more should the human agents depend upon God for constant instruction, so that their lives might be the simple working out of God's will. Oh, that failing, erring mortals would be content to seek wisdom from God, and be entirely submissive in working out his directions, in exemplifying his character! If ever mortals needed to send to heaven an earnest cry, "Lord, show me thy way; teach me the way of the Lord," it is now. Only those will have a fitness for the mansions above who give to God full and implicit obedience. God knows that we would not appreciate his rarest gifts if we were not perfectly submissive to his will.

And in keeping the way of the Lord there is great reward. We shall be tempted by the adversary of souls to deviate from God's way, to neglect to search the Scriptures in order that we may find out whether we are walking in the sparks of our own kindling, or seeking the light which God has given us. Oh, that we may be vessels unto honor,

prepared for the Master's use! Oh, that the work of the grace of God may so go forward in our hearts that we may come to see the matchless charms that are revealed in Jesus!

Whatever may be our temperament, we are to form a character after the divine Pattern; we have no excuse for retaining the mold and superscription of our nature; for Christ has died that we may have his mold and superscription. We cannot retain self and yet be filled with the fullness of God. We must be emptied of self. If heaven is gained by us at last, it will be only through the renunciation of self, and the receiving of the mind of Christ. Pride and self-sufficiency must be crucified, and the vacuum supplied with the Spirit and power of God. Are we willing to pay the price required of us for eternal life? Are we ready to sit down and count the cost, and conclude that heaven is worth the sacrifice of dying to self, of having our will brought into perfect conformity with the will of God? Until we are willing, the transforming grace of God will not be manifested upon us. When we present our emptied nature to God, he will by his Holy Spirit supply the vacuum made by the renunciation of self, and give us of his fullness. The Lord would not have us perish. He would have us consecrate to his service all there is of us; for he desires to bless us more than we desire to be blessed. He would have us abide in Christ, receive his blessing, and diffuse it to others while we live, that we may enjoy a blessed eternity. Life is short, but eternity is endless.

We should ask ourselves, For what are we living and working? And what will be the outcome of it all? We need the religion of Jesus Christ daily; for everything we do or say comes under the notice of God. "We are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." What we are at heart, we reveal in life. Our thoughts, our words, our actions, are the result of what we are; and our influence is a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death, according to whether we abide in Christ or not. In the judgment we shall be brought face to face with those whom we have had opportunity to help by directing them, through choice words of counsel, into right, safe paths. If we have a daily connection with God, we shall have a living, abiding interest in the saving of the souls of men, and our influence will be a savor of life unto life.

The Lord has blessed us with the light of truth, and we are to let that light be seen, by being doers of the word. We are to let the bright rays of God's word extend to others, to cheer and bless all that are in the house. If we do not have oil in our vessels, accept of the grace of Christ, which is abundantly provided for us, our light will burn dim, and, if neglected, will die out. But if from the treasure of the heart you bring forth

good things, then your light shines out to those who are in darkness. But if you indulge in slang phrases and foolish talk, you bring forth from the treasure of the heart evil things, and darkness comes upon your soul, and upon the souls of others; for evil words bring forth a harvest after their kind. Evil words do more mischief than you have any idea of; they are seeds sown to produce a harvest, and your influence as a Christian is weakened. Foolish, idle jesting fails to exalt the character of Christ; and when he is not lifted up, souls are not drawn to him. The Lord Jesus calls upon you to place yourself in the channel of light, that the result of thorough faith in Christ as your personal Saviour may appear. Christianity is not to be put on and off at will, but it is to be our constant adorning; we are to be clothed with Christ's righteousness as a garment.

Let no one rob God of the service he requires. Half-hearted service is of no value. Have we not tried our own way again and again, and found it was but foolishness? In following our independent judgment, have we not virtually said, "Lord, I want not thy way, for it does not please me; I want my own way; and if I cannot do as I please, I will not serve thee?" How many have let go of Christ, to follow their own plans? Did Christ, the Majesty of heaven, have his way? Behold him in travail of soul in Gethsemane, praying to his Father. What forced those blood drops of agony from his holy brow? Oh, the sins of the whole world are upon him! It was separation from the Father's love that forced from his pale, quivering lips the cry, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Three times was the prayer offered, but was followed by, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, O God, be done." This must be our attitude: "Not my will, but thine, O God, be done." This is true conversion.

The church of Christ is to represent his character. Its members, if their names are written in the Lamb's book of life, will be united by a vital connection with Christ, as the branch is united with the living vine. Jesus says, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." Christ devoted himself entirely to the work of saving souls. He left the glories of heaven, and clothed his divinity with humanity, and subjected himself to sorrow, and shame, and reproach, abuse, denial, and crucifixion. Though he had all the strength of the passion of humanity, never did he yield to temptation to do that which was not pure and elevating and ennobling. He says, "I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified." He devoted himself wholly to God in an infinite sacrifice to redeem the world. What a wholeness in his life, his character! The plan of salvation, devised prior to the beginning of time, expresses the love of Christ to man, the devotion of the Son to the Father's glory. "To the intent that

now the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." This eternal purpose embodied before the universe the glory of the divine love in the salvation of man.

Charged with his exalted mission, Jesus came into the world as the visible representative of the invisible God. He said to Philip: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? ... From henceforth ye know him and have seen him." "I and my Father are one." What height, and depth, and breadth of meaning in the Saviour's words! They are clothed with a mysterious power that can only be spiritually discerned.

November 28, 1892

Representing Christ to the World

In order to save fallen man, under a sense of the infinite magnitude of the task, Christ undertook to represent to the world the character of God in his great love for the world. Nothing was allowed to divert his attention for a moment. His one effort was to carry out the plan of God laid before the foundation of the world. Said Christ, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again." "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep." That is: "My Father hath so loved you, that he even loves me more for giving my life to redeem you. In becoming your substitute and surety, by surrendering my life, by taking your liabilities, your transgressions, I am endeared to my Father; for by my sacrifice, his will is fulfilled, his law vindicated, and God can be just, and yet justify him who believes in Jesus."

This is a love that passeth knowledge. Shall we not be filled with astonishment at the amazing riches of the grace of Christ? Jesus alone could do the work. Knowing the height and depth of the love of God, he engaged to come into the world to make it manifest to sinners. Nothing less than the infinite sacrifice made by Christ in behalf of fallen man could express the love of God to lost humanity. It is impossible for us to conceive of the riches of his grace abundantly provided for all who believe on Christ. And having thus himself represented the love of the Father, he has enjoined upon those who believe in him to represent his character to the world, and thus reflect the glory of God in their own character.

Jesus says, "As Thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world," to be witnesses for me. Christ calls upon each of his followers to represent his goodness, his mercy, and his love to the world, as he has represented the love of the Father. He has made those who believe in him as their personal Saviour, partakers of the divine nature, that they should not perish, but have everlasting life; and those who are saved by his grace are to reveal his power to others, that others may be saved through their instrumentality. All who are truly converted are commissioned of God to be light bearers to the world.

"That Christ 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." It is the privilege and duty of every child of God to obtain day by day a living experience in the things of Christ. Through a connection with Christ, we are to go forth in his Spirit, with his mind, as agents to cooperate with the divine, to bear to the world the message of the love of God to man. We are to proclaim that Christ is our advocate, that the bow of promise encircles the throne, that the Lord is waiting to be gracious. This work must not be set aside because it requires self-denial and self-sacrifice. Looking to the Author and Finisher of our faith, we must see there our pattern, and shape our life after the example he has given.

All the heavenly intelligencies are looking with intense interest to see what the human agencies will do at this time. As ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto them who shall be heirs of salvation, they look with yearning desire upon the world for whom Christ died. They know that Jesus has died that the world might believe in him and not perish, but have everlasting life. They know that Jesus now says to the sincere, believing ones: You have given yourselves to me, and I have given you to the world as my representatives. Ye are to be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine. You are my witnesses, dedicated to me, that ye should go forth to represent the gracious character of God."

When by faith we grasp what Jesus has done for us, all hardness of heart will be melted under the softening, subduing influence of his matchless love, and we shall bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. We shall then feel that we are under obligation to task to the uttermost our capability, that our talent may be brought into highest service to diffuse the light and grace we have received. There will not be exhibited a disposition to tear down, but the mind and spirit which dwell in Christ Jesus, to restore, to build up. Jesus was a fountain of healing mercy for the saving of the world; for by precept and example he represented the justice and love of God to men. When the nature of man is renewed by grace, he will be full of tenderness, sympathy, and love. Thus the character of God will be unfolded to the world as it is, and Satan will not be able to fasten the minds of all humanity in his snare, charging God with his own attributes, and misrepresenting his character.

Jesus could not express in words to the understanding of man the love of the

Father; he could only say, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." But he did express the love of God in his actions. Never can we equal the goodness and the love of Jesus, but he calls upon every man and woman, youth and child, to behold him, and by beholding his perfection of character, to become changed into his image. Call every talent into exercise to copy the Pattern. Christ died to save man, and he calls upon us to live as seeing Him who is invisible, that we may save souls. Then seek the Lord most earnestly. Eternal life at the right hand of God is worth a lifelong, persevering, untiring effort. Look to the cross of Calvary, and be no longer half-hearted. It is either life or death with every one of us; and when we surrender all, then Jesus will open ways that we may serve him with every power of our being. The Lord would have us gather up the rays of light, and be witnesses for Christ.

Says the prophet, "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. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not."

The church may individually be all that they profess to be; for if they will seek the Lord with all the heart, they will be filled with the Spirit. Jesus Christ is the Pattern, and everyone who copies the Pattern will estimate the value of his own soul as the purchased possession of Christ. He will see that the Lord requires all the members of his church, as living, human agencies, to exert a sanctified influence in unity to build up the Redeemer's kingdom in the earth. The careless inaction, the indolence, the neglect to improve a single faculty and intrusted capability which might have been employed for blessing humanity, robs the world of the promised influence of the Holy Spirit, which might have accompanied with its presence the living witness for God. A message from heaven is sent to the world by those whom the Lord has called. They are to make known the salvation of God, that, by the testimony of those who are sanctified, many may be saved.

December 5, 1892

The Way to Christ

The commandments of God are comprehensive and far reaching; in a few words they unfold the whole duty of man. "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.... Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." In these words the length and breadth, the depth and height, of the law of God is comprehended; for Paul declares, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." The only definition we find in the Bible for sin is that "sin is the transgression of the law." The word of God declares, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." Many are deceived concerning the condition of their hearts. They do not realize that the natural heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. They wrap themselves about with their own righteousness, and are satisfied in reaching their own human standard of character; but how fatally they fail when they do not reach the divine standard, and of themselves they cannot meet the requirements of God.

We may measure ourselves by ourselves, we may compare ourselves among ourselves, we may say we do as well as this one or that one, but the question to which the judgment will call for an answer is, Do we meet the claims of high heaven? Do we reach the divine standard? Are our hearts in harmony with the God of heaven?

The human family have all transgressed the law of God, and as transgressors of the law, man is hopelessly ruined; for he is the enemy of God, without strength to do any good thing. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Looking into the moral mirror,--God's holy law,--man sees himself a sinner, and is convicted of his state of evil, his hopeless doom under the just penalty of the law. But he has not been left in a state of hopeless distress in which sin has plunged him; for it was to save the transgressor from ruin that He who was equal with God offered up his life on Calvary. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Jesus was the majesty of heaven, the beloved commander of the angels, who delighted to do his pleasure. He was one with God, "in the bosom of the Father," yet he

thought it not a thing to be desired to be equal with God while man was lost in sin and misery. He stepped down from his throne, he left his crown and royal scepter, and clothed his divinity with humanity. He humbled himself even to the death of the cross, that man might be exalted to a seat with him upon his throne. In him we have a complete offering, an infinite sacrifice, a mighty saviour, who is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him. In love he comes to reveal the Father, to reconcile man to God, to make him a new creature renewed after the image of Him who created him.

Jesus is our atoning sacrifice. We can make no atonement for ourselves; but by faith we can accept the atonement that has been made. "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, ... but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." It was through infinite sacrifice and inexpressible suffering that our Redeemer placed redemption within our reach. He was in this world unhonored and unknown, that, through his wonderful condescension and humiliation, he might exalt man to receive eternal honors and immortal joys in the heavenly courts. During his thirty years of life on earth his heart was wrung with inconceivable anguish. The path from the manger to Calvary was shadowed by grief and sorrow. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, enduring such heartache as no human language can portray. He could have said in truth, "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." Hating sin with a perfect hatred, he yet gathered to his soul the sins of the whole world. Guiltless, he bore the punishment of the guilty. Innocent, yet offering himself as a substitute for the transgressor. The guilt of every sin pressed its weight upon the divine soul of the world's Redeemer. The evil thoughts, the evil words, the evil deeds of every son and daughter of Adam, called for retribution upon himself; for he had become man's substitute. Though the guilt of sin was not his, his spirit was torn and bruised by the transgressions of men, and he who knew no sin became sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Voluntarily our divine substitute bared his soul to the sword of justice, that we might not perish but have everlasting life. Said Christ: "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." No man of earth or angel of heaven could have paid the penalty for sin. Jesus was the only one who could save rebellious man. In him divinity and humanity were combined, and this was what gave efficiency to the

offering on Calvary's cross. At the cross mercy and truth met together, righteousness and peace kissed each other.

As the sinner looks upon the Saviour dying on Calvary, and realizes that the sufferer is divine, he asks why this great sacrifice was made, and the cross points to the holy law of God which has been transgressed. The death of Christ is an unanswerable argument as to the immutability and righteousness of the law. In prophesying of Christ, Isaiah says, "He will magnify the law, and make it honourable." The law has no power to pardon the evil doer. Its office is to point out his defects, that he may realize his need of One who is mighty to save, his need of One who will become his substitute, his surety, his righteousness. Jesus meets the need of the sinner; for he has taken upon him the sins of the transgressor. "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." The Lord could have cut off the sinner, and utterly destroyed him; but the costlier plan was chosen. In his great love he provides hope for the hopeless, giving his only-begotten Son to bear the sins of the world. And since he has poured out all heaven in that one rich gift, he will withhold from man no needed aid that he may take the cup of salvation, and become an heir of God, joint heir with Christ.

Christ came to manifest the love of God to the world to draw the hearts of all men to himself. He said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." The first step toward salvation is to respond to the drawing of the love of Christ. God sends message after message to men, entreating them to repentance, that he may forgive, and write pardon against their names. Shall there be no repentance? Shall his appeals be unheeded? Shall his overtures of mercy be ignored, and his love utterly rejected? Oh, then man will cut himself off from the medium through which he may gain life eternal; for God only pardons the penitent! By the manifestation of his love, by the entreating of his spirit, he woos men to repentance; for repentance is the gift of God, and whom he pardons he first makes penitent. The sweetest joy comes to man through his sincere repentance toward God for the transgression of his law, and through faith in Christ as the sinner's Redeemer and Advocate. It is that men may understand the joy of forgiveness, the peace of God, that Christ draws them through the manifestation of his love. If they respond to his drawing, yielding their hearts to his grace, he will lead them on step by step, to a full knowledge of himself, and this is life eternal.

But Satan will not permit a soul to escape from the captivity of sin if by any

means he can prevent it. Though all heaven has been poured out in one rich gift--for when God gave his Son, he gave the choicest gift of heaven, and the treasures of heaven are at our command--yet to the repenting soul the enemy will seek to represent God as stern and inexorable, unwilling to pardon the transgressor. At different times letters have come to me from persons who were in despair over their sins. One and another have written: "I fear I am past all help. Is there any hope for me?" To these poor souls the message has been given: "Hope in God. The Father has bread enough and to spare. Arise, and go to your Father. He will meet you a great way off. He will give you his love and compassion."

When the enemy comes in like a flood, and seeks to overwhelm you with the thought of your sin, tell him: "I know I am a sinner. If I were not, I could not go to the Saviour; for he says, 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance'. And because I am a sinner I am entitled to come to Christ. I am sinful and polluted, but he suffered humiliation and death, and exhausted the curse that belongs to me. I come. I believe. I claim his sure promise, "Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life'."

Will such a plea made in contrition of soul be turned away?--No, never. By the suffering and death of Christ is proven his boundless love to man. He is willing and able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.

Then as a little child, come to God, presenting yourself as suppliant at his feet; for we need not ascend into the heavens to bring Jesus down; nor into the earth to bring him up; for he is ever near us. He says, "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." How willing is Christ to take possession of the soul temple if we will let him! He is represented as waiting and knocking at the door of the heart. Then why does he not enter? It is because the love of sin has closed the door of the heart. As soon as we consent to give sin up, to acknowledge our guilt, the barrier is removed between the soul and the Saviour. (Concluded next week.)

December 12, 1892

The Way to Christ

But in repenting of sin we need not go into a cell, as did Luther, imposing penances upon ourselves to expiate our iniquity, thinking by so doing to gain the favor of God. The question is asked: "Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" The Psalmist says, "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." John writes, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." The only reason that we have not remission of sin is that we have not acknowledged to him whom we have wounded by our transgressions, whom we have pierced by our sins, that we are at fault, and in need of mercy. The confession that is the outpouring of the inmost soul will find its way to the heart of infinite pity; for the Lord is nigh unto him that is of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

How mistaken are those who imagine that confession of sin will detract from their dignity, and lessen their influence among their fellow-men. Clinging to this erroneous idea, though seeing their faults, many fail to confess them, but rather pass by the wrongs they have done others, so embittering their own lives, and shadowing the lives of others. It will not hurt your dignity to confess your sins. Away with this false dignity. Fall on the Rock and be broken, and Christ will give you the true and heavenly dignity. Let not pride, self-esteem, or self-righteousness keep anyone from confessing his sin, that he may claim the promise. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Keep nothing back from God, and neglect not the confession of your faults to your brethren. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." Many a sin is left unconfessed to confront the sinner in the day of final account; better far to confront your sins now, to confess them and put them away, while the atoning Sacrifice pleads in your behalf. Do not fail to learn the will of God on this subject. The health of your soul and the salvation of others depends upon the course you pursue in this matter. "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." The humble and broken heart can appreciate something of the love of God and the cross of Calvary. Ample will be the

blessing experienced by him who meets the condition by which he may become a partaker of the favor of God.

We are to surrender our hearts to God, that he may renew and sanctify us, and fit us for his heavenly court. We are not to wait for some special time, but today we are to give ourselves to him, refusing to be the servants of sin. Do you imagine you can leave off sin a little at a time? Oh, leave the accursed thing at once! Hate the things that Christ hates, love the things that Christ loves. Has he not by his death and suffering made provision for your cleansing from sin? When we begin to realize that we are sinners, and fall on the rock to be broken, the everlasting arms are placed about us, and we are brought close to the heart of Jesus. Then we shall be charmed with his loveliness, and disgusted with our own righteousness. We need to come close to the foot of the cross. The more we humble ourselves there, the more exalted will God's love appear. The grace and righteousness of Christ will not avail for him who feels whole, for him who thinks he is reasonably good, who is contented with his own condition. There is no room for Christ in the heart of him who does not realize his need of divine light and aid.

Jesus says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." There is fullness of grace in God, and we may have his spirit and power in large measure. Do not feed on the husks of self-righteousness, but go to the Lord. He has the best robe to put upon you, and his arms are open to receive. Christ will say, "Take away the filthy garments from him, and clothe him with a change of raiment."

But shall we wait till we feel that we are cleansed?--No; Christ has promised that "if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." You are proved of God through the word of God. You are not to wait for wonderful emotions before you believe that God has heard you; feeling is not to be your criterion, for emotions are as changeable as the clouds. You must have something solid for the foundation of your faith. The word of the Lord is a word of infinite power, upon which you may rely, and he has said, "Ask, and ye shall receive." Look to Calvary. Has not Jesus said that he is your advocate? Has he not said that if you ask anything in his name you shall receive? You are not to depend on your own goodness or good works. You are to come depending upon the Sun of Righteousness, believing that Christ has taken away your sins and imputed to you his righteousness.

You are to come to God as a repenting sinner, through the name of Jesus, the

divine Advocate, to a merciful, forgiving Father, believing that he will do just as he has promised. Let those who desire the blessing of God knock, and wait at the throne of mercy, with firm assurance, saying, "For thou, O Lord, hast said, For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." The Lord longs to have those who seek after God believe in him who is able to do all things. The Lord has sought to show us how ready is God to hear and answer our request by the use of a most familiar and commonplace occurrence. He said: "What man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" Christ made an appeal to us concerning the willingness of God to help, arguing from the natural love of the parent to his offspring. What father could turn from his son who asks bread? Should anyone dishonor God by imagining that he will not respond to the call of his children? Would we think a parent capable of trifling with his child, and tantalizing him by raising his expectation only to disappoint him? Will a father promise to give good and nourishing food to his child and then give him a stone? If ye then, being human and evil, give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? The Lord assures those that ask him that he will give them the Holy Spirit.

With the confession of the repenting, believing sinner, Christ mingles his own righteousness, that the prayer of fallen man may go up as fragrant incense before the Father, and the grace of God be imparted to the believing soul. Jesus says, to the trembling, repenting soul: "Let him take hold of my strength that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me." "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Will you let him reason with you? Will you commit to him the keeping of your soul as unto a faithful Creator? Come then, and let us live in the light of his countenance, and pray, as did David, "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." By faith apply the blood of Christ to your heart, for that alone can make you whiter than snow. But you say, "This surrender of all my idols will break my heart." This giving up of all for God is represented by your falling upon the Rock and being broken. Then give up all for him; for unless you are broken, you are worthless. When you turn away from the broken cisterns that can hold no water, and in the name of Jesus your Advocate come directly to God, asking for the things you need, the righteousness of Christ will be revealed as your

righteousness, the virtue of Christ as your virtue. You will then understand that justification will come alone through faith in Christ; for in Jesus is revealed the perfection of the character of God; in his life is manifested the outworking of the principles of holiness. Through the atoning blood of Christ the sinner is set free from bondage and condemnation; through the perfection of the sinless Substitute and Surety, he may run in the race of humble obedience to all God's commandments. Without Christ he is under the condemnation of the law, always a sinner, but through faith in Christ he is made just before God. (Concluded next week.)

December 19, 1892

The Way to Christ

It is impossible for man to save himself. He may deceive himself in regard to this matter, but he cannot save himself. Christ's righteousness alone can avail for his salvation, and this is the gift of God. This is the wedding garment in which you may appear as [a] welcome guest at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Let faith take hold of Christ without delay, and you will be a new creature in Jesus, a light to the world.

Christ is called "the Lord our righteousness," and through faith each one should say, "The Lord my righteousness." When faith lays hold upon this gift of God, the praise of God will be upon our lips, and we shall be able to say to others, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." We shall then be able to tell the lost concerning the plan of salvation,--that while the world was lying under the curse of sin, the Lord presented terms of mercy to the fallen and hopeless sinner, and revealed the value and meaning of his grace. Grace is unmerited favor. The angels, who know nothing of sin, do not understand what it is to have grace exercised toward them; but our sinfulness calls for the exercise of grace from a merciful God. It was grace that sent our Saviour to seek us as wanderers and bring us back to the fold.

Have you a sense of want in your soul? Do you hunger and thirst after righteousness? Then this is an evidence that Christ has wrought upon your heart, and created this sense of need, in order that he may be sought after to do those things for you through the endowment of his Holy Spirit which it is impossible for you to do for yourself. The Lord specifies no conditions except that you hunger for his mercy, desiring his counsel, and long for his love. "Ask!" The asking makes it manifest that you realize your necessity, and if you ask in faith, you will receive. The Lord has pledged his word, and it cannot fail. That you feel and know that you are a sinner is sufficient argument in asking for his mercy and compassion. The condition upon which you may come to God is not that you shall be holy, but that you shall ask God to cleanse you from all sin and purify you from all iniquity. Then why wait longer? Why not take God at his word, and say:--

Here, Lord, I give myself to thee, 'Tis all that I can do?

If Satan comes to cast his shadow between you and God, accusing you of sin, tempting you to distrust God and doubt his mercy, say: I cannot allow my weakness to come between me and God; for he is my strength. My sins, which are many, are laid upon Jesus, my divine Substitute and Sacrifice.

"Nothing in my hand I bring. Simply to thy cross I cling."

No man can look within himself and find anything in his character that will recommend him to God, or make his acceptance sure. It is only through Jesus, whom the Father gave for the life of the world, that the sinner may find access to God. Jesus alone is our Redeemer, our Advocate and Mediator; in him is our only hope for pardon, peace, and righteousness. It is by virtue of the blood of Christ that the sin-stricken soul can be restored to soundness. Christ is the fragrance, the holy incense which makes your petition acceptable to the Father. Then can you not say:--

Just as I am, without one plea, But that thy blood was shed for me, And that thou bid'st me come to Thee, O Lamb of God, I come.

Coming to Christ does not require severe mental effort and agony; it is simply accepting the terms of salvation that God has made plain in his word. The blessing is free to all. The invitation is, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do you spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."

Then come, and seek, and find. The reservoir of power is open, is full and free. Come with humble hearts, not thinking that you must do some good work to merit the favor of God, or that you must make yourself better before you can come to Christ. You are powerless to do good, and cannot better your condition. Apart from Christ we have no merit, no righteousness. Our sinfulness, our weakness, our human imperfection make it impossible that we should appear before God unless we are clothed in Christ's spotless righteousness. We are to be found in him not having our own righteousness, but the righteousness which is in Christ. Then in the name that is above every name, the only name given among men whereby men can be saved, claim the promise of God,

saying, "Lord, forgive my sin; I put my hands into thy hand for help, and I must have it, or perish. I now believe." The Saviour says to the repenting sinner, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "I am thy salvation."

When you respond to the drawing of Christ, and join yourself to him, you manifest saving faith. To talk of religious things in a casual way, to pray for spiritual blessings without real soul hunger and living faith, avails little. The wondering crowd that pressed close about Jesus realized no accession of vital power from the contact. But when the poor, suffering woman, who for twelve years had been an invalid, in her great need put forth her hand and touched the hem of his garment, she felt the healing virtue. Hers was the touch of faith, and Christ recognized that touch. He knew that virtue had gone out from him, and turning about in the throng, he asked, "Who touched me?" Surprised at such a question, the disciples answered, "Master, the multitude throng thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately; and he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." The faith which avails to bring us in vital contact with Christ expresses on our part supreme preference, perfect reliance, entire consecration. This faith works by love and purifies the soul. It works in the life of the follower of Christ true obedience to God's commandments; for love to God and love to man will be the result of vital connection with Christ. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

Jesus says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." Can we conceive of a more intimate relation than this implies? The fibers of the branch are identical with those of the vine. The communication of life, strength, and nourishment from the trunk to the branches is unobstructed and constant. The root sends its nourishment through the branches. Such is the believer's relation to Christ, if he abides in Christ and draws his nourishment from Him. But this spiritual relation between Christ and the soul can be established only through the exercise of personal faith. "Without faith it is impossible to please him;" for it is faith that connects us with the power of heaven, and brings us strength for coping with the powers of darkness. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Faith familiarizes the soul with the existence and presence of God, and, living with an eye single to the glory of God, more and more we discern the

beauty of his character, the excellence of his grace. Our souls become strong in spiritual power; for we are breathing the atmosphere of heaven, and realizing that God is at our right hand, that we shall not be moved. We are rising above the world, beholding him who is the chief among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely, and by beholding we are to become changed into his image. (Concluded next week.)

December 26, 1892

The Way to Christ

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Nothing but divine power can regenerate the human heart and imbue souls with the love of Christ, which will ever manifest itself with love for those for whom he died. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. When a man is converted to God, a new moral taste is supplied, a new motive power is given, and he loves the things that God loves; for his life is bound up by the golden chain of the immutable promises to the life of Jesus. Love, joy, peace, and inexpressible gratitude will pervade the soul, and the language of him who is blessed will be, "Thy gentleness hath made me great."

But those who are waiting to behold a magical change in their characters without determined effort on their part to overcome sin, will be disappointed. We have no reason to fear while looking to Jesus, no reason to doubt but that he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto him; but we may constantly fear lest our old nature will again obtain the supremacy, that the enemy shall devise some snare whereby we shall again become his captives. We are to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure. With our limited powers we are to be as holy in our sphere as God is holy in his sphere. To the extent of our ability, we are to make manifest the truth and love and excellence of the divine character. As wax takes the impression of the seal, so the soul is to take the impression of the Spirit of God and retain the image of Christ.

We are to grow daily in spiritual loveliness. We shall fail often in our efforts to copy the divine pattern. We shall often have to bow down to weep at the feet of Jesus, because of our shortcomings and mistakes; but we are not to be discouraged; we are to pray more fervently, believe more fully, and try again with more steadfastness to grow into the likeness of our Lord. As we distrust our own power, we shall trust the power of our Redeemer, and render praise to God, who is the health of our countenance, and our God.

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 our religion. No one can love Christ and not love his children. When we are united to Christ, we have the mind of Christ. 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. We drink in the love of Christ, as the branch draws nourishment from the vine. If we are grafted in Christ, if fiber by fiber we have been united with the Living Vine, we shall give evidence of the fact by bearing rich clusters of living fruit. If we are connected with the Light, we shall be channels of light, and in our words and works we shall reflect light to the world. Those who are truly Christians are bound with the chain of love which links earth to heaven, which binds finite man to the infinite God. The light that shines in the face of Jesus Christ shines in the hearts of his followers, to the glory of God.

By beholding we are to become changed; and as we meditate upon the perfections of the divine Model, we shall desire to become wholly transformed, and renewed in the image of his purity. It is by faith in the Son of God that transformation takes place in the character, and the child of wrath becomes the child of God. He passes from death unto life; he becomes spiritual and discerns spiritual things. The wisdom of God enlightens his mind, and he beholds wondrous things out of his law. As a man is converted by the truth, the work of transformation of character goes on. He has an increased measure of understanding. In becoming a man of obedience to God, he has the mind of Christ, and the will of God becomes his will.

He who places himself unreservedly under the guidance of the Spirit of God, will find that his mind expands and develops. He obtains an education in the service of God which is not one-sided and deficient, developing a one-sided character, but one which results in symmetry and completeness. Weaknesses that have been manifested in a vacillating will and powerless character, are overcome, for continual devotion and piety bring the man in such close relation to Christ that he has the mind of Christ. He is one with Christ, having soundness and strength of principle. His perception is clear, and he manifests that wisdom which comes from God. Says James, "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom." "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of

them that make peace." This will be the wisdom manifested by him who takes the cup of salvation and calls upon the name of the Lord. This salvation, which offers pardon to the transgressor, presents to him the righteousness that will bear the scrutiny of the omniscient One, gives victory over the powerful enemy of God and man, provides eternal life and joy for its receiver, and may well be a theme of rejoicing to the humble, who hear thereof and are glad.

The beautiful parable that Christ gave of the one lost sheep, of the shepherd that left the ninety and nine to go in search of that which was lost, illustrates the work of Christ, the sinner's condition, and the rejoicing of the universe over the salvation of the soul. The shepherd did not look carelessly over the sheep, and say, "I have ninety and nine, and it will cost me too much trouble to go in search of the straying one, let him come back, and I will open the door of the sheepfold that he may come in; but I cannot go after him." No; no sooner does the sheep go astray than the countenance of the shepherd is filled with grief and anxiety. He counts and recounts the flock, and when he is certain that one sheep is lost, he slumbers not. He leaves the ninety and nine within the fold, and, however dark and tempestuous the night, however perilous and unpleasant the way, however long and tedious the service, he does not weary, he does not falter, until the lost is found. And when it is found, he lays the weary, exhausted sheep on his shoulder, and, with cheerful gratitude that his search has not been in vain, he bears back the wanderer to the fold. His gratitude finds expression in the melodious songs of rejoicing, and he calls upon his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, "Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost." So when a wanderer is found by the great Shepherd of the sheep, heavenly angels respond to the Shepherd's note of joy. When the lost is found, heaven and earth unite in thanksgiving and rejoicing. "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."

January 2, 1893

Chosen in Christ

Many have confused ideas as to what constitutes faith, and they live altogether below their privileges. They confuse feeling and faith, and are continually distressed and perplexed in mind; for Satan takes all possible advantage of their ignorance and inexperience. Through manifold temptations, Satan often succeeds in making the experience of the Christian dark and bitter, according to his evil designs. We are to accept of Christ as our personal Saviour, or we shall fail in our attempt to be overcomers. It will not answer for us to hold ourselves aloof from him, to believe that our friend or our neighbor may have him for a personal Saviour, but that we may not experience his pardoning love. We are to believe that we are chosen of God, to be saved by the exercise of faith, through the grace of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit; and we are to praise and glorify God for such a marvelous manifestation of his unmerited favor. It is the love of God that draws the soul to Christ, to be graciously received, and presented to the Father. Through the work of the Spirit the divine relationship between God and the sinner is renewed. The Father says: "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. I will exercise forgiving love toward them, and bestow upon them my joy. They shall be to me a peculiar treasure; for this people whom I have formed for myself shall show forth my praise."

The Father sets his love upon his elect people who live in the midst of men. These are the people whom Christ has redeemed by the price of his own blood; and because they respond to the drawing of Christ, through the sovereign mercy of God, they are elected to be saved as his obedient children. Upon them is manifested the free grace of God, the love wherewith he hath loved them. Everyone who will humble himself as a little child who will receive and obey the word of God with a child's simplicity, will be among the elect of God. Of the church at Ephesus, the apostle writes:

"Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus

Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him; in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

In the council of heaven, provision was made that men, though transgressors, should not perish in their disobedience, but, through faith in Christ as their substitute and surety, might become the elect of God predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will. God wills that all men should be saved; for ample provision has been made, in giving his only-begotten Son to pay man's ransom. Those who perish will perish because they refuse to be adopted as children of God through Christ Jesus. The pride of man hinders him from accepting the provisions of salvation. But human merit will not admit a soul into the presence of God. That which will make a man acceptable to God is the imparted grace of Christ through faith in his name. No dependence can be placed in works or in happy flights of feelings as evidence that men are chosen of God; for the elect are chosen through Christ.

Jesus says, "Him that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out." When the repenting sinner comes to Christ, conscious of his guilt and unworthiness, realizing that he is deserving of punishment, but relying on the mercy and love of Christ, he will not be turned away. The pardoning love of God is appropriated, and joyful gratitude springs up in his heart for the infinite compassion and love of his Saviour. That provision was made for him in the councils of heaven before the foundation of the world, that Christ should take upon himself the penalty of man's transgression and impute to him his righteousness, overwhelms him with amazement, and calls forth from his lips words of praise and songs of gratitude.

Christ was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. To many it has been a mystery why so many sacrificial offerings were required in the old dispensation, why

so many bleeding victims were led to the altar. But the great truth that was to be kept before men, and imprinted upon mind and heart, was this, "Without shedding of blood is no remission." In every bleeding sacrifice was typified "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Christ himself was the originator of the Jewish system of worship, in which, by types and symbols, were shadowed forth spiritual and heavenly things. Many forgot the true significance of these offerings; and the great truth that through Christ alone there is forgiveness of sin, was lost to them. The multiplying of sacrificial offerings, the blood of bulls and goats, could not take away sin.

In the old dispensation many failed to see the force of the lesson presented to them in sacrifice and offering, and they were without excuse. But today we are living when type has met antitype in the offering of Christ for the sins of the world; we are living in the day of increased light, and yet how few are benefited with the grand and all-important truth that Christ has made an ample sacrifice for all! What justice required, Christ had rendered in the offering of himself, and "how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Those who reject the gift of life will be without excuse; "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."

January 9, 1893

"Seek Those Things Which are Above"

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections 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."

These words are simple and plain, but do we understand them? Do we have a practical knowledge of what they mean? If we do not, as professed followers of Christ, we are to understand that we need to make haste, and place our affections on those things that are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Why are we commanded to do this?--Because if we place our affections on the things of earth, we shall become earthly, common, and evil. Our minds take the level of the things on which our thoughts dwell, and if we think upon earthly things, we shall fail to take the impress of that which is heavenly. We would be greatly benefited by contemplating the mercy, goodness, and love of God; but we sustain great loss by dwelling upon those things which are earthly and temporal. We allow sorrow and care and perplexity to attract our minds to earth, and we magnify a molehill into a mountain. In speaking of that which we are called upon to endure, Paul says: "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look"--at our difficulties, while we magnify our trials, and think only of our hardships? No, but "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."

Temporal things are not to engage our whole attention, or engross our minds until our thoughts are entirely of the earth and the earthly. We are to train, discipline, and educate the mind so that we may think in a heavenly channel, that we may dwell on things unseen and eternal, which will be discerned by spiritual vision. It is by seeing Him who is invisible that we may obtain strength of mind and vigor of spirit. This is the way in which Daniel received strength. He was called to act a part in the first place in the kingdom of Babylon, and proved himself a noble statesman in all his connection with the court. He lived a noble life, and presented a worthy example. His eye was

fastened on things unseen and eternal. He realized that he was fighting in the sight of the heavenly intelligences, and his dependence was in God.

We may not be called upon to act a part in public affairs, but in whatever place we are called by the providence of God, we may confidently expect that God will be our helper. We are not to be a toy to circumstances, but to be above circumstances. We are not to be controlled by circumstances. When we are placed in trying positions, and find things about us that we do not like, that try our patience, and test our faith, we are not to sink down in despondency, but to take a firmer hold upon God, and prove that we are not setting our affection on things on the earth, but on things above; that we are looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Jesus is to be the beginning and the end, the first and the last. He is to be our strength in every time of trial. God must be our sole dependence. When we drop God out of our reckoning, and cease to place our affections upon him, we deprive ourselves of great benefit. We cannot afford to do this, and God cannot afford to have us do it! Why?--Because we have been bought with an infinite price, even with the precious blood of his only-begotten Son. God cannot afford to have us glorify the powers of darkness by turning our eyes upon things seen and temporal; for instead of being workers together with him, we cast our influence on the side of the enemy.

You are to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, at the same time realizing that it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. When we are laborers together with God, we cannot set our affections upon things below; for where our affections are, our thoughts will be; and where our thoughts are, there will be our treasure. When we dwell upon things seen and temporal, we fail to obtain divine knowledge, as did Daniel. What is our position today? Are we learners in the school of Christ, earnestly seeking to know what is the will of God concerning us? How many in this congregation believe that Christ is their personal Saviour? How many can say, "He saves me"? I know that he wants that I should be saved. He looks upon me as of value in his sight, and therefore I know that my thoughts, my words, and my works, all pass in review before him. Everything that is connected with the purchase of the blood of Christ is of value in the sight of God. By the price paid for our redemption we are under obligation to devote our entire affections to Christ. We are to give God all there is of us; and in giving to God our all, are we to consider that we sustain a great loss?--No, for in giving to him our talents, we are doubling them. Every gift he has given to us, when returned to him, receives his blessing, that it may have increased

influence in the work of God. Wherever you may be, you are to realize that you belong to Christ, and that your influence is to be as far-reaching as eternity.

At one time a lawyer came to Jesus, and said, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Is there anyone here that wants that question answered? Jesus turned the question back upon the questioner, and said unto him, "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" The lawyer answered him in a way that made manifest that he understood what the law comprehended. He quoted the words found in Deuteronomy and Leviticus, and said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart [not giving half to the world and a third to self, but all to God. Will there be anything left for the world?] and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live." Our whole being is required in the service of God. No reservation is to be made. But someone says, "Well, I do not know how I would succeed in the things of this world were I to carry out this instruction." You would succeed much better; for you would find that godliness is profitable unto all things, providing that which is essential for your welfare in this world and your happiness in the next. You would succeed much better; for you would have God to work with you. You would live as seeing him who is invisible, realizing that you were working in the sight of the unseen world.

This is the way in which Moses succeeded. He lived as seeing Him who is invisible, and was therefore able to count the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. If men would live in this way, we should see their faces aglow with the glory of God; for they would be viewing the glory of the eternal, and by beholding, would be transformed into the image of Christ. But instead of this, how general is forgetfulness of God! How few are constantly beholding the unseen Guest, realizing that he is at their right hand! How many ignore his presence! Did we treat others as we treat Jesus, what discourtesy it would be thought!

Suppose a friend were with us, and we should meet an acquaintance on the way and direct our whole attention to our new-found acquaintance, ignoring the presence of our friend, what opinion would men have of our loyalty to our friend, of our degree of respect to him? And yet this is the way we treat Jesus. We forget that he is our companion. We engage in conversation, and never mention his name or include his instruction in our words. We talk of worldly business matters, and where it does not bruise the soul, where it is essential, we do not dishonor Jesus, but we do dishonor him

when we fail to mention him in our intercourse with our friends and associates. He is our best friend, and we should seek for opportunities to speak of him. We should ever remember that he is at our right hand, that we should not be moved, and we should ever keep him in view. Our conversation should be of a character that would be of no offense to God. We are to be overcomers, copartners with Jesus, not lending our influence to the work of the enemy. Although "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," yet not a soul of us will be saved who fails to cooperate with God. Although our salvation is dependent upon our cooperation with God, yet we can take no glory to ourselves; for Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith; all the glory is to rebound to God. Christ is the beginning and the end, and we are utterly dependent upon him.

Jesus says, "Without me ye can do nothing." Since this is our position, shall we permit our minds to wander to the ends of the earth? Shall we spend our probationary time in jesting and joking? Shall we fail to realize that it is a solemn thing to live? Men generally agree that it is a solemn thing to die; but it is a far more solemn thing to live. Why?--Because every soul surrounds itself with an atmosphere that has a telling influence upon those with whom we are brought in contact. Many gather to themselves the atmosphere that breathes from the powers of darkness. Even professed followers of Christ often permit the hellish shadow of Satan to interpose between the soul and God. Their thoughts, their words are of a cheap, common order, and they give others the impression that religion is a cheap thing. Oh, we cannot afford to give any such instruction! We who may be imbued with the Spirit of Christ, who may have his love in our hearts, his vivifying influence in our souls, should shed upon men a beneficial influence. We should be copartners with Jesus. He says:

"As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."

These are the truths upon which we should dwell. Our bodies are built up from what we feed upon, and our minds, our experiences, will be after the order of that which composes our spiritual food. Jesus says: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

January 16, 1893

"Seek Those Things Which are Above"

We are looking forward to the change from mortality to immortality; but what more can we have than it is now our privilege to have? We may have Jesus abiding in our hearts by faith. He died on Calvary's cross, that he might abide in you, and you in him. We may have the presence of Christ with us, as had Daniel in Babylon. God gave him wisdom in all knowledge, and he had understanding in all mysteries. But we may be as was Daniel. The Source of Wisdom is open to us. We may come to God, we may grow in wisdom.

There is no need of our being ignorant. James says, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." The exhortation is given, "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." How is it possible that we may grow in grace? It is possible to us only as we empty our hearts of self, and present them to heaven, to be moulded after the divine Pattern. We may have a connection with the living Channel of Light; we may be refreshed with the heavenly dew, and have the showers of heaven descend upon us. As we appropriate the blessing of God, we shall be able to receive greater measures of his grace. As we learn to endure as seeing him who is invisible, we shall become changed into the image of Christ. The grace of Christ will not make us proud, cause us to be lifted up in self, but we shall become meek and lowly in heart. It was the grace of Christ that made Moses the meekest man on earth. As we learn of the divine Master, we shall manifest this precious attribute. How long did it take Moses to learn the lesson of meekness, and become fitted to be a general to lead the armies of Israel out of Egypt? He went through a long discipline. For forty years he tended sheep in the land of Midian, learning how to be a good shepherd to the flock. In his position of shepherd he was called upon to care for the weak, to guide the wayward, to seek for the wandering. This was an essential training for him who was to be the leader of Israel; for in the care of the flock of God he would be called upon to nourish the weak, to instruct the wayward, and to bring the lost one back to the fold. This is the work of the follower of Christ. We are to watch for souls as they that must give an account, to do all in our power that those with whom we associate may grow to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus.

We are to realize to what we are called in Christ; for by faith we are to attain unto his righteousness. Since this is the standard for our attainment, how can any of us be satisfied with our present attainments? If we have been dwelling upon things seen and temporal, let us turn our attention to the things unseen and eternal. Let us not wait for a revival in the church, or for special conviction; but, realizing our need, and knowing that all heaven is at our command, let us now yield our hearts to God. Let us not think that we may wait until some Conference meeting, until a large company is called forward, to seek God's blessing. It is best for us to be awake individually, today yielding our hearts to God. Decide now to dedicate yourself to him, not only as a congregation, but as individuals; decide to seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Do not wait one for another. Do not look about you to see if your neighbor is going to make the surrender, but, realizing that each one of us must give an account of himself to God, that we have a living Saviour, who is our substitute and surety, draw nigh to God.

The word of the Lord says, "Draw nigh to God, and" perhaps he will draw nigh to you? No, the promise is, "He will draw nigh to you." God does not do anything for man without his cooperation. He draws you by the tender cords of his love, and as you respond to this drawing, you draw nigh to him. As you are seeking his face, the angels minister unto you. He has at his command ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of angels. They are constantly ascending and descending; for are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation? They are ministering in the cities, towns, and villages. They receive their commission from God, whose eye beholds all things; and when a soul is in discouragement, he sends help from heaven, even before the prayer for help is uttered. Before we ask, he commissions his ministers to go forth with divine aid. During the sleepless nights I have passed through the months of my illness, I have taken indescribable comfort in these thoughts. As soon as my mind was fixed on Jesus, the clouds of darkness were transformed, and all was light in the Lord. My soul was melted with his love. Fix the eyes upon Jesus, and say, "Lead me, guide me." Your prayer will ascend before the Father as fragrant incense; for the merit of Christ will make it of value before God.

When Christ's righteousness is your plea, you will be accepted in the Beloved. Jesus encourages us to present his merit at the throne. He says, "If ye ask anything in my name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." Oh, educate the soul to believe the promises of God. Would he make such promises if he did not love us? We

are his purchased property; bought at an infinite price. Would you know the manner of love that has been bestowed upon you? I point you to the cross of Calvary. "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." Christ died in behalf of the world. Our Heavenly Father has valued us at the price of Jesus, and, having been bought at such a cost, what right have we to spend our God-given capabilities in the service of the world and sin? What right have we to fritter away our time, to use our talents in aiding the work of the powers of darkness? "Set your affections on things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

It means something to be a Christian, a joint heir with Jesus Christ. To what?--To an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. But are we preparing for such an inheritance when the mind is all full of lightness and trifling and folly, when we devote our God-given time to that which has no substantial value? We need the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said to his disciples, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.... When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you."

We are to commune with God through the agency of the Holy Spirit; and when we pray, the Spirit helpeth our infirmities. The plow-share of truth must go deep. We are full of self, satisfied with our condition. Jesus says, "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; 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." We must fall on the Rock and be broken, and then the Spirit of God will take possession of us, and mould us after the divine Pattern.

Then make the surrender at once. Don't wait till you get home, but make it manifest that you realize what is required of you. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." You are to set your affections upon God. In order to do this it is not necessary to sound a trumpet before you, to make a proclamation to the world that you have turned from darkness to light, and that you do not wish anyone to come near you

to cast a cloud of darkness over you. Religion means the making of a daily consecration of yourself to God; it means meekness and lowliness of heart; it means to take everything that comes to you as a blessing, to let praise flow back to God. The Lord says, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." As we praise God, the soul becomes strong in spiritual power.

At morning, noon, and night we should meditate upon the goodness and love of God, that we may know God; for this is life eternal. The Father has given the best gift, the greatest treasure of heaven, to us, and we are of value to God, and should render praise to him. But when we surround ourselves with a dark atmosphere, we forget that the Father knows our trials, and has sent them to us in love. The praise that should reach him never comes to his throne; for our affections are not centered upon him.

We should lay hold upon God with all our strength, and love him with undivided heart. Do not look to see what others are doing, but be yourself a copartner with him, a laborer together with God, a partaker of the divine nature. We are to consecrate ourselves to God, to help others, to surround ourselves with a fragrant atmosphere. Our words are to be cheerful and kind; we are to come heart to heart as members of the family of Christ. We are to be one, as Christ is one with the Father. Let us seek for this oneness, and by and by we shall see him as he is, and enjoy his presence through the ceaseless ages of eternity. We shall have the life that measures with the life of God. It will take all eternity to comprehend the science of redemption, to understand something of what it means that the Son of the infinite God gave his life for the life of the world. Then shall we not seek for glory, honor and eternal life? Shall we not make it our first business? We can have but a short lifetime here, but the life to come is eternal. We may attain unto this through daily consecration of ourselves to God, through the aid of the Holy Spirit, through following the example of Christ, who was tempted in all points like as we are, yet who sinned not, that he might be able to succor those who are tempted. Let us come to the throne of infinite love, and there wait and watch to see the fulfillment of the promises of God. Make your appeal to heaven, knowing that what God hath said he will do, and will make his light shine through you to others. You may not know that you are giving light to others, but God will know it. To those on the right hand the Lord will say: "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 thee, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." They did not know that they were doing good to others; for it was the Spirit of Christ that wrought with them, and others took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus, and learned of him. Let us have personal religion, and become rooted and grounded in love.

While the Conference was assembled at South Lancaster, Mass., a faithful old sister was dying, and she sent in this message to those assembled, "The anchor holds." This is what we want, a hope that we can cast like an anchor, entering into that which is within the veil. We want to be able to bear testimony that the anchor holds in the time of sickness, trial, or bereavement. In our darkest hours we want to be able to see matchless charms in Jesus, to set our affections on things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God, that our life may be hid with Christ in God, that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we also may appear with him in glory.

January 23, 1893

Our Obligation to Improve Our Talents

From this far distant field of Australia I would address you in America, asking to what use you are putting your intrusted talents? Every talent is to be returned to the Master with interest; for the Lord has a work for one and all to do, which, if performed, will result in the accumulation of talent and blessing. All are called upon to work while it is day; for the night cometh, in which no man can work. There are towns and villages and cities that are white already to harvest; but where are the reapers? Seed sowers are needed, and the reapers should be ready to follow after. Time is short, and there is need of earnest laborers to go all through Michigan, for in this State especially the fields are white for the harvest.

Let not the work that needs to be done wait for the ordination of ministers. If there are not ministers to take up the work, let men of intelligence, with no thought of how they can accumulate the most property, establish themselves in these cities and towns, and lift up the standard of the cross, using the knowledge they have gained in winning souls to the truth. The knowledge of the truth is altogether too precious to be hoarded up, and bound about, and hid in the earth. Even the one talent intrusted by the Master is to be faithfully employed to gain other talents also. Where are the men and women who have been refreshed with rich streams of blessing from the throne of God? Let them ask themselves what they have done to communicate this light to those who have not had like advantages? How will those who have neglected to use their talents stand in the judgment, when every motive will be brought under scrutiny? The heavenly Master has committed to every one of his servants talents. "And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability."

God has not given talents to merely a chosen few, but to everyone he has committed some peculiar gift to be used in his service. Many to whom the Lord has given precious talents have refused to employ them for the advancement of the kingdom of God; nevertheless, they are under obligation to God for their use of his gifts. Everyone, whether serving God or pleasing himself, is a possessor of some trust, whose proper use will bring glory to God and whose perverted use will rob the Giver. That the

possessor of talents does not acknowledge God's claims upon him, does not make his guilt the less. If he chooses to stand under the black banner of the prince of darkness through this life, he will stand unconfessed by Christ in the day of final accounts.

"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 ransom money has been paid for every son and daughter of Adam, and that those who have been ransomed by the precious blood of Christ, refuse allegiance to him, will not shield them from the retribution that will come upon them in the last day. They will have to answer for their neglect to use their intrusted talents for the Master. They will have to answer for their reproaches against their Maker and Redeemer, and for their robbery of God in withholding their talents from his service, and burying their Lord's goods in the earth.

The human family is composed of responsible moral agents, and from the highest and most gifted to the lowest and most obscure, all are invested with the goods of heaven. Time is an intrusted gift of God, and is to be diligently employed in the service of Christ. Influence is a gift of God, and is to be exerted for the forwarding of the highest, noblest purposes. Christ died on Calvary's cross that all our influence might be used to lift him up before a perishing world. Those who behold the Majesty of heaven dying on the cross for their transgressions, will value their influence only as it draws men to Christ, and they will use it for this purpose only. Intellect is an intrusted talent. Sympathy and affection are talents to be sacredly guarded and improved, that we may render service to Him whose purchased possession we are.

All that we are or can be belongs to God. Education, discipline, and skill in every line should be used for him. The capital is his, and the improvement is the usury that rightfully belongs to the Master. Whether the amount intrusted is large or small, the Lord requires that his householders do their best. It is not the amount intrusted or the improvement made that brings to men the approbation of heaven, but it is the faithfulness, the loyalty to God, the loving service rendered, that brings the divine benediction, "Well done, 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." This reward of joy does not wait until our entrance into the city of God, but the faithful servant has a foretaste of it even in this life.

Instead of burying our talents in the earth, those who are willing to trade upon

them, will not trade in vain. God pronounces his blessing upon unselfish, unwearied diligence; and though we may have but one talent, and can make but a small investment, yet God will make the effort fruitful in results. The man who works in faith will realize that his intellect, his affections, his whole power, belongs to God, and he will seek to make diligent use of his powers, and will improve his faculties and talents. But, instead of realizing that all our faculties belong to God, how many are reckless, little thinking that their influence, their cheap, light words, are moulding the characters of those with whom they associate, and bringing down their minds to a low level. If they did but understand what they are doing, and could realize that they are accountable for their influence, and that in the sight of heaven they are wasting their opportunities, would they so belittle their talents of speech and mind, and so mould the minds of their companions to what is low and ignoble, by their trifling, cheap conversation? It is by the influence of reckless triflers that the confederacy of evil is strengthened and the intrusted talents of God are corrupted and buried in the earth.

But the very talents that men pervert to the service of evil have been bestowed by the Lord for their elevation and the elevation of those with whom they associate. Through the exercise of the faculties of the mind, through the power of speech, they are to be constantly improving, and feeding other minds with rich, intellectual food, thus becoming a blessing to the world. Shall we not individually make the best possible use of the natural powers of mind and body? Shall we not carefully treasure every intrusted talent, and by exercise strengthen every faculty, and live in such a way that the young and inexperienced and the aged and experienced shall be benefited by association with us?

The atmosphere that surrounds the soul is fraught with influence for good or evil according to the character of the thoughts. It may be full of poison and malaria, or be fragrant and pure and health giving. This moral influence will be according to our connection with Christ or our separation from him, who is light and life. Those who are united with Christ will realize that he has given them trusts according to their several ability; and, whatever their surroundings, they will consider them favorable for the development of moral character. We are to make the most of every advantage and opportunity. We may continually remember that we must train and improve our ability that we may not disappoint our Master, but reach the highest possible standard, and thus influence others to follow in the footsteps of our Example. We may say, "Neither society nor intimate companions must have their ideas of Christian character cheapened

by my course of action." Those who take and keep this position will find that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Such will receive the commendation, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

In the work of disseminating the gospel, Christ sent his disciples out by two and two. In our efforts we should follow the plan of our Master. There are many that think it would be more advantageous to scatter our forces as much as possible so as to take in as much territory as possible; but Christ's way is best, and it will always result in loss to follow other methods than his. If two workers could come to this distant field, qualified by the Holy Spirit, and would deny self and take up the cross and follow Jesus, making it manifest that they were true disciples, an important work could be accomplished in the cities and their suburbs. We desire that men and women should come to these fields who have a knowledge of the truth, who are not as children tossed to and fro, who want not a pleasant time, but who are willing to carry burdens.

Oh! that the Lord would baptize men and women who were once in darkness and have seen great light, with his Holy Spirit, that they may realize their duty to let the light shine forth to others who are in darkness.

The advantages of you who have heard the truth in America have been great; but what use are you making of your privileges? What are you doing with your talents? Are you putting them out to the exchangers? Have you treasured up the truth in good and honest hearts, accepting the light ray after ray as it has come to you, and do you feel under obligation to diffuse the light you have received? Do you comprehend what the Lord would impress upon you by the parable of the talents? The Lord committed to every man talents according to his ability, and all were to trade upon these intrusted goods. By doing as their Lord commanded, they doubled their talents. But there was one who had but one talent intrusted to him, and he went and wrapped it in a napkin, and hid it in the earth; and when the Master returned and reckoned with his servants, he returned the talent to his Lord, bearing false witness against his Master, accusing him of being a hard man, who reaped where he had not sown, and gathered where he had not strewn, and he made this misapprehension of his Lord's character an excuse for his slothfulness. But the Lord penetrated his disguises and answered him according to his estimate:

"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. Take therefore the talent from him, and give unto him that hath ten talents. For unto everyone that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

But upon those who faithfully employed their talents, and who by wise use of their gifts doubled their ability, the Lord pronounced his divine benediction. To them he said, "Well done, 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."

January 30, 1893

Benefits of Bible Study

"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." In the word of God is contained everything essential to the perfecting of the man of God. It is like a treasure house, full of valuable and precious stores, but we do not appreciate its riches, nor realize the necessity of equipping ourselves with the treasures of truth. We do not realize the great necessity of searching the Scriptures for ourselves. Many neglect the study of the word of God in order to pursue some worldly interest, or to indulge in some trifling pleasure. A passing affair is made an excuse for ignorance of the Scriptures given by inspiration of God. Oh, we might better put off anything of an earthly character than the investigation of the word of God, which is able to make us wise unto life eternal.

"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 claims to our reverent attention. Superficial study of the word of God cannot meet the claims it has upon us, nor furnish us with the benefit that is promised. We should seek to learn the full meaning of the words of truth, and to drink deep the spirit of the holy oracles. To read daily a certain number of chapters, or to commit to memory a stipulated amount of Scripture, without careful thought as to the meaning of the text, will profit but little. To study one passage until its significance is clear to the mind, and its relation to the plan of salvation is evident, is of more value than the perusal of many chapters with no definite purpose in view and no positive instruction gained. We cannot obtain wisdom from the word of God without giving earnest and prayerful attention to its study. It is true that some portions of Scripture are, indeed, too plain to be misunderstood; but there are many portions whose meaning cannot be seen at a glance; for the truth does not lie upon the surface. In order to understand the meaning of such passages, scripture must be compared with scripture; there must be careful research and prayerful reflection. Such study will be richly repaid. As the miner discovers precious veins of 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 the greatest value which are concealed from the careless seeker.

You must dig in the mine of truth till you find its richest treasure, and by comparing scripture with scripture you may find the true meaning of the text. But if you do not make the sacred teachings of God's word the rule and guide of your life, the truth will be nothing to you. Truth is efficient only as it is carried out in practical life. If the word of God condemns some habit you have indulged, a feeling you have cherished, a spirit you have manifested, turn not from the word of God, but turn away from the evil of your doings, and let Jesus cleanse and sanctify your heart. Confess your faults, and forsake them wholly and determinedly, believing the promises of God, and showing your faith by your works. If the truths of the Bible are woven into practical life, they will bring the mind up from earthliness and debasement. Those who are conversant with the Scriptures will be men and women who exert an elevating influence.

In searching for heaven-revealed truths, the Spirit of God is brought into close connection with the sincere searcher of the Scriptures. An understanding of the revealed will of God enlarges the mind, expands, elevates, and endows it with new vigor, by bringing its faculties into contact with stupendous truth. No study is better to give energy to the mind, to strengthen the intellect, than the study of the word of God. No other book is so potent in elevating the thoughts, in giving vigor to the faculties, as is the Bible, which contains the most ennobling truths. If God's word were studied as it should be, we would see breadth of mind, stability of purpose, nobility of character, such as is rarely seen in these times.

But the study of the word of God is made a secondary consideration, and a great loss is sustained thereby. The understanding takes the level of the things with which it becomes familiar. If all would make the Bible their study, we would see a people who were better developed, who were capable of thinking more deeply, who would manifest greater intelligence than those who have earnestly studied apart from the Bible the sciences and histories of the world. The Bible gives the true seeker for truth an advanced mental discipline, and he comes from contemplation of divine things with his faculties enriched; self is humbled, while God and his revealed truth are exalted. It is because men are unacquainted with the precious Bible histories that there is so much lifting up of man and so little honor given to God.

The Bible contains that which will give the Christian vigor of spirit and intellect. The Psalmist says, "The entrance of thy word giveth light; it giveth understanding unto

the simple." The Bible is a wonderful book. It is a history that opens up to us the past centuries. Without the Bible we would have been left to conjectures and fables in regard to the occurrences of past ages. It is a prophecy that unveils the future. It is the word of God unfolding to us the plan of salvation, pointing out the way by which we may escape eternal death and gain eternal life. Of all the books that flood the world, however valuable, the Bible is the Book of books, most deserving of our study and admiration. It gives not only the history of this world but a description of the world to come. It contains instruction concerning the wonders of the universe, it reveals to our understanding the character of the Author of the heavens and the earth. In it is the revelation of God to man.

The searching of all books of philosophy and science cannot do for the mind and morals what the searching of the Bible can do, if its teaching is made practical. He who studies the Bible holds converse with patriarchs and prophets. He comes in contact with truth clothed in elevated language, which exerts a fascinating power over the mind and lifts the thought from the things of earth to the glory of the future immortal life. What wisdom of man can compare with the revelation of the grandeur of God? Finite man who knows not God, seeks to lessen the value of the Scriptures, claiming that their supposed knowledge of science will not harmonize with the word of God; but the word of God is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path.

February 6, 1893

Blessings of Bible Study

Those who boast of wisdom beyond the teaching of the word of God, need to drink deeper of the fountain of knowledge, that they may learn their real ignorance. Men boast of their wisdom when it is foolishness in the sight of God. Let no man deceive himself. "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, he taketh the wise in their own craftiness." The greatest ignorance that now curses the human race is in regard to the binding claims of the law of God; and this ignorance is the result of neglecting the study of the word of God. It is Satan's plan to so engage the mind that men shall neglect the great guidebook, and thus be led into the path of transgression and destruction.

The Bible is not exalted to its place among the books of the world, although its study is of infinite importance to the souls of men. In searching its pages the imagination beholds scenes majestic and eternal. We behold Jesus, the Son of God, coming to our world, and engaging in the mysterious conflict that discomfited the powers of darkness. Oh, how wonderful, how almost incredible it is, that the infinite God would consent to the humiliation of his own Son that we might be elevated to a place with him upon his throne! Let every student of the Scriptures contemplate this great fact, and he will not come from a study of the Bible without being purified, elevated, and ennobled. The truth will be opened to the mind, and applied to the heart by the Spirit of God. Through connection with God the Christian will have clearer and broader views, unbiased by his own preconceived opinions. His discernment will be more penetrating, his judgment be better balanced and far seeing. His understanding, exercised in contemplation of exalted truths, will be expanded, and in obtaining heavenly knowledge, he will better understand his own weakness and grow in faith and humility. When there is little attention given to the word of God, divine counsels are not heeded, admonitions are in vain, grace and heavenly wisdom are not sought that past sins may be avoided, and every stain of corruption may be cleansed from the character. David prayed: "Make me to understand the way of thy precepts; so shall I talk of thy wondrous works." "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

There is a great work to be done by earnest Bible students, for gems of truth are to be gathered up, and separated from the companionship of error. Though the Bible is a revelation from heaven, yet many do not comprehend its divine teaching. We are to discover new aspects of truth in both Old and New Testaments, to behold the exceeding breadth and compass of truths which we imagine we understand, but of which we have only a superficial knowledge. He who earnestly searches the Scriptures will see that harmony exists between the various parts of the Bible, will discover the bearing of one passage upon another, and the reward of his toil will be exceedingly precious.

All over the field of revelation are scattered glad springs of heavenly truth, of peace and joy. These glad springs of truth are within the reach of every seeker. The words of inspiration, pondered in the heart, will be as living streams flowing from the river of the water of life. Our Saviour prayed that the mind of his followers might be opened to understand the Scriptures. Whenever we study the Bible with a prayerful heart, the Holy Spirit is near to open us the meaning of the words we read. The man whose mind is enlightened by the opening of God's word to his understanding, will not only feel that he must more diligently seek to understand the word of God, but that he must have a better understanding of the sciences. He will feel that he is called to a high calling in Christ Jesus. The more closely connected man is with the Source of all knowledge and wisdom, the more he will be convinced that he must advance in intellectual and spiritual attainment. The opening of God's word is always followed by a remarkable opening and strengthening of man's faculties; for the entrance of God's words giveth light. By contemplation of great truths the mind is elevated, the affections purified and refined; for the Spirit of God through the truth of God quickens the lifeless spiritual faculties, and attracts the soul heavenward.

Then take your Bible and present yourself before your Heavenly Father, saying, "Enlighten me; teach me what is truth." The Lord will regard your prayer, and the Holy Spirit will impress the truth upon your soul. In searching the Scriptures for yourself, you will become established in the faith. It is of the greatest importance that you continually search the Scriptures, storing the mind with the word of God, for you may be separated from the companionship of Christians, and placed where you will not have the privilege of meeting with the children of God. You need the treasures of God's word hidden in your heart, that when opposition comes upon you, you may bring everything to the Scriptures.

Truth is eternal, and conflict with error will only make manifest its strength. We should never refuse to examine the Scriptures with those who we have a reason to believe desire to know what is truth as much as we do. Suppose a brother holds a view that differs from yours, and he comes to you, proposing that you sit down with him and investigate that point in the Scriptures; should you rise up filled with prejudice, and condemn his ideas, while refusing to give him a candid hearing? The only right way would be to sit down as Christians and investigate the position presented in the light of God's word, which will reveal truth and unmask error. To ridicule his ideas would not weaken his position, though it were false, or strengthen your position, though it were true. If the pillars of our faith will not stand the test of investigation, it is time that we knew it, for it is foolish to become set in our ideas, and think that no one should interfere with our opinions. Let everything be brought to the Bible; for it is the only rule of faith and doctrine.

We must study the truth for ourselves; no living man should be relied upon to think for us, no matter who he may be or in what position he may be placed. We are not to look upon any man as a perfect criterion for us. We are to counsel together, and be subject one to another, but at the same time we are to exercise the ability God has given us to learn what is truth. Each one of us must look to God for divine enlightenment, that we may individually develop a character that will stand the test in the day of God.

We are living in the last days, when error of a most deceptive character is accepted and believed, while truth is discarded. Many are drifting into darkness and infidelity, picking flaws with the Bible, bringing in superstitious inventions, unscriptural theories, and speculations of vain philosophy; but it is the duty of everyone to seek a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. The importance and benefit of Bible study cannot be overestimated. In searching the Scriptures our minds are caused to dwell upon the infinite sacrifice of Christ, on his mediation in our behalf. As we see his love, as we meditate upon his humiliation and sufferings, the same spirit of self-denial and sacrifice for the good of others will be kindled in our hearts. As we behold Jesus by the eye of faith, we shall be "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

February 13, 1893

The Plan of Salvation

The law of love is the foundation of God's government, and the service of love the only service acceptable to heaven. God has granted freedom of will to all, endowed men with capacity to appreciate his character, and therefore with ability to love him and to choose his service. So long as created beings worshiped God they were in harmony throughout the universe. While love to God was supreme, love to others abounded. As there was no transgression of the law, which is the transcript of God's character, no note of discord jarred the celestial harmonies.

But known unto God are all his works, and from eternal ages the covenant of grace (unmerited favor) existed in the mind of God. It is called the everlasting covenant; for the plan of salvation was not conceived after the fall of man, but it was that which was "kept in silence through times eternal, but now is manifested and by the Scriptures of the prophets according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known unto all the nations unto obedience of faith."

The purpose and plan of grace existed from all eternity. Before the foundation of the world it was according to the determinate counsel of God that man should be created and endowed with power to do the divine will. The fall of man, with all its consequences, was not hidden from the Omnipotent. Redemption was not an after thought, a plan formulated after the fall of Adam, but an eternal purpose, suffered to be wrought out for the blessing, not only of this atom of a world, but for the good of all the worlds that God had created.

Before Him who ruleth in the heavens, the mysteries of the past and future are alike outspread, and God sees beyond the woe and darkness and ruin that sin has wrought, the outworking of his purpose of love and blessing. Though clouds and darkness are round about him, yet righteousness and judgment are the foundation of his throne.

Through creation and redemption, through nature and through Christ, the glories of the divine character are revealed. By the marvelous display of his love in giving "his

only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," the character of God is revealed to the intelligences of the universe. Through Christ our Heavenly Father is made known as the God of love.

When man sinned, all heaven was filled with sorrow; for through yielding to temptation, man became the enemy of God, a partaker of the Satanic nature. The image of God in which he had been created was marred and distorted. The character of man was out of harmony with the character of God; for through sin man became carnal, and the carnal heart is enmity against God, is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. To the angels there seemed to be no way of escape for the transgressor. They ceased their songs of praise, and throughout the heavenly courts there was mourning for the ruin sin had wrought. Out of harmony with the nature of God, unyielding to the claims of his law, naught but destruction was before the human race. Since the divine law is as changeless as the character of God, there could be no hope for man unless some way could be devised whereby his transgression might be pardoned, his nature renewed, and his spirit restored to reflect the image of God. Divine love had conceived such a plan. It was through Satan's misrepresentation of God's character that man was led to doubt the reality of his love, and came to look upon God as his enemy. As Satan had done in heaven, so he did on earth,--declared God's government unjust, the restrictions of his law unnecessary, and bade man, as he had angels, to throw aside the yoke and let the dictates of their own nature be their only guide and law. He promised liberty; but as he himself is the servant of corruption, he brought the race into bondage, to sin, misery, and death. He represented God as claiming all and giving nothing, as requiring men's service for his own glory, but denying himself nothing for man's good.

In the work of creation, Christ was with God. He was one with God, equal with him, the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person, the representative of the Father. He alone, the Creator of man, could be his Saviour. No angel of heaven could reveal the Father to the sinner, and win him back to allegiance to God. But Christ could manifest the Father's love; for God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. Christ could be the "day's man" between a holy God and lost humanity, one who could "lay his hand upon us both." None but Christ could redeem man from the curse of the law. He proposed to take upon himself the guilt and shame of sin,--sin so offensive in the sight of God that it would necessitate separation from his Father. Christ proposed to reach to the depths of man's degradation and woe, and restore the repenting, believing soul to harmony with God. Christ, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the

world, offered himself as a sacrifice and substitute for the fallen sons of Adam though in this offering all heaven was involved in infinite sacrifice. But the Father so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that through his smitten heart a channel might be found for the outflowing of infinite love for fallen man. Man had become so degraded by sin, his nature so perverted by evil, that it was impossible for him of himself to come into harmony with God, whose nature is purity and love. But Christ redeemed him from the condemnation of the law, and imparted divine power, and through man's cooperation, the sinner could be restored to his lost estate.

The grace of Christ alone could change the heart of stone to a heart of flesh, make it alive unto God, and transform the character, so that a degraded child of sin might become a child of God and heir of heaven. Man had no power to justify the soul, to sanctify the heart. Moral disease could be healed only through the power of the great Physician. The highest gift of heaven, even the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, was able to redeem the lost.

The only hope for the fallen race was found in becoming reconciled to God. Satan had so misrepresented God that man had no true conception of the divine character. Christ came to the world, and in carrying out the plan of salvation, revealed the fact that "God is love."

When the plan of salvation was revealed to the angels, joy, inexpressible joy, filled heaven. The glory and the blessedness of a world redeemed outmeasured even the anguish of the Prince of Life. Through the celestial courts echoed the first strain of that song that angels sang above the hills of Bethlehem,--"Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will to men." And the lost pair in the garden of Eden, standing as criminals before the righteous Judge, waiting the sentence their transgression merited, heard the first notes of the divine promise. Before the life of toil and sorrow which sin had brought upon them was depicted before them, before the decree that the wages of sin is death was pronounced, they heard the promise of redemption. Though they must suffer from the power of their mighty foe, still through the merits of Christ they could look forward to victory. The mystery of the gospel was spoken in Eden, when God said to the serpent, "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." If Satan could have touched the head with his specious temptations, the human family would have been lost; but the Lord had made known the purpose and plan of the mystery of grace, declaring

that Christ had bruised the serpent under his feet.

But not only had man come under the power of the deceiver, but the earth itself, the dominion of man, was usurped by the enemy. Through the plan of salvation, the sacrifice of Christ, not only was man but his dominion to be redeemed. Through the merits of Christ all that man lost through sin was to be restored. The time would come when there would be "no more curse, but the throne of God should be in it, and his servants should serve him." The promise would be fulfilled, "The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell therein forever."

Through the plan of salvation a larger purpose is to be wrought out even than the salvation of man and the redemption of the earth. Through the revelation of the character of God in Christ, the beneficence of the divine government would be manifested before the universe, the charge of Satan refuted, the nature and results of sin made plain, and the perpetuity of the law fully demonstrated. Satan had declared that the law of God was faulty, and that the good of the universe demanded a change in its requirement. In attacking the law, he thought to overthrow the authority of its Author, and gain for himself the supreme allegiance. But through the plan of salvation the precepts of the law were to be proved perfect and immutable, that at last one glory and love might rise to God throughout the universe, ascribing glory and honor and praise to him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb forever and ever. (To be Continued.)

February 20, 1893

The Plan of Salvation

To fallen man was revealed the plan of infinite sacrifice through which salvation was to be provided. Nothing but the death of God's dear Son could expiate man's sin, and Adam marveled at the goodness of God in providing such a ransom for the sinner. Through the love of God, a star of hope illumined the terrible future that spreads before the transgressor. Through the institution of the typical system of sacrifice and offering, the death of Christ was ever to be kept before guilty man, that he might better comprehend the nature of sin, the results of transgression, and the merit of the divine offering. Had there been no sin, man would never have known death. But in the innocent offering slain by his own hand, he beheld the fruits of sin,—the death of the Son of God in his behalf. He sees the immutable character of the law he has transgressed, and confesses his sin; he relies upon the merits of the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world.

The plan of saving sinners through Christ alone was the same in the days of Adam, Noah, Abraham, and in every successive generation that lived before the advent of Christ, as it is in our day. The patriarchs, the prophets, the martyrs from righteous Abel, looked forward to a coming Saviour, and they showed their faith in him by sacrifices and offerings. The sacrifice of beasts shadowed forth the sinless offering of God's dear Son, and pointed forward to his death upon the cross. But at the crucifixion type met antitype, and the typical system there ceased.

The Son of God is the center of the great plan of redemption which covers all dispensations. He is the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." He is the Redeemer of the fallen sons and daughters of Adam in all ages of human probation. "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Christ is the substance or body which casts its shadow back into former dispensations. When Christ died, the shadow ceased. At the death of Christ the typical system was done away, but the law of God, whose violation had made the plan of salvation necessary, was magnified and made honorable. The gospel was good tidings of great joy to Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses; for it presented to them a coming Saviour. A more clear and glorious light now shines upon

the Christian. Those who lived before the coming of Christ looked forward by faith to his coming, but what had to be grasped by faith by them is assurance to us; for we know that Christ has come, as foretold by the prophets. It is just as essential for us to have faith in our Redeemer, who came to earth and died our sacrifice, as it was for the ancients to believe in a Redeemer to come, represented by their offerings and sacrifices.

In becoming man's substitute, in bearing the curse which should fall upon man, Christ has pledged himself in behalf of the race to maintain the sacred and exalted honor of his Father's law. He came to convince men of sin, which is the transgression of the law, and through divine mediation bring them back to obedience to God's commandments. God has given the world into the hands of Christ, that he may completely vindicate the binding claims of the law, and make manifest the holiness of every principle. Christ was the Father's "appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." He was the "brightness of his glory, the express image of his person." And he upheld "all things by the word of his power." He possessed divine excellency and greatness. It pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell. And Christ "thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Yet Jesus exchanged a throne of light and glory which he had with his Father, counting it not a thing to be desired to be equal with God, while man was lost in sin and misery. He came from heaven to earth, clothed his divinity with humanity, and bore the curse as surety for the fallen race. He was not compelled to do this; but he chose to bear the results of man's transgression that man might escape eternal death.

The coming of Christ to our world was a great event, not only to this world, but to all the worlds in the universe of God. Before the heavenly intelligences he was to take upon himself our nature, to be tempted in all points like as we are, and yet to leave an example of perfect purity and unblemished character.

Satan and his angels exulted as they discovered that the Son of God had taken upon himself the nature of man, and had come to be man's substitute, to engage in the conflict in our behalf. The human family had been overpowered by the deception of the enemy; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, and the enemy hoped that Christ also would become a victim to his seductive wiles. Satan gloried in the opportunity of besieging the Son of God with fierce temptations. Because he had taken upon himself the nature of man, Satan deemed that his victory was certain, and with every malignant device in his power he strove to overcome Christ. The steadfast

resistance of Christ to the temptations of the enemy brought the whole confederacy of evil to war against him. Evil men and evil angels united their forces against the Prince of Peace. The issues at stake were beyond the comprehension of men, and the temptations that assailed Christ were as much more intense and subtle than those which assail man as his character was purer and more exalted than is the character of man in his moral and physical defilement. In his conflict with the prince of darkness in this atom of a world, Christ had to meet the whole confederacy of evil, the united forces of the adversary of God and man; but at every point he met the tempter, and put him to flight. Christ was conqueror over the powers of darkness, and took the infinite risk of consenting to war with the enemy, that he might conquer him in our behalf.

The Redeemer of the world clothed his divinity with humanity, that he might reach humanity; for, in order to bring to the world salvation, it was necessary that humanity and divinity should be united. Divinity needed humanity, that humanity might afford a channel of communication between God and man, and humanity needed divinity, that a power from above might restore man to the likeness of God. Christ was God, but he did not appear as God. He veiled the tokens of divinity, which had commanded the homage of angels and called forth the adoration of the universe of God. He made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. For our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich.

He humbled himself to pass through man's experiences, and he would not turn aside from the plan by which salvation could come to man. Knowing all the steps in the path of his humiliation, he refused not to descend step by step to the depths of man's woe, that he might make expiation for the sins of the condemned, perishing world. What humility was this! It amazed the angels. Tongue can never describe it. Pen can never portray it. The imagination cannot take it in. Sinless and exalted by nature, the Son of God consented to take the habiliments of humanity, to become one with the fallen race. The eternal Word consented to be made flesh. God became man.

But he stepped still lower; he humbled himself to bear insult, reproach, accusation, and shameful abuse. In the world which he had made, which was sustained by the word of his power, there seemed to be no room for him. He had to flee from one place to another until his life work was accomplished. He was betrayed by one of his followers, and denied by another. He was mocked and taunted. He was crowned with

thorns, and forced to bear the burden of the cross. He was not insensible to ignominy and contempt; he submitted to it, but he felt its bitterness as no other being could feel it. Pure, holy, and undefiled, he was yet arraigned as criminal before the eyes of the world. From the highest exaltation the adorable Redeemer took step after step in the path of humiliation. He consented to die in the sinner's stead, that by a life of obedience man might escape the penalty of the law. He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death. And what a death! It was the most shameful, the most cruel--the death upon the cross as a malefactor. He died not as a hero in the eyes of men, loaded with honors; he died as a condemned criminal, suspended between the heavens and the earth--died a lingering death, exposed to the tauntings and revilings of a debased and profligate mob. "All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head." He was numbered with the transgressors, and even his kinsmen according to the flesh disowned him. He was forced to see the sword pierce the heart of his mother,--he beheld her sorrow. He expired amidst derision. But all his sufferings were counted as of small account in consideration of the result he was working out in behalf of man, and for the good of the whole universe. He expired on the cross exclaiming, "It is finished," and that cry rang through every world, and through heaven itself. The great contest between Christ, the Prince of Life, and Satan, the prince of darkness, was practically over, and Christ was Conqueror. His death answered the question as to whether there was self-denial with the Father and the Son. (Concluded next number.)

February 27, 1893

The Plan of Salvation

Through the death of Christ a door of hope was opened for fallen man. Man was under sentence of death for the transgression of the law of God. He was under condemnation as a traitor, as a rebel; but Christ came to be his substitute, to die as a malefactor, to suffer the penalty of the traitors, bearing the weight of their sins upon his divine soul. He descended lower and lower till there was no lower depths of humiliation to sound in order that he might lift up those who would believe in him, and cleanse the guilty from moral defilement, and impart to them his own righteousness. He died to make an atonement, to redeem, cleanse, restore, and exalt man to a place at his right hand.

Through his life upon earth he scattered blessings wherever he went. Though at his word legions of angels would render him homage, yet he walked the earth unhonored, unconfessed. In place of praise he met reproach. He walked among men as one of the poor and lowly. Though he healed the sick, relieved the oppressed, bound up the broken hearted, yet few called him blessed, and the great of the earth passed him by with disdain.

As a member of the human family he was mortal, but as God he was a fountain of life to the world. He could have withstood the advances of death and refused to come under its dominion, but voluntarily he laid down his life that he might bring life and immortality to light. He bore the sin of the world, endured the penalty, yielded up his life as a sacrifice, that man should not eternally die. Contrast his suffering and humiliation with the riches of his glory, with the wealth of praise pouring forth from immortal tongues, with the anthems of adoration, with the homage of millions of holy angels in the heights of the sanctuary, and seek to comprehend what manner of love inspired the heart of Jesus.

How much has God loved the race of men?--Look to Calvary. As you behold Jesus upon the cross, does not the heinous character of sin appear? It was sin that caused the death of God's dear Son, and sin is the transgression of the law. Says the prophet: "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him

stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But 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. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.... It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." When the sinner realizes that Christ died for him, that he might impute his righteousness unto him, he magnifies the love of God in providing the plan of salvation.

"The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." At infinite cost the salvation of man has been purchased. The world may refuse the gift, but this will not lessen its value, or relieve men of its responsibility. When he was upon earth Jesus said to those who refused him, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." There are many who are refusing to respond to the drawing love of Christ today. Jesus calls, but many refuse to respond to the invitation. They will not avail themselves of the privilege of having Jesus for their personal Saviour. They do not come in humility and faith, that they may know by a personal experience what they are to Jesus, and what he is to them. But the promise is, "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." Jesus will not rest until he leads his followers unto the realms of perfect joy and glory.

The plans of God cannot fail. Men make great plans, but fail to accomplish the object that they design. They begin to build and are not able to finish. They do not count the cost. But Jesus counted the cost of the salvation of every son and daughter of Adam. He provided abundant means whereby all might be saved, if they would but comply with the conditions and lay hold upon eternal life. Unfailing resources are at his command to complete the work which he has begun. Those who respond to his love, yielding their wills to him, will not perish, but have everlasting life.

How the wondrous provision of the plan of God for the salvation of men widens and exalts our ideas of the love of God! How it binds our hearts to the great Heart of infinite love! How it makes us delight in his service, as our hearts respond to the drawing of his loving-kindness and loving mercy! John calls upon men to behold the marvelous love of God. He exclaims: "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. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." Those who are true, who are pure, who love and obey the words of God, will be counted children of the Heavenly King, members of the royal family, heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ.

March 6, 1893

Justification by Faith

When God pardons the sinner, remits the punishment he deserves, and treats him as though he had not sinned, he receives him into divine favor, and justifies him through the merits of Christ's righteousness. The sinner can be justified only through faith in the atonement made through God's dear Son, who became a sacrifice for the sins of the guilty world. No one can be justified by any works of his own. He can be delivered from the guilt of sin, from the condemnation of the law, from the penalty of transgression, only by virtue of the suffering, death, and resurrection of Christ. Faith is the only condition upon which justification can be obtained, and faith includes not only belief but trust.

Many have a nominal faith in Christ, but they know nothing of that vital dependence upon him which appropriates the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour. Of this nominal faith James says: "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well; the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" Many concede that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of the world, but at the same time they hold themselves away from him, and fail to repent of their sins, fail to accept of Jesus as their personal Saviour. Their faith is simply the assent of the mind and judgment to the truth; but the truth is not brought into the heart, that it might sanctify the soul and transform the character. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Calling and justification are not one and the same thing. Calling is the drawing of the sinner to Christ, and it is a work wrought by the Holy Spirit upon the heart, convicting of sin, and inviting to repentance.

Many are confused as to what constitutes the first steps in the work of salvation. Repentance is thought to be a work the sinner must do for himself in order that he may come to Christ. They think that the sinner must procure for himself a fitness in order to obtain the blessing of God's grace. But while it is true that repentance must precede forgiveness, for it is only the broken and contrite heart that is acceptable to God, yet the

sinner cannot bring himself to repentance, or prepare himself to come to Christ. Except the sinner repents, he cannot be forgiven; but the question to be decided is as to whether repentance is the work of the sinner or the gift of Christ. Must the sinner wait until he is filled with remorse for his sin before he can come to Christ? The very first step to Christ is taken through the drawing of the Spirit of God; as man responds to this drawing, he advances toward Christ in order that he may repent.

The sinner is represented as a lost sheep, and a lost sheep never returns to the fold unless he is sought after and brought back to the fold by the shepherd. No man of himself can repent, and make himself worthy of the blessing of justification. The Lord Jesus is constantly seeking to impress the sinner's mind and attract him to behold himself, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world. We cannot take a step toward spiritual life save as Jesus draws and strengthens the soul, and leads us to experience that repentance which needeth not to be repented of.

When before the high priests and Sadducees, Peter clearly presented the fact that repentance is the gift of God. Speaking of Christ, he said, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Repentance is no less the gift of God than are pardon and justification, and it cannot be experienced except as it is given to the soul by Christ. If we are drawn to Christ, it is through his power and virtue. The grace of contrition comes through him, and from him comes justification.

Paul writes: "But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." The faith that is unto salvation is not a casual faith, it is not the mere consent of the intellect, it is belief rooted in the heart, that embraces Christ as a personal Saviour, assured that he can save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him. To believe that he will save others, but will not save you is not genuine faith; but when the soul lays hold upon Christ as the only hope of salvation, then genuine faith is manifested. This faith leads its possessor to place all the affections

of the soul upon Christ; his understanding is under the control of the Holy Spirit, and his character is molded after the divine likeness. His faith is not a dead faith, but a faith that works by love, and leads him to behold the beauty of Christ, and to become assimilated to the divine character. "For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. . . . But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."

It is God that circumcises the heart. The whole work is the Lord's from the beginning to the end. The perishing sinner may say: "I am a lost sinner; but Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost. He says, 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance'. I am a sinner, and he died upon Calvary's cross to save me. I need not remain a moment longer unsaved. He died and rose again for my justification, and he will save me now. I accept the forgiveness he has promised." Mrs. E. G. White. (To be continued.)

March 13, 1893

Justification by Faith

Christ is a risen Saviour; for, though he was dead, he has risen again, and ever liveth to make intercession for us. We are to believe with the heart unto righteousness, and with the mouth make confession unto salvation. Those who are justified by faith will make confession of Christ. "He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." The great work that is wrought for the sinner who is spotted and stained by evil is the work of justification. By Him who speaketh truth he is declared righteous. The Lord imputes unto the believer the righteousness of Christ and pronounces him righteous before the universe. He transfers his sins to Jesus, the sinner's representative, substitute, and surety. Upon Christ he lays the iniquity of every soul that believeth. "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

Christ made an atonement for the guilt of the whole world, and all who will come to God in faith, will receive the righteousness of Christ, "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed." Our sin has been expiated, put away, cast into the depths of the sea. Through repentance and faith we are rid of sin, and look unto the Lord our righteousness. Jesus suffered, the just for the unjust.

Although as sinners we are under the condemnation of the law, yet Christ by his obedience rendered to the law, claims for the repentant soul the merit of his own righteousness. In order to obtain the righteousness of Christ, it is necessary for the sinner to know what that repentance is which works a radical change of mind and spirit and action. The work of transformation must begin in the heart, and manifest its power through every faculty of the being; but man is not capable of originating such a repentance as this, and can experience it alone through Christ, who ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

Who is desirous of becoming truly repentant? What must he do?--He must come to Jesus, just as he is, without delay. He must believe that the word of Christ is true,

and, believing the promise, ask, that he may receive. When sincere desire prompts men to pray, they will not pray in vain. The Lord will fulfill his word, and will give the Holy Spirit to lead to repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. He will pray and watch, and put away his sins, making manifest his sincerity by the vigor of his endeavor to obey the commandments of God. With prayer he will mingle faith, and not only believe in but obey the precepts of the law. He will announce himself as on Christ's side of the question. He will renounce all habits and associations that tend to draw the heart from God.

He who would become a child of God must receive the truth, that repentance and forgiveness are to be obtained through nothing less than the atonement of Christ. Assured of this the sinner must put forth an effort in harmony with the work done for him, and with unwearied entreaty he must supplicate the throne of grace, that the renovating power of God may come into his soul. Christ pardons none but the penitent, but whom he pardons he first makes penitent. The provision made is complete, and the eternal righteousness of Christ is placed to the account of every believing soul. The costly, spotless robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has been provided for the repenting, believing sinner, and he may say: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness."

Abundant grace has been provided that the believing soul may be kept free from sin; for all heaven, with its limitless resources, has been placed at our command. We are to draw from the well of salvation. Christ is the end of law for righteousness to everyone who believeth. In ourselves we are sinners; but in Christ we are righteous. Having made us righteous through the imputed righteousness of Christ, God pronounces us just, and treats us as just. He looks upon us as his dear children. Christ works against the power of sin, and where sin abounded, grace much more abounds. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt

among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth. . . . And of his fullness have all we received and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

The Lord would have his people sound in the faith,--not ignorant of the great salvation so abundantly provided for them. They are not to look forward, thinking that at some future time a great work is to be done for them; for the work is now complete. The believer is not called upon to make his peace with God; he never has nor never can do this. He is to accept Christ as his peace, for with Christ is God and peace. Christ made an end of sin, bearing its heavy curse in his own body on the tree, and he hath taken away the curse from all those who believe in him as a personal Saviour. He makes an end of the controlling power of sin in the heart, and the life and character of the believer testify to the genuine character of the grace of Christ. To those that ask him, Jesus imparts the Holy Spirit; for it is necessary that every believer should be delivered from pollution, as well as from the curse and condemnation of the law. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, the sanctification of the truth, the believer becomes fitted for the courts of heaven; for Christ works within us, and his righteousness is upon us. Without this no soul will be entitled to heaven. We would not enjoy heaven unless qualified for its holy atmosphere by the influence of the Spirit and the righteousness of Christ.

In order to be candidates for heaven we must meet the requirement of the law: "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." We can do this only if we grasp by faith the righteousness of Christ. By beholding Jesus we receive a living, expanding principle in the heart, and the Holy Spirit carries on the work, and the believer advances from grace to grace, from strength to strength, from character to character. He conforms to the image of Christ, until in spiritual growth he attains unto the measure of the full stature in Christ Jesus. Thus Christ makes an end of the curse of sin, and sets the believing soul free from its action and effect. Christ alone is able to do this, for "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." Reconciliation means that every barrier between the soul and God is removed, and that the sinner realizes what the pardoning love of God means. By reason of the sacrifice made by Christ for fallen men, God can justly pardon

the transgressor who accepts the merits of Christ. Christ was the channel through which the mercy, love, and righteousness might flow from the heart of God to the heart of the sinner. "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Mrs. E. G. White (Concluded next number.)

March 20, 1893

Justification by Faith

In the prophecy of Daniel it was recorded of Christ that "he shall make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness." By his perfect obedience he has satisfied the claims of the law, and my only hope is found in looking to him as my substitute and surety, who obeyed the law perfectly for me. By faith in his merits I am free from the condemnation of the law. He clothes me with his righteousness, which answers all the demands of the law. I am complete in him who brings in everlasting righteousness. He presents me to God in the spotless garment of which no thread was woven by any human agent. All is of Christ, and all the glory, honor, and majesty are to be given to the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.

Many think that they must wait for a special impulse in order that they may come to Christ; but it is necessary only to come in sincerity of purpose, deciding to accept the offers of mercy and grace that have been extended to us. We are to say, Christ died to save me. The Lord's desire is that I should be saved, and I will come to Jesus just as I am without delay. I will venture upon the promise. As Christ draws me, I will respond. The apostle says, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." No one can believe with the heart unto righteousness, and obtain justification by faith, while continuing the practice of those things which the word of God forbids, or while neglecting any known duty.

Genuine faith will be manifested in good works; for good works are the fruits of faith. As God works in the heart, and man surrenders his will to God, and cooperates with God, he works out in the life what God works in by the Holy Spirit, and there is harmony between the purpose of the heart and the practice of the life. Every sin must be renounced as the hateful thing that crucified the Lord of life and glory, and the believer must have a progressive experience by continually doing the works of Christ. It is by continual surrender of the will, by continual obedience, that the blessing of justification is retained.

Those who are justified by faith must have a heart to keep the way of the Lord. It

is an evidence that a man is not justified by faith when his works do not correspond to his profession. James says, "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was his faith made perfect?" The faith that does not produce good works does not justify the soul. "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness."

Imputation of the righteousness of Christ comes through justifying faith, and is the justification for which Paul so earnestly contends. He says: "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.... Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law."

Grace is unmerited favor, and the believer is justified without any merit of his own, without any claim to offer to God. He is justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, who stands in the courts of heaven as the sinner's substitute and surety. But while he is justified because of the merit of Christ, he is not free to work unrighteousness. Faith works by love and purifies the soul. Faith buds and blossoms and bears a harvest of precious fruit. Where faith is, good works appear. The sick are visited, the poor are cared for, the fatherless and the widows are not neglected, the naked are clothed, the destitute are fed. Christ went about doing good, and when men are united with him, they love the children of God, and meekness and truth guide their footsteps. The expression of the countenance reveals their experience, and men take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus and learned of him. Christ and the believer become one, and his beauty of character is revealed in those who are vitally connected with the source of power and love. Christ is the great depository of justifying righteousness and sanctifying grace.

All may come to him, and receive of his fullness. He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Then why not cast aside all unbelief and heed the words of Jesus? You want rest; you long for peace. Then say from

the heart, "Lord Jesus, I come, because Thou hast given me this invitation." Believe in him with steadfast faith, and he will save you. Have you been looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of your faith? Have you been beholding him who is full of truth and grace? Have you accepted the peace which Christ alone can give? If you have not, then yield to him, and through his grace seek for a character that will be noble and elevated. Seek for a constant, resolute, cheerful spirit. Feed on Christ, who is the bread of life, and you will manifest his loveliness of character and spirit.

March 27, 1893

Growth in Christian Experience

Jesus had given the lesson concerning the sower and the seed. He had said, "Behold, a sower went forth to sow; and when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the fowls came and devoured them up; some fell upon stony places," and made a pretentious show of life, but "because they had no root, they withered away." And some fell among thorns and briers, and the rank growth of the thorns choked out the seed, and it yielded no fruit; but some fell upon soil prepared for its reception, and it sprang up and increased, and bore fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold.

When the soil has been prepared for the reception of the seed, the sower casts it in, and by processes which men cannot control or understand, the seed begins to grow, and advances to maturity. Jesus compared the growth of the kingdom of God to the sowing of seed, and to its development into the full measure of maturity. The seed is the word of God, and the soul who receives it, is said to be born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, which liveth and abideth forever. "And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

This parable of the kingdom was designed to illustrate to the disciples the growth and progress of Christian character. The good seed of the word falls into the heart, and at once the first development of Christian experience is made manifest. This experience is likened to the tender blade, and to the young child. The blade is beautiful, and the child is attractive, but should there be no further development, we would look upon the plant as stunted, and the child as dwarfed. The young convert is to advance in knowledge, to grow in grace. Christ looks upon his children, and he is not ignorant as to how the seed is developing. Temptations will come, and it will be only through constant trust in his Redeemer that perfection of Christian character can be attained. The convert is to look to the mighty Helper, lest he be surprised off guard, and seduced by the enemy. He is not to be ignorant of Satan's devices, nor rest satisfied with the knowledge

he has attained; for "this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

The experience of the Christian in his earliest love is full of simplicity and freshness; but as his opportunities multiply, his experience should enlarge, and his knowledge increase. He should become strong to bear responsibility, and his maturity should be in proportion to his privileges. But the young convert is not to worry or perplex his mind with questioning as regards his advancement and growth. He is to trust himself wholly to Jesus, and with fear and trembling work out that which God works in; for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Advancement in Christian experience can be accomplished only through cooperation with heavenly agencies, for it is a result of growth in grace. Feeling his helplessness, the young Christian is to place himself in the channel of light, and improve all the opportunities that are graciously bestowed upon him, that he may gain a deeper experience, and take deep root in Christ, as the plant roots in the soil. His faith must increase, his consecration be maintained, his love be made perfect, as is represented by the blade, the ear, and the full corn in the ear. His zeal should be ardent and tireless; and with unwavering trust in Christ, his growth may be unmarred; for a genuine experience will result in the development of a Christlike character.

But unless there is an hourly dependence upon Christ, increasing knowledge and privileges will result in self-trust and self-righteousness. The young Christian is in danger of forgetting that it is Christ that has begun the good work in him, and that it is Christ that must finish it. The soul must renounce all merit, and trust wholly in the merit of Him who is too wise to err. Man of himself can do no good thing. Said Jesus, "Without me ye can do nothing." The soul is to stay itself upon God. In the gift of Christ all Heaven was poured out, and through Christ the Holy Spirit is promised to the believer. Jesus said to his disciples, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Christ not only offers pardon to the believing, repenting soul, but he promises him the constant aid of the Holy Spirit.

In the growth of the seed in the soil, man cannot see the working of unseen agencies that develop the plant to perfection, bringing up first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. But though young in the faith, you may know that you have passed from death unto life, if the fruits of the Spirit are made manifest in your life. If

you are growing in faith and hope and love, you may know that your spiritual vision has been cleared. If you delight to dwell upon the plan of salvation, upon the glorious manifestations of the divine character, if your heart, in contemplation of the love of God, glows with thankfulness and joy, you may be sure that you have been illuminated by the beams of the Holy Spirit, and heavenly agencies are bringing your character up to maturity of Christian life. You may not realize that you are growing up into Christ, your living Head. Your part is simply to submit your ways and your will to God. You are to trust yourself fully to God, knowing you cannot make yourself grow. A Paul may plant, and an Apollos may water, but it is God that giveth the increase. (Concluded next number.)

April 3, 1893

Growth in Christian Experience

Through vital connection with Christ, the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven will be unfolded, and according to your capacity to receive, the Lord will bless you, if you are willing and obedient. But the young Christian may often be brought into strait places, and into trying circumstances, as were the children of Israel. Of old the Lord brought his people into these trying places that he might finally bring them blessing. He says: "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no." God knew what was in the hearts of his people before he brought trial upon them; but they were ignorant of the condition of their own hearts. Under trial and test their deficiencies were made manifest, and they felt indeed that they had not understood themselves. But the fierce flames of trial and temptation did not consume them, but rather worked for their purification and refinement, and aided them in the development of Christlike character.

Let the young Christian seek to fulfill all the responsibilities that devolve upon him, and meet obstacles and difficulties with courage, keeping an eye single to the glory of God, that his profiting may appear unto all. In whatever circumstances you may be placed, the Lord designs that you shall find his grace sufficient, that your love may abound more and more, that you may approve things that are excellent, and be filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Christ Jesus, unto the glory and praise of God. But unless the Christian continues to grow, he will retrograde, and his experience will become sickly and be fruitless of good. Jesus says, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit."

In order to bear much fruit, we must make the most of our privileges and opportunities, becoming more and more spiritually minded. We must put away all commonness, all pride, all worldliness, and daily receive divine aid. If you grow spiritually, you must employ all the means which the gospel provides, and be prepared to gain in piety by the influence of the Holy Spirit; for the seed is developed from blade to full corn by unseen and supernatural agencies. The promise with which Jesus consoled his disciples just before his betrayal and crucifixion was that of the Holy

Spirit; and in the doctrine of divine influence and agency, what riches were revealed to them; for this blessing would bring in its train all other blessings. The Holy Spirit breathes upon the soul who humbly rests on Christ, as the author and finisher of his faith; and from such a believer fruit will come forth unto life eternal. His influence will be fragrant, and the name of Jesus will be music in his ears, and melody in his heart.

The Christian will be a savor of life unto life to others, although he may not be able to explain the mysteries of his experience. But he will know that when clouds and darkness compassed him about, and he cried unto the Lord, the darkness was dispersed, and peace and joy were in the temple of the soul. He will know what it is to have the pardoning love of God revealed to the heart, to experience the peace that passeth all understanding, to have praise and thanksgiving and adoration welling up in the soul unto him who has loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. He has peace through Jesus Christ, and joy in the Holy Ghost. One with Christ, his soul is filled with submission to his will, and heaven is enshrined in his heart while he is enfolded in the bosom of infinite love. Christians of this order will bear much fruit to the glory of God. They will rightly interpret the character of God, and manifest his attributes unto the world.

Jesus illustrated the compassionate mercy and tender love of God in many of the parables that he uttered, and in his own life and character he gave us an exhibition of infinite love. He represents himself as the life of the world. He says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." There is no growth where there is no life. Where there is no life, there is no fruit.

But how shall we know that we are in Christ?--We may know it by the character of our fruit. The fruit borne on the Christian tree is holiness of heart,--wholeness to Christ. God will be in the thoughts of the Christian, and he will love those for whom Christ has died. He will follow in the path of self-denial, and his life will be fragrant with the love of Jesus. He will delight more in contemplation of the love of God than in anything earth can offer. He will prefer his plain, homely duties rather than romantic novelties, and will be satisfied with the place God has appointed him. When the heart is

renewed by the Spirit of God, when consecration to God is maintained, there can be only love and thankfulness and praise in the heart, because Jesus is within, the hope of glory, and they live as seeing him who is invisible. Christ is in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life, and the true follower of Christ strengthens the good purposes of everyone with whom he comes in contact. Such believers are living, growing Christians. They carry with them the fragrance of holiness, and are reaching on to the measure of the stature of men and women in Christ Jesus.

April 10, 1893

Overcome As Christ Overcame

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. 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."

The world's Redeemer passed over the ground where Adam fell because of his disobedience to the law of Jehovah. The only-begotten Son of God came to our world as a man, to reveal to the world the fact that men through divine power could keep the law of God. Satan, the fallen angel, had declared that no man could keep God's law, and he pointed to the disobedience of Adam as proving the declaration true. But the Son of God placed himself in man's stead, and passed over the ground where Adam fell, and endured temptation stronger than ever was or ever will be brought to bear upon the human race. Jesus resisted the temptations of Satan in the same manner in which every tempted soul may resist the evil one. He referred the tempter to the inspired record and said, "It is written." Christ overcame the temptations as a man, by relying solely upon the word of God; and every man may overcome as Christ overcame.

We need not place the obedience of Christ by itself as something for which he was particularly adapted, because of his divine nature; for he stood before God as man's representative, and was tempted as man's substitute and surety. If Christ had a special power which it is not the privilege of a man to have, Satan would have made capital of this matter. But the work of Christ was to take from Satan his control of man, and he could do this only in a straightforward way. He came as a man, to be tempted as a man, rendering the obedience of a man. Christ rendered obedience to God, and overcame as humanity overcome. We are led to make wrong conclusions because of erroneous views of the nature of our Lord. To attribute to his nature a power that it is not possible for man to have in his conflicts with Satan, is to destroy the completeness of his humanity.

The obedience of Christ to his Father was the same obedience that is required of man. Man cannot overcome Satan's temptations except as divine power works through humanity. The Lord Jesus came to our world, not to reveal what God in his own divine person could do, but what he could do through humanity. Through faith man is to be a partaker of the divine nature, and to overcome every temptation wherewith he is beset. It was the Majesty of heaven who became a man, who humbled himself to our human nature; it was he who was tempted in the wilderness and who endured the contradiction of sinners against himself.

We are not to serve God as if we were not human, but we are to serve him as those who have been redeemed by the Son of God and through the righteousness of Christ we shall stand before God pardoned, and as though we had never sinned. We shall never gain strength in considering what we might do if we were angels; but as obedient children we are to turn in faith to Jesus Christ, and show our love to God through obedience to his commands. Jesus "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Jesus says, "Follow me." "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Jesus leads the way. Do not wait and continue in disobedience, hoping circumstances may change, making it easier for you to obey. Go forward, for you know the will of God. "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 Garden of Eden, with its foul blot of disobedience, should be carefully compared with the Garden of Gethsemane, where the world's Redeemer suffered superhuman agony when the sins of the whole world were rolled upon him. Listen to the prayer of the only-begotten Son of God, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." And the second time he prayed, saying, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." And the third time he prayed, saying the same words. Oh, it was here the mysterious cup trembled in the hands of the Son of God! Shall he wipe the bloody sweat from his agonized countenance and let man go? The wail, wretchedness, and ruin of a lost world roll up before him. "And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." "And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him."

The conflict is ended. Jesus consents to endure the curse of sin. He was obedient

unto death, even the death of the cross. Here we see what was involved in Adam's disobedience, and what the obedience of the Son of God means to us. Adam did not consider what would be the consequences of disobedience. He did not set his mind in defiance against God, nor did he in any way speak against God; he simply went directly contrary to his express command. And how many today are doing the very same thing, and their guilt is of much greater magnitude, because they have the example of Adam's experience in disobedience and its terrible results to warn them of the consequences of transgressing the law of God. So they have clear light upon this subject, and no excuse for their guilt in denying and disobeying God's authority. Adam did not stop to reckon what would be the result of his disobedience.

With the after sight we are privileged to have in this age, we can see what it means to disobey God's commandments. Adam yielded to temptation, and we have sin and its consequences laid distinctly before us. Reasoning from cause to effect, we see it is not the greatness of the act of disobedience which constitutes sin, but the fact of variance from God's expressed will in the least particular, for this is a virtual denial of God, a rebellion against the laws of his government. The happiness of man is found in obedience to the laws of God. In obedience to God's law he is surrounded as with a hedge and kept from the evil. No man can depart from God's specified requirements, and set up a standard of his own which he decides he can safely follow, and still find peace and joy. Were each one left to follow his own way, there would be a variety of standards to suit different minds, and the government would be taken out of the Lord's hands, and man would grasp the reins. The law of self would be erected. The will of man would be made supreme; and the high and holy will of God would be dishonored, disrespected. To what extent man would choose to follow the promptings of his selfish heart it is impossible to tell. But whenever man chooses his own way, there is controversy between the man and God.

April 17, 1893

Overcome As Christ Overcame

Since the fall of our first parents, obedience has not been deemed an absolute necessity. Men have followed the imagination of their own hearts, which the Lord has said is "evil, and that continually." The Lord Jesus declares, "I have kept my Father's commandments." How? as a man? "Lo I come to do thy will, O God." To the accusations of the Jews he stood forth in his pure, virtuous, holy character, and challenged them to point out a defect in his life. He said, "Who of you convinceth me of sin?" The world's Redeemer came not only to be a sacrifice for sin, but to be an example to man in all things. He was a teacher, such an educator as the world never saw or heard before. He spake as one having authority, and yet he invites the confidence of all. "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."

The only-begotten Son of the infinite God has, by his words and in his practical example, left us a plain pattern which we are to copy. By his words he has educated us to obey God, and by his own practice he has showed us how we can obey God. This is the very work he wants every man to do, to obey God intelligently, and by precept and example teach others what they must do in order to be obedient children of God. Jesus has helped the whole world to an intelligent knowledge of his divine mission and work. He came to represent the character of the Father to our world; and as we study the life, the words, and works of Christ, we are helped in every way in the education of obedience to God; and as we copy the example he has given us, we are living epistles known and read of all men. We are the living human agencies to represent to the world the character of Christ. Not only did Christ show us how we may become obedient children, but he showed us in his own life and character just how to do those things which are right and acceptable with God, so there is no reason why we should not do those things which are pleasing in his sight.

We are ever to be thankful that Jesus has proved to us by actual life that man can keep the commandments of God, contradicting Satan's falsehood that man cannot keep them. The great Teacher came to our world to stand at the head of humanity, to thus

elevate and sanctify humanity by his holy obedience to all the requirements of God, showing it is possible to obey all the commandments of God. He has demonstrated that a lifelong obedience is possible. Thus he gives men to the world, as the Father gave the Son, to exemplify in their life the life of Christ.

Christ redeemed Adam's disgraceful failure and fall, and was conqueror, thus testifying to all the unfallen worlds and to fallen humanity that through the divine power granted to him of heaven man can keep the commandments of God. Jesus, the Son of God, humbled himself for us, endured temptation for us, overcame in our behalf, to show us how we may overcome; by the closest ties he bound up his interest with humanity, and gave positive assurance that we shall not be tempted above that we are able; for with the temptation he will make a way of escape.

The Holy Spirit was promised to be with those who were wrestling for victory, demonstrating the power of might by endowing the human agent with supernatural strength, and instructing the ignorant in the mysteries of the kingdom of God. The Holy Spirit is to be our helper. Of what avail would it have been to us that the only-begotten Son of God had humbled himself, endured the temptations of the wily foe, and wrestled with him during his entire life on earth, and died, the just for the unjust, that humanity might [might] not perish, if the Spirit had not been given as a constant working, regenerating agent to make effectual in our cases what had been wrought by the world's Redeemer?

The Holy Spirit implanted in the disciples, enabled them to stand firmly against idolatry, and to exalt the Lord alone. The Holy Spirit guided the pens of the sacred historians that the record of the precious words and works of Christ might be presented to the world. The Holy Spirit is constantly at work seeking to draw the attention of men to the great sacrifice made upon the cross of Calvary, to unfold to the world the love of God to man, and to open to the convicted soul the precious promises in the Scriptures. It is the Holy Spirit that brings to the darkened minds the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. It is the Holy Spirit that makes men's hearts burn within them with an awakened intelligence of the truths of eternity. It is the Holy Spirit that presents before the mind the moral standard of righteousness and convinces of sin. It is the Holy Spirit that produces godly sorrow which worketh repentance that needeth not to be repented of, and inspires faith in Him who alone can save from all sin. It is the Holy Spirit that works to transform character by withdrawing the affections of men from those things

which are temporal and perishable, and fixing them upon the immortal inheritance, the eternal substance which is imperishable. The Holy Spirit recreates, refines, and sanctifies the human agents, that they may become members of the royal family, children of the Heavenly King.

Jesus says: "Follow me." "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Consider it not a hard duty. The commandments of God are his expressed character flowing out of a heart of love in thoughtful plans that man may be preserved from every evil. They are not to exercise an arbitrary authority over man, but the Lord would have men act as his obedient children, members of his own family. Obedience is the outgrowth and fruit of oneness with Christ and the Father. "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

When we unmistakably hear his voice and obey, every murmuring thought will be repressed; and we will leave all consequences with Him who gave the commandment. If, as we see the footprints of Jesus, we step in them and follow him, we shall have love and power.

The question is often asked, "What difference does it make which day we keep for the Sabbath?" But it does make a difference; for the same principle is involved as was involved in Adam's case. He was put to the same test. For he was to prove by obedience his loyalty to God or by disobedience to forfeit the right to the tree of life. Satan presented this same specious question. What difference does it make whether you eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, or of any other tree of the garden? Adam's sin consisted in doing the thing the Lord had forbidden him to do, and this opened the flood gates of woe on our world. We should carefully meditate upon the life of Christ, and desire to understand the reason why he came at all. We should search the Scriptures as Christ has enjoined upon us to do, that we may know those things that are testified of him. By searching we may find the virtues of obedience in contrast with the sinfulness of disobedience. "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

The Lord Jesus has bridged the gulf that sin has made. He has connected earth

with heaven, and finite man with the infinite God. Jesus, the world's Redeemer, as our example, could only keep the commandments of God in the same way that humanity can keep them. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." The glory mentioned is character, and by faith we become changed from character to character. "And be renewed in the Spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." "Ye are 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."

April 24, 1893

Obedience the Fruit of Love

We should contemplate the love of Jesus, his mission and his work in reference to us as individuals. We are to say, Jesus so loved me that he gave his own life to save me. The Father loves me, "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." It becomes us to ascertain upon what terms Christ promises the gift of eternal life. I answer, It is upon our faith. We must have faith in the promises. Jesus says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye who love me know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." John 14:12-17, 21.

"He that hath my commandments" means he that hath light upon what constitutes the commandments of God, and will not disobey his commandments, although it might seem an advantage to do so. "If a man love me, he will keep my words [my commandments]; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings; and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." If it were not possible for us to keep the commandments of God, we should all be lost. But under the Abrahamic covenant, the covenant of grace, every provision for salvation has been made. "By grace ye are saved." "For as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God."

John writes to the children of God, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not." And what is sin?--"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." And if any man sin, he need not give up

his hope in Christ. He need not say it is of no use longer to attempt to keep the commandments of God; for this would be placing himself wholly on Satan's ground. Satan follows you with his temptations, in order that he may persuade you to yield and sin; and when you sin, then he tells you it is of no use for you to try, and you might just as well announce yourself an open transgressor of the law of God, for you cannot keep his commandments. In the name and strength given of God we may be obedient to all his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous. We are happy in doing them. "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 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. Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning."

The Lord would not leave the enemy any opportunity to perplex the soul or to becloud the mind as to the commandments of which he is speaking. It is the commandments which he made when the foundations of the earth were laid, "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." Away back in the world's history, before there were any people distinguished as Jews, he laid the foundations of his law, when he laid the foundations of the world. "The old commandment is the word which ye heard from the beginning." John, the beloved disciple, as mouthpiece for God, gives the inspired message, and it comes echoing down the lines, from age to age, to our time. Thank God, we are not left in mist and confusion in regard to the commandments.

We are required to keep the commandments of God, and to demonstrate before the heavenly worlds that we are obedient children, loyal and true to the government of God. We may not expect the world, which is under the power and dominion of Satan, to obey God and keep his commandments. There are but two classes in our world, the obedient and the disobedient, the holy and the unholy. When our transgressions were laid upon Jesus, he was numbered among the unholy on the sinner's account. He became our substitute, our surety, before the Father and all the heavenly angels. By imputing the sins of the world to Jesus, he became the sinner in our stead, and the curse due to our sins came upon him. It becomes us to contemplate Christ's life of humiliation and his

agonizing death; for he was treated as the sinner deserves to be treated. He came to our world, clothing his divinity with humanity, to bear the test and proving of God. By his example of perfect obedience in his human nature, he teaches us that men may be obedient.

And the apostle writes, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." It is here plainly revealed that whosoever believeth in Jesus Christ becomes a partaker of the divine nature. Let divinity and humanity cooperate, and fallen man may be more than conqueror through Christ Jesus.

May 1, 1893

"Never Man Spake Like This Man"

Jesus Christ was the light of the world; for "by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight; if ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven."

If Christ had thought it necessary, he could have opened to his disciples mysteries which would have eclipsed and put far out of sight all the discoveries of the human mind. He could have presented facts concerning every subject that would have gone beyond human reasonings, and yet not misrepresented the truth in any particular. He could have revealed that which was unknown, that which would have put imagination to the stretch, and attracted the thoughts of successive generations to the close of earth's history. He could have opened doors into mysteries that the human mind had sought in vain to open. He could have presented to men a tree of knowledge from which they might have plucked from age to age; but this work was not essential to their soul's salvation, and the knowledge of the character of God was necessary to their eternal interests. As it is, men have devoted their time and talents to the pursuit of certain kinds of knowledge merely for the gratification of curiosity, and have neglected the momentous subjects that have been plainly revealed, which concern their eternal interests.

Jesus, the Lord of life and glory, came to plant the tree of life for the human family, and to invite the members of a fallen race to eat and be satisfied. He came to

reveal to them what was their only hope, their only happiness, both in this world and in that which is to come. "For this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." He would allow nothing to divert his attention from the work which he came to do. He knew that men would seek out many inventions, and follow the imagination of their own hearts. He knew that they would use their God-given intellect to please and glorify themselves, that they would forget God, and lose the knowledge of his way and will. Jesus saw that men needed to have their minds attracted to God, that they might become acquainted with his character, and obtain the righteousness of Christ represented in his holy law. He knew that it was necessary that men should have a faithful representation of the divine character, that they might not be deceived by the misrepresentations of Satan, who had cast his hellish shadow athwart men's pathway, and to their minds clothed God with his own Satanic characteristics.

Jesus came to the world to reveal, in their beauty, original truths that had been lost sight of through the misconception of men, and had been buried beneath a mass of tradition and error. He severed the old familiar truths from the companionship of error, that they might no longer be clouded and hidden by the customs and superstitions of men, but stand forth in their original, purity. For ages truth had been thrust from its true position, and Jesus reinstated it, reset it in the framework of truth, and established it anew upon the basis of its own eternal merit. The principles of justice and right that through the working of Satan upon the human mind had become powerless in their influence upon men, he revived, and commanded them, like the stars in the firmament, to stand fast forever and ever.

The Redeemer of the world did not come to encourage curiosity, to stimulate human speculation, but to show the real character of truth, so long falsified by Satan, and set before the world in a distorted light. The suggestions of Satan had been received by the depraved human heart, had been repeated by human agents, and traced by human pens; but Jesus restored the jewels of truth to the world, and made them shine before the eyes of men in all their original splendor and beauty. The Son of Man, our Lord, possessed an intellect of the highest order, and nothing before or since his appearance has been presented that approached to the elevation of the themes which he presented in his lessons to his disciples, which by their testimony have been transmitted to us. Apparently he borrowed the thoughts of minds inferior to his own, but this was not the case in reality, for he was the originator of all truth, and he had given to men all the

light they had upon all mysteries, all the knowledge they had in every branch of science. In him were hid all the treasures of wisdom and truth, both of heavenly and earthly things. In quoting the utterances of patriarchs and prophets, he quoted that which he himself had imparted. The uttermost stretch of the human mind can embrace but a fractional part of the infinite whole, and even that fractional part is the outworking of the mind of Him who comprehends all science, all mystery and knowledge. All the wisdom of men should roll back glory and praise to the great Originator.

The Redeemer of the world gave evidence of his superiority over the men of the world in the way in which he presented truth to the human mind. However great and wise the teachers of the world might have been regarded in his day or may be regarded in our day, yet in comparison to him they are not to be admired; for all the truth they uttered was but that which he originated, and all that came from any other source was foolishness. Even the truth they uttered, in his mouth was beautified and made glorious; for he presented it in simplicity and dignity. Such attractiveness was in his words that not only the common people heard him gladly, but wise and noble men declared, "Never man spake like this man."

May 8, 1893

A Lesson for Our Day

"Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee."

In these words of denunciation a solemn warning is given to the churches of today. It will make every difference with us as regards our eternal future whether we receive or reject the message and the messenger that God sends. All truth originates with God, and according to its character is invested with influence to move men. Spiritual truth is above all else, and Christ came to reveal this manner of truth to the world. The Father came in vital connection with the world through his well-beloved Son, and the revelation of divine truth through the Son was designed to draw men to the Father.

Satan has been the central object of the world's worship; but where stands Satan's seat, the throne of God should have been planted. Christ purposed that his cross should become the center of attraction, whereby he should draw the hearts of men to himself. Taking upon him human nature, he became one with the fallen race, and by virtue of the divine nature he laid hold of the throne of the Infinite, and enlisted the cooperation of every heavenly instrumentality to carry out his plan for redeeming a lost race. He sends down upon the hearts of men the bright beams of his righteousness in order to dispel the shadow which Satan has cast upon the world. To counteract his work, Satan and his hosts combined their forces with evil men, and sought to overthrow the work of Christ; but heavenly agencies, united in their great Head, advanced to meet the confederacy of evil, and evil and error were in conflict with goodness and truth.

The love of God was to be revealed to the world in the death of his beloved Son,

crucified on Calvary for the sins of the world. He was to present to the world the gospel, which was to be the power of God unto salvation. This was not a new truth, but through the traditions of men it had become obscured, and the original truths, by separation from their Author, had lost their meaning to the world. When Christ came, a flood of light was to be shed upon the utterances of patriarchs and prophets. Through this revelation, neglected obligations were to be taken up. Obedience was to take the place of rebellion, and the truth would work a transformation of character in all who should receive it. The great atoning Sacrifice was to be the central and supreme truth, about which all other truths were to cluster. And Christ himself came to the world to bear this truth to his rebellious subjects.

Before the coming of Christ, prophets had been sent, and message after message had been delivered to the people of God; but they had beaten one and stoned another, and at length the loving Father said, "They will reverence my Son." But when he came with the message of divine love, their hearts had grown so hard through their rejection of light, their resistance had become so stubborn, that they said, "This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance." The work of rejection of light was to result in the murder of their Lord. Among the most diligent enemies of Jesus were the scribes and Pharisees. They were ready to bear false witness, and in their blindness even thought that they were doing God service. Jesus went through all the land of Canaan, and mighty works were wrought in Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum; but notwithstanding all his mighty works in these cities, they did not believe on him. The great mass of the people would and did listen to the great Teacher, and they would have taken their position with him had it not been for the counterworking of the scribes and Pharisees and those who sat in Moses' seat. But the priests and teachers, filled with intense hatred and unreasonable prejudice, made every possible effort to make his words and works of no effect. They saw the fruit of his doctrine and the results of his work, but when they had exhausted all their objections, they inquired for a sign of his authority.

The lessons that Jesus taught, the work he wrought, gave unanswerable evidence that he was the Son of God. Abundant evidence was given of the most conclusive character, but they closed their eyes lest they should see, and their ears lest they should hear, and refused to listen to his appeals. What sadness it brings to the heart as we read that "he came unto his own, and his own received him not"! He had to leave his own, and go from city to city, and from place to place, in order to preserve his life until his

work was done. We read, "He walked in Galilee; for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him."

At one time the people came to the priests and asked, "When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?" And so enraged were the Pharisees at the evident conviction that had settled upon the people, that they immediately dispatched officers to arrest him. He was teaching the people and healing the sick, and when the officers came within the sound of the melody of his voice, and heard his gracious words, they stood as men entranced, and forgot what had been their errand. Hardened as were their hearts, they were melted under his words of truth and compassion; and when the chief priests and Pharisees inquired, "Why have ye not brought him?" they answered, "Never man spake like this man." Then answered them the Pharisees: "Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed."

The Pharisees charged the people with ignorance of the prophecies, and yet it was themselves who were willingly ignorant that Jesus met in his life and works and character every specification of the Scriptures. There was no want of evidence of his Messiahship, no dimness of light concerning his divine claims; but they did not wish to believe, and permitted prejudice to blind their eyes.

The Man of sorrows, who bore our griefs and carried our sorrows, who was bruised for our iniquities, and wounded for our transgressions, by whose stripes we are healed, was indeed without form or comeliness to the Jews; and yet he was the predicted Messiah, who was to shine before the ancients gloriously, to reign from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. As he came in his humiliation to our earth, no conquering armies were visible to mortal eyes, and the unbelieving Jews decided that he could not be the illustrious King for whom they were looking, as there was no outward display. And why did the people of Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum, and Jerusalem reject the Lord of life and glory? Why did they keep up a continual controversy with him? It was because those who claimed to believe and teach the word of God interpreted its utterances to suit their own preconceived opinions, so that the word of God might seem to harmonize with the traditions and commandments of men. It was because the people did not see the necessity of searching the Scriptures for themselves, of comparing scripture with scripture, that they might know the truth. They gave credence to what the priests and Pharisees taught, in place of seeking to understand the

true meaning of the word of God for themselves, instead of using the reason and judgment which God had given them that they might understand. They placed the priests and rulers where they should have placed God, and rejected the truth of God, that they might keep their own tradition. Let us take a lesson from the mistake of the Jewish people, and not be found committing a similar error.

May 15, 1893

Transformation of Character Noted by the World

"For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost; so that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak anything. For they themselves show of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come."

The apostle wrote these words of encouragement in order that we upon whom the ends of the world have come, might receive benefit. Through the grace of Christ such a transformation of character is to take place in us that the word of the Lord may leave an impression upon many minds, that "in every place your faith Godward is spread abroad." When the people of God yield themselves to be controlled entirely by the Holy Spirit, in them will appear that Christlikeness which is in accordance with the richness and grandeur of the truth. But in order that Christ shall be revealed in the human agent, self must die. The believer is to study the life and character of Christ, that by beholding he may become changed into his divine image in life and character.

How cautious should each one be lest he cultivate an unsanctified independence! The enemy is vigilant, working with tremendous power to subvert souls who have had presented before them the light of truth. Satan watches that he may take advantage of every unconsecrated element of character in the human agent, in order that he may use him who professes to be a servant of Christ to further his Satanic designs. He will take advantage of prejudice, of preconceived opinion, of side issues, that he may make of no effect the words of God's messenger to the church. Contention and strife will be aroused, and the message of heaven will be rendered of no effect through the working of this evil leaven.

In the days of Paul there was need of warning the churches against bringing in their own ideas and opinions, of setting their stakes, and of holding the measuring tape in their hands, so that if the message or the messenger differed in some little degree from their preconceived ideas, they closed the door firmly against the light and the lightbearer. In the words of Paul, the Lord warns every man to take heed as to entertaining this spirit of jangling and strife. He says: "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do. Now the end of the commandment is charity [love] out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned; from which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm." "And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort. 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."

From the words of Paul we can see that he had the same difficulties to deal with in his day that we have to deal with in our day. There were in the early church those who made much of matters of minor importance, and wrought mischief among the believers in creating strife and contention. Through pride men and women are led to take the position that rendering service to a brother or sister in certain ways has a degrading tendency; but it is just as commendable to serve in what are called menial positions as to minister from the pulpit. There is no degradation in doing the duties that must be done in the house, and there is no humiliation in being able to do well and thoroughly the duties that devolve on a housemaid or a man of all work. It will never injure self-respect to be a good servant if the right view is taken of the subject.

But in whatever branch of the Lord's work you are, you should study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, willing to be taught, ready to learn, faithful in your work, and ever growing in power and efficiency.

There is no safety for any of us unless we trust fully in God, and take a decided stand, guarding the avenues of the will, resisting the first insinuations of Satan, rejecting his counsel to yield to questionable impulses. This requires watchfulness, perseverance, and continual adherence to the word of God under all circumstances. We are here as probationers, and are deciding our own eternal destiny. Then how important it is that we daily educate and train the will power to render obedience to God in the least as well as in the greatest tests. How important to ever remember the fact, "Thou God seest me. Thou knowest every thought, and art acquainted with every action"! How important that we regard ourselves as pupils in the school of Christ, that we learn to repress every vain, trifling word! Jesus has been tempted in all points like as we are, and it is our Saviour who admonishes and warns us concerning evil. He has identified his interest with that of suffering humanity, and he bids us "watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation." We should esteem his counsel as of the highest value. You are not to be off guard for an instant, but as a faithful sentinel to stand at your post of duty, and having done all to stand. But with all our watchfulness we are to remember that "except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Man must cooperate with the heavenly agencies; he must use his God-given abilities to their utmost in earnest endeavor to keep his own soul from being degraded by sin; but he must not trust in his own finite strength, for it will be as a broken staff, a bruised reed. With his human endeavor he must mingle faith in a divine Deliverer, and express his dependence upon God in prayer. The promise is given, "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me, and he shall make peace with Me." There is no safety for us outside of entire dependence on Jesus Christ. His wisdom, his power, his grace, his love must be our only support. We are to unite prayer with watchfulness, and thus lay hold upon his mighty power, feeling our insufficiency to cope with self and the powers of darkness.

Then looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith, with perfect assurance we may commit the keeping of our souls unto him, while we cooperate with divine agencies. Every soul may say: "Lord, without thee I can do nothing in saving or keeping my soul from sinning against thee; but thou art able to keep me from falling, and to present me faultless before the presence of thy glory with exceeding joy. To thee I commit the keeping of my soul as unto a faithful guardian, and I leave all in thy hands, knowing that thou doest all things well."

May 29, 1893

Walk in the Light

When John was cast into prison, he sent messengers to Jesus to inquire, "Art thou He that should come? or look we for another?" For an answer to this inquiry Jesus showed them his works. "And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight. Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached."

Jesus had seen these messengers as they left John, and he was prepared to answer them. He wrought as only God could for those who were afflicted and suffering, and under the cruel power of the destroyer. He who was seeking to deliver manifested his mighty power, and wrought wonderful miracles. The voice of the mighty Healer penetrated the deaf ear; a word, a touch of his hand opened the blind eyes to behold the light of day, the scenes of nature, the faces of friends, and the face of the Deliverer. Jesus rebuked disease and banished fever. His voice reached the ears of those who were dying, and they arose and became strong. Paralyzed demoniacs obeyed his voice, and their madness left them, and they worshiped him. All this was witnessed by the disciples of John, and they bore back to John the report of Christ's marvelous works. This report was as heaven's light flashing in amid the darkness of the prison. John accepted and appreciated this light.

And Jesus said unto his followers: "Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light." These words apply to us as well as to them. There is great reluctance to discern and gratefully receive the light from heaven. Moral darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people. Satan has the heart service of the world; his hellish shadow pervades and overshadows all human society, and how positively essential that Christ's professed followers should be channels of light. Says Christ, "Ye are the light of the world;" then how important that we place ourselves directly under the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Those who are sanctified through the

truth will be bright and shining lights in the world.

The whole earth is to be lightened with the glory of God. But how difficult for some to see and acknowledge the light and be converted, that I, Christ says, should heal them. The atmosphere of selfishness, pride, formality, and self-righteousness surrounds their souls, and it is very difficult for them to discern light as light and appreciate it. Some walk away from the light into darkness, and how much greater is the darkness that enshrouds their souls because they have had the light. Refusing to walk in the light, they stumble at most precious things. Refusing to see the truth, they stumble and know not at what they stumble. The light that has been graciously given has not been appreciated and brought into the practical life, and many are not doers of the word. Every true believer should have a realization of his solemn responsibility before God, to be a missionary seeking to save those that are lost. We should see armies of consecrated workers seeking to do, not their own will or pleasure, but the will of God. They should be laborers together with God. They should work, pray, and continually look unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of their faith. Those who surrender wholly to God will put thought and prayer and earnest, consecrated tact into their labors.

Young men and young women, if you are true disciples of Christ, you will consecrate every talent, and be able to reach out for the unconverted, by ways and methods that will be effective. You will be active, working agencies for Christ. In every church there should be devoted workers. All should realize that they are to seek counsel of God, that by well-directed personal efforts they may save souls for whom Christ died. No sinner should come within the sphere of a Christian's influence and feel that his interest has not been enlisted on the side of Jesus, the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. Those who profess to believe the truth should walk in the light of the precious beams of the Sun of Righteousness.

Who of our youth will give themselves to God for the purpose of laboring for the salvation of their fellow youth? Who will put their talent out to the exchangers? Who will feel their sacred accountability and put to use every ability given them of God to win souls? Young men and young women, cannot you form companies, and, as soldiers of Christ, enlist in the work, putting all your tact and skill and talent into the Master's service, that you may save souls from ruin? Let there be companies organized in every church to do this work. It is stated that when the householder left his servants, "he gave to every man his work." Not one was to be idle.

I appeal to both young and old, and ask, Is Jesus your personal Saviour? If you do not realize that he is yours, by all means make him yours. Then without delay teach others what you have experienced in the Christian life. Instead of being as frail reeds blowing in the wind, show yourselves as those who have root in themselves--that you believe and that you practice the truth, and its sanctifying power is upon your life and character. Then you will be walking in the light while you have the light. Will the young men and young women who really love Jesus organize themselves as workers, not only for those who profess to be Sabbath keepers, but for those who are not of our faith; for there is no respect of persons with God? All souls are precious; they are the purchase of the blood of the Son of God. Why has there been so little interest and soul burden for sinners? Many outside the ranks of Sabbath keepers, who have not had the light, give more promise of becoming children of God, joint heirs with Jesus, than do those who have had the light of truth, and who have not appreciated it, but have walked in the sparks of their own kindling. No one can labor successfully for souls without true, earnest, unselfish interest. Those who do so labor will see souls converted, and will themselves grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. They will not have a dwarfed experience in the things of God. They will be learners in the school of Christ, and educators as well, making known to others the things which they have learned of Jesus.

June 5, 1893

Transformation Through Faith and Obedience

The teaching of Christ in the gospel is in perfect harmony with the teaching of Christ through the prophets in the Old Testament. The prophets spoke through the messengers of Christ in the Old Testament as much as the apostles voiced his messages in the New Testament, and there is no contradiction between their teachings. But Satan has ever worked and is still working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness to make the word of God of none effect. He seeks to make mysterious that which is simple and plain. He has had long experience in this work. He knows the character of God, and through his subtlety he has captivated the world. It was through making the word of God of none effect that sin was brought into the world. Adam believed the falsehood of Satan, and through his misrepresentation of the character of God, Adam's life was changed and marred. He disobeyed the commandment of God, and did the very thing the Lord told him not to do. Through disobedience Adam fell; but had he endured the test, and been loyal to God, the flood gates of woe would not have been opened upon our world.

Through belief in Satan's misrepresentation of God, man's character and destiny were changed, but if men will believe in the word of God, they will be transformed in mind and character, and fitted for eternal life. To believe that "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life", will change the heart, and reproduce in man the image of God.

As many are today, so (before his conversion) Paul was very confident in an hereditary piety; but his confidence was founded on falsehood. It was faith out of Christ, for he trusted in forms and ceremonies. His zeal for the law was disconnected from Christ and was valueless. His boast was that he was blameless in his performance of the deeds of the law; but the Christ who made the law of any value he refused. He was confident that he was right. He says: "I verily thought of myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which things I also did in Jerusalem; and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them." For a time Paul did a very cruel work, thinking that he was doing God service; for he says, "I did it

ignorantly in unbelief." But his sincerity did not justify his work, or make error truth.

Faith is the medium through which truth or error finds a lodging place in the mind. It is by the same act of mind that truth or error is received, but it makes a decided difference whether we believe the word of God or the sayings of men. When Christ revealed himself to Paul, and he was convinced that he was persecuting Jesus in the person of his saints, he accepted the truth as it is in Jesus. A transforming power was manifested on mind and character, and he became a new man in Christ Jesus. He received the truth so fully that neither earth nor hell could shake his faith.

There are many who cry, "Believe, only believe." Ask them what you are to believe. Are you to believe the lies forged by Satan against God's holy, just, and good law? God does not use his great and precious grace to make of none effect his law, but to establish his law. What is the decision of Paul? He says: "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law.... For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and [the commandment then ended?--No.] I [Paul] died.... Wherefore the law is [standing directly in the way of my having liberty and peace?--No.] holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."

Paul learned that there was no power in the law to pardon the transgressor of law. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified." "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

The Lord saw our fallen condition; he saw our need of grace, and because he loved our souls, he has given us grace and peace. Grace means favor to one who is undeserving, to one who is lost. The fact that we are sinners, instead of shutting us away from the mercy and love of God, makes the exercise of his love to us a positive necessity in order that we may be saved. Christ says, "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."

When Adam fell, provision was made for his restoration. In due time Jesus, the Prince of life, came to our world to enter into controversy with the powers of darkness.

In this world Satan had an opportunity to exhibit the result of the working out of his principles of freedom from all law, and Christ, by his unswerving obedience to his Father's commandments, made manifest the result of practicing the principles of righteousness. In accordance with his principles of evil, Satan harassed the Son of God with fierce temptations, and finally brought him to the judgment hall, that he might be condemned to death without cause. The confederacy of evil moved upon the hearts of men to work out the principles of evil. Christ and Barabbas were presented before the multitude. Barabbas was a notable robber and murderer; Christ was the Son of God. Pilate looked upon the two, and thought there would be no hesitation in the choice of Jesus. The marks of nobility, intelligence, and purity were plainly revealed in his countenance, in marked contrast to the coarse features of Barabbas. He asked, "Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you?" And the hoarse cry of the infuriated mob was heard, calling, "Barabbas." "Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified."

In this choice the principles of Satan were made manifest; and the hosts of heaven, and all the worlds that God had created, judged that Satan was an accuser of the brethren, a liar, and a murderer. In heaven and among the unfallen worlds the question of Satan's deceiving power, of his malignant principles, was settled, and the perfect purity and holiness of Christ, who was bearing the test and trial in behalf of fallen man, was forever proved. Through the development of Satan's character and principles, he was forever uprooted from the affection of the unfallen worlds, and the controversy concerning his claims and the claims of Christ was forever settled in heaven. The righteousness manifested in the character of Christ was forever to be the anchor, the saving hope, of the world. Every soul who chooses Christ can say with faith, "The Lord my righteousness."

Christ was "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. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But 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."

The grace of Christ and the law of God are inseparable. In Jesus mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. In his life and character he not only reveals the character of God, but the possibility of man. He was the representative of God and the exemplar of humanity. He presented to the world what humanity might become when united by faith with divinity. The only-begotten Son of God took upon him the nature of man, and established his cross between earth and heaven. Through the cross, man was drawn to God, and God to man. Justice moved from its high and awful position, and the heavenly hosts, the armies of holiness, drew near to the cross, bowing with reverence; for at the cross justice was satisfied. Through the cross the sinner was drawn from the stronghold of sin, from the confederacy of evil, and at every approach to the cross his heart relents and in penitence he cries, "It was my sins that crucified the Son of God." At the cross he leaves his sins, and through the grace of Christ his character is transformed. The Redeemer raises the sinner from the dust, and places him under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. As the sinner looks upon the Redeemer, he finds hope, assurance, and joy. Faith takes hold of Christ in love. Faith works by love, and purifies the soul.

June 12, 1893

"Build the Old Waste Places"

"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."

The work expected of those who honor God has been plainly opened before us. "They that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places; thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations." This prophecy refers to the fourth commandment, which has been broken down and laid waste. The prophet brings to view a class of people who see and feel the importance of exalting the day that God has specified as his own, which is being dishonored and disregarded by the Christian world.

Paul, in his second epistle to the Thessalonians, points out the power that has attempted to break down the law of God. He warns the believers concerning the great apostasy and the blasphemous antichristian power that would be developed and perform its work before Christ should come the second time. He says: "That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.... The mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth [hindereth] will let [hinder], until he be taken out of the way. 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." The prophet Daniel, describing the same power, says, "He shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws."

How strikingly have these prophecies been fulfilled by the Romish Church! Not

only has this power attempted to change the times and laws of God, but she openly avows that she has made such changes, and she declares that by the observance of Sunday, which rests solely upon her authority, the Protestant world is acknowledging the supremacy of Rome. It is the breach which has thus been made in the law of God that the people described by Isaiah are seeking to build up.

"Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment, and do justice; for my salvation is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil. Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people.... The sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, everyone that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer."

Mark the conditions of the promise; it is to him "that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil." And the time when this promise especially applies is when "My salvation is near to come, and My righteousness to be revealed." There is a special work for God's people in these last days, to turn away their feet from trampling upon the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and to exalt it before men, calling it "a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable."

But when the claims of the Sabbath are presented, there are many who ask, What difference does it make what day we keep as the Sabbath, so long as we observe one day in seven? We answer, It makes all possible difference whether we obey or disregard the word of God. God has given us the Sabbath as a memorial of the great work of creation. He says: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work; ... for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." He declares through Moses, "It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever." And the children of Israel include all who believe in Christ. For "if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed." Again, by the prophet Ezekiel, the Lord says, "Hallow my Sabbaths; for they shall be a sign between me and you, that you may know that I am the Lord your God." The Sabbath is a sign of God's

creative power; it shows him to be supreme, the Maker and Upholder of the universe, the One from whom we receive "life and breath and all things," and hence the One to whom our allegiance is due.

Satan is determined that the knowledge of God, of his creative power, shall be banished from the contemplation and remembrance of men. But he cannot accomplish his purpose while the fourth commandment is kept; for the Sabbath directs the minds of men to the Creator. Therefore Satan has worked through the Papacy to set aside this precept. He inspired the Romish Church to "think to change" the times and laws of God. In setting aside the true Sabbath, which is the sign of God's power and authority, and substituting the institution which is the sign of Rome's supremacy, the "man of sin" is indeed "sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself that he is God." He is turning the minds of men away from God, and directing them to himself, and to the one whose instrument he is,--to the prince of evil.

The Sunday sabbath, the child of the Papacy, has been accepted by the Protestant church, who have fostered and cradled it as if of heavenly birth. But their human sanction can never give it acceptance with God. It is a rival, spurious Sabbath, usurping the place of the holy day upon which God rested, which he blessed and sanctified, and gave to man as an everlasting memorial of the Creator's work. When the facts are brought before them, will Protestants, by their deference to the Sunday, consent to recognize the sacrilegious claims of the man of sin? Will they choose to worship him instead of God?

Can we who see the Sabbath as the sign of the living God consent to renounce that sign? Do we wish to renounce it? Or do we desire to keep and cherish the sign which God has given to designate his commandment-keeping people? The world's persistent unbelief of this grand truth does not lessen its importance. Although we may refuse to obey, it remains the truth still; if not allowed to guide, it will condemn us.

Now is the time when God calls upon us to honor his precepts that have been made void. As soon as the light shines upon us, we are to seek, by voice and pen and influence, to make up the breach in the law of God.

The mystery of iniquity, which had already begun to work in Paul's day, will continue its work until it be taken out of the way at our Lord's second coming. The

climax of the working of iniquity will soon be reached. When the land which the Lord provided as an asylum for his people, that they might worship him according to the dictates of their own consciences, the land over which for long years the shield of Omnipotence has been spread, the land which God has favored by making it the depository of the pure religion of Christ,--when that land shall, through its legislators, abjure the principles of Protestantism, and give countenance to Romish apostasy in tampering with God's law,--it is then that the final work of the man of sin will be revealed. Protestants will throw their whole influence and strength on the side of the Papacy; by a national act enforcing the false Sabbath, they will give life and vigor to the corrupt faith of Rome, reviving her tyranny and oppression of conscience. Then it will be time for God to work in mighty power for the vindication of his truth.

Our Duty

The prophet says: "I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen.... And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." When do her sins reach unto heaven? When the law of God is finally made void by legislation. Then the extremity of God's people is his opportunity to show who is the governor of heaven and earth. As a Satanic power is stirring up the elements from beneath, God will send light and power to his people, that the message of truth may be proclaimed to all the world.

The Lord calls upon his people to rise to the emergency; the human agencies are to cooperate with the divine. It is always difficult to hold fast to the profession of faith, when a deadening, paralyzing influence is exerted in the religious world against loyalty to God. But because iniquity abounds, shall God's people permit their love to grow cold? Shall our hearts faint? Shall we not rather stand to our allegiance, and bear the noblest testimony that man can bear to the honor of God? Those who are not whole-hearted will lean to the world's side of the question; they will advise that the plain, decided truth be suppressed. But such is not the teaching of the word of God.

"The dragon [Satan and all that are imbued by his spirit] 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." "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." The true children of God will not be less fervent in their adherence to his law because it is made void. As opposition to God's law increases, the chosen and faithful will love his commandments above gold, while the world counts them as dross. All who are loyal to heaven will put on the whole armor of God, that they "may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an 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." The time when God is especially dishonored by those who make void his law is the time when every loyal subject should unfurl the banner inscribed "The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."

The Lord's injunction to Joshua when he was about to take command of the armies of Israel, was: "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee; turn not from it to the right hand nor to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." Those who do thus meditate in the commandments of God, and whose hearts are stayed on the Lord, are the ones who will be found repairers of the breach in God's holy law. They will build the old waste places, and raise up the foundations of many generations.

June 19, 1893

The Gift of God

Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water."

The gifts of God are on every hand, and all his gifts come to us through the merit of Jesus, whom he gave to the world. The apostle Paul breaks forth in an exclamation of gratitude, saying, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." And with Christ God has given us all things. The opening bud, the blooming flowers in their variety and loveliness, delightful to the senses, are the work of the Master Artist's expressions of his love toward us. What beautiful things his hands have made, and yet many behold the lovely things of nature, and do not associate God with these blessings. They do not realize that the beautiful things about them are tokens of God's love to fallen humanity, his efforts to attract them to himself. The Lord has taken great care that everything should be grateful and pleasant to us, and yet how much greater effort he has made to provide us with that gift whereby we may perfect a Christian character, after the pattern of Christ.

Through the flowers of the field God would call our attention to the loveliness of Christlike character. Jesus says, "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." God is a lover of the beautiful. He desires that we shall consider the lovely flowers of the valley, and learn lessons of trust in him. They are to be our teachers. They grow, as God has designed they should, in purity and natural simplicity. The Lord takes care of the flowers of the field, and clothes them with loveliness, and yet he has made it evident that he looks upon man as of greater value than the flowers for which he cares. He has lavished upon us such gifts as human hand could not fashion, and yet the great mass of humanity take his gifts as a matter of course, or as if they came by chance. They offer no grateful thanks; their hearts are not awakened with love toward the gracious Giver.

Suppose that our benevolent Father should grow weary with man's ingratitude,

and for a few weeks should withhold his innumerable bounties. Suppose he should become discouraged in seeing his treasures applied to selfish ends, in hearing no response of praise and gratitude for his unmerited mercies, and should forbid the sun to shine, the dew to fall, the earth to yield her increase. What a sensation would be created! What dismay would fall upon the world! What a cry would be raised as to what we should do to supply our tables with food and our bodies with clothing! And yet, dependent as we are upon his bounties, many have taken his gifts as have the beasts of the field, and have never said, "I thank thee, kind Father, for thy daily benefits." If his mercies should be withdrawn, it would be no more than we deserve; for it would be treating us as unworthy of such unrequited love.

God has not only supplied us with temporal benefits, but has provided for our eternal welfare; "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." "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." Oh, if we did but know the gift of God, if we did but appreciate what this gift of God means to us, we would have been earnestly seeking for it with unwavering perseverance! We would have offered such supplication, such appeals to God, that the gift of grace would not have been withheld, and the living water would have come to satisfy our longing, thirsty souls. "If thou knewest the gift of God." Yes, if the gift of God had been known, there would not be prayerless homes, and hearts as unimpressible as stone.

Jesus Christ, the Majesty of heaven, has been offered to the world, has been given to man as his Saviour and Redeemer. Well may the inhabitants of heaven and the unfallen worlds look with astonishment upon man's lack of discernment, upon his ingratitude. Many have hated and spurned the gift of God, although Jesus clothed his divinity with humanity, and for our sake became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich. He left the courts of heaven, and came to the world, all seared and marred and polluted with sin; he practiced self-denial and self-sacrifice, descending lower and lower in the path of humiliation, that we might be enriched and exalted. Rich in houses and lands, in worldly honor?--No, but that we might have all heaven's imperishable treasure, an eternal weight of glory.

"If thou knewest the gift of God." Oh, if the deceptive, bewitching power of Satan were only resisted, blinded eyes would be opened, unbelieving hearts would be made to

perceive, and unsaved souls would have a knowledge of the unspeakable gift, and would press to the throne of grace with importunate prayer, entreating that they might drink of the living water. God is willing to impart to men the knowledge of his gift. Jesus is "to give the knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." "If thou knewest the gift of God." Who is there among those who already know the gift of God, who will fail to make known its preciousness to those who know it not? If you know the gift of God, if you have an experimental knowledge of what the blessings are that Christ came to bestow upon the perishing, will your lips be silent, your heart ungrateful? Will you have no interest in others, and be indifferent as to whether or not they know the way of salvation? Will you not make known to others the precious light of truth, that they also may know, that they also may ask of him, and receive the living water?

Speaking of Jacob's well, Jesus said unto the woman: "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but 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." How many are drinking of broken cisterns that can hold no water! Some think that if they could only have a certain salary, that would lift them above temporal want, they would be happy. But when the Lord grants them their heart's desire, and tests them by a larger measure of favor, they are just as desirous of a larger amount, and so it is with other things. Their hunger and thirst increase in proportion as his gifts increase, and humanity is ever crying, Give me this or that favor, and I will hunger and thirst no more; but when the desire is gratified, there is still a greater need. But there is one gift that God desires to bestow that will be as living water, and he who partakes of Christ will never hunger, never thirst.

Jesus, the loving Saviour, entreats the woe-stricken inhabitants of earth to come to him. He says: "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." Oh, have you found this rest? Have you been to the fountain of living water to drink? The knowledge of God is the most vital to you. Have you found it? Jesus says: "As thou hast given him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and

Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." The evidence of our knowledge of God and of his Son is seen in the fact that we reveal him in life and character, that we make him known unto others.

Shall we open our hearts to Jesus Christ? Shall we enthrone him in the temple of the soul? Shall we not cast away our idols, and surrender our all to God? God has had power to make the flowers fair and fragrant, and he has power to give meekness and lowliness to the heart, to impart purity and nobility to the character, to make us complete in Jesus. We may have loveliness of disposition, a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. Let us consider the precious gifts of God, think upon his tender mercies, yield our all to him, that he may give us hearts filled with gratitude, lives filled with the fragrance of deeds of love, a disposition to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, seeking to save those that are lost.

June 26, 1893

What Shall It Profit?

The question is asked, "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?" It is dangerous to give time, thought, and strength to the pursuit of worldly gain, even if success follows persevering effort; for in thus doing there is danger of making God and his righteousness secondary. It is better far to be in poverty, to endure disappointment, and have our earthly hopes shattered, than to have our eternal interests imperiled. Flattering inducements may be presented to us, and we may think to obtain wealth and honor, and so set our heart and soul on worldly enterprises. But as we cannot serve God and mammon, we are led to give up the service of God.

Money has become the measure of manhood in the world, and men are estimated, not by their integrity, but by the amount of wealth they possess. Thus it was in the days before the flood. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.... And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." "But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be."

Let us not be determined to get rich. If we see that poverty will be our portion in abiding in the simple truth, let us abide by the truth and enter into life. Jesus said that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." The devotees of the world may smile at this statement, but it is nevertheless the counsel of eternal wisdom. Jesus has left his followers a legacy of peace. He says, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." The Christian who is called into the world by his

business, if he follows Christ, will bear his cross, and meet his perplexities in the Spirit of Christ. He will not make the world his God, and give brain and bone and muscle to the service of mammon. He will realize that Heaven is looking upon him, and whatever success attends him, he will give glory to God. He will realize that God knows, as man does not, that a few more years will roll by, and the treasures of earth be no more.

Our Saviour came to the world to adjust the claims between heaven and earth. He knows that man, formed in his image, has been endowed by his Creator in such a way that he may rise to the highest eminence of moral efficiency through cooperation with divine agency provided for his assistance. With what sorrow Jesus looks upon man wasting his energies in pursuit of that which profiteth nothing. In tones of sorrow in which mingle tears, Jesus asks, "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? "The arch-deceiver has inspired in man, by his temptations, by his presentation of flattering inducements, an inordinate desire to get the riches of this world, and he leads men to practice every form of sin in order that they may gain every earthly treasure. In the acquirement of this world's wealth, the precious promises of God are cast aside as worthless. Through the service of mammon the love of God has been expelled from the heart, and the love of the world has rushed in to fill the vacuum, and to firmly enthrone itself in the heart, to rule and reign in the life. The power of God alone can force it from its usurped position. Through love of the world the spiritual vision is blinded, and the pleasures and attractions of the future world are hid from sight.

It is the vision of the world to come that balances the mind, so that the things which are seen do not obtain control over the affections, which have been bought with an infinite price by the world's Redeemer. Through the agency of the Holy Spirit the things unseen and eternal are brought before the soul, and the advantages of the eternal, imperishable treasure are made to appear before the mind's eye in their attractive beauty. In this way we learn to look to the unseen and the eternal, and to esteem the reproaches of Christ greater value than the treasures of the world.

The angels are the servants of Christ, and there are ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands who are sent to minister unto them that shall be heirs of salvation. Angels that excel in strength minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, and impart to them divine power; for they become partakers of the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world through lust. Heavenly agencies are

ever at the side of him who is wrestling for the victory, in order that while lawfully striving for the mastery, he may not be worsted in the conflict. But if the human agent places little value upon the precious things which God, through the gift of his only-begotten Son, has made possible for man to obtain, if he loses eternity out of his reckoning, and listens to Satan's false representation, and is attracted to the things of earth instead of heaven, he sustains great loss, so cultivating the powers of his mind and soul that he will not have a fitness for eternal life. In this way he not only concentrates his mind and affection upon that which cannot possibly bring him happiness in this life, but through the idolizing of the most contemptible things, he degrades himself to a low moral level. In his insane pursuit after earthly gain, he accepts Satan's method, and practices dishonest ways, and is blind to the result. Why should he not do this way when he disconnects himself from Him who is the source of all good, all righteousness and truth? Why will not Satan give him his mind and his attributes, and so mould him by his influence that he shall reflect the image of the earthly? The mind of him who follows the suggestion of Satan becomes like his leader; evil propensities gradually take him captive, and he becomes a slave of Satan. He is led on into deeper idolatry, beholding not the celestial imagery but the deceiving representation of the enemy. Satan pictures before him the advantage of worldly gain, and fills memory's hall with false representations. The mind looks upon these, and becomes debased according to the subjects presented.

July 3, 1893

Seek Those Things Which are Above

"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." Through every age the experiment of serving two masters whose interests were divergent has been tried over and over, but the world's Redeemer solemnly assures us, as one who knows that the experiment is utterly impracticable, that "no man can serve two masters." He has given important lessons on this matter, lessons that we neglect at the peril of our souls. We are to be intensely in earnest in regard to heavenly things. We are to watch, to pray, to wait, and to work. "Why," he asks, "stand ye here all the day idle?" and adds, "Go work today in my vineyard." Work, earnest work, is before us. We are to consecrate our life wholly to the service of God, and to trade diligently on our Lord's intrusted talents. We are to permit nothing to interpose between us and God, but to look well to our soul's eternal interest, and meet the claim that God has upon his human agents. We would inquire of those who profess the solemn truth for this time, Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed? Is your heart reaching heavenward, and does your soul contemplate heavenly things? Have earthly things more attraction for you than heavenly things? If heaven is the theme of your contemplation, it will be the theme of your conversation. To him who is growing in grace and in a knowledge of the truth, the heavenly attractions become all absorbing, and he grows up into Christ, his living head. Responding to the glory of Christ, our righteousness is brought forth as the light, and our judgment as the noonday. In contemplating the matchless charms of Jesus, in realizing the light of his presence by faith, we have a foretaste of the joy of the heavenly world. He who follows on to know the Lord will know that his goings forth are prepared as the morning.

How much more may we enjoy in this life than that which we have enjoyed! In our present spiritual condition we have only a faint idea of what our life might become, of what our homes might be, if we would cultivate heavenly affections, and yield ourselves wholly to the service of God. We would live in joyful communion with God. Our human affections and sympathies are not to wane away and become extinct, but through living connection with God, our love is to deepen, our interest to become more intense, our efforts more successful in promoting the happiness of those around us.

Through Jesus Christ, households are to have blissful harmony and unity, and parents are to live together in peace and love, neither speaking nor thinking evil one of another. Parents and children are to be kind, forbearing, forgiving, having their hearts softened by the grace of Christ.

The truth of heavenly origin received into the heart never makes its possessor coarse, rough, uncourteous, hard hearted, and unsympathetic. The reception of the truth is to work a result exactly opposite to this. Its influence will encourage, and strengthen the tender, finer feelings of human nature. Those who believe the truth, will reveal its influence in their daily life. They will have the mind of Christ. They will be affectionate parents, loving children, faithful friends, and agreeable associates. They will not feel that they have occasion to blush when they give expression to feelings of tenderness and sympathy to those of their own flesh and blood.

He who cherishes the softening, subduing influence of the love of God, will not be coarse and rough and unforgiving, revengeful and full of bitterness. The true Christian will make his home a type of the heavenly home, and this he can do only as he has the abiding love of Christ in his soul. Souls about us are perishing for sympathy which is never expressed. Many have a cold, stern manner, and do not hesitate to reprove, while they withhold all praise, and never give a word of commendation to brighten the pathway of those who serve them. As the heavenly home would not be a home of bliss without the presence of Christ, neither can the earthly home be a happy one without his abiding love. Let us heed the words of Christ, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." If this injunction is obeyed from the heart, the life will be full of grace and peace, and our conversation will not consist simply of a set of dry phrases, but will bring happiness, peace, and joy to the members of the household. Thoughts and actions will reveal that we are in harmony with the divine will.

We shall be judged by our thoughts and words. There is need that we pray much, that all our thoughts may be brought into captivity to Jesus. We should hourly seek the grace of God, that our natural irritability of temper shall not overcome us, or our desire to have our own way make us brace ourselves against the work of God. We should educate ourselves after the divine order, that we may not tear down but build up the interests of humanity. The workers must not draw apart. They will have to meet discouragements from without, and not one who claims to be making up the breach in

the law of God, of building up the old waste places, restoring the foundations of many generations, should be found undoing the work that God has set his workmen to accomplish in different branches of his cause.

Cultivate confidence, love, and faith in one another. Let confidence be so thoroughly grounded that your love one for another may not be easily chilled or turned aside. Cultivate good will toward the children of God, and especially toward those whom God hath sent to bear a special message to the world. Do not find fault with and cast reflections one upon another. If you see anything in the servants of God which seems to you unworthy of their high calling, let it not be a matter of discouragement to you, but let it be an incentive to reach a higher level.

July 10, 1893

Necessity of Contemplating Heavenly Things

John says: "I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which was the book of life, and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

If we would bear in mind the momentous events which are soon to take place, we would not be so weak in character. We would feel that we were living in the presence of God, and awed and amazed we should heed the injunction, "Be still and know that I am God." Oh, when shall we ever realize the full value of our Saviour's work and intercession? When shall we rely upon him with full confidence, and live a noble, pure, and devoted life? To what heights may the imagination reach when sanctified and inspired by the virtue of Christ! We may take in the glories of the future, eternal world. We may live as seeing him who is invisible. Walk by faith and not by sight. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Through searching the Scriptures we may come to understand what we are to Christ, and what he is to us. By beholding him we are to become changed into his image, becoming co-laborers with him, representatives of him in life and character. We must learn to realize that we are to live as the sons and daughters of God, loving God supremely, and our neighbor as ourselves. We are to live a pure, perfect life for Christ's sake. We are to love perfection because Jesus is the embodiment of perfection, the great center of attraction. The life we now live we must live by faith in the Son of God.

If we follow Christ we shall not have a spasmodical experience, and be moved by circumstances and influenced by our surroundings. We shall not let feeling control us, and indulge in fretting, envying, fault-finding, jealousy, and vanity.

It is indulgence in these things that puts us out of harmony with the harmonious life of Christ, and prevents us from becoming overcomers. We should be actuated by the noble purpose of winning daily victories, and by watchfulness and sincere prayer attain to complete control of self. When petty trials come upon us, and words are spoken that cut and bruise the soul, speak to yourself and say, "I am a child of God, heir with Jesus Christ, a co-laborer with heaven, and I cannot afford to easily take offense, to be always thinking of self; for this will produce a distorted character, and is unworthy of my high calling. My Heavenly Father has given me a work to do, and let me do it worthily for his name's sake."

We should consider earnestly and continually the excellence of the character of Jesus Christ, and we may impart his blessings, and lead men to follow in his footsteps. If the ministers of Christ would do this, there would be no reason for deploring their inefficiency. If they came to the people filled with the meekness and lowliness of Christ, knowing what it is to grow up into the full stature of men in Christ Jesus, power would attend their labors, and people would receive impressions from their association with them that would be of eternal benefit. The work of God would go deeper than it now does, and the soul would be changed into the likeness of Christ. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed in the same image from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord." "For as much as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.... The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? ... Now the Lord is that Spirit. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." "Wherefore also we pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power; that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ 5/be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God, and the Lord Jesus Christ."

July 17, 1893

Christ Adjusts the Claims Between Earth and Heaven

The abominations of the earth have defiled the minds of men, and made gross their imagination, until nothing is pure to the mind's eye. God designed that the mind should be elevated and noble, that through the merits of the crucified and risen Saviour, the soul should be pure and exalted; but through the contemplation of defiling things, through setting the affections upon the so-called treasures of this earth, the mind is debased, and incapable of appreciating heavenly things. God designed that man's mind should be capable of rising to heights of pure delight, that we might take in the significance of things infinite and eternal, looking upon views of which God is the center; yet through submitting themselves to Satan, men have lowered themselves to fulfill the devices and plans of Satan, thus completing the ruin of soul, body, and spirit.

But "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 Lord Jesus sees with what masterly power Satan is working to obliterate in man the image of God, and to place upon him his own image and character. Through his love for the fallen human family, Christ consented to come to this world. He clothed his divinity with humanity, and engaged in the task of correcting the evils which are ruining the world. As he looked upon the world, he saw that the senses of men were closed to the eternal realities, and he sees today the same blindness to spiritual things. He lifts up his voice in warning. Listen, what does he say?--"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?"

Earth and earthly things will perish with the using. A few years will pass by, and death will come. Your eternal destiny will be fixed, eternally fixed. If your soul is lost, what will compensate you for its loss? Christ the Life Giver, Christ the Redeemer, Christ the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world, points you to a nobler world. He brings it within range of your vision. He takes you to the threshold of heaven, and brings you to contemplate the glories of eternal realities, that your aspirations may be quickened to grasp the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. As you contemplate heavenly scenes, desire is kindled in your heart to have friendship with God, to be wholly reconciled to him.

Our Saviour's work is to adjust the claims between earthly and heavenly interests, to put the duties and responsibilities of the life that now is in proper relation to those that pertain to eternal life. The fear and love of God are the first things that should claim our attention. We cannot afford to put off that which concerns our soul's interest till tomorrow. The life which we now live we are to live by faith in the Son of God. We are redeemed from the beggarly elements of the world with a redemption that is full and complete, that cannot be increased by any supplement from human sources.

But in the midst of this flood of mercies, this plentitude of divine love, many hearts continue in indifference, careless, and unimpressed by the provisions of God's grace. Shall we who claim to be Christians make no effort to break the spell which Satan has cast upon these souls? Shall we let them go on in hardness of heart, without God, and without hope in the world?--No; although every appeal we may make may be slighted and refused, we cannot cease to pray for them and to make tender entreaty for their souls. We must do all we can, through the aid of God's Holy Spirit, to break down the barriers by which they have sought to make themselves impregnable to the light of God's truth. We must seek to open their eyes to their blindness, to loose them from the captivity of Satan. These poor, deceived, blinded, deluded souls look upon religion as something that will fetter them, that will deprive them of their liberty, when the truth is that an infinite sacrifice has been made in order to emancipate them from the slavery of Satan, to break every yoke, and to let the oppressed go free. They are victims of the father of lies, and it is the truth of God alone that can set them free, and sanctify them to a blessed service. They seem to feel afraid of the truth lest it should bring them into subjection to Christ. Shall we who know the value of truth arouse our sleeping energies, and become laborers together with God, putting forth personal effort, that we may by both precept and example win souls to Christ?

If once the vision were cleared to behold eternal realities as they really are, many of these poor, deluded souls would decide for Christ and heaven. Would this incapacitate them for the affairs of this life?--No. But Christ would teach them the value of eternal life, and by comparing earthly treasure with heavenly treasure would show them of how little esteem the world is in contrast with eternal blessedness among the redeemed hosts. He would show them that the world and its engrossing engagements are to be kept in subjugation to heavenly interests. Jesus did not come to annihilate the world and its appropriate interests. He made the world, and he had such respect for the

world that he came in person to dispute Satan's usurped authority and power over his own purchased possession. In dealing with the souls of men he deposes the world and its interests from its position of usurped authority, and assigns to it its proper place in subordination to the will of God.

The object of the world's Redeemer in coming to earth was to impress the minds of men with high and solemn considerations, so that every moment of life might be regarded by them as burdened with momentous interests and freighted with eternal results. The world was in rebellion against him, and he might have swept away all rebellion by annihilating those who were in resistance to his will; but instead of this, he set before men the value of life, the attractions of the heavenly world, and he invites every son and daughter of Adam to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. In place of exhausting the powers of brain, bone, and muscle in securing the bread which perisheth, he warns us not to drop eternity out of our reckoning, but to seek for the bread which cometh down from heaven. It is safe for us to put forth our chief endeavors to secure eternal substance. He encourages us to have our principal interest in heaven, and in so doing to secure our peace on earth; "for where the treasure is, there will the heart be also."

July 24, 1893

Christ's Example in Prayer

When Christians complain of being in darkness, when they dwell upon their trials and discouragements, and murmur against God, they virtually say that they are not following the example of Christ in offering to God humble, fervent prayer for grace and strength that they may be fortified for trials and strengthened for duty. Christ's professed followers may be strong in the Lord if they avail themselves of the provisions made for them through the merits of Jesus. God has not closed the heavens against the humble prayers of repenting, humble, believing souls. The humble, simple, earnest, persevering prayer of the faithful one will now penetrate heaven, as surely as did the prayer of Christ. Heaven opened to his prayer, and this shows us that we may be reconciled to God, and that communication is established between God and man through the righteousness of our Lord and Saviour. Christ took upon him humanity, and yet he was in close, intimate relationship with God. He linked humanity with his divine nature, making it possible for men also to become partakers of the divine nature, and thus escape the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Christ is our example in all things. In response to his prayer to his Father, heaven was opened, and the Spirit descended like a dove and abode upon him. The Holy Spirit of God is to communicate with man, and to abide in the hearts of the obedient and faithful. Light and strength will come to those who earnestly seek it in order that they may have wisdom to resist Satan, and to overcome in times of temptation. We are to overcome even as Christ overcame.

Jesus opened his public mission with fervent prayer, and his example makes manifest the fact that prayer is necessary in order to lead a successful Christian life. He was constantly in communion with his Father, and his life presents to us a perfect pattern which we are to imitate. He appreciated the privilege of prayer, and his work showed the results of communion with God. Examining the record of his life, we find that upon all important occasions he retired to the grove, or to the solitude of the mountains, and offered earnest, persevering prayer to God. He frequently devoted the entire night to prayer just before he was called upon to work some mighty miracle. During these nightly seasons of prayer, after the labors of the day, he compassionately

dismissed his disciples, that they might return to their homes for rest and sleep, while with strong crying and tears he poured forth earnest petitions to God in behalf of humanity.

Jesus was braced for duty and fortified for trial through the grace of God that came to him in answer to prayer. We are dependent upon God for success in living the Christian life, and Christ's example opens before us the path by which we may come to a never-failing source of strength, from which we may draw grace and power to resist the enemy and to come off victorious. On the banks of Jordan Christ offered prayer as the representative of humanity, and the opening heaven and the voice of approval assures us that God accepts humanity through the merits of his Son.

Christ was the Son of the Most High God, yet throughout his life he did not seek to magnify or exalt himself by any of his works, but sought simply to proclaim the glory of the Father. For thirty years he seemed to be unhonored and unknown, and yet he lived a diligent, faithful life. As individuals we also are not to seek to glorify ourselves, but to keep our souls open to the cheering beams of the Sun of Righteousness, that we may show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. The injunction to each one of us is, "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." The ardent desire of the apostles was to know God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. Jesus lives; he is before the Father in the heavenly courts, making intercession for those who are still upon the earth in the turmoil and strife of life; for the church militant is not yet the church triumphant.

By communion with God we may constantly have a cultivation in mind and heart and character that will elevate us and direct our thoughts heavenward, that we may become partakers of the divine nature. We are to be human agents that will cooperate with divine intelligences. We are to be quickened under the influence of divine power, that will not only strengthen us, but attract our minds from the dust and rubbish of earth, that will set us free from the polluting, deceiving influences of the world, so that we may contemplate heavenly things. Through this influence our hearts are to be purified, our affections sanctified, and set not upon earthly things but upon heavenly things. The treasure of earth will soon pass away, and "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?" The soul is capable of purification and sanctification, capable of attaining, through the offering of Christ, the heavenly treasure, even the gift of life that shall measure with the

life of Jehovah.

July 31, 1893

Our Eternal Destiny Decided by Our Course Here

We have but one probation in which to form character, and our destiny depends upon the manner of character we form. Those who on earth have formed characters that through the grace of Christ bear the heavenly mould, will be ripened through the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit for the eternal reward. They become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. It is a realization of the fact that our characters are Christlike, that calls forth the song of praise and thanksgiving to God and to the Lamb. Those who appreciate the goodness, mercy, and love of Christ, and by beholding him become changed into his image, will be partakers of eternal life. The attributes of their character are like those of Christ, and they cannot fail of the rest that remains for the people of God.

But those who have developed a character after the Satanic order would not be at home in heaven. The sinful, selfish, passionate accuser and criticiser would be miserable in heaven; and even in the counsels of the court of God, because of his lack of wisdom, he would reveal his uncourteous, unsympathizing, harsh disposition. If he were placed upon the very loftiest pinnacle, and held supremacy in angelic councils, he would still want to be in a higher position, and even covet the throne of God. There would be no happiness for such a man in heaven. He could not practice evil thinking, evil speaking, be boisterous, critical, and condemnatory, amid the peaceful hosts of the redeemed. Could such a one enter heaven, he would find that he had brought his untamable, unmanageable self along, and heaven itself could not afford him relief from his innate disposition. Heaven begins in the soul, and as heavenly-mindedness increases, Christ is more and more appreciated, and finally becomes the Chiefest among ten thousand, the One altogether lovely. But as Satan is allowed to control the mind, his attributes become a part of the character of the one whom he controls, and the sinner exercises himself unto more and more ungodliness.

If we would see heaven, we must have heaven below. We must have a heaven to go to heaven in. We must have heaven in our families, through Christ continually approaching unto God. Christ is the great center of attraction, and the child of God hid in Christ, meets with God, and is lost in the divine being. Prayer is the life of the soul; it

is feeding on Christ; it is turning our faces fully toward the Sun of Righteousness. As we turn our faces toward Him, He turns his face toward us. He longs to give us divine grace; and as we draw nigh to God with full assurance of faith, our spiritual conceptions are quickened. We do not then walk in blindness, bemoaning our spiritual barrenness; for by diligent, prayerful searching of the word of God, we apply his rich promises unto our souls. Angels draw close to our side, and the enemy with his manifold devices is driven back.

Prayer is the strength of the soul, and yet this exercise has been sadly neglected. By simple, earnest, contrite prayer, heavenly mindedness is greatly increased. No other means of grace can be substituted and healthiness of the soul be preserved. Prayer brings the soul into immediate contact with the wellspring of life, and strengthens the spiritual sinew and muscle of our religious experience; for we live by faith, seeing Him who is invisible. Neglect the exercise of prayer, or engage in prayer spasmodically, now and then, as it is deemed convenient, and you lose your connection with God. The Christian life becomes dry, and the spiritual faculties have no vitality. The religious experience lacks health and vigor. There is a growing tendency to substitute the writings and sayings of men for the word of God.

It is because of a neglect of prayer and of searching the Bible that the multitudes accept men-made theories, vain philosophies, or the flashing speculations of the human mind. God never designed that the soul should be nourished with the traditions and speculations of human invention. The imagination must plume for a higher flight than human ability can originate; for the mind must ascend to the Source of all wisdom. Souls all about us are starving for the bread of life, famishing for the living water, clear as crystal, that flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb. But the bread of life is denied these poor souls, and even from the pulpits discourses on science and vain philosophy are substituted for the word of God. It is the word of God that is as pure provender, thoroughly winnowed from all the chaff of human uncertainties and suppositions.

It is the grace of God alone which can vitalize and refresh the soul. The precious sure word of prophecy reveals to him who is a searcher for truth, the riches of the grace of Christ. The word of God is a spiritual granary from whence the soul may receive that which will nourish its life. In perusing the word of God we find doctrines, precepts, promises, admonitions, exhortations, and words of encouragement, that will meet the

case of emergency in every human mind. Here the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works; for "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." "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." "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.... Keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called, which some professing have erred concerning the faith." "Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith, so do. Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and a faith unfeigned; from which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm." "And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness."

This instruction is vital, and may be considered with profit. We are to rely upon the word of God, and not upon the assertion or speculation of human philosophy. The soul is to be nourished by the pure, unadulterated word of God; and by persevering search the Bible student will find a "feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Then the language of the heart will be, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart."

August 7, 1893

Ye Did It Unto Me

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

God's people will be composed mostly of persons from the common walks of life. "Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" One of the tokens of Christ's divine mission was, "The poor have the gospel preached unto them." Through our large cities there are many in lowly circumstances who are serving the Lord in singleness of heart, according to the best light which shines upon their pathway. They are hidden ones, for their life is hid with Christ in God. They have an humble opinion of their merits, and yet they love Jesus according to the knowledge they have of him, and put their trust in him as their personal Saviour. They have had no opportunity to understand the philosophy of theology, and are not wise in worldly wisdom; yet they know enough to love Jesus, and Jesus loves them. In humble ways they have done according to their ability what they could to bless others, and they will be surprised when the heavenly benediction is spoken upon them by the Heavenly Master: "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."

Those to whom these blessed words are spoken are those who have cherished the principles and spirit of the character of Christ. They loved the Lord Jesus, and served him in the simplicity of true godliness. They were a blessing to all with whom they associated, although they knew but little of the theory and doctrine of theology. Even

among the heathen there are those who cherish the spirit of kindness, who have given all the help within their power to the missionaries that have been sent them. They worship God ignorantly, and to many of them the message of light is never brought; yet they will not perish, for they will receive the blessing, because they have wrought the works of God. Many who have never heard the message of salvation are all ready to receive the light, and God designs that it shall go to them like clear rays of glory. They will hear the living messenger, who brings the living message, as he says: "Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us; for in him we live, and move, and have our being."

How surprised and gladdened will be the hearts of the lowly among the nations, and among the heathen, to hear from the lips of the Saviour: "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." They will answer, 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."

Christ identifies his interest with that of suffering humanity. Every kindly action, if it is simply the giving of the cup of cold water, if it is the best that can be given, will be remembered and rewarded. How glad will be the great heart of Infinite Love as his simple-hearted followers look up with surprise and joy at his words of approval, "Ye have done it unto me." But to those who have been self-centered, who have lived but to please and serve themselves, he will say: "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 to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me."

Through life the class that are bidden depart from Christ have served and glorified themselves; and in their self-indulgence and self-pleasing it was impossible to form a character after Christ's likeness. They had the word of God, they may have even understood the theory of the truth, but they did not exercise themselves unto godliness. Satisfied in their sufficiency, their daily acts decided their own destiny, and they formed a character exactly contrary to the character of Christ. They failed to comprehend the value and significance of the infinite sacrifice made to save their souls. Had they responded to the great love that had been manifested for them, they would have been convinced of their own weakness and sinfulness, and would have loved God with the whole heart and their neighbors as themselves. But they did not desire an experience in wearing the yoke of Christ, and they cared not to carry his burden in willing service for the Master, and so failed to become colaborers with Christ. They excused themselves from all responsibility for Christ's sake. They were slothful servants, and misapplied their talents, and used their ability for the service of self and the world. While making a profession of godliness, their Christless lives misrepresented the character of their professed Lord. They refused everything of a spiritual nature, and would have nothing to do with that which required sacrifice and self-denial, and their souls were as destitute of the grace of Christ as were the hills of Gilboa of dew or rain.

August 14, 1893

Sanctification Through the Truth

"Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.... Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an 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; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; having your conversation honest among the Gentiles; that, whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."

Among many who have claimed to accept the precious light of truth, there is a perverted idea of what constitutes Christian character. They have not performed the words of Christ, and instead of advancing, following on to know the Lord, they have been retrograding, backsliding. Christ represents the truth as a treasure that is hid in the field, for which, if men would possess it, they must search diligently. In the field of revelation are hid the unsearchable riches of Christ. As yet we have only come in possession of the most accessible treasures, and yet many have settled down, feeling that they are rich and increased in goods, and in need of nothing. Every part of the field of revelation is to be diligently explored, and searched with persevering effort, in order that precious jewels of truth may reward the diligent seeker, and may be restored to their proper framework in the plan of redemption. Let the shaft sink deep into the mines of truth. If you come to the searching of the Scriptures with contrition of soul, with a humble, teachable spirit, rich and precious treasures will reward your search.

The Lord sends his ministers to hold forth the word of life, to preach, not "vain philosophy" and "science falsely so called," but the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation. "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." Paul gives his dying

charge in the following words: "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." In this charge every minister has his work laid out before him, and this he can do through the fulfillment of the promise that Jesus gave to his disciples: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

In the teachings of Christ, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is made prominent. What a vast theme is this for contemplation and encouragement! What treasures of truth did he add to the knowledge of his disciples in his instruction concerning the Holy Spirit, the Comforter! He dwelt upon this theme in order to console his disciples in the great trial they were soon to experience, that they might be cheered in their great disappointment. He said: "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

The world's Redeemer sought to bring to the hearts of the sorrowing disciples the strongest solace. But from a large field of subjects, he chose the theme of the Holy Spirit, which was to inspire and comfort their hearts. And yet, though Christ made much of this theme concerning the Holy Spirit, how little is it dwelt upon in the churches! The name and presence of the Holy Spirit are almost ignored, yet the divine influence is essential in the work of perfecting the Christian character. Some are not at peace, not at rest; they are in a state of constant fretfulness, and permit impulse and passion to rule their hearts. They know not what it means to experience peace and rest in Christ. They are as a ship without anchor, driven with the wind and tossed. But those whose minds are controlled by the Holy Spirit walk in humility and meekness; for they work in Christ's lines, and will be kept in perfect peace, while those who are not controlled by

the Holy Spirit are like the restless sea.

The Lord has given us a divine directory by which we may know his will. Those who are self centered, self-sufficient, do not feel their need of searching the Bible, and they are greatly disturbed if others do not have the same defective ideas, and see with the same distorted vision that they do. But he who is guided by the Holy Spirit has cast his anchor within the veil wherein Jesus has entered for us. He searches the Scriptures with eager earnestness, and seeks for light and knowledge to guide him amid the perplexities and perils which at every step compass his path. Those who are restless, complaining, murmuring, read the Bible for the purpose of vindicating their own course of action, and they ignore or pervert the counsels of God. He who has peace has placed his will on the side of God's will, and longs to follow the divine guidance, while he who is full of unrest is constantly struggling to sustain himself, and make it appear that he is right, and is sustained by what he estimates as wisdom. But he is controlled by caprice and by the changing passions of a soul not abiding in Christ. To the sincere, contrite heart, truth is truth; and if it is allowed, it will sanctify the soul and transform the character into the divine image. To the other, truth is a theory, and is not brought into the practical life. Those who realize what is the character of the work that they must do in order to represent Christ, will walk softly and tremblingly before God, looking unto Jesus, who is the Author and Finisher of their faith. They dare not trust themselves, they dare not kindle a fire of their own, and walk in sparks of their own kindling, for the Lord has said that all such shall lie down in sorrow. The Lord has intrusted to his people the treasures of sacred truth, and in no case will they be excusable if they present the truth in their own unsanctified spirit, or use the truth as a scourge by which to afflict others.

August 21, 1893

The Word of Truth the Way to Heaven

We are to present the truth as it is in Jesus, made fragrant and attractive by the grace and the courtesy that characterized the life of Christ. Godliness is to be an ornament to the life, as well as the saving salt of character. Why do those who claim to be advanced in knowledge, make themselves objectionable, and bring the truth into disrepute? It is because the truth has not been permitted to sanctify their unholy dispositions. Those who misrepresent the truth are harsh, unsympathetic, and denunciatory. They climb upon the judgment seat, as though they had been ordained to measure character, and lord it over God's heritage. In their uncourteous ways, they make it manifest that love is not in their hearts, and they do not know the plague spot of their own souls. They do not keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment, nor value the soul as Christ's purchased possession, although they are charged with treating Christ as they treat the least of his little ones. What is it that constitutes the loveliness of the soul?--It is the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. Jesus said, "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." If the things of nature are so clothed in loveliness by our Heavenly Father, shall not the soul be clothed in more desirable beauty? Through the merits and virtues of Jesus Christ, the soul may wear the image of Him who created man in His own likeness. It is holiness of life and Christlikeness of character that constitute the beauty of the soul. Through sin the divine image in man has been marred, and Satan has placed upon the soul the stamp of his own image and character; for it has been Satan's purpose to obliterate the image of God in man, so that man should not occupy the mansions that Jesus has gone to prepare for those who love him. Through apostasy Satan lost heaven, and he is determined that the human race, whom he has led to transgress the law of God, shall not enjoy the pure and inexpressible glory from which he is shut out.

The Lord Jesus came to earth that he might recreate the image of God in man. He says to the repenting sinner, "A new heart will I give you." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." He who abides in Christ, and has Christ abiding in his heart by faith, cannot retain the same

unlovely traits of character as were made manifest in his life before he had a connection with Christ. Christ came to save men from their sins, not in their sins. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation" "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." "We then as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."

Christ came to the world that we might become new creatures, created after the similitude of his own character; that we might have purity like the purity of God, have perfection like his perfection. In the work of regeneration, the original loveliness begins to be restored. The attributes of the character of Christ are imparted to the soul, and the image of the divine begins to shine forth. "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." It is plainly declared that a change takes place in the character of the human agent.

In the Christian life we are not assured that we shall be freed from trials, but that grace will be given us to bear them. We are individually called to go through temptations and trials, but the object for which they are permitted to come upon us is that we may be perfected in grace and love, that the image of selfishness may disappear, and the image of Christ appear in our characters, as we advance from glory to glory, from character to character, following on to know the Lord. The soul polluted by sin, through divine power is recreated after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness.

Ushered into the Christian life we no longer complain of darkness; for we have the light of life and joy which Christ said would be in all who abide in him. "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." In place of having less love as we advance in the Christian life, we are to have love that will increase more and more until our love is perfected; and where there is perfect love, there is full joy. We can be happy when we see God in

everything. When we can see him in affliction, we have comfort and solace in our sorrow. When the sunshine of prosperity smiles, we recognize that the blessing flows from the fountain of life, and when trial and affliction are ours, we realize that the hand of the Lord is in all our perplexities, and thus we come to understand that sunshine and shadow are needful to perfect the character of the believer, and give him the true joy of perfect trust in God; for through faith he looks beyond the things that are seen to the things that are unseen. He says, "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

Praise God, we have a divine road to heaven. We need not depend upon the conjectures and opinions of men, but upon the infallible decision of the word of God. The word of the infinite God is true, and cannot be distorted to suit men's pleasure, or be turned aside to suit the inclinations of the unsanctified soul. No man can safely judge the word of the Supreme Ruler of the universe. In it is his revealed will. In it we have a guide to the world of bliss, to eternal life. The road to life is summed up in the knowledge of God. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

August 28, 1893

The Christian's Attitude in Trial

In all our afflictions Jesus was afflicted, and the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering. In this life we shall be proved to see whether or not we shall be able to bear the test of God. Satan's temptations will come upon us, and we shall be tried, but the question of most importance to us is, Shall we be overcome? or shall we be overcomers? Jesus has said, "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." How precious, how full is this promise! Shall we not have the mind stored with heavenly truth, that, like our great Example, we may be able to meet Satan with the weapon of God's word, saying to him as he tempts us to do evil, "It is written"? Satan knows better than many professed Christians what is written, for he is a diligent student of the Bible, and he works to pervert the truth, and lead men into the paths of disobedience. He leads men to neglect the searching of the word of God; for he knows that it testifies against him, that his works are evil. It describes him as the apostate angel who fell from heaven, and drew many of the hosts of heaven after him in a course of rebellion against their Creator.

Satan is seeking continually to draw away the minds of men from God and his word. He knows that if he can cause men to neglect the word of God, he can soon cause them to depart from its precepts, and finally to forget their Maker. They will then take the suggestions and instructions of the adversary of God and man, and evil men and evil angels will form a confederacy against the God of heaven.

Those who would be loyal to God will be subject to trials and temptations; but if they are truly alive unto God, and have their life hid with Christ in God, they will also know what it is to have the blessings which God bestows upon the faithful and obedient. Every soul will have its trials, disappointments, sickness, and sorrow. Bereavements will come, and because of their own frailties and mistakes, or through sympathy for their friends, heavy grief will press upon the heart. But whatever may be the character of their sorrows, whether heavy or comparatively light, there is no necessity for becoming restless, impatient, rebellious, or morose. There is no need of speaking rash, faithless words. It is a great mistake to dictate to the Lord. Elijah knew not what he was

doing when he said to God that he had had enough of life, and asked to die. The Lord did not take him at his word; for there was a great work for Elijah to do before he should be translated to heaven.

Instead of murmuring against God in times of trial, let us remember that Jesus, the Majesty of heaven, suffered being tempted. Jesus did not permit the enemy to plunge him into the mire of unbelief, despondency, and despair. But how often we permit it, and because we have but little moral power, not doing the works of Christ, we do not resist the first insinuations of the evil one! The promise is given: "Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you." How precious to the tempted soul is this positive promise! If anyone is tempted, let him keep his eyes upon Jesus, and draw nigh to God, talking of his goodness and mercy. When the tempted soul realizes that Jesus is drawing nigh unto him, the annoyances that he thought unbearable will vanish. "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

When this precious experience is ours, then there will be vital energy in the church. Love for Christ must be revived, and not permitted to grow cold. We must not only pray for unity with Christ and with one another, but actually have it, know what it means by real experience. Troublous times are before us, but this is not to worry us. To worry is to doubt; but we would impress upon all the necessity of going to God for help, whatever may be your afflictions and troubles.

Do not think to obtain help by going to the gods of Ekron. Jesus has left an invitation for every burdened soul. He says: "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."

John, who leaned upon the bosom of Christ, says, "We have known and believed the love that God hath to us." If we can individually say this from the heart, we are indeed rich in faith, living on the promises of God. Amid our trials, disappointments,

bereavements, and afflictions, we are to learn that God is love, and that he that dwelleth in God, dwelleth in love. "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as he is, so are we [in heaven?] in this world." We have reason ever to thank God that he knows all the storms, disappointments, and trials that come upon his people. He follows them through every experience, with tender, pitying love, and expresses his desire to heal our wounds, and restore unto us the joy of his salvation.

Jesus has said, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." There is but one channel of light, but that is always accessible to us, and through that channel flow streams of forgiveness and love. The streams of God's mercy can cleanse the darkest stain, bring peace to the greatest sinner. The blood of Christ was shed for the sins of the world. In the sacrificial offering, offered by the Jews, was seen a symbol of Christ, whose blood was to be shed for the salvation of the world. In the sacrificial system the truth of the atonement was to be impressed upon the world, that all might know that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. Many have wondered why it was that God appointed so many sacrifices in the old dispensation; but it was to teach the world in ever-bleeding sacrifices concerning Christ, the victim of man's transgressions. The offering for sin was a most solemn, sacred offering, and was placed upon the altar with impressive ceremony, and every detail was explained by the priest to the people, that they might understand that the Son of God was to be made an offering for their sins. This is the central truth of the plan of salvation, and it should be often repeated in the hearing of both believers and unbelievers.

The angels behold with amazement the indifference with which men hear these sacred truths. They look with sorrow upon those who profess to believe advanced truth, to see how little they make manifest the fact that they are the purchase of the blood of the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." It is only through faith in the cleansing blood that we may have forgiveness of sin, that clings to us like a moral leprosy. Jesus need not have suffered for himself, for "he knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth;" yet he suffered agony in proportion to the purity and majesty of his character. Angels are amazed that those for whom so much has been done by the Son of God, still continue to cherish sin. The inexpressible sufferings of Christ were endured that the souls of men might be saved from sin and its penalty. Oh, why is it that men are so indifferent? Why is it that the plan of salvation is so little mentioned in our

conversation? We dwell but lightly upon these vital truths, that mean so much to us, and continue willing captives of Satan and sin. Oh, that we might cultivate habits of contemplation of the self-sacrifice, self-denial, and love of Christ, until we should have a deeper sense of the malignant character of sin, and hate it as the vile thing that it is! Let the mind and heart awaken to gratitude, and let us come to the Father in the name of Jesus, asking for the forgiveness of sins, for the cleansing from all unrighteousness. Let us plead with God that he may "cleanse us with hyssop," that we may be clean, wash us, that we may be "whiter than snow." He will restore unto us the "joy of his salvation," put within us a new heart, a right spirit, put a "new song" into our mouths, "even praise unto our God."

September 4, 1893

The Religion That Is Unto Salvation

Of Christ it is written, "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." God hates sin. It is the work of Satan to allure to evil. Satan has worked adroitly with bewitching power to fascinate the mind with iniquity, and make righteousness to appear undesirable. We need to remember continually that our secret sins are in the light of God's countenance. Of ourselves we cannot see or realize how grievous are our secret sins in the sight of God. Under the influence of Satan we are led to pursue a course of evil until our hearts become hardened, our conscience seared, and our thoughts are brought into captivity to the prince of evil. But God is ever seeking to impress our hearts by his Holy Spirit, that we shall be convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come. We may place our will on the side of God's will, and in his strength and grace resist the temptations of the enemy. As we yield to the influence of the Spirit of God, our conscience becomes tender and sensitive, and sin that we have passed by with little thought, becomes exceeding sinful; for we begin to realize that our secret sins are in the light of his countenance.

There is hope for the sinner. Christ uplifted upon the cross of Calvary furnishes that hope; for mercy has provided to the uttermost demand the victim that justice calls for, for man's transgression. Through the merits of Jesus Christ, God can forgive sin, and be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Precious truth of inestimable value to every repenting soul! Shall we not individually seek to appreciate, as far as it is possible, the fact that God forgives sin, that he loves us if we believe in Jesus, though we are erring, ignorant, and sinful, even as he loves his Son? The moment we ask for forgiveness in contrition and sincerity, God forgives. Oh, what a glorious truth! Preach it, pray it, sing it. Lift up the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Say to the people, "Behold the man of Calvary!" God is waiting to forgive all who come unto him with sincere repentance. The Psalmist says, "There is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mightest be feared."

Oh, that the salvation of souls was the aim and object of every soul who professes the name of Christ! Let those who know the pardoning love of God speak to the youth,

the unconverted, and in tenderness urge them to give their hearts to Jesus. Oh, make an offering of yourselves to the Lord ere it be too late! Jesus has given his own precious life for you. If God had not loved you, he would never have sent his well-beloved Son to live in humiliation, to suffer and to die. "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Do not allow the enemy to crowd this truth out of your mind. It is a theme for meditation. What have we done to show our appreciation of this great love? What have we given to Jesus, who has given himself for us? The gift that will be most grateful to him, most precious and fragrant, will be yourself. You that have not decided to become sons and daughters of God, I would now entreat you to delay no longer. Place your will on the side of God's will. He delights in mercy. "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?"

Come to Jesus just as you are, weak, sinful, ignorant, unworthy, and he will receive you. He says, "A new heart also will I give thee." Among the Jews there was a continual remembrance made of sin. Every year on the day of atonement a fresh sacrifice was brought forth; for sin was still remembered, and the blood of the sacrifices could not take away sin. But sins forgiven through Christ are remembered no more. The Lord says, "I will remember their sins no more."

The Lord accepts the sinner who comes to him through the merits of Jesus, and he treats the transgressor as though he were innocent. Will not the youth and the unconverted begin to inquire, "What shall I do to be saved?" The answer is: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Train and educate the mind to think and to talk of Jesus, and Satan will lose his power over you. He cannot long bear to be in the company of those who meditate and converse upon the love of God. In this way the mind is strengthened. Moral power increases by dwelling upon the goodness, beauty, mercy, and love of Christ. Training the mind in this way will make it natural for you to inquire at every step: "Is this the way of the Lord? Will Jesus be pleased to have me do this? Will this course please self, or my Lord?"

The Lord would have us follow in his footsteps, and be influenced by the dictates of his Holy Spirit. The influence of man upon man, unless controlled by the Holy Spirit, is a dangerous influence; for Satan causes his suggestions to be acted upon, and draws

men into his service through human instrumentalities. But the Lord Jesus by the agency of his Holy Spirit changes this order of things. He takes upon himself the sin of man, and by the power of his divine love draws men to himself, sanctifies and makes them holy. When men are under the control of Christ, he employs them as his agents, and leads them to devote their powers to doing a work exactly opposite to that which Satan had designed they should do.

Jesus would enlist men in his service. He would direct their perverted powers in such a way that, through his grace, they may become agents for the working of unmingled good to every other man, and each become his brother's keeper in disinterested love, and thus the world be restored to God. Through faith in Jesus Christ the chain of mutual dependence is fastened to the throne of God, and through the agency of man humanity is bound to God. God has promised his Holy Spirit, the highest power in the universe, to be embodied in men, that through faith in Jesus Christ humanity may be elevated. An influence emanating from God draws and concentrates the power of the universe, that a lost and rebel race may be reconciled and restored to God.

Then let those who would stand firmly for God, hold fast their profession of faith without wavering. Let them maintain a close and living connection with God, because in this is involved the life of the soul. Let them follow in the footsteps of Jesus, obeying to the letter his word of direction,--"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me," "so shall he be my disciple." In the grace of Christ alone can this be done. Whatever may be the Christian's business, if it be a lawful calling, God has provided grace that his chosen, his elect, shall not be discomfited by the enemy. God has provided that men shall be Christians in the market place, in the house of commerce, in all manner of taxing cares in private or public life, as well as at the prayer meeting. Every business enterprise may be conducted on Christian principles; but in attempting to serve God and mammon, there will be betrayal of sacred trusts; there will be the putting of mammon first and Christ last.

In order to be the blessing to the world which God would have his children, we need to pray and to watch unto prayer. Never should we be placed in a position where we shall be so pressed by care that we shall neglect the study of the Bible or fail to attend the prayer and social meeting. We are not to lose heaven out of our reckoning. The things which belong unto our eternal happiness, which make rich and add no sorrow, are not to be crowded out of our minds by any manner of responsibility. It is not

the getting of houses and lands, heaping up treasure on earth, that is to give us peace and happiness; but it is our connection with God, a realization that we are laborers together with him, that is to constitute our joy. We have no right to place ourselves where we shall be loaded down with cares, that will lessen and finally supplant the influence of the truth upon us to sanctify the soul. Let us remember that every moment is charged with responsibility, and that we are to deal with all in the highest integrity, both as regards this life and that which is to come.

September 11, 1893

Holiness the Power of the Church

The professed church of God may be possessed of wealth, education, and knowledge of doctrine, and may say by her attitude, "I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;" but if its members are devoid of inward holiness, they cannot be the light of the world. The church is to reflect light into the moral darkness of the world, as the stars reflect light into the darkness of the night. These who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, do not reflect light into the world, and will not have power to reach the hearts of the unsaved. Without vital connection with Christ the value of truth cannot be made to appear in good fruit in the world; but if Christ is formed within, the hope of glory, his saving grace will be manifested in sympathy and love for perishing souls.

Every soul truly converted to God will be a light in the world. Bright, clear rays from the Sun of Righteousness will shine forth through human agents who use their intrusted ability to do good; for they will cooperate with heavenly agencies, and labor with Christ for the conversion of souls. They will diffuse the light which Christ sheds upon them. The Sun of Righteousness shining in their hearts will shine forth, enlightening and blessing others.

The rays of heaven shining from human agents will exert a subduing influence upon those whom Christ is drawing to himself. The church is weak before the angels of heaven, unless power is revealed through its members for the conversion of those who are perishing. Unless the church is the light of the world, it is darkness. But of the true followers of Christ it is written: "We are laborers together with God; ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building."

The church may be composed of those who are poor and uneducated; but if they have learned of Christ the science of prayer, the church will have power to move the arm of Omnipotence. The true people of God will have an influence that will tell upon hearts. It is not the wealth or the educated ability which the members of the church may possess that constitutes their efficiency. The members of the church may have been so situated that they may have had every spiritual advantage, they may have been so

situated that they have had opportunity to know the truth, to know Jesus Christ their Lord; but notwithstanding their advantages, if they are not humble, praying men and women, there will not be with them the hiding of the power of God. They will not exert that influence that will be far reaching as eternity in its results, and men will not see their good works, and glorify God because of his people's faithfulness. It is when the Sun of Righteousness shines forth from the people of God that Christ is glorified and his kingdom advanced. It is then that they are chosen vessels of salvation, and are fit for the Master's use.

If the churches established in our world would follow Christ, they would pray as Christ prayed, and the result of their prayers would be seen in the conversion of souls; for when communication is opened up between souls and God, a divine influence is shed upon the world. When the members of the church abide in Christ, they deliver an effective testimony in their lives. They fulfill the words of Christ, "Ye are my witnesses." By their influence all the day long by precept and example, they say, "Come," "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

The Lord is our light. The Lord is our salvation. This is the period in the earth's history when light will surely be given to the Lord's chosen people. The world's Redeemer "is light, and in him is no darkness at all." Jesus says, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." To those who will appreciate light, and who in their turn will impart light to others, God will give increased light. Saints and prophets of former ages were recipients of precious light and knowledge that was to be unfolded to the chosen of God in these last days. The disciples of Christ were honored in having Christ, the Light of the world, among them. But they failed to appreciate their great privileges and blessings, until Jesus had left them. When his presence was no longer with them, they realized that they had been blessed with association with the only begotten Son of the infinite God. That they might fully realize the blessing that had been bestowed upon them, the Lord Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit, which would bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever he had said unto them. In their blindness and unbelief they had not comprehended the value of the celestial truth presented to them; but the Holy Spirit was to illuminate the lessons of Christ before their minds, that they might have an appreciation of heavenly things.

Jesus is the fountain head of knowledge, the treasure-house of truth, and he longed to open before his disciples treasures of infinite value, that they in turn might

open them to others. But because of their blindness he could not unfold to them the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. He said to them, "I have many things to say unto you; but ye cannot bear them now." The minds of the disciples were to a great degree influenced by the traditions and maxims of the Pharisees, who placed the commandments of God on a level with their own inventions and doctrines. The scribes and Pharisees did not receive or teach the Scriptures in their original purity, but interpreted the language of the Bible in such a way as to make it express sentiments and injunctions that God had never given. They put a mystical construction upon the writing of the Old Testament, and made indistinct that which the infinite God had made clear and plain. These learned men placed before the people their own ideas, and made patriarchs and prophets responsible for things they never uttered. These false teachers buried up the precious jewels of truth beneath the rubbish of their own interpretations and maxims, and covered up the plainest specifications of prophecy regarding Christ. They made the keeping of the commandments of God appear to be a rigorous round of ceremonies, so needless and foolish that the force of God's law was destroyed. They heaped exactions upon the commands of God that could never be met, and thereby lessened respect for God.

When the Author of truth came to our world, and was the living interpreter of his own laws, the Scriptures were opened to men like a new revelation; for he taught as one having authority, as one who knew whereof he was speaking. The minds of men were confused with false teaching to such an extent that they could not fully grasp the meaning of divine truth, and yet they were attracted to the great Teacher, and said, "Never man spake like this man?"

September 18, 1893

The Weapon Against Satan's Delusions

Satan is continually seeking to influence human minds by his subtle arts. His is a master mind, given of God, but prostituted with all its noble capabilities to oppose and to make of no effect the counsels of the Most High. He had an advanced experience in his connection with the God of heaven, and he wields his knowledge of the attributes of God in such a way as to misinterpret the divine character. Satan was an apostate, and all who follow in the way of apostasy will work in the same lines of evil. There was a time when Satan was in harmony with God, and it was his joy to execute the divine commands. His heart was filled with love and joy in serving his Creator, until he began to think that his wisdom was not derived from God, but was inherent in himself, and that he was as worthy as was God to receive honor and power. When he found that he could not be as God, he was filled with rebellion, and would not submit his will to the will of God.

When men apostatize from the truth, many will raise the question, What is the reason this has happened? And when they can find no reason for apostasy, they will be inclined to believe that the apostates have never had a genuine experience in the truth and cause of God, that they were wholly insincere in their professions; but this is not safe reasoning. What was it caused Satan to rebel? Was there any just reason that could be assigned for his sin? The place where sin originated has been pointed out, but the reason for sin cannot be found; for there is no reason for its existence. It is written of Satan, "Thou wast perfect in all thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee." All who apostatize are destitute of any real excuse. Their apostasy will be manifested in rebellion and self-exaltation, as it was seen in the first apostate. Of him it is written, "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness."

The Lord himself gave to Satan his glory and wisdom, and made him the covering cherub, good, noble, and exceeding lovely. But beauty, wisdom, and glory were bestowed upon God's creature as a gift of love. For like reasons the Lord has bestowed upon human agencies talents of intellect, qualities of mind and character, that they may be able to fill positions of trust, and glorify their Creator and Redeemer. But,

like Satan, men become lifted up in self because of their beauty and wisdom, and pervert their talents, and corrupt their characters, and use their God-given gifts for the glory of self rather than for the glory of God and the good of others. The whole world has been corrupted by the false principles Satan has led men to follow.

Satan works with his arts of infatuation, and weaves a spell about the human mind. The power of spiritual witchcraft steels the heart so that it is not susceptible to heavenly influences, which would counteract the power of the deceptive infatuation. Satan is the root of all deception, the origin of all falsehood, and it was through his witchcraft that the enchanters and sorcerers were bold to withstand Moses, imitating the miracles he wrought. It is Satan who presents the world before the mind in an attractive light, who makes the glories of empires pass before the vision as he did before Christ, promising, "All this will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."

Satan came to Christ in the wilderness of temptation and presented before him in a magnificent panoramic view the splendors of the kingdoms of the earth, and promised all their power to Christ if he would but assent to the superiority of the prince of evil. Satan pretended to doubt the divinity and mission of Christ, and asked of him a sign of his authority and power. He had said, "If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread;" "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." But at his audacious request that Christ should bow down and worship him, divinity flashed through humanity, and Jesus said, "Get thee behind me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Satan had the evidence he desired in his summary dismissal, and, under the rebuke of Him who was equal with God, he fled from the field of conflict, a conquered foe.

Jesus endured the temptations of Satan in our behalf, that in his name we might come off more than conquerors. But we can overcome only by believing in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God. We must know what is written in order that we may not be defeated by the sophistry and enchantments of Satan. The wily foe will work upon our minds in such a way that he will lead us to follow in the way he has gone, and cause us to dream of greatness, worldly honor, and distinction. If we have been ensnared by his enchanting power, let us in the name of Jesus rebuke his power, and break with Satan without delay. Whatever may be the character of the draught you have

taken, in whatever way Satan may have led you to exalt self at the expense of Jesus, through the power of divine grace escape from the delusion, away with the infatuation. We inquire, "Who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the truth?"

Those who cry unto God for deliverance from the terrible spell that Satan would weave about them, will set a high estimate upon the Scriptures. Our only safety is in receiving the whole Bible, not taking merely detached portions, but believing the whole truth. Your feet are upon sliding sand if you depreciate one word that is written. The Bible is a divine communication, and is as verily a message to the soul as though a voice from heaven were heard speaking to us. With what awe and reverence and humiliation should we come to the searching of the Scriptures, that we may learn of eternal realities. When the spell of Satan is broken, and the Bible becomes to us the living word of God, we shall be safe in following our convictions of duty; for if we watch unto prayer, they will be inspired by the Spirit of God. Let everyone study the Bible, knowing that the word of God is as enduring as the eternal throne. If you come to the study of the Scriptures in humility, with earnest prayer for guidance, angels of God will open to you its living realities; and if you cherish the precepts of truth, they will be to you as a wall of fire against the temptations, delusions, and enchantments of Satan.

It is the wisdom of God that makes men great. The utterances of men are to be judged, because they are the fruit of human ability, and work either good or evil according to the source from which men draw their inspiration; but the word of God is able to save your souls, to make you wise unto salvation. The Psalmist says, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." Then let us hide the word of God in our hearts, that we may "be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

September 25, 1893

"Why Halt Ye Between Two Opinions?"

"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Those who have set before them in clear lines the self-sacrifice and self-denial of Jesus, his life of shame and suffering, his reproach, rejection, and crucifixion, and yet refuse to open their hearts to him, although he says, "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 sup with him, and he with me," commit great sin. How great is the magnitude of sin of those who have had Jesus set before them, who have been warned and entreated, and yet pass on their way, following the imagination of their own hearts, and saying, "I will wait for a more convenient season to exercise repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ"!

I am deeply moved in behalf of those who are putting off the time of surrender to Jesus, and yet I know that my interest is very feeble in comparison with his who knows the value of your souls, for he paid the price of the soul's redemption with his own blood. In earnest love for your soul, he is waiting for you to decide to throw off the yoke of Satan, and take his yoke, which is easy, and his burden, which is light. There is nothing too precious for us to give to Jesus. Jesus has purchased wife, husband, and children at infinite cost, and though it is right for us to love those whom God has given us, yet God is ever to hold our supreme affection. Your attitude toward God and the truth has a decided influence upon your family, and the atmosphere that surrounds your soul will affect them in every way. If you are bestowing your affections upon the things of this world, the atmosphere which surrounds your soul will be of a malarious character, that will be death to spirituality, and will weaken hope and faith in God. Satan will cast his hellish shadow over your soul, and lead you captive at his will, unless you give yourself without reserve to Christ.

Christ has purchased all your capabilities and talents. Why not give him that which is his own? Your intellect is God's property, made to be used for his service and glory. Your affections belong to God, and he demands them as his right. Give him your talents, your best and sharpest thoughts; for they are the purchase of his own blood. He has intrusted them to you as his children. Give all back to him. Seek in earnest prayer for his blessing upon them, and surrender to him husband, wife, children, and your all.

Dedicate yourself to his service in a precious offering; and as you give all to Jesus, your heaven will begin upon earth; for as long as you keep all on the altar, Christ is yours, heaven is yours, eternal life is yours. All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Surely the God of heaven could give no greater proof that he longs for your salvation than the proof he has given in the gift of his only-begotten Son.

The free gift of grace is yours; will you by faith accept it? Your surrender to God must be as free and complete as has the offering of Christ been free and complete for you. Then you will be accepted of God in every work you do, in every prayer you offer. Hesitate no longer. "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him." In the face of present and acknowledged duty, make no delay to meet the demand of God; for if you do, the light you have will become darkness. The mind and judgment will become perverted; for when precious opportunities are neglected, blessings unappreciated and unimproved, all good purposes become weakened, and there is less strength to resist temptation to commit presumptuous sins. The ties of worldly influence are subtle and strong, and can be severed only through the power of the grace of Christ. Make it your purpose to break away from every influence and habit, to give up every practice that weakens spirituality, and sunder every tie that binds you to Satanic agencies.

Christ says: "Follow me;" "I am the way, the truth, and the life." "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

The word of God should be your study, and if your heart is susceptible to the influence of the truth, you will find in the Bible, instruction that will be a sure guide to your soul from darkness to light, from unbelief to faith. "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 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."

The more our faith fastens and holds to Christ, the more peace we shall have.

Faith grows by exercise, and God's rule is one day at a time. Day by day we are to go on, doing the work for each day, conscious that we are working in the sight of angels, cherubim, and seraphim, in the sight of God and of Jesus Christ. Ye are a spectacle unto the world, to angels, and to men. We should pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." As our day is, so our strength will be. We are to be constantly looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, and if we live thus in dependence upon him, the Holy Spirit will bring to our remembrance all things whatsoever he has spoken unto us, and will sanctify every faculty, and keep us reminded of our daily and hourly dependence upon our Heavenly Father's care, wisdom, love and guardianship. When we are thus minded, we have the spirit of a little child, the spirit that Jesus said his followers must possess in order to enter his kingdom. As a little child we are to trust in our Heavenly Father. When this is our spirit, we can more easily discern the temptations of Satan; for we are constantly drawing nigh to God. The feeling of self-sufficiency, that works the ruin of so many souls, has no atmosphere in which to flourish.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." This precious promise is from One who means every word he speaks. Then why are we fearful, distrustful, unbelieving? Let us go on, doing our duty with an eye single to his glory, filling up our time, working out God's plan as in the sight of an invisible world.

October 2, 1893

"My People Have Committed Two Evils"

"Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." "For of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands; and thou saidst, I will not transgress; when upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, playing the harlot. Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed; how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me? For though thou wash thee with niter, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the Lord."

Why is that the people in this age are so easily drawn away from the observance of God's commandments? Why is it that they relish the mockery of those who profess to be teachers of righteousness, who yet cast contempt upon the commandments of Jehovah? Is it not because the heart of this people is carnal? In the scriptures quoted the Lord presents his reproof to those whom he terms "my people," who have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns that can hold no water. "The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant." Those who profess to be the children of God, cast contempt upon his law, and trample upon the fourth precept,--"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

Instead of keeping the commandments of God, and hallowing the Sabbath day, the churches have substituted for God's holy Sabbath, a day instituted by the Papacy, and do not observe the one of divine appointment. The man of sin, who has "exalted himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the

temple of God, showing himself that he is God," has thought himself able to change the time and the law of God, and has given to the world a spurious sabbath, thus making a breach in the law of God. The Christian world have accepted the papal sabbath, and have cherished it as a day of divine appointment. Thus they have forsaken the plain commandment of Jehovah, and have honored an institution nowhere approved by the Scriptures. In this, surely, they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living water, and have hewed for themselves broken cisterns that can hold no water. The Lord of heaven will inquire of the Christian churches, "Who hath required this at your hands?"

The sin of those who have been enlightened as to the origin and support of Sunday, is very grievous in the sight of God, when they cling to the tradition of men, and thus make void the commandment of God. When the binding claims of the fourth commandment are presented, many use every subterfuge to avoid the conclusion that God requires the observance of the day which he sanctified and blessed. When every other argument against keeping the commandments of God is shown to be vain, the opposers of his law take refuge in the delusion that there is no law, that the commandments of God were abolished by Christ at the cross. What an astonishing statement, that God has no law! Kings of the earth have laws whereby the nations are governed, and has the God of the universe no law? Those who advocate this doctrine say they rejoice in the glorious liberty wherewith Christ has made them free; but from what have they been made free?--Not from sin surely, since sin is the transgression of the law, and where there is no law, there is no transgression. If there is no law, then it is right for every man to follow the depraved impulses of his own heart; for there is no standard by which evil can be detected. It is plain from the results of this doctrine who is the originator of such a theory, for it is manifestly of Satan's devising, since Christ came to save his people from their sins. Christ is not the minister of sin, and the idea that he came to give liberty to men to break his Father's law, and to free them from the penalty of willful transgression, is utterly out of harmony with his example and teaching.

The world and the church are both standing in a position of rebellion against God in casting aside his law, and trampling upon his holy commandment. The larger proportion of the Christian world accept the observance of Sunday, knowing that it is an institution of the Papacy, and keep the day, that they may be in harmony with the customs and practices of the world, thus choosing to honor the tradition of men rather than the commandment of God. To this state of apostasy the words of Moses under the

inspiration of the Holy Spirit are appropriate,--"He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment, a God of truth without iniquity, just and right is he. They have corrupted themselves; their spot is not the spot of his children; they are a perverse and crooked generation. Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise?" God chose his people, and planted them a noble vine; how is it that they are turned into a degenerate vine? The description that has been given of the apostasy of Israel, has an application to the churches that have made void the law of God. Isaiah says, "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters; they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward."

The great sin of God's ancient people was their disregard of the commandments of the Lord, and especially their disregard of the day that God had sanctified and blessed. Because of their disregard of his commandments and ordinances, the Lord removed his defense from them, and permitted their enemies to afflict them and scatter them. Has the Lord changed? Did his holy commandments need to be amended?--Not at all. He says, "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that has gone out of my lips." Has, then, the Majesty of heaven, the Governor of the universe, no law?--Only Satan's sophistry could induce men to entertain such a thought.

Jesus was the invisible leader of his ancient people, and every command and direction given to the people through Moses, was the command and direction of Jesus Christ. Jesus has brought before us the importance of giving heed to what has been written in the law and the prophets. In the parable of Lazarus and the rich man, the rich man is represented as begging that someone be sent back to warn his five brethren, that they come not to the place of torment in which he is found, but the answer is: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham; but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

Jesus in the New Testament does the same work as Jesus in the Old Testament did; but men are so determined to do away with the law of God, in order that they may

find a way of avoiding the observance of the Sabbath, that they array Jesus in the New Testament against Jesus in the Old Testament. These blind leaders of the blind, who are ignorant both of the Scriptures and of the power of God, pour contempt on the law of God, and at the same time seek to hold up Christ in contrast to the law. But this they cannot do; for Christ gave the law to his chosen people, and in seeking to make void the law of God on the ground that Christ abolished it, they do insult to both the Father and the Son. Jesus says, "I and my Father are one."

The blind teachers of this age, who seek to turn the people away from the law of God, tell the people that the law is Jewish, given only to the Jews, and spoken only for their observance. Where is their authority for such a statement? The prophet says, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." The Lord gave his law before there was a Jew in the world. Heavenly intelligences were governed by God's law before man was created, and the Sabbath was blessed and set apart for holy use immediately after God had made the world, and had rested from his work of creation.

Oh, that I had language to present these lofty themes! I lay down my pen in sorrow that my words are so feeble to deal with grand and awful truth; as I contemplate, I seem to shrink into nothingness before its vast significance. The themes connected with the law and the gospel seem too great for such a weak, ignorant mortal as I to handle. From time to time I venture in the simplest language to present that which has been revealed to me concerning the plan of salvation, but again and again I mourn that my expression falls so far short of the glory of the truth as it is in Jesus.

My brethren, be not satisfied with a superficial knowledge of truth, with a surface view of the law of God. Dig deep in the Scriptures of truth, and with an understanding enlightened by the Holy Spirit, dwell upon the holy requirements of the law of Jehovah, until you can reveal to the people their spiritual and eternal character. Your researches have not been deep enough. You need the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to aid you to search into the truth with reverence and awe, bringing your mind to the task with intense desire, that will not be quenched until you see wondrous things out of the law. Dig deep into the mine of truth, and be not satisfied until you have a more perfect comprehension as to what constitutes the strength of the law of God. You need to search and search, and to weep and fast and pray, in order that you may have revealed unto you such a view of the law of God that you will be fitted to go forth and watch for souls as they that

must give an account.

October 9, 1893

Sodom's Last Warning

Sodom was situated in a beautiful and fertile plain, and reveled in an abundance of everything that nature and art could bestow. The inhabitants of Sodom seemed to be strangers to want and to work. A poor man was not permitted to become an inhabitant of the city. He was driven out by abuse, or if not driven out, was the victim of an iniquitous plan that compassed his ruin. The people of this wicked city took no thought for the future life. Idleness and wealth and love of excitement carried them into every excess of pleasure and indulgence. The sensual, animal nature was cultivated, and as, like the world before the flood, the imagination of their hearts was evil, and evil continually, they set their minds to work to find out new, unnatural ways whereby they might gratify their abominable, corrupt passions.

Inspiration gives a testimony concerning the corrupt condition of the world before the flood. The Bible says: "As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." Before the flood they employed all their powers for the gratification of base passions, and cast contempt upon the law of God, and as it was in the days of the flood, so it was in the time of Sodom. They would not admit for a moment that their devotion to sensual pleasure brought upon them guilt and danger. They knew not that the cloud of divine wrath, which their sin had for years been loading, was about to break forth in vengeance upon them.

Before the time of Sodom's overthrow, two angels visited Abraham and were courteously entertained. As they were passing on their way to Sodom, Abraham accompanied them, and they revealed to the patriarch the errand for which they had come,--to destroy Sodom. They told Abraham that because of the grievous wickedness of the inhabitants, the city was to be destroyed. Abraham knew that Lot was in this place, and although he had been taught of God, he could not believe that the inhabitants of Sodom were so utterly corrupt. He began to plead that the righteous should not perish with the wicked, that if a certain number of the godly were there, the city might be

spared. Pleading for the city, he decreased the number of righteous that would be likely to be found in the city, until he reached the number of ten. But although God would have spared the city if ten righteous persons could have been found there, that number could not be made up to redeem the city.

As the evening draws on, the men of Sodom see the two messengers approaching, but as they have concealed their heavenly character, they appear as common men coming in from the country to visit Sodom. If the veil could be removed from our eyes we should often see in the form of men, the powerful messengers of mercy or of wrath among us. They warn, they caution, they reprove, they protect from a thousand dangers, and yet we know not that the angel's blessing has come to us.

As the angels draw nigh unto Sodom, only one man manifests an interest in the strangers. Lot welcomed them in, invited them to his house. He was ignorant in regard to the character of these men, and knew not the terrible errand upon which they had come; but the courtesy which he manifested was in harmony with his character, and he was saved from the general ruin. Had he appeared indifferent to these strangers, he would not have secured to himself such help as only the angels can give. Many a house has been closed to strangers who were God's messengers of hope, and blessing, and peace. In neglecting the commonest duties of life, withholding kindness and courtesy and hospitality, we miss the richest blessings heaven has to bestow.

When the men of Sodom saw that Lot opened his doors to these strangers, that he did not treat them with derision and contempt, they were stirred with passion. As Lot in Eastern fashion bows in deference, and invites them to share his home, they taunt and jeer. Lot was a man of great wealth, but in showing respect to these travelers he did not meet the mind of these ease-loving Sodomites. They crowded about the house of Lot, and as the crowd increased, vile speeches were made which revealed the state of corruption that existed among the people, and the worst suggestions were received and acted upon. The crowd became more clamorous in their cries to have Lot bring forth the strangers to them; for they had become so base through the indulgence of evil passions, that every good thought had been uprooted, and reason was so clouded that they would even do violence to the angels of heaven.

The angels had come to see if there were any in the city who were not corrupted, and could be persuaded to flee from the impending doom that threatened Sodom. That

night the evil doers added the last drop to their cup of iniquity, and the wrath of God could no longer be delayed. The night of the destruction of Sodom the inhabitants of the city were doing that which they had been doing through all their past life. They were no more base and dissolute and corrupt than on other nights when strangers had entered their city; but there is a point beyond which there is no reprieve, and that night the inhabitants of Sodom passed the mystic boundary that decided their destiny. Lot expostulated with them at his door, and refused to permit them to do violence to the strangers who were in his house. But the evil doers had no idea of being restrained from accomplishing their purpose, but thought to beat Lot to the ground, and get access to the strangers. Before this was done, the angels drew Lot into the house, and smote the men with blindness, so that they wearied themselves to find the door.

The angels then told Lot what was their errand, and made known to him that God would bring destruction upon the wicked city. Lot believed the word of the angels, but his family was reluctant to receive their message, for they had so long lived in sight and sound of wickedness that their senses were blunted to the grievous character of sin. Lot had afflicted his soul for the debasing sins that the Sodomites were continually committing, and yet even he had not thought their sin was of the debasing character it was, nor deemed that it was so firmly seated as to yield to no remedy. He begs permission of the angels to go forth and warn his daughters and sons-in-law who live in the city. He made his way through the rabble, who were prevented from injuring him by the power of the angels, and gave his message to his children. With grief and terror he begs them to leave the doomed city, and flee with him ere its destruction shall be accomplished, but they look upon him as upon one who is mad, coming to them with such a message at the midnight hour. They laugh at his fears, and think some horrible nightmare has crazed his brain. They will not trouble themselves about the matter, but treat it as a joke, and these who will not receive the message, sleep on, heedless of the last warning of their lives.

Anxious and disappointed, Lot returns to his home through the rabble, and finds the angels still waiting, urging that Lot and his family leave the city before the sun is fully risen. As they go out they see no visible token of God's displeasure. Everything seems to say peace and safety. The sun is illuminating the eastern hills with golden beams, and everything in nature seems to say peace. But the words of the angels ring in the ears of Lot, saying, "The Lord will destroy this city." Unbelief did not prevent the destruction of Sodom. Trifling and gayety did not secure its inhabitants against the

doom that overtook the wicked city. They flattered themselves that long days of indulgence in sin were yet to be theirs, but in such an hour as they thought not of, ruin encompassed them.

October 16, 1893

The Doom of Sodom a Warning for the Last Days

How hard it was for Lot to leave Sodom! Part of his family had to be left behind, and all the wealth he had accumulated had to be sacrificed. He must go out from Sodom a poor man. The labor of years has to be counted in vain. He does not feel the terrible necessity for God's judgment to fall upon the wicked city, and he still lingers. The angels urge his immediate departure; but Lot, stupefied with sorrow for the loss of his children and property, still hesitates. The angels lay hold of his hands, and the hands of his wife and children, and with merciful violence hasten them out of the city. When they reach the city limits, a word of command is given with startling vehemence: "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest ye be consumed." A few moments' delay now, a few moments of hesitancy, a few moments' disregard of the warning, will cost the fugitives their lives. They are not even to turn their eyes back to see if their beautiful home has survived the general ruin, or the storm will burst upon them. God has delayed his retributive judgment only that they may escape. What care, what tenderness, to these four who flee from the doomed city!

Lot is confused, terrified, and distracted. He begs to be allowed to rest at a little settlement on this side the mountains. Unbelief sprang up in his heart, and he said: "Oh, not so, my Lord; behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast showed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die; behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one; oh, let me escape thither (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live. And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken. Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar."

But why should Lot not have trusted the mercy of the angels in directing him to escape to the mountains, since he ascribed to them the saving of his life? Lot's stay in Sodom had not tended to increase his faith in God, nor had his intercourse with those who knew not God tended to convert them from the error of their way. He had pleaded that the angels permit him to take up his abode in the city of Zoar, saying, "Is it not a

little one? and my soul shall live," as though the God who had directed his escape from Sodom did not understand how to preserve the life he had saved. But what mercy and condescension are manifested by the God of heaven! His request is heard, and his plea granted; yet how much better would it have been to heed the angel's voice, and go to the mountains, as far as possible from the wicked city. The angel bids him to hasten, because the fiery storm would be widespread and terrible.

One of the four fugitives ventures to cast a lingering look behind, to see the coming storm, and the number is less by one; for she stands as a memento of God's wrath, turned into a pillar of salt. Had Lot earnestly and firmly fled to the mountains, as the angels had directed, without pleading for a new plan, his wife would not have transgressed the commandment of the angels, and would have been at his side.

When the first beams of the morning dawn, the inhabitants of Sodom are not aware of the departure of Lot and the angels. They were determined to abuse the strangers, but as they come to the house of Lot, it is found vacant, and the hour of doom comes upon them. And the Lord rains fire and brimstone upon the city, and the beautiful plain that looked like Paradise when the angels passed over it, now looks like a parched and blackened desert. The smoke of the burning goes up like the smoke of a great furnace, and the whole heaven is illuminated with the flames of the great conflagration. Sodom has become a place of desolation and ruin.

The sin of the people rose up to heaven, and because of the iniquity of the people, the Lord poured out the vials of his wrath. The fearful doom of Sodom stands forth as a warning for all time, and especially for those who live in the last days. The destruction of Sodom was a symbol of the destruction that will come upon the finally impenitent, when tempests of fire come from above, and fountains of flame break forth from the crust of the earth. The fate of this ancient city should be a warning to all who live for self, and who corrupt their ways before God. The sin of Sodom is the sin of many cities now in existence, that have not been destroyed as was Sodom. Ezekiel says, "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. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before me; therefore I took them away as I saw good."

The warning that was given to Lot comes down to us who live in this degenerate

age,--"Escape for thy life." The voice of the tempter is crying peace and safety. The evil one would have you feel that you have nothing to fear, and bids you eat, drink, and be merry. Which voice will you heed, the voice of heaven, or the voice that lures you to destruction? The Redeemer of the world, the compassionate Friend of man, discloses to our eyes the fact that there is a sin greater than the sin of Sodom. It is that of sinning against greater light. To those who have heard and have not heeded the gospel invitation to repent and have faith in Christ, the sin is greater than was the sin of Sodom. To those who have professed the name of Jesus, who have professed to know God, and to keep his commandments, and yet who have misrepresented Christ in their daily life and character, who have been warned and entreated, and still dishonor their Redeemer by their unconsecrated lives, the sin is greater than that of Sodom.

Jesus said: "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained unto this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee."

The warning of Christ sounds down along the lines to our day. He would arouse the people for whom he gave his life, and attract their attention to himself, the source of all wisdom, righteousness, strength, and hope, and peace. He would have his people let their light shine forth to the world in good works. The sins of Sodom are repeated in our day, and the earth is destroyed and corrupted under the inhabitants thereof; but the worst feature of the iniquity of this day is a form of godliness without the power thereof. Those who profess to have great light are found among the careless and indifferent, and the cause of Christ is wounded in the house of its professed friends. Let those who would be saved, arouse from their lethargy, and give the trumpet a certain sound; for the end of all things is at hand.

October 23, 1893

The Blind Man Healed

"And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

In the question the disciples asked Jesus, they showed that they thought all disease and suffering the result of sin. This is indeed truth, but Jesus showed that it was an error to suppose that everyone who was a great sufferer was also a great sinner. While he corrected their errors, he spat upon the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, which is by interpretation, Sent," and he went his way, and came seeing. Jesus answered the question the disciples put to him in a practical way, and in the way he usually answered questions put to him from curiosity. The disciples were not called upon to discuss the question of who had sinned or not sinned, but to understand the power of God, his mercy and compassion, in giving sight to the blind. It was that all might be convinced that there was no healing virtue in the clay or in the pool wherein he was sent to wash, but that virtue was in Christ.

Although the Pharisees quibbled at and misrepresented his words, yet they made no attempt to give credit to the clay or to the waters of Siloam. They could but be astonished at the wonderful work which he had done, yet they were more than ever filled with hatred; for this was a most convincing argument that he was the Son of God. They could not controvert this testimony, and the miracle could not be hid. The neighbors of the young man, and those who knew before of his blindness, said, "Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said, This is he; others said, He is like him; but he said, I am he."

The friends and neighbors of the young man who had been healed looked upon him with doubt; for when his eyes were opened, his countenance had been changed and

brightened, and made him appear like another man. From one to another the question was passed, "Is it he?" And some said, "It is like him;" but he who had received the great blessing settled the controversy by saying, "I am he." He then told them of Jesus, and by what means Jesus had healed him, and they inquired, "Where is he? He said, I know not. They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. And it was the Sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them."

The Pharisees thought that they could make a decided impression against Jesus by charging him with breaking the Sabbath, upon which they had heaped traditions and exactions. They knew not that it was He who had made the Sabbath, who knew all its obligations, who had healed the blind man. They appeared wonderfully zealous for the observance of the Sabbath, and yet were planning murder on the very day that they professed to guard with their exactions. They regarded themselves as guardians of the Sabbath, and thought themselves capable of interpreting the principles of the fourth commandment, and in their interpretation declared that, by the bestowal of the blessing of healing, the commandment had been transgressed. This they did because they were anxious to find some way in which to condemn Jesus. They put their construction upon the law, misapplied and misinterpreted it, in order to make Jesus out to be a sinner, and therefore not the Messiah. Many were greatly moved, and convicted that this man who opened the eyes of the blind, was more than a common man. In answer to the charge that Jesus was a sinner, because he kept not the Sabbath day, they said, "How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?"

Through this great miracle the power of the Lord Jehovah was made manifest. The work done upon the blind man spoke to their senses and told them that One mightier than a common man was there. Could One that was divine break the Sabbath? They appealed again to the blind man, "What sayest thou of Him, that He hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet." The Pharisees then asserted that he had not been born blind and then received his sight. They called for his parents, and asked, saying: "Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see? His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not;

he is of age; ask him; he shall speak for himself."

There was the man himself, declaring that he had been the blind man, and had had his sight restored; but the Pharisees had been taking advanced steps in prejudice and hatred of Christ, and no sign or miracle would be acknowledged by them as evidence of his Messiahship. They would rather deny the evidences of their own senses than admit that they were mistaken, and that their teaching was wrong, so powerful is prejudice, so distorting is Pharisaical righteousness. Here were fallen men, who yet persisted in walking away from the light, yet they claimed to sit in Moses' seat, and were professedly the wisest of man, expounders of the law of God. In their exactions and distinctions they bound heavy burdens upon others, and covered up the commandments of God with the traditions and commandments of men.

The Pharisees had one hope left, and that was to intimidate the parents of him who had received his sight. With apparent sincerity they asked the parents, "How doth he now see?" The parents trembled, for they knew what would be the consequences of confessing Christ. The great work wrought for their son had awakened conviction in their hearts, and they answered: "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not; he is of age; ask him; he shall speak for himself." They shifted all responsibility from themselves to their son, for they dared not openly confess Christ. "These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews; for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him."

The dilemma in which the Pharisees were placed, their questioning prejudice, their unbelief in the facts of the case, were opening the eyes of the multitude, and especially the eyes of the common people. The mighty healer had frequently wrought his miracles in the open street, and his work was always of a character to relieve mankind of woe and suffering. The question that agitated the minds of many was, Would God do such mighty works through one that was an impostor, a deceiver, as the Pharisees insisted that Jesus was? The controversy was becoming very earnest on both sides. Those who were convinced by the miracles, claimed that Christ was the Son of God, and this growing conviction in the minds of the people greatly annoyed the Pharisees. There were two decided parties. "There was a division among them." Unable to agree among themselves, the Pharisees again appealed to the man who was born

blind. They thought that they could deceive this man, who had been blind and was uneducated, by their perversions and reasonings. But to their question as to what he thought of Him who had restored his sight, he firmly and boldly replied, "He is a prophet."

The Pharisees see that they are giving publicity to the work that has been done by Jesus, for the multitude is increasing. They cannot deny the miracle. What can they say or do to counteract the effect of Jesus' work? The blind man is filled with joy and gratitude, and beholds the wondrous things of nature, and is filled with intense delight at the beauty of earth and sky. He freely recites his experience, and though they cannot deceive or mislead him, yet they determine to do the talking, and say, "Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner.? Do not ever say again that this man gave you sight; God has done it. The blind man answered and said, "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." Then they questioned again: "what did He to thee? how opened He thine eyes?" With many words they tried to deceive him, and confuse his senses, so that he might think he was deluded. Satan and his evil angels were on the side of the Pharisees, and united their energies and subtlety with man's reasonings in order to counteract the influence of Christ. They blunted the convictions that were deepening in many minds; for angels of God were also on the ground to strengthen the blind man who had had his sight restored.

The Pharisees made apparent their prejudice and unbelief. They did not realize that they had to deal with anyone stronger than the uneducated man who had been born blind; but this was not true. Divine light shone into the chambers of his soul, and as these hypocrites tried to make him disbelieve, God helped him to show by the vigor and pointedness of his replies that he was not to be ensnared, and they could not pervert and misconstrue his experience. "He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear; wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be His disciples? Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art His disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses; as for this fellow, we know not from whence He is."

The Lord Jesus knew the ordeal through which the man for whom he had worked this miracle was passing, and gave him grace and utterance, so that he became a witness for Christ. And he answered the Pharisees: "Why herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence He is, and yet He hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him

he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, He could do nothing." The blind man, who now could see, looked upon the wonders of creation, and would he turn from his Restorer to gain the favor of those who sought to entangle him in his talk, or heap ridicule upon him? He felt able to withstand their influence. The Pharisees saw that they could not by their reasonings pervert the man's experience, and they were astonished and held their peace, spellbound, before his pointed, determined words. For a few moments there was silence. The frowning priests and Pharisees gathered about them their robes, as though they feared contamination from contact with him. They shook off the dust of their feet against him, and treated him with derision and contempt, hurling their denunciations against him: "Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshiped him." The believer on Jesus was cast out of the synagogue, but was received into union with Jesus Christ.

November 6, 1893

Danger of Spiritual Blindness

"And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees that were with him heard these words, and said unto him. Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."

The Pharisees were spiritually blind, and were leaders of the blind. The physical blindness that Jesus had healed in the man born blind, was not as dangerous as the moral blindness of those who had evidence piled upon evidence in regard to the divine character of the world's Redeemer, and yet who closed the eyes of their understanding, and refused to see, because they were too self-exalted to be instructed by Christ. They claimed to be learned in the Scriptures, to have spiritual eyesight, yet they made the plainest specifications concerning Christ a different matter from that which the records testified. "The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles; the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." The light of the world was shining amid the moral darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. The darkness that blinded the minds of the Pharisees was much more deplorable than was the darkness that blinded the eyes of the man who had been born blind.

The Pharisees had said to the believing man who had had his sight restored, "Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?" Their foolish hearts had been darkened. He who is blind in a physical way is incapable of distinguishing the tints of the flowers, and things of beauty are nothing to him. The beautiful canvas of the heavens, the stars marshaled in order, the solemn beauty of the sun and moon, are not seen, their forms not discerned. Thus it is with the man who closes his eyes to light and knowledge. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. The man who refuses to have his understanding quickened by the Spirit of God is in a state of blindness. He cannot appreciate the beauties of holiness, neither can he discern the deformity of sin. What a dreadful thing is willful spiritual blindness. Those who are spiritually blind, claim to be able to lead the blind; but they have closed their eyes to the light which has been

graciously given them of God to show them the way to heaven, and in place of traveling the royal path cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, they follow another leader, even Satan.

How precious to the Jewish nation would have been the light of the Sun of Righteousness! What Christ would have been to the people was all shadowed forth in the types, offerings, and prophecies. They would have been justified through his blood, sanctified through his Spirit. They would have known what it was to have the combined work of the Son and the Spirit in the soul. But the scribes and the Pharisees became blind by failing to acknowledge the spiritual light that God sent to them. "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" Blinded by unbelief, they refused to accept the evidences God had graciously given them, and clung to the traditions and maxims of men, that God had not given them. They walked in a way of their own choosing, because it agreed better with their sinful practices than the way of the Lord, and they did not discern the fruit of holiness; for they had chosen darkness rather than light.

He whose heart is not open to receive the bright beams of light from the Sun of Righteousness, will meet with terrible loss; for the light that is in him will become darkness, because of the rejection of additional light, and he will walk in darkness, and lead others out of the path of peace and joy and righteousness in the Holy Ghost. He who is thus blinded will cease to grow in grace. The Lord Jesus is waiting to give the light of life to those who are in darkness, in order that they may show forth the praises of Him that hath called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. If the rejectors of the Lord Jesus Christ could have seen what would be the result of turning away from the world's Redeemer, of cherishing their own ideas and exalting themselves in their own wisdom, what a picture would they have beheld!

The miracles that Jesus worked, the spirit and power that attended his ministry, were a live, conclusive testimony to every unprejudiced mind. It was not evidence that was wanting, but an honest heart of faith. With what power Christ worked to save the Jewish nation! He foresaw the result, yet he did not waver in his purpose to bring every evidence to convince them, notwithstanding the fact that Jerusalem would despise the day of her visitation, and the people would fasten themselves in prejudice and unbelief. Christ left no means untried in order that he might win them. The guilt, the responsibility of their rejection of his mercy, lay with themselves. (Concluded next

number.)

November 13, 1893

Danger of Spiritual Blindness

The Jewish nation stood forth among the nations of the earth as a proud, haughty people, who claimed to have great knowledge and to manifest great piety. The Jews looked down upon the Gentiles as upon those who were far beneath them, because of darkness and error. Yet the pretentious fig tree bore not fruit, but leaves only. If they had had spiritual understanding, they would have seen and understood the mission of Christ. The light dimly seen at first would have increased in brightness, expanding unto the perfect day. If they had followed on to know the Lord, they would have known that his goings forth are prepared as the morning. Oh, what a light would have shone upon Judah and Jerusalem had they but welcomed the light that was sent them of heaven! What a transforming power would have been manifest in life and character! They would have been just what Jesus longed to have them be,--a living, shining light in the darkness. They would have borne the noblest credentials that any one of the followers of Christ can bear. They would have been representatives of Christ, monuments of the power of the Spirit of God upon human hearts. The Spirit of God would have worked a miracle upon the heart, changing it from a heart of stone to a heart of flesh. They would have known what is meant by the regeneration of the Spirit, for the whole moral taste would have been changed, and they would have loved the things they once hated, and hated the things they once delighted in.

The words of Christ to the Pharisees come home with power to every living soul to whom the light of the Sun of Righteousness has been revealed. To those who have caught a glimpse of celestial truth, to whom have come some rays of enlightenment, is the warning given. For your souls' sake do not turn away and be disobedient to the heavenly vision. You may have seen something in regard to the righteousness of Christ, but there is truth yet to be seen clearly, and that should be estimated by you as precious as rare jewels. You will see the law of God and interpret it to the people in an entirely different light from what you have done in the past, for the law of God will be seen by you as revealing a God of mercy and righteousness. The atonement, made by the stupendous sacrifice of Jesus Christ, will be seen by you in an altogether different light. You will see sin in its heinous character. But this the Jews did not desire to see. Jesus said to them, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." "For everyone that

doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." "Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness of the truth. But I receive not testimony from man; but these things I say, that ye might be saved." He appeals to them to recall the deep conviction that was upon them under the messages of John. He said: "He was a burning and a shining light; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I have a greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you; for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not." The witness of the Father had been given. "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Although the men whom he was then personally addressing had not heard the voice, yet they had heard the report, and knew that the testimony of John was not borne in a corner. John's testimony had been positive, had been given in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power. He had testified of what his eyes had seen, of what his ears had heard, of what his hands had handled, of the word of life. Jesus said, "There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true." The scribes and Pharisees had believed the words of John at the time, but pride and unbelief worked in their hearts after Satan's order, and envy, jealousy, and downright hatred of Christ were revealed.

Jesus said to his disciples: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; ... but now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me; and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."

November 20, 1893

The Good Shepherd's Estimate of a Lost Sheep

"Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. And He spake this parable unto them, saying, What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. 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. Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

The mission and work of Christ did not harmonize with the work of the Pharisees. They were full of self-conceit, and they saw that Christ did not approve of their works. He gave them no flattering words to nourish their pride. They were disappointed that Jesus, who manifested to the world so lofty a character, did not mingle with them, and practice their manner of teaching, rather than go about in so unpretending a manner, working among all classes of people. They saw among the people who listened with rapt attention those who did not belong to the Jewish nation, and who had never manifested the least interest in their teaching.

When the Pharisees expressed their discontent because of the class of people with whom he mingled, Jesus set the matter before them in the parable of the lost sheep. But their understanding was darkened; for Satan had power over their minds, and they arrayed themselves in opposition to Jesus. The Pharisees said that if Jesus were a true prophet, he would harmonize with them, and voice their precepts and maxims, and treat the wretched publicans and sinners as they treated them. In giving his Son to die for the sins of the world, the Lord God made manifest what was the estimate he placed upon

men; for in giving Jesus to the world, he gave heaven's best gift. For this costly sacrifice the most profound gratitude is demanded from every soul. Whatever may be the nation kindred, or tongue, whether a man is white or black, he still bears the image of God, and "the proper study of mankind is man," viewed from the fact that he is the purchase of the blood of Christ. To show contempt for, to manifest hatred toward any nation, is to reveal the characteristic of Satan. God has placed his estimate upon man in giving Jesus to a life of humiliation, poverty, and self-sacrifice, to contempt, rejection, and death, in order that man, his lost sheep, might be saved. Is it then a remarkable thing that all heaven is interested in the ransom of man? Is it a wonderful fact that ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of angels are employed in ascending and descending on the mystic ladder to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation? Angels do not come to the earth to denounce and to destroy, to rule and to exact homage, but are messengers of mercy to cooperate with the Captain of the Lord's host, to cooperate with the human agents who shall go forth to seek and to save the lost sheep. Angels are commanded to encamp round about those who fear and love God.

The sympathy of all heaven is enlisted on behalf of the sheep that is wandering far from the fold. If the Pharisees had been working in harmony with God, in place of uniting with the adversary of God and man, they would not have been found despising the purchase of the blood of Christ. As the delusions of Satan are broken from human minds, as the sinner looks to Calvary, and sees the costly offering that has been given to save an apostate and ruined race, he contemplates and is deeply moved by the love of God, and becomes repentant. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us." Oh, that we might comprehend the love of God and even to a faint degree take in the compassion that has been manifested toward fallen man! How would we look and live! By beholding Christ man becomes changed and transformed in character from glory to glory. The conflict between light and darkness is entered upon. Look, poor sinner, represented by the lost sheep after whom the shepherd is seeking, look to the cross! The Pharisees may hold in contempt the very one whom the Lord is anxious to save. In the poor blind man restored to sight by the compassionate Shepherd, was one whom the self-righteous Pharisees thought worthy only of sneers and hatred.

Jesus, the Son of the Highest, is combating the powers of Satan, who is laying every possible device whereby he may counteract the work of God. The prize for which the powers of light and darkness are contending, is the soul of man. The Good Shepherd is seeking his sheep, and what self-denial, what hardships, what privations he endures!

The under shepherds know something of the stern conflict, but little in comparison to what is endured by the Shepherd of the sheep. With what compassion, what sorrow, what persistence, he seeks the lost! How few realize what desperate efforts are put forth by Satan to defeat the Shepherd's purpose. When the Shepherd at last finds his lost sheep, he gathers it in his arms with rejoicing, and bears it back to the fold on his shoulders. And the harps of heaven are touched, and an anthem of rejoicing is sung over the ransom of the wandering and lost sheep. "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance."

How does the contrast appear between the scowling scribes and Pharisees and the Christ they condemned, misinterpreting his mission, and putting upon his words the worst possible construction? The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost. A lost sheep never finds its way back to the fold of itself. If it is not sought for and saved by the watchful shepherd, it wanders until it perishes. What a representation of the Saviour is this! Unless Jesus, the Good Shepherd, had come to seek and to save the wandering, we should have perished. The Pharisees had taught that none but the Jewish nation would be saved, and they treated all other nationalities with contempt. But Jesus attracted the attention of those that the Pharisees despised, and he treated them with consideration and courtesy. Because he did this, the Pharisees sought to bring a charge against him, and destroy his influence.

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This love on behalf of man, expressed in the gift of his only-begotten Son, called forth from Satan the most intense hatred, both toward the Giver and toward the priceless Gift. Satan had represented the Father to the world in a false light, and by this great Gift his representations were proved untrue, for here was love without a parallel, proving that man was to be redeemed by an inconceivable cost. Satan had tried to obliterate the image of God in man in order that as God looked upon him in his wretchedness, in his perverseness, in his degradation, he might be induced to give him up as hopelessly lost. But the Lord gave his only-begotten Son in order that the most sinful, the most degraded, need not perish, but, by believing on Jesus Christ, may be reclaimed, regenerated, and restored to the image of God, and thus have eternal life.

November 27, 1893

The True Sheep Respond to the Voice of the Shepherd

"I am the Good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd."

In the East it is the custom of the shepherd to name his sheep, and as the sheep learn their names, they respond to the voice of the shepherd. The shepherd goes before them and leads them out, guiding them from the fold to the pasture. The sheep recognize the voice of the shepherd and follow him. Jesus declared himself to be the true shepherd, because he gave his life for the sheep. He says; "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

Jesus spoke these words in the hearing of a large concourse of people, and a deep impression was made upon the hearts of many who listened. The scribes and Pharisees were filled with jealousy because he was regarded with favor by many. Among the multitude were also rulers, who were deeply impressed as they listened to his important words. While he represented himself as the True Shepherd, the Pharisees said, "He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?" But others distinguished the voice of the True Shepherd, and said:

"These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind? And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch. Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not; the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no

man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."

With what firmness and power he uttered these words. The Jews had never before heard such words from human lips, and a convicting influence attended them; for it seemed that divinity flashed through humanity as Jesus said, "I and my Father are one." The words of Christ were full of deep meaning as he put forth the claim that he and the Father were of one substance, possessing the same attributes. The Jews understood his meaning, there was no reason why they should misunderstand, and they took up stones to stone him. Jesus looked upon them calmly and unshrinkingly, and said, "Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of these works do ye stone me?"

The Majesty of heaven stood, calmly assured, as a god before his adversaries. Their scowling faces, their hands filled with stones, did not intimidate him. He knew that unseen forces, legions of angels, were round about him, and at one word from his lips they would strike with dismay the throng, should they offer to cast upon him a single stone. He stood before them undaunted. Why did not the stones fly to the mark?-- It was because divinity flashed through humanity, and they received a revelation, and were convicted that his were no common claims. Their hands relax and the stones fall to the ground. His words had asserted his divinity, but now his personal presence, the light of his eye, the majesty of his attitude, bore witness to the fact that he was the beloved Son of God.

Had the Pharisees misunderstood his words, he could and would have corrected their wrong impression. He could have told them that he was no blasphemer, although he had called himself the Son of God, and that his words need not necessarily mean that he had invested himself with divine prerogatives, and made himself equal with the Father. But he made no such statement. The impression they had received was the very impression he desired to make. Jesus answered them: "Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken; say ye of Him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him." Again the hatred and the wrath is stirred within the breast of the Jews, and they sought "to take him; but he escaped out of their hand, and went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode. And many resorted unto him, and

said, John did no miracle; but all things that John spake of this man were true. And many believed on him there.

December 4, 1893

Jesus the Good Shepherd

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. He that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers. This parable spake Jesus unto them; but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them."

Here it was demonstrated that a worse blindness than that of physical blindness closed the understanding of the Jewish people. By his infinite power Jesus could heal those who were physically blind, but those who were spiritually blind could not discern their need of enlightenment; for they thought themselves righteous. The treatment that Jesus received from those of his own nation is symbolic of the treatment he was to receive from the whole world. He lived in the world, and he had a deep, earnest love for the world, and especially for the Jewish nation. The question was brought to an issue that had been the point of controversy since the fall, concerning the character of God. Satan had charged God with exercising arbitrary power, and of alienating the human race from himself. Satan sowed seeds of enmity, and kept them well watered, in order that he might be successful in deluding souls, and thus triumph over Christ, making the gulf more deep and impassable between earth and heaven. He presented his falsehoods as truth, and became bold in transgression, seeking to wear out the goodness, mercy, and forbearance of God, to extinguish from his heart all love for man, and thus so exasperate divine justice that God would leave the world under Satanic jurisdiction. "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." Instead of being softened by the long patience of God, they encourage themselves in continual resistance.

Satan took the field in person against Jesus Christ. Evil angels conspired with evil men to resist good, to trample upon righteousness, and all the energies of evil were confederated together to destroy the champion of God and truth. While success seems to

attend the masterly activity of Satan, Jesus takes the field to contest his power. Jesus came "unto his own, and his own received him not." He was charged with an embassy of mercy, sent of the Father at a crisis when rebellion had overspread the world, in order that man should not perish, but have everlasting life through faith in the Son of God. Through Christ they were to bruise the serpent's head, and gain eternal life.

Jesus was the truth, yet he was scorned as a deceiver. He was hunted from place to place as a malefactor. His own nation took the most active part in throwing contempt upon him. His friends, and even his own brethren, denied and forsook him. Every cruelty that an apostate angel could instigate was set in operation. He was buffeted with temptations, lacerated with stripes, crowned with thorns, mocked and derided as a false king, and at last crucified on the cross.

Satan has kept up his system of cruelty, and still employs his planned agency of crookedness and deception, and accuses and condemns and tortures in order that he may control the conscience. While exercising his power in torturing those whom he controlled through demoniacal possession, he yet laid the blame of it upon the Lord God of heaven. He put his own interpretation on his Satanic actions, and charged God with being the author of all evil. In the parable of the shepherd Jesus puts his own interpretation on his work and mission, and represents himself as the good shepherd, feeding and taking charge of the sheep. He said, "He that entereth not in by the door [by himself] into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." Christ said that all who came before him claiming to be the Messiah were deceivers. At the time of Christ's coming there was much agitation concerning the appearance of the world's Messiah. The Jewish nation expected that a great deliverer would come, and there were men who took advantage of this expectation, turning it to the service of themselves, that they might be thereby profited and glorified. Prophecy had foretold that these deceivers would arise. The deceivers did not come in the way in which it was prophesied that the world's Redeemer should come; but Christ came, answering every specification. Types and symbols had represented him, and in him type met antitype. In the life, mission, and death of Jesus every specification was fulfilled.

Jesus was the good shepherd to whom the porter openeth, who knows the sheep, calleth his own by name, and leadeth them out. He it is who is stronger than the thief and the robber, those who enter not in at the door, but climb up some other way. The Pharisees were not able to discern that this parable was spoken against them, the

professed leaders of the people, pastors of the flock. Jesus presented himself in contrast to them, and when they reasoned in their hearts as to what he could mean by the parable, he said: "I am the door of the sheep.... By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy; I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Christ presented himself as the only one in whom were qualifications for making a good shepherd. He is represented as the "Chief Shepherd." Peter writes, "When the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." Again he is called the great Shepherd. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever." "But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep."

The Pharisees had just cut one off from the fold because he had acknowledged that Jesus had wrought a wonderful miracle, and had opened his eyes. They had called the blind man to them after his healing and had said: "Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner. He could never have wrought the miracle. As to this man doing the miracle, you are wrong. It is only a deception." But the restored man answered, "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." Then they asked again, "What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes? How hard they were to convince! How hard they tried to cover up with unbelief the mighty work of Jesus, and sought to persuade the man to disbelieve his own senses! They were false shepherds indeed, and sought to scatter the sheep. But the blind man who had been made to see answered their caviling, asking them if they too would be his disciples. They were indignant that this ignorant man should presume to teach them, and could scarcely find words to express their contempt. They were men who had been educated in the schools, and claimed to be expositors of the Scriptures. They were not to be thought of as disciples of any pretender, and declared themselves to be the disciples of Moses.

But the man upon whom the miracle was wrought was not to be intimidated by

their scorn, and said: "Why herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now we know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshiper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God, he could do nothing." The indignation of the scribes and Pharisees knew no bounds. Gathering their robes about them, as though they feared contamination, shaking the dust from their feet against him, and treating him with the utmost contempt and derision, they said, "Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?" And in no gentle manner they thrust him out of the synagogue. The sheep was cast out of the fold for being a living witness to the power of Christ. Many have been cast out of the church whose names were registered upon the book of life. Wolves in sheep's clothing were ready to cast out of the fold and devour one who was entitled to the Lord's pasture; but Jesus, the True Shepherd, sought him, and gave him a place within the fold.

December 11, 1893

Truth Revealed to the Humble

"Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." The Lord Jesus presented the heavenly treasures to the Jewish people, but many of them would not receive them. The educated men thought themselves too wise to need instruction, too righteous to need salvation, too well honored to need the honor that Jesus would confer upon them in making them laborers together with God. In the scribes, Pharisees, and rulers, Jesus found not the bottles for his new wine. He was obliged to turn from them to humble men, whose hearts were not filled with envy, covetousness, and self-righteousness. The lowly fishermen obeyed the call of the divine Teacher, while the scribes and Pharisees refused to become converted.

The disciples that Jesus called were uneducated, and were far from being perfect in character when Jesus united them with himself; but they were willing to learn from the greatest Teacher the world ever knew. They were truly converted men, and became the new bottles into which Jesus could pour the new wine of his kingdom. But though they were converted to Christ, yet, because of their limited earthly comprehension--the result of the teaching they had had from the Jews--they were unable fully to understand the spiritual nature of the truth he could impart. The burden of his instruction was the necessity of his followers having pure and holy hearts, for holiness alone would fit them to become subjects of his heavenly kingdom.

The divine Sower scattered grains of precious seed, which we cannot see until a skillful laborer, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, gathers them together and presents them to us as a complete system of truth, unfolding the depths of divine love. For all ages Jesus, the author of truth, through prophets and people, had presented truth upon truth to the Jews, from the pillar of cloud and fire. But the truth he had given had become mingled with error, and it was necessary to separate from the companionship of heresy and evil. It was necessary to readjust it in the framework of the gospel, in order that it might shine forth in its original luster and illuminate the moral darkness of the world. Wherever he found a gem of truth that had been lost from its setting, or had been marred with error, he reset it, and stamped upon it the signature of Jehovah. He proved

himself to be the word and the wisdom of God.

The commonplace matters of time and earth had engrossed the minds of the people at the time of Christ, just as Satan had designed that they should. Sin had expelled from the heart the love of God, and instead of the love of God there was found in the heart the love of the world, the love of sinful indulgence of evil passions. Christ alone could adjust the claims between heaven and earth. Man's vision had become blinded, because he did not keep in view the spiritual and eternal world. But the kind of teaching that Christ gave to the world did not harmonize with the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees; for their religion consisted in a round of forms and ceremonies, and the offering of sacrifices, which had been designed by Christ to keep his sacrifice in mind, had lost its significance. Unless the sacrifices were offered in faith, accompanied with contrition and humility, they were valueless in the eyes of God, and even an abomination to him. God repeatedly had declared that the sacrifices acceptable to him were a broken and a contrite heart. He said, "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."

In Christ's perfection of character was found the ransom for the sinner, the way in which the rebel against God might be reconciled to God. Those who will submit to the drawing power of Christ, may be justified by a just God. Jesus is the ladder which Jacob saw. The base of this ladder rests upon the earth, in the human nature of our Lord, and its top reaches the throne of God, in his divinity. The light of the glory of God illuminates the whole ladder, and that light shines into every believing heart, enlightening, strengthening, encouraging. Angels of shining brightness ascend and descend upon this ladder, and minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. Through the merit of Christ, intercourse between heaven and earth has been opened, and the system of sacrifices instituted at Adam's fall had no virtue except as they showed forth the great Mediator between God and man. Jesus was the true Sacrifice, who was to die for man's transgression. The sacrifice of Cain was rejected because it was not an offering that acknowledged the sacrifice of Christ for the sins of the world. In Cain's offering there was no confession of sin, no acknowledgment that he was in need of a Saviour. Today there are thousands and tens of thousands who are making the same mistake as did Cain, and as did the Pharisees in the days of Christ. They are trusting in self, and depending upon their own wisdom, and do not realize their own spiritual poverty. To them comes the Laodicean message: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art

lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew 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."

As in the days of Christ, the Pharisees do not know their own spiritual destitution. The Lord says, "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." Faith and love are the gold tried in the fire. But with the Pharisees the gold has become dim, and the rich treasure has been lost. To them it is said: "I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

But while these messages of reproof are addressed to those who have backslidden, and who have left their first love, yet He who knows all things has given us this precious promise: "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." One who has been anointed with the spirit of wisdom and understanding, is able to lead every soul who will submit to be led, and He has trodden every step of the way before us. "If any man lack wisdom," let him lean upon his fellow-man?--No; "let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not."

In the person and work of Christ the holiness of God is revealed; for Christ came to reveal the Father. Satan had cast his shadow athwart the pathway of humanity, and misrepresented the character of God. The controversy of Satan did not end when he was expelled from the courts of heaven. He hated Christ for his position in the courts of God, and he hated him the more when he himself was dethroned. He hated him when he came to a ruined world, to show mercy and manifest his compassion toward a race of sinners. Through the chief priests and Pharisees the hatred of Satan was manifested toward the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.

December 18, 1893

The Character to Be Tested

We are to form characters after the divine Model, Jesus Christ, and bring every power and capability of our natures into subordination to him in this life, that we may through him have a right hold of the future immortal life. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent." Those who have a character that will be found worthy of a place in the kingdom of God, will be those who have become acquainted with God, who have obeyed the explicit directions given in his word. They will be entitled to a seat at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

The only way in which we can distinguish between the true Christian and the pretender to Christianity is by the fruit of the life. The works will testify whether or not Christ, the hope of glory, is formed within. Everyone who enters the kingdom of heaven will have been tested and proved. Judas was one who was favored in being associated with Christ and his disciples. He was with Jesus during the time of his public ministry, and he possessed qualities of character that would have made him a blessing to the church had he but submitted to the discipline that Jesus desired him to have. He was privileged to have the same advantages as did John and the other disciples, and might have been benefited by the education and training of the greatest Teacher the world ever knew.

In Christ he beheld a character that was pure, harmless, and undefiled, and his heart was drawn out in love for his Master. But the light that was shed upon him from the character of Christ, brought with it the responsibility of yielding up every natural or acquired trait that was not in harmony with the character of Christ. In this Judas did not stand the test. The love of the world was deeply rooted in his heart, and he did not give up his love for the world, nor surrender his ambition to Christ. He never came to the point of surrendering himself fully to Jesus. He felt that he could retain his own individual judgment and opinion. While he accepted the position of the minister of Christ, yet he never brought himself under the divine moulding of Christ. He clung to his objectionable traits of character, and indulged in his own sinful habits, and, instead of becoming pure and Christlike, he became selfish and covetous. Selfishness became

the controlling power of his life.

Judas listened to the lessons which Christ gave to his disciples and to the multitudes, and he did not offer any opposition, or seem to question their importance. He made no outward murmur until the time that Mary anointed the feet of Jesus. The record says:

"Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; and Martha served; but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment. Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein."

In the circumstance of Mary's anointing Jesus' feet, the plague spot of Judas' character was revealed. The crisis had come in the life of Judas, and the ruling trait of character took its supremacy over every other trait. Covetousness, which is idolatry, had been cultivated, and had strengthened in his heart, and when temptation came upon him, he was held under its control. The temptations of Satan will ever thus meet a response from the elements of depravity that are in the human character that have not been resisted and overcome. The covetous greed that Judas had indulged for years, now held in control and overpowered every other characteristic of his nature. He harmonized with the drawings of Satan, and evil triumphed as he yielded to temptation. Although he was professedly a follower of Jesus, yet he was in heart strengthening the evil of his character. Jesus knew every transgression, and he now looked sorrowfully upon him who was numbered with the twelve, and who was yet not a doer of the words of Christ.

The disciples could not discern the evil of Judas' heart; only the eye of God could discern the hidden motive, the unholy desire. When an impure thought is welcomed, an unholy desire cherished, a rebellious purpose formed, the purity of the soul is stained and its innocence is ruined, temptations prevail, and hell triumphs. "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." A

man is tempted to sin when some attractive object or indulgence is presented to him, and he is drawn to overstep principle, and to violate his conscience in doing that which he knows to be wrong. This was what Judas was doing. He had no oil in his vessel with his lamp. He professed to have a deep interest in the welfare of the poor, but all his professions were pretenses, mere hypocrisy. He wanted to give others the impression that he was a very pious man, but the fact was that he was nothing else than a self-conceited sinner.

It was his day to seek grace and purity and holiness; but he failed to seek them. He did not cultivate humility, and die to the world. He did not cultivate hope and love, and manifest pure devotion to God. He did not obtain a strong, noble character, full of faith and holy endeavor, but permitted the wild, unsanctified elements of character to prevail. During his whole life he continually repeated acts of selfishness, though wearing the garb of religion.

Those who are satisfied in having merely a form of religion, who do not carry out the lessons of Christ in their practical life, make manifest the weakness of their character when trial and temptation come upon them, and they prove that they were not Christians. Every duty that is performed in love to Jesus, in simplicity and humility, divested of all selfishness, has its effect on the character and shapes it after the divine Model. Through faithfulness in the Christian life the soul is braced to withstand sudden assaults of temptation; for the true Christian learns to depend upon Christ for strength and grace. When the first temptation is met and resisted, the second is more easily met and resisted. We may be able to resist every temptation that assails the heart by calling upon our mighty Deliverer.

It is not in the power of Satan to force anyone to sin. Sin is the sinner's individual act. Before sin exists in the heart, the consent of the will must be given, and as soon as it is given, sin is triumphant, and hell rejoices. But there is no excuse for sin, either great or little. Christ has been provided as the tempted one's refuge. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. 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 an 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. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

Temptation is not sin, and is no indication that God is displeased with us. The Lord suffers us to be tempted, but he measures every temptation, and apportions it according to our power to resist and overcome evil. It is in time of trial and temptation that we are enabled to measure the degree of our faith and trust in God, and to estimate the stability of our Christian character. If we are easily jostled and overcome, we should be alarmed; for our strength is small. Let us consider the words of comfort that have been left on record for our instruction: "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." God has apportioned the temptation in proportion to the strength he can supply, and he never permits us to be tempted beyond our ability to resist or to endure. "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation." "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." Through prayer and the word of God we shall be enabled to overcome temptation.

December 25, 1893

"Walk in the Spirit"

"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another." Many are deceiving their own souls, because, while they assent to the truth, they fail to become sanctified through the truth. To have a right religious experience it is essential not only to have an intelligent idea as to what is the theory of truth, but the heart and mind must be trained, and the habits must be in harmony with the expressed will of God. The word, the requirements of God, must be studied; for if we weave into our experience incorrect principles, we shall cherish false ideas as to what constitutes a Christian, and shall not be found obeying the voice of God. We cannot spiritually discern the character of God, or accept of Jesus Christ by faith, unless our life and character are marked by purity, by the casting down of imaginations, and of every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and by bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

It is sin that has dragged down and degraded the faculties of the soul; but through faith in Jesus Christ as our Redeemer, we may be restored to holiness and truth. All who would learn of Christ must be emptied of human wisdom. The soul must be cleansed from all vanity and pride, and vacated by all that has held it in prepossession, and Christ must be enthroned in the heart. The constant strife in the soul that results from selfishness and self-sufficiency must be rebuked, and humility and meekness must take the place of our natural self-esteem. I am pained beyond measure when I see men and women professing the name of Christ, and yet manifesting not the Spirit of Christ; for I know that they are dwelling in fatal delusion. Many are satisfied with a mere semblance of religion, and they have no experimental knowledge of the virtues of Christ, no vital connection with Jesus. They listen to the most searching presentation of truth, but make no application of the truth to their own souls, because they are clothed with a garment of self-righteousness. Every salutary impression is warded off with the thought that they are Christians, and that the close, searching appeals are not meant for them. The most solemn message from the great Teacher through his delegated servants is lost upon them, because they do not see the need of any such warning or appeal. They have not come to the point of realizing that they are sick and in need of a physician. Christ said,

"They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

Solemn conviction of sin will lead individuals to tremble at the word of God, and surrender their ways, their ideas, and their will to God. I tremble when I see so many who feel perfectly contented. They will admit that they have little experience in religious things, and when given an opportunity to gain an experience, they do not advance, because they do not feel their need, and so the matter ends where it began; for they do not seek divine enlightenment with true contrition of soul.

It is only at the altar of God that we kindle the taper with holy fire. It is only the divine light that will reveal the littleness, the incompetence of human ability, and give clear, distinct views of the perfection and purity of Jesus Christ. It is only as we behold Jesus that we desire to become like him. It is only as we view his righteousness that we hunger and thirst to possess it. It is only as we ask in earnest prayer, in humility and simplicity, as a little child asks an earthly parent for some good thing, that God will grant unto us our heart's desire. Such prayer is heard and answered. The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that earnestly desire it, than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. Christ has promised the Holy Spirit to guide us unto all truth and righteousness and holiness. The Holy Spirit is not given by measure to those who earnestly seek for it, who by faith stand upon the promises of God. They plead the pledged word of God, saying, "Thou hast said it. I take thee at thy word."

The Comforter is given that he may take of the things of Christ and show them unto us, that he may present in their rich assurance the words that fell from his lips, and convey them with living power to the soul who is obedient, who is emptied of self. It is then that the soul receives the image and superscription of the divine. Then Jesus Christ is formed within the hope of glory.

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Those who are called to be shepherds of the flock of God are called to be laborers together with God. The Lord Jesus is the great Worker, and he prayed to his Father that his followers might be sanctified through the truth. If we are doers of the word of God, we shall understand that we cannot retain any sinful habit, or indulge in any crooked or guileful way. His truth, his word, must be brought with divine power into our human hearts, and we must purify our hearts by obeying the

truth. We must renounce all the hidden things of dishonesty, all craftiness and Satanic wiles. We must be where we shall be enabled to discern the snares of him who lieth in wait to deceive. Sin must be sensed in its true, hateful character, and expelled from the soul. All who preach the word in verity and truth can afford to be fair in its presentation. We are not to be deceitful in any way. Not handling the word of God deceitfully, we are to let the cross of Christ stand in prominence in all our teaching. We are not to hide the gospel, or cover the cross of Christ with ornamental roses, and thus make the preaching of it of no effect. Let no one shun the cross of self-denial. Make the instruction plain as to what it means to be a Christian. "If any man will come after me," said Jesus, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." Food is the substance of which we partake, that our bodies may be strengthened and built up. In like manner we are to feed upon that which will build up our spiritual nature. Jesus said, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Our bodies are composed of that upon which we feed; so our spiritual life will be composed of that upon which we feed. If we feed on Christ, by thinking of him, by obeying his words, we are built up in him, and grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth unto the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. "Receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."

As God works in us to will, we are to cooperate with God, manifesting a determination like that of Daniel to do the will of God, working in harmony with the divine Agent. Then we shall have rest in God. Teachers of the word of God are not to keep back any part of the counsel of God, lest the people shall be ignorant of their duty, and not understand what is the will of God concerning them, and stumble and fall into perdition. But while the teacher of truth should be faithful in presenting the gospel, let him never pour out a mass of matter which the people cannot comprehend because it is new to them and hard to understand. Take one point at a time, and make that one point plain, speaking slowly and in a distinct voice. Speak in such a way that the people shall see what is the relation of that one point to other truths of vital importance. Every man who becomes a teacher must also become a learner, and daily sit at the feet of Jesus. It is impossible for anyone to rightly divide the word of truth, unless he earnestly seeks wisdom from on high that he may understand what is taught in the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit must attend the word spoken to the heart. It will be difficult to create prejudice in the hearts of those who are seeking for truth as for hidden treasure, if the speaker will

hide himself in Christ; for he will then reveal Christ, not himself.

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." But though God has set these different laborers in the church, there is to be no neglect on the part of one in the performance of duty. Let no one neglect to give faithful and plain instruction upon tithing. Let there be instruction as to giving to the Lord that which he claims as his own; for the commendation of the Lord will not rest upon a people who rob him in tithes and offerings. There will be need of often setting before the people their duty in this matter, that they may render unto God his own. Let the one who first presents the truth be faithful in presenting this duty, and let him also who follows up the interest, make plain the requirement of God on tithing, that the people may see that in all points the laborers are teaching the same truth, and are of one mind in urging them to yield obedience to all the requirements of God.

But let laborers have discretion, and not give strong meat to those who are as babes, but feed them with the sincere milk of the word. In no case mingle your own spirit and ideas with the truth, and cover up the precepts of God by traditions or suppositions. Let the people have the truth as it is in Jesus, and do not mingle it with concoctions of your own devising, for your presentation of the truth will taste so strongly of self that it will disgust the hearers. Be able to say with Paul: "I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ... I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." There is most earnest work to be done in order that you may so search the Scriptures that you may be able to declare unto those with whom you meet the whole counsel of God.

January 1, 1894

Christ Seeks the Lost through Human Agents

"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 scribes and Pharisees had built up a wall of separation between their nation and every other people. They passed by the publicans and sinners, as though communication with them would bring upon them some moral defilement. Imagine their contempt of Christ when he received publicans and sinners and ate with them. The Lord desired to break down the wall of separation; for he loved the souls who had never known a better way. He is no respecter of persons, and willeth not the death of any sinner, but would that all men might come unto him and live.

In this age, as then, there are lost sheep to be sought and saved. There are many who need personal labor. No prophet, like John the Baptist, has cried out the message of warning to them. No one has pointed them to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." But this is not because the Lord has no interest in these souls who are ready to perish, represented as lost sheep. But the Lord is not chargeable with any neglect on his part. Look to Calvary and answer decidedly, No, no. The Lord has made every provision to save men in giving his Son. Jesus thought it not robbery to be equal with God, for in him dwelleth all the fullness of the godhead bodily. When he claimed the highest prerogatives, he did not make an empty boast. Yet when he was among men, he did not call together a concourse of people, and sound a trumpet before him, and command attention. The great Teacher came in simplicity, though he was the light of the world. He taught the people in plain, simple words, which all could understand. He said, "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father.... My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." "All things that the Father hath are mine." With the familiarity and ease of eternal habitude, Jesus lays his hand on the throne of God.

In giving Jesus to the world God gave all heaven in one gift. Then why is it, when

God has left nothing undone that could be done, that there are not more brought from darkness to light?--It is because the human will does not cooperate with the divine intelligences. If the Lord's will and way were carried out, humanity would be reached through humanity, and every lost prodigal would be brought home, and saved through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who tasted death for every man. Sin would no longer exist. But it is humanity that bars the way. It is for lack of the copartnership of man, because of rebellion, that the way is blocked up. The revelation of God's truth comes to us through human agents. Christ came to the world as the Son of Man. This was the only way in which he could reach humanity. Jesus enters into humanity, that through his power and grace humanity may become partaker of the divine nature. "Ye are laborers together with God." Man must cooperate with Jesus Christ, and through earnest endeavor work out his own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. Man works out what God works in, not by means of finite endeavor, but by the strength imparted through the divine nature. Those who are building up a Christlike character, will not, cannot, withhold their interest from the work of aiding Christ in seeking and saving that which is lost.

The Jews looked upon the whole world as cursed, and Satan claimed the world. He claimed the publicans and sinners as his own subjects, but Christ came to dispute his claims and challenge his usurped authority. In this work man is brought into cooperation with God, and is to work as God works for the salvation of fallen men. What are we individually doing to let our light shine forth to others? It is the neglect of men in failing to cooperate with Jesus that leaves the world so long unreclaimed. Jesus has said of his followers, "As Thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world." As Christ represented the Father, so he has commissioned his believing ones to represent him in character. We are to show forth his self-denial and self-sacrifice, and to establish his kingdom in righteousness. We are to speak the words that Christ has spoken, and do the works that Christ has done. The work of Christ was not to destroy, but to save. He gave his disciples lessons that are of the highest value; for through their words many are to come to the knowledge of Bible truth, and teach others also the lessons which they have learned. The disciples were to know that they were not simply combating the influence of finite enemies, but that they were also contending with demons. Light and darkness were in opposition, truth and delusion, good and evil, heaven and hell. Satanic supernatural agencies were united with evil men to corrupt and destroy.

The publicans and sinners, so despised by the Pharisees, were drawn to Christ, and their hearts were awakened to ask, "What is truth?" The Pharisees, closed their eyes and their ears lest they should see and hear and be converted from the error of their ways, and thus be saved. Heavenly intelligences watched the battle with awe and reverence. As those who are lost, and bound by Satan, struggle to burst the bands that enchain them, they are led to fly to Christ, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. The sinful, repenting soul becomes hopeful, follows Jesus, and catches the words from his lips. Heaven looks upon the scene with rejoicing; but the scribes and Pharisees look on with lowering brow and with sneering, contemptuous words.

What a contrast is the attitude of the Pharisees to that of the angels! The angels look upon Jesus as the Commander of heaven, the Son of the highest, and see him contending with the prince of darkness. The prize for which they are battling is the human soul, for which Christ has come to die, that he may redeem the lost. It is well to contemplate the divine condescension, the sacrifice, the self-denial, the humiliation, the resistance the Son of God must encounter in doing his work for fallen men. Well may we come forth from contemplation of his sufferings, exclaiming, Amazing condescension! Angels marvel as with intense interest they watch the Son of God descending step by step the path of humiliation. It is the mystery of godliness. It is the glory of God to conceal himself and his ways, not by keeping men in ignorance of heavenly light and knowledge, but by surpassing the uttermost capacity of men to know. Humanity can comprehend in part, but that is all that man can bear. The love of Christ passes knowledge. The mystery of redemption will continue to be the mystery, the unexhausted science and everlasting song of eternity. Well may humanity exclaim, Who can know God? We may, as did Elijah, wrap our mantles about us, and listen to hear the still, small voice of God.

January 8, 1894

The Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment Unchanged

The commandment for Sabbath observance reads: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle; nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

The Sabbath commandment is placed in the very bosom of the Decalogue, amid the unchangeable precepts of Jehovah. And yet from many pulpits of our land a contemptuous cry is raised against the Sabbath instituted by the Lord God of heaven, and it is stigmatized as "the old Jewish Sabbath." Let all who are seeking for truth remember that the Sabbath was instituted in Eden before there was a Jew in existence, and that the Saviour said, "The Sabbath was made for man." The fourth commandment was spoken with the other nine of God's moral precepts, amid the thunders and grandeur of Mount Sinai, and in the holy of holies in the heavenly sanctuary above, is the ark of God. It is called the "ark of the testament," and under its cover,--the mercy seat,--are the ten commandments that were written with the finger of God.

On the tables of the law, written with the finger of the infinite God, is the fourth commandment. Does the commandment read, "The first day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God?"--No, it reads: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested [the first day?] the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day; and hallowed it." Thus it reads today in the sacred law as engraven by the finger of God, and thus it is preserved in the ark in the temple of God in heaven.

The institution of the Sabbath was made when the foundation of the earth was

laid, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Like the other nine precepts of the law, it is of imperishable obligation. It is the memorial of God's creative power, the reminder of his exalted work. The fourth commandment occupies a sacred position in the law, and bears the same hallowed nature as do the other great moral precepts of God. God has stamped it with his divine authority as a law of his eternal government. No change can come to it, nothing can alter the thing that has gone out of his lips, or lessen in any degree its sacred obligation. The law of the Sabbath is placed in the very midst of the Decalogue, and walled in with the sacred immutability of truth, justice, and holiness.

The fall of Adam was a terrible thing, and the consequences of his sin so fraught with evil that language cannot portray it. By his disobedience of the divine law, the world was thrown into disorder and rebellion. Because of his disobedience, man was under the penalty of breaking the law, doomed to death. The only definition given in the word of God as to what is sin, is found in 1 John 3:4: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." The law of God is that standard by which character is to be measured in the judgment. Do those who are contending that the first day of the week should be observed instead of the day commanded by Jehovah, understand what they are doing? Do they realize that they are leading men to trample upon one of the precepts of Jehovah?

What significance has the Sabbath if its observance is transferred to the first day of the week? God gave it to men as a memorial of his creative work in six days and his rest upon the seventh. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep; for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the Sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you; everyone that defileth it shall surely be put to death; for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord; whosoever doeth any work in the Sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed. And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God."

Satan, the apostle, the rebel against the government of God, has proposed to obliterate the fourth commandment, which brings to view the Creator of the heavens and the earth, and, instead of the Sabbath, he designs to cause all men to honor a common working day. God blessed the seventh day, he rested upon it and sanctified it for man's observance, but Satan is determined to set aside the claims of the Sabbath, and cause men to accept a spurious sabbath. The excuse for refusing to observe the Sabbath of God's appointment is often made that it does not make any difference upon which day we rest, so long as it is one day in the seven. But it makes every difference upon which day you rest. Resting upon the day God commanded reveals the fact that you honor the Maker of heaven and earth; but disregarding that fact makes it evident that you do not honor God or obey his commandment to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Your non-observance of the memorial of creation shows that you place no merit upon the day that has been sanctified and blessed, and think that you will be excused if you observe the day that has been appointed by the Papacy, which has exalted itself above God and all that is worshiped.

You accept a common working day instead of the day that has been sanctified and blessed, but in thus doing you offer positive insult to the God of heaven. In holding to an observance commanded by the Papal Church, you exalt the opinions and traditions of men above the commandments of the God of heaven.

The Lord understood in just what lines the enemy would work in seeking to tear down his memorial, thus destroying from the minds of men the reminder of his creative work and rest. But to his children he has given this message,--that the Sabbath shall have such significance in their eyes that they will not be moved away from obedience to his requirements: "Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my Sabbaths ye shall keep; for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.... It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed." "And hallow my Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God."

January 15, 1894

"This Man Receiveth Sinners"

"Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. And he spake this parable unto them, saying, What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. 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."

The scribes and Pharisees prided themselves upon the idea that they were God's chosen people, and they were filled with self-righteousness. "Christ came unto his own, and his own received him not." He did not flatter the Pharisees or exalt them in any way. He received the publicans and sinners whom the Jews heartily despised, and, because his lessons of humility, compassions, and love rebuked their selfishness and pride, they would none of him, but turned from him in scorn. They made great ostentation, wore long robes, and stood praying on the corners of the streets, but none of these pretensions to piety awed the great Teacher or drew from him one word of approval. They flattered themselves, but he did not flatter them. The teaching of Christ was against all vanity and pride, for these were abhorrent to the Most High. It is the humble and the contrite whose prayers are heard in heaven. The Lord declares that he knoweth the proud afar off. He says, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word."

When the scribes and Pharisees saw the publicans and sinners following Christ and listening with living interest to his teaching, they could not tolerate either teacher or listeners. They hated Christ and said, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." By this accusation they thought to make the false impression that Jesus loved the association of those who were sinful and defiled, and was insensible to their wickedness. To this reproach Jesus replied by the parable of the lost sheep. "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 parable of the lost sheep places man in the position of one who is helpless and undone. All are lost unless they are transformed in character. The lost condition of the sheep necessitates the coming of the True Shepherd, that, at any cost to himself, he may seek and save those that are perishing. Those who are wise in their own conceit do not realize the position in which they are placed by this parable. The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which is lost. Doth not the shepherd leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness and go after that which is lost until he find it?

In giving his only-begotten Son to save us, the Lord God shows what is the estimate he puts upon man. To the question, What is the price of the soul of man? the answer is, The life of the only-begotten Son of God. And as Christ came to save man, high or low, rich or poor, white or black, are any to be treated with contempt? Satan has studied to lay in ruins the image of God, and, through intemperance and sin, obliterate all trace of his character in man. Christ came, clothing his divinity with humanity, that he might meet humanity and not extinguish humanity by divinity. He came to save the lost sheep, and became a servant in lowly ministry to lift up the lowly.

The science of salvation is a grand theme, and all the glory of restoring the image of God in man is to be laid at the feet of the Eternal. Holy angels have left the royal courts, and have come down to earth to encamp in the valleys in chariots of fire, a vast army, not to despise, not to rule, or require man to worship them, but to minister unto those who shall be heirs of salvation. Could human eyes be opened, they would see in times of danger when Satan goes forth as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, that heavenly beings encamp around the little flock who love and fear God.

The heavenly Shepherd left the ninety and nine to seek the lost one. However dark the night, however severe the tempest, the Shepherd goes forth, at every step calling by name his lost sheep, until he hears its terrified, faint, and dying cry. Then he hunts amid the dangerous places, crosses the tangled briers, and finds his sheep. He rescues it from peril, places it on his shoulder, and with rejoicing returns to the fold. At every step he cries, "Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost." "And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost."

Could we see the heavenly angels watching with intense interest the steps of the Shepherd as he goes into the desert to seek and to save the lost, what wonder would fill our hearts! "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons [in their own estimation], which need no repentance." It is he who is sick who feels the need of physician, and the mission of Christ to the world was to seek and to save those who were perishing. "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."

January 22, 1894

A Representation of God's Love for the Sinner

In the parable of the shepherd seeking for the lost sheep is a representation of the tender patience, perseverance, and great love of God. As we contemplate the unselfish love of God, our hearts well up with gratitude, praise, and thanksgiving. We praise him for the priceless gift of his only-begotten Son. There is no animal so helpless and bewildered as is the sheep that has strayed away from the fold. If the wanderer is not sought for by the compassionate shepherd, it will never find its way back to the fold. The shepherd must take it in his arms himself, and bear it to the fold. This care on the part of the shepherd, and helplessness on the part of the sheep, represent God's care for the sinner and the condition of the soul that has wandered away from God. He is as helpless as the poor lost sheep, and, unless divine love comes to his rescue, he will never find his way to the Father's house.

There is no possible way in which, of himself, man may recover his purity. The natural powers are perverted. Jesus, the good Shepherd, says, "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." The Pharisees were ready to accuse and condemn Jesus, because he did not, like themselves, repulse and condemn the publicans and sinners. The Pharisees put their trust in the law, and yet Jesus declared they did not keep the law. They thought that the law would justify them, and they would not consider the compassion and mercy that Jesus presented in his lessons as necessary to be brought into their practical life. Jesus came to the world to erect the cross, and beneath it all publicans and sinners may find refuge, and the Pharisees also may find peace, but only on the same terms by which those thought to be the greatest sinners may come to Christ.

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." Christ never invited the wicked to come to him to be saved in their sins, but to be saved from their sins. Oh, what hope does this give the sinner, for there is a way whereby he may return to his Father's house! The bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness shine upon his pathway, making it the royal path of holiness. The scribes and Pharisees can be saved only by entering in at the door of the sheepfold,--through faith in Jesus Christ.

The mercy and compassion of Christ stand out in clear contrast beside the indifference of the Sadducees and the contempt of the Pharisees toward those they looked upon as inferior to themselves. Christ did not ordain the plan of salvation for any one people or nation. He said: "I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." Christ is not only the propitiation for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world. The value of the offering of Jesus Christ cannot be estimated; yet, by beholding the sufferings of the Son of God on Calvary, we may obtain some idea of the value at which God estimates the world. The value of the offering was deemed sufficient to save every soul from Adam's time down to the close of earth's history. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Salvation is proffered to all men. The Jews, the Greeks, the Gentiles, the bond, the free, all tribes and nations, may come to Christ.

But while heaven rejoices over the restoration of one lost sheep, the scribes and Pharisees looked upon Jesus with contempt, and the result of his expressed compassion and love led them to determine to kill him. When the Lord works through human instrumentalities, and they are moved with power from above, Satan leads his agents to cry, "Fanaticism," and to warn the servants of God not to go to extremes. Let all be careful how they raise this cry; for, while there is spurious coin, the value of the genuine is unreduced. Because there are many spurious revivals and spurious conversions, it does not follow that all revivals are to be held in suspicion. Shall we have no reason to rejoice on earth when angels rejoice in heaven? Will not those who claim to be children of God stand in harmony with the angels of heaven in their rejoicing? Let them not voice the words and reveal the contempt expressed by the Pharisees as they said, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." We have abundant reason given by our Lord to make us afraid of sneering at his work in the conversion of souls. The manifestation of God's renewing grace on sinful man, pronounced in heaven as genuine, causing angels to rejoice, has by many through unbelief been termed fanaticism, and the messenger through whom God has worked has been spoken of as one having zeal not according to knowledge.

Let every desponding, distrustful soul take courage, even though he may have done wickedly. Read the parable of the lost sheep, the lost piece of silver, and the prodigal son, and take courage. You are not to think that perhaps God will pardon your transgressions, and permit you to approach into his presence, but you are to remember

that it is God who has made the first advance, that he has come forth to seek you while you were still in rebellion against him. With the tender heart of the shepherd, he has left the ninety and nine, and gone out into the wilderness to seek his wandering one. His lost sheep is precious to his heart of love, and he will bring back every wanderer to his Father's house who will let him do so. In the return of the lost sheep to the fold not only does the shepherd rejoice, but the angels also rejoice over the restoration of the wanderer more than over the ninety and nine who think themselves just persons.

Try to contemplate the rejoicing of heaven over the success of the Shepherd in finding the one that was lost, and in no case be intimidated by the indifference, the contempt, and scorn of the scribes and Pharisees. Jesus said: "Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

If diligent search was made by the woman who had lost a piece of silver only, should there not be persevering effort made by those who are seeking to save the human soul, and as much more diligent effort made as the human soul is of greater value than is the piece of silver? How is it that greater zeal is manifested in obtaining the common things of life than is manifested in saving the soul for whom Christ has died? Is not the saving of the lost a work that should arouse every dormant faculty of our being? If the ardor and enthusiasm encouraged as necessary to the success of attaining worldly things is not commendable in seeking the salvation of the lost, which has a twofold object,--to bless and to make us a blessing,--what is? Through conversion we are personally placed in vital connection with Jesus Christ, who is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Every truly converted person carries about with him that which signifies and proves the power of Christianity upon the human soul. The search for the piece of silver was diligent; but of how much greater diligence should be our search for the lost, since every soul who lays hold of Jesus Christ by faith is capable of the highest achievements, and, if obedient and faithful, will have life that measures with the life of God, and live through eternal ages.

January 29, 1894

The Prodigal Son

"And he said, A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him. And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry.... Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in; therefore came his father out, and entreated him. And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends; but as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."

It was to answer the accusation of the scribes and Pharisees to the effect that Jesus chose the companionship of sinners that he spake the parables concerning the lost

sheep, the lost silver, and the prodigal son, and in these presentations showed that his mission to the world was not to make miserable, not to condemn and destroy, but to recover that which was lost. This was the reason he did not exclude himself from those who were sinful. These were the very ones that needed a Saviour. The Pharisees felt that they had need of nothing to make them spiritually perfect. They were just in their own eyes, and felt no need of repentance, and they condemned Christ in his work of seeking to save those who felt themselves lost and undone.

The prodigal son was not a dutiful son, not one who would please his father, but one who desired his own way. He wished to follow the dictates of his own inclination, and was tired of counsel and advice from the father who loved him, and who only wished him to act in such a way that his happiness would be insured. The tender sympathy and love of his father were misinterpreted, and the more patient, kind, and benevolent the father acted, the more restless the son became. He thought his liberty was restricted, for his idea of liberty was wild license, and as he craved to be independent of all authority, he broke loose from all the restraint of his father's house, and soon spent his fortune in riotous living. A great famine arose in the country in which he sojourned, and in his hunger he would fain have filled himself with the husks that the swine did eat.

This was the result that followed this youth's impetuous course. He did not know that the best place in the world is home; for the home atmosphere had become disagreeable to him, because he could not be as independent as he desired. Any place looked better to him than home. Evil companions helped to plunge him deeper and deeper into sin, and a false excitement was kept up, and he imagined that he was happy in being free from all restraint. He had no one now to say: "Do not do that; for you will do injury to yourself. Do this, because it is right." But when his means failed, and he was obliged to take time to consider, he found himself without the bare necessities of life; and, to make his situation more trying, a famine had come upon the land.

Starvation stared him in the face, and he joined himself to a citizen of the place. He was sent to do the most menial of work,--to feed the swine. Although this to a Jew was the most disreputable of callings, yet he was willing to do anything, so great was his need. Miserable and suffering, he sat in the fields doing his task. Because he had been unwilling to submit to the restraint of home, he now had the place of the lowest of servants. He had left home for liberty, but his liberty had been turned into the lowest of

drudgery.

Where now is his riotous joy? Stilling his conscience, benumbing his sensibilities, he had thought himself happy in scenes of revelry; but now, with money spent, with pride humbled, with his moral nature dwarfed, with his will weak and unreliable, with his finer feelings seemingly dead, he is the most wretched of mortals. He is suffering keen hunger, and cannot fill his want, and, under these circumstances, he remembers that his father has bread enough and to spare, and resolves to go to his father. He says: "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son."

Having made this decision, he does not wait to make himself more respectable. It seems that the only way to save his life is to return; for there is bread in his father's house, and he is perishing with hunger. "And when he was a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." The father sees before him one who is on the verge of starvation, and with the marks of dissipation upon him; but this does not make him hesitate. He covers him with his own robe. And the son says, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son;" but the father brings him into the house, and says to the servants, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry."

The home looks just as it did when he left it; but what a difference there is in himself. How could he have abused his father's love, and have chosen his own way? The father has no words of upbraiding to offer, and, though the son wept out his repentance, the father thought only of rejoicing, weeping with joy on the neck of his son. The father does not give him a chance to say, "Make me as one of thy hired servants." The welcome he receives assures him that he is reinstated to the place of son.

Is not the reception of the prodigal son a representation of the way in which the Lord receives the repenting sinner? In the cross of Calvary mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. Every penitent feels himself enfolded in the arms of the Heavenly Father. There is no taunting, no casting up of his evil course. He realizes that he is met by the Lord--"the Lord God, merciful and

gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin."

"Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in; therefore came his father out, and entreated him. And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends; but as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."

Mark the points in the parable: The elder brother coming from the field, hearing the sound of rejoicing, inquires what it all means, and is told of the return of his brother, and how the fatted calf has been killed to provide for the feast. Then is revealed in the elder brother selfishness, pride, envy, and malignity. He feels that favor to the prodigal is an insult to himself, and the father remonstrates with him, but he will not look upon the matter in the right light, nor will he unite with the father in rejoicing that the lost is found. He gives the father to understand that, had he been in the father's place, he would not have received the son back, and forgets that the poor prodigal is his own brother. He speaks with disrespect to his father, charging him with injustice to himself, while he shows favor to one who has wasted his living. He speaks of the prodigal to his father as "this thy son." Yet, notwithstanding all this unfilial conduct, his expressions of contempt and arrogance, the father deals patiently and tenderly with him. He presents before the elder son the facts of the case, and vindicates his course of action toward the returned wanderer, and seeks to awaken tenderness in the heart of the brother.

Did the elder son finally come to see his unworthiness of so kind and considerate a father? Did he come to see that, though his brother had done wickedly, he was his brother still, that their relationship had not altered? and did he repent of his jealousy, and ask his father's forgiveness for so misrepresenting him to his face?

How true a representation was the action of this elder son of unrepenting and

unbelieving Israel, who refused to acknowledge that the publicans and sinners were their brethren, who should be forgiven, and should be sought for, labored for, and not left to perish, but led to have everlasting life! How beautiful is this parable as it illustrates the welcome that every repentant soul will receive from the Heavenly Father! With what joy will the heavenly intelligences rejoice to see souls returning to their Father's house! The sinners will meet with no reproach, no taunt, no reminder of their unworthiness. All that is required is penitence. The Psalmist says, "For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou will not despise." "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."

"Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

February 5, 1894

God's Love Unmeasured

"Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." From Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, beam forth rays of life and light. Would you have Jesus lift upon you the health and light of his countenance?--Then turn your face toward him, and look and live. Talk of Jesus; dwell on his matchless charms; eat of the bread of life; take of the water of life freely. Do you desire to love God supremely and your fellow-men as Jesus loved them?--Keep your heart in meditation upon the spotless character of Christ. His divine heart was moved with compassion and love for suffering humanity. His love cannot be fathomed, except as we take in the sacrifice made on Calvary. Through the renunciation of all selfishness, we need to be able to comprehend what is the height and depth and length and breadth of the love of God, which passeth knowledge.

If we constantly cherish the love of Christ, we shall have the love that cannot be repressed. We shall love the atmosphere of light and love and truth and righteousness. We shall be constantly inquiring after truth, and, knowing that there is such a wealth of precious ore of truth to be found, we shall not grasp for thorns and thistles. Humbly and sincerely we shall search after divine knowledge, realizing that all we can carry with us to heaven is that which is akin to heaven. We shall know that it is very poor policy to be cultivating ourselves in the art of seeing everything that is objectionable, for all the knowledge of God that we can here obtain we shall carry with us to heaven. We can safely cultivate purity, love, and devotion to God and our Redeemer. The love of God must be planted in the heart in this life, and it will enable us to have happiness, and joy, and peace, because the kingdom of heaven will be set up in our hearts. Heaven is to begin on earth. The word of God will reveal to us whatsoever is real and abiding, and these permanent excellences will find a place in our hearts, so that we may now have within us the perfection of heaven.

Can anyone think it possible that pride can exist in the heart and yet that heart have a place in the kingdom of God? It was pride that caused the fall of Satan. His heart was lifted up because of his beauty. All his wisdom and glory were the gift of God; but the very gift bestowed by the generous love of God was perverted to wrong use in

exalting himself, as if his glorious endowments were something that he himself had originated. At that time no pride had been before manifested, and the results of evil had not been made manifest. Pride will never be admitted into heaven. Can we cherish envy in our hearts and yet be found in the kingdom of God?--No; envy cannot be transplanted into the kingdom of God. Satan originated this terrible evil, and its result was that Satan desired and sought to take the place of the only-begotten Son of God. It was because he could not have the place of Christ that Satan revolted in heaven.

Heart burnings, unhappiness, result where unlawful yearnings are cherished for the place and position of another. He who is full of envy looks upon the one he envies with dislike and seeks to show himself superior to his rival; unless he sees and repents of his sin, he will grudge against the one he envies, and all love of Christ will die out of his heart. Can one who cherishes envy be permitted to enter into the kingdom of heaven?--No; for envy brings evil surmisings, deception, pride, accusations, and enmity, and all these have been expelled from heaven. Unless we are divested of all that is evil, we shall not enter into the kingdom of God, but will find ourselves shut out of its gates.

What is it that will gain us an entrance into the kingdom of God?--A character after the likeness of that of Jesus Christ. The Lord God has given to the world all opportunity, all privilege, the grace of the Holy Spirit, the gift of Jesus Christ, in order that we might have a character like that of our Lord, and find abundant entrance into the kingdom of God. Christ's mission to the world made it evident that the human race was standing under the menace of incensed justice, on the verge of eternal ruin, in helplessness and ignorance. To our help Jesus came, bringing the fullest assurance of relief. What has the Father done?--"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 question has been asked, "Would not a lesser gift from God have been adequate for the redemption of lost man?" "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." The question is unanswerable, and it is not profitable for us to spend our time in making conjectures. All our thoughts and imaginations will not alter in the least any part of the plan of redemption devised from all eternity. God loved the world to such an extent that he gave full and complete

evidence of the fact. He did not leave any chance for the tempter to say that he did not love us, for he gave a gift whose value could not be estimated. Had he done less, Satan and his agencies would have sought to have inspired jealousy against God by intimating that he could have done more than he did. God so loved the world that he determined to give a gift beyond all computation, and make manifest how immeasurable was his love. The gift of God would be a wonder to all worlds, to all created intelligences, ever enlarging their ideas of what God's love was in its infinity and greatness. Contemplation of this love would uproot from the heart all selfishness, and so transform the soul that men would cherish generosity, practice self-denial, and imitate the example of God. God so loved the world that he gave heaven's best gift, in order that the most guilty transgressor should not be deferred from coming to Christ, however great his sin, and be enabled to ask for pardon at a throne of mercy.

Since God has given the greatest gift in his power, we are to render to him our whole heart. He has poured out to the world the treasures of heaven, giving with such largeness that there is nothing more to bestow, no reserve grace or power or glory, and we are to respond to this love by rendering willing service to Jesus, who has died for us on Calvary's cross.

At the time when sin had become a science, when the hostility of man was most violent against heaven, when rebellion struck its roots deep into the human heart, when vice was consecrated as a part of religion, when Satan exulted in the idea that he had led men to such a state of evil that God would destroy the world, Jesus was sent into the world, not to condemn it, but, amazing grace! to save the world. The unfallen worlds watched with intense interest to see Jehovah arise and sweep away the inhabitants of the earth, and Satan boasted that if God did do this, he would complete his plans and secure for himself the allegiance of unfallen worlds. He had arguments ready by which to cast blame upon God, and to spread his rebellion to the worlds above; but at this crisis, instead of destroying the world, God sent his Son to save it. The apostle caught a glimpse of the plan, and he kindled into inspiration upon the great theme. Language cannot express his conception, but ever falls below the reality. John exclaims: "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."

Before the coming of Christ to the world evidences abundant had been given that God loved the human race. But in the gift of Christ to a race so undeserving was

demonstrated the love of God beyond all dispute. This gift outweighed all else, showed that his love could not be measured. We have no line to measure it, no plummet by which to sound its depths, no chain by which to encompass it, no standard with which to compare it. All we can say is that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Jesus said, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life." He gave his life for the sheep. The only-begotten Son of God accepts all the liabilities that fall upon the transgressor of the law, vindicates its unchangeable and holy character. The death of Christ removes every argument that Satan could bring against the precepts of Jehovah. Satan has declared that men could not enter the kingdom of heaven unless the law was abolished and a way devised by which transgressors could be reinstated into the favor of God, and made heirs of heaven. He made the claim that the law must be changed, that the reins of government must be slackened in heaven, that sin must be tolerated, and sinners pitied and saved in their sins. But every such plea was cast aside when Christ died as a substitute for the sinner. He who was made equal with God bore the sin of the transgressor, and thereby made a channel whereby the love of God could be communicated to a fallen world, and his grace and power imparted to those who came to Christ in penitence for their sin.

The sum and substance of the arguments of Satan is that sin may be immortalized, that Christ abolished the law, and that evil doers may be in favor with God. But the death of Christ tells a different story; for he died to vindicate the claims of the law, to give to the world and to angels an unanswerable argument of the immutability of the law of Jehovah.

February 12, 1894

Co-operation With God a Necessity

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" I repeat the words of John, "Behold the Lamb of God!" We are to contemplate the character of Christ. We are to meditate upon the cross of Calvary; for it is the unanswerable argument of Christianity. The message we are to bear to the impenitent, the warning we are to give to the backslider, is, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" Those who bring the message to the soul may turn aside from the truth, but he who would be saved must keep his eye on Jesus. By beholding Christ he will learn to hate sin, that has brought to his Redeemer suffering and death. By beholding, his faith is made strong, and he comes to know "the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." The sinner sees Jesus as he is, full of compassion and tender love, and by beholding the manifestation of his great love toward fallen man in his sufferings of Calvary, he is transformed in character.

While our salvation is wholly dependent upon Jesus, yet we have a work to do in order that we shall be saved. The apostle says, "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." The work that we are to do is not independent of what God is to do, but a work of cooperation with God. The power and the grace of God is to be wrought into the heart by the divine Worker, but some go astray here, claiming that man has a work to do that is wholly independent of any work of God. Another class take the other extreme, and say that man is free from all obligation, because God does the whole work--both the willing and doing. But the true ground to take is that the human will must be in subjection to the divine will. The will of man is not to be forced into cooperation with divine agencies, but must be voluntarily submitted. Man has no power of himself to work out his own salvation. Salvation must be the result of cooperation with divine power, and God will not do that for man which he can do for himself. Man is wholly dependent on the grace of Christ. He has no power to move one step in the direction of Christ unless the Spirit of God draws him. The Holy Spirit is continually drawing the soul, and will continue to draw until by persistent refusal the sinner grieves away the tender messenger of God.

In the heavenly councils it has been decided by what means and methods the grace of Christ shall prove effectual in saving the soul. And it is clear that unless the sinner consents to be drawn, unless he will cooperate with divine agencies, the end will not be attained. The work to be done is a united work. The divine and the human are to work together, and the sinner is to depend upon grace, while rendering willing obedience to the dictates of the Spirit of God. "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."

God has endowed men with reason and with intellectual faculties, but if these are untrained, left uncultivated, men will become like the savage heathen. The mind must be cultivated, and it is necessary that teachers present line upon line and precept upon precept, guiding and training the free-will moral agent so that he shall understand what it is to cooperate with God. God works in the human agent by the light of truth, and the mind, enlightened by truth, is capable of seeing truth in distinction from error. Open to the light of truth, free from prejudice, unbound by the opinions and traditions of men, the enlightened mind clearly sees the evidences of the truth, and believes it as from God. The man enlightened by truth will not call falsehood truth, and light darkness. The Spirit reveals to the mind the things of God, and to him who cooperates with God is the realization that a Divine Presence is hovering near. When the heart is open to Jesus and the mind responds to the truth, Jesus abides in the soul. The Spirit's energy works in the heart, and leads the inclinations toward Jesus. By living faith, the Christian places entire dependence on divine power, expecting that God will and do that which is according to his good pleasure. As fast as the soul resolves and acts in accordance with the light that is revealed, the Spirit takes the things of God and gives more light to the soul.

"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." The Spirit of God is not commissioned to do our part of the work, either in willing or doing. It is the work of the human agent to cooperate with divine agencies. As soon as we incline our will to harmonize with God's will, the grace of Christ is supplied to cooperate with our resolve. But it is not to be a substitute to do our work,--to work in spite of our resolutions and actions. Therefore, our success in the Christian life will not be because of an abundance of light and evidence, but will depend upon our acceptation of the light given, upon the rousing of the energies, and operating

with the heavenly ministers appointed of God to work for the salvation of the soul.

If the sinner or the backslider settles himself in sin, the light of heaven may flash about him to no purpose, as it did about Saul when the bewitching power of the world's deception was upon him. Unless the human agent inclines his will to do the will of God, as finally Saul did, the light will shine in vain, and a thousand-fold more light and evidence would do no good. God knows when the sinner has sufficient evidence, and says to such, "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them." "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

Paul had a terrible awakening when the light from heaven flashed upon him, and a voice said to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Paul answered, "Who art thou, Lord?" And Christ said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." And the Lord said, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." The Lord always gives the human agent his work to do. Paul was to work in compliance with the divine command. If Saul had said, "Lord, I am not in the least inclined to follow your directions in working out my salvation," then, should the Lord have showered upon him a light tenfold as bright, it would have been useless. It is man's part to cooperate with the divine. Here is where the conflict is to be sternest, hardest, and most fierce--in yielding the will and way to God's will and way, relying upon the gracious influences which God has exerted upon the human soul throughout all the life. The man must do the work of inclining. "For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do." The character of the actions will testify what has been the nature of the resolve. The doing was not in accordance with feeling and natural inclination, but in harmony with the will of the Father in heaven. Follow and obey the leadings of the Holy Spirit; obey not the voice of the deceiver, which is in harmony with the unsanctified will, but obey the impulse God has given. This is what the heavenly intelligences are constantly working to have us do,--the will of our Father which is in heaven.

Everything is at stake. Will the human agent cooperate with divine agencies to will and to do? If a man places his will on the side of God's will, fully surrendering self to do his will, the rubbish will be cleared from the door of the heart, the defiance of the soul will be broken down, and Jesus will enter to abide as a welcome guest.

February 19, 1894

Romanism the Religion of Human Nature

There is great need that all who claim to be Bible Christians should take the Scriptures as they read. There is need of arriving at right conclusions as to what the Scriptures mean in their reference to the man of sin, who thought to change times and laws. He had no real power to change the time and the law of God, but he thought himself able to do this work; for he "opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." He is an imitator of the first great rebel, the originator of sin. In heaven Satan thought to change the laws of God, and for this purpose he changed his character and his position in the heavenly courts, and influenced others until they united with him in the work of rebellion against God; but he did not succeed in changing the law of God. God did not alter or change his form of government to suit Satan's ideas, but made it manifest that the foundation of his government in heaven and earth is as unchangeable as is the throne itself.

When Satan could not induce all the angels to revolt against the law of God, he made the earth the scene of his rebellion, and through the man of sin seeks to carry out his diabolical purpose. Through the Papacy, the Roman power, the man of sin, the purpose of Satan is carried out among men; the law and the time of God are set aside. In this we see that Protestantism is giving encouragement to popery; and false systems of worship, against which our fathers manfully opposed themselves, imperiling even property and life, are fostered and cherished and encouraged to extend and gain wide influence. Protestants do not search their Bibles as they should, and do not heed the warning that has been given concerning the work of the man of sin. The Roman Church claims that the pope is invested with supreme authority over all bishops and pastors, and this claim of supremacy was once denied by Protestants. They took the position that the Bible, and the Bible alone, constituted the rule of faith and doctrine, that the word of God is the only unerring guide for human souls, and that it is unnecessary and harmful to take the words of priests and prelates instead of the word of God.

To the Romanist the Bible is a forbidden book, because it plainly reveals the errors of the Roman system; and whoever searches the Bible with an enlightened

understanding, cannot long be in harmony with Romanism. He who searches the Bible to understand the truth, will find no authority in the word of God for the assumption of power on the part of popes and cardinals. There is no word of God that sanctions their assumed superiority or supremacy over their people, as there is no word to sanction the claim that Lucifer made in heaven of superiority over Christ. The claim of the Papacy to superiority is made under the influence of the first great usurper, who so persistently urged his right to supremacy over the host of God. Through the Dark Ages,--that long night of ignorance and superstition,--the claim of the Papacy to superiority and supremacy was conceded by emperors and kings, although God had sanctioned no such concession, and raised up men to dispute the claim, and to break the Romish yoke from the church of God. Through his appointed agencies God summoned the church to reassert her independence, and in the strength of God she stood forth in the liberty wherewith Christ had made her free. She broke away from the papal yoke, and with the word of God in her hand, met the giant evil of Romanism, even as David met Goliath in the name of heaven, using his sling and a few pebblestones. The defier of Israel was slain before the man of faith; and while men cling to the word of the Lord, they cannot affiliate with the great system of error.

The Lord has pronounced a curse upon those who take from or add to the Scriptures. The great I AM has decided what shall constitute the rule of faith and doctrine, and he has designed that the Bible shall be a household book. The church that holds to the word of God is irreconcilably separated from Rome. Protestants were once thus apart from this great church of apostasy, but they have approached more nearly to her, and are still in the path of reconciliation to the Church of Rome. Rome never changes. Her principles have not altered in the least. She has not lessened the breach between herself and Protestants; they have done all the advancing. But what does this argue for the Protestantism of this day? It is the rejection of Bible truth which makes men approach to infidelity. It is a backsliding church that lessens the distance between itself and the Papacy.

It is souls like Luther, Cranmer, Ridley, Hooper, and the thousands of noble men who were martyrs for the truth's sake, who are the true Protestants. They stood as faithful sentinels of truth, declaring that Protestantism is incapable of union with Romanism, but must be as far separated from the principles of the Papacy as is the east from the west. Such advocates of truth could no more harmonize with "the man of sin" than could Christ and his apostles. In earlier ages the righteous felt that it was

impossible to affiliate with Rome, and, though their antagonism to this system of error was maintained at risk of property and life, yet they had courage to maintain their separation, and manfully struggled for the truth. Bible truth was dearer to them than wealth, honor, or even life itself. They could not endure to see the truth buried under a mass of superstition and lying sophistry. They took the word of God in their hands, and raised the standard of truth before the people, boldly declaring that which God had revealed unto them through diligent searching of the Bible. They died the cruelest of deaths for their fidelity to God, but by their blood they purchased for us liberties and privileges that many who claim to be Protestants are easily yielding up to the power of evil. But shall we yield up these dearly bought privileges? Shall we offer insult to the God of heaven, and, after he has freed us from the Romish yoke, again place ourselves in bondage to this antichristian power? Shall we prove our degeneracy by signing away our religious liberty, our right to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience?

The voice of Luther, that echoed in mountains and valleys, that shook Europe as with an earthquake, summoned forth an army of noble apostles of Jesus, and the truth they advocated could not be silenced by fagots, by tortures, by dungeons, by death; and still the voices of the noble army of martyrs are telling us that the Roman power is the predicted apostasy of the last days, the mystery of iniquity which Paul saw beginning to work even in his day. Roman Catholicism is rapidly gaining ground. Popery is on the increase, and those who have turned their ears away from hearing the truth are listening to her delusive fables. Papal chapels, papal colleges, nunneries, and monasteries are on the increase, and the Protestant world seems to be asleep. Protestants are losing the mark of distinction that distinguished them from the world, and they are lessening the distance between themselves and the Roman power. They have turned away their ears from hearing the truth; they have been unwilling to accept light which God shed upon their pathway, and are therefore going into darkness. They speak with contempt of the idea that there will be a revival of the past cruel persecution on the part of Romanists and those who affiliate with them. They do not recognize the fact that the word of God fully predicts such a revival, and will not concede that the people of God in the last days shall suffer persecution, although the Bible says, "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."

Popery is the religion of human nature, and the mass of humanity love a doctrine

that permits them to commit sin, and yet frees them from its consequences. People must have some form of religion, and this religion, formed by human device, and yet claiming divine authority, suits the carnal mind. Men who think themselves wise and intelligent turn away in pride from the standard of righteousness, the ten commandments, and do not think it is in harmony with their dignity to inquire into the ways of God. Therefore they go into false ways, into forbidden paths, become self-sufficient, self-inflated, after the pattern of the pope, not after the pattern of Jesus Christ. They must have the form of religion that has the least requirement of spirituality and self-denial, and as unsanctified human wisdom will not lead them to loathe popery, they are naturally drawn toward its provisions and doctrines. They do not want to walk in the ways of the Lord. They are altogether too much enlightened to seek God prayerfully and humbly, with an intelligent knowledge of his word. Not caring to know the ways of the Lord, their minds are all open to delusions, all ready to accept and believe a lie. They are willing to have the most unreasonable, most inconsistent falsehoods palmed off upon them as truth.

Satan's masterpiece of deception is popery; and while it has been demonstrated that a day of great intellectual darkness was favorable to Romanism, it will also be demonstrated that a day of great intellectual light is also favorable to its power; for the minds of men are concentrated on their own superiority, and do not like to retain God in their knowledge. Rome claims infallibility, and Protestants are following in the same line. They do not desire to search for truth and go on from light to a greater light. They wall themselves in with prejudice, and seem willing to be deceived and to deceive others.

But though the attitude of the churches is discouraging, yet there is no need of being disheartened; for God has a people who will preserve their fidelity to his truth, who will make the Bible, and the Bible alone, their rule of faith and doctrine, who will elevate the standard, and hold aloft the banner on which is inscribed, "The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." They will value a pure gospel, and make the Bible the foundation of their faith and doctrine.

For such a time as this, when men are casting aside the law of the Lord of hosts, the prayer of David is applicable,--"It is time for thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void thy law." We are coming to a time when almost universal scorn will be heaped upon the law of God, and God's commandment-keeping people will be severely

tried; but will they lose their respect for the law of Jehovah because others do not see and realize its binding claims? Let God's commandment-keeping people, like David, reverence God's law in proportion as men cast it aside and heap upon it disrespect and contempt.

February 26, 1894

Put Away the Evil of Your Doings

"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?" The doing of these things is the keeping of the commandments of God; but the people to whom these words are addressed, though claiming to keep God's commandments, are yet transgressors of his law. The prophet is instructed by the Lord to give them a message of warning and reproof. "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God; they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God."

Though making high professions, they were not sincerely seeking to understand the plain "Thus saith the Lord." The Lord condescends to open before them the errors and deceptions which they were cherishing, while professing to be his worshipers. He says: "Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labors. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness; ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high. 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?" "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifice upon me? ... bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; ... and when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood." How much lifting and spreading forth of the hands in self-righteousness and self-importance there is, while at heart many of the professed workers for God are transgressing the principles of the law of God in their daily practices.

The Lord says to this class of professors: "Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek

judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

Why is it that so many are deceiving their souls, apparently delighting in the service of God, and yet trampling upon his precepts? The law of God is a transcript of his character; it is the standard of righteousness. "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Man is required to render obedience to the revealed will of God in the smallest requirement of the law. Terrible results followed the transgression of the law when our first parents sinned. The flood gates of woe were opened upon our world. With the history of sin before us, how dare we disregard and ignore any one of the commandments that God has given us? The law of God is the foundation of his government, and is exactly what is needed to preserve life and righteousness. Every principle of the law emanates from the Infinite God, and man will fail in his duty to God and his neighbor unless he believes and weaves the principles of the law into his life. Without faith it is impossible to please God, for it is through faith that we may render obedience to the law.

Man belongs to God, both by creation and redemption. "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." Man owes to God his life, and should therefore yield all his powers in submission to the will of God. "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

The Lord has universal supremacy and sovereign authority over the human family. They are recipients of his mercies and bounties, and dependent upon him for life and protection. To them he says: "Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein; I am the Lord your God.... Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments; which if a man do, he shall live in them; I am the Lord." "And I gave them my statutes, and showed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. Moreover also I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them."

God has given to the world a clearly-defined revelation of his will, and he has shown the richness and fullness of his mercy and grace through Jesus Christ, that we might be partakers of the divine nature, and escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust. "For 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."

In order that we may make no mistakes where our eternal interests are involved, the Lord has given us plain instruction as to what to receive as truth. He says, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." We shall be in danger of being misled if we trust to ministers, or councils of men, or depend upon the interpretation that men may put upon the Scriptures. Whatever doctrine is brought to us, we should diligently search the Scriptures, as did the noble Bereans, to know for ourselves whether the messenger's exposition is in harmony with the sure word of prophecy. "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." God has given us the precious endowment of reason and intellect, and we shall be held accountable for our mistakes if we do not use the mind in earnest study of the word of God. God has endowed us with capabilities whereby we may understand what is acceptable unto him. Our human ideas, our human wills, are not to take the throne, but the will of God is to be supreme. (To be Continued.)

March 12, 1894

Whom Are We Serving?

"Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Professed Christians would do well to inquire what God they are serving. Are they serving the God that made heaven and earth, who gave the human race his law, in the bosom of which he placed the fourth commandment, requiring men to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy"? The seventh-day Sabbath is a memorial of the creative power of God, and is to be sacredly observed throughout all generations.

After Israel had been in bondage in Egypt, and through witnessing idolatry had almost forgotten God and the precepts which he had given, the Lord led them forth into the wilderness. He had them assemble about Mount Sinai, and there, amid awful grandeur, Jesus Christ, who was the founder of the whole Jewish economy, spoke the ten precepts of God to the people. Christ unites in himself both the law and the gospel; they are not divided. Those who are offering prayers to the God of heaven and earth will not refuse to be obedient to the plainest precept of the law. They will listen to the voice of Christ, and will "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," as the day on which the Creator of the heavens and the earth rested from all the work which he had done. They will not turn away from the holy commandment, and accept a spurious sabbath instead of the holy, sanctified day that God instituted in Eden as a memorial of his creative power. The Sabbath was given to man as a sign that was to show to whom the allegiance of the people was given.

In the counsels of the synagogue of Satan it was determined to obliterate the sign of allegiance to God in the world. Antichrist, the man of sin, exalted himself as supreme in the earth, and through him Satan has worked in a masterly way to create rebellion against the law of God and against the memorial of his created works. Is this not sin and iniquity? What greater contempt could be cast upon the Lord God, the Creator of the

heavens and the earth, than is cast upon him by ignoring the Sabbath, which he instituted, sanctified, and blessed, that it might ever be a memorial of his power as Creator? How dare men change and profane the day which God has sanctified? How dare the Christian world accept the spurious sabbath, the child of the Papacy? The Christian world has nourished and cherished the spurious sabbath, as though it had a divine origin, when the fact is that it originated with the father of lies, and was introduced to the world by his human agent, the man of sin. The false sabbath has been upheld through superhuman agency in order that God might be dishonored. It is a sign of Satan's supremacy in the earth, for men are worshiping the God of this world.

The Prince of Light and the prince of darkness are contending for the victory. When Jesus, the Prince of Life, came forth from Joseph's sepulcher, his triumph was assured. As he came forth from the grave, and proclaimed himself the resurrection and the life, the end of Satan's reign on the earth was made certain; but well may the hosts of heaven be astonished to see men exalting him who is the leader of the great rebellion against God. Those who are choosing to honor Satan by exalting the spurious sabbath are making a choice similar to that which the people made when they rejected Christ, that Barabbas, a robber and murderer, should be given unto them.

But because the great majority of the world have accepted the spurious sabbath, it does not give it importance and sanctity in the eyes of heaven. The dishonor to God is none the less because great numbers accept the false sabbath and ignore the Sabbath of the Lord their God. The confederacy of evil in the earth has always been to outward appearance the largest confederacy. At a time of rebellion in Israel men of renown, men famous in the congregation, joined with Korah, Dathan, and Abiram in their work of rebellion. In spirit and principle the whole congregation of Israel were one with the workers of iniquity. After the earth had opened and swallowed up the most prominent of the rebels, and a fire from the Lord had burst forth and consumed two hundred and fifty of the princes of Israel, the people were still full of unbelief and rebellion. They came to Moses and Aaron the next day, saying, "Ye have killed the people of the Lord." They persisted in stubborn resistance of light, and would not be convinced, even when God worked in a miraculous way to convince them of the truth. But large numbers on the side of error do not strengthen the cause of iniquity. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that

bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous; but the way of the ungodly shall perish."

The Lord hath a controversy with his people, and, although in his great mercy he bear long with them, yet if they persist in living in transgression of his law, they will not stand in the day of his rebuke. He has seen the backsliding and iniquity of his professed people. He has noted the unbelief, the hypocrisy, the pride, the selfishness, the disobedience to his law, and he will punish for these things. God cannot be in harmony with the people who will not obey his commandments who are wickedly departing from his precepts and by their example of disobedience at leading their children and their neighbor in the way of transgression. The professed church of Christ is strengthening the hand of sinners in their evil work by making void through their traditions, the commandment of Jehovah.

If parents had educated their children to reverence the law of God, as Christ enjoined that they should educate them, we should not see wickedness reaching so great proportions. Through disobedience the world is fast becoming as it was in the days before the flood and as it was in the days of Sodom and Gomorrah. The church has taken the world into her fellowship, and has given her affections to the enemies of holiness. The church and the world are standing on the same ground in transgression of the law of God. The church prefers to assimilate to the world rather than separate from its customs and vanities.

But God will bless all those who do his commandments. He will give grace upon grace to all them that fear him, and walk in the light of truth as they find it by diligently and prayerfully searching the Scriptures. There will be a remnant who will do the will of God. "And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places; thou shall 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."

March 19, 1894

The Missionary's Pattern

"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."

There is need for every soul to study the Pattern, Christ Jesus. Those who follow his methods of labor will have freedom in utterance and earnestness in manner. They will be inspired by the sacred themes of truth. Christ understood the needs of all classes, and was successful in preaching the gospel to the poor. He understood all their temptations. We need to study methods whereby we may preach the gospel to the poor and downtrodden and degraded of humanity. But let no one think that God will approve of a method which will require a man to act the part of a clown, or like a man who has lost his senses. Such methods as these are wholly unnecessary and inappropriate.

Among the Salvation Army workers such methods as these have been employed; but it is more necessary that they should study and preach the word than act in a sensational way in order to draw the attention of the people. It is the word of truth that, like a strong, golden chain, will bind men to God, where they will learn of the great Teacher. It is the word of God that is to test character. The Lord has precious, conscientious souls who have joined the Army; but they need to advance and receive other and higher truths of the word of God.

Those who are teaching the way to life have much to learn, and the Lord invites all who will to come to him and learn of him who is meek and lowly of heart. He declares, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Take your text from the word of God, and make use of the scenes of nature, and of events and objects about you, to make the meaning plain, and find your way to the hearts of the people, and angels of God will make a personal application of the truth to the hearts of those who are ignorant. You need not be formal or mechanical. You need not depend upon notes, neither need you be rough and uncouth, and use coarse language

and slang expressions, thinking that in this way you will reach the uneducated classes. Look at the manner in which Jesus addressed the poor. His language was pure, but it was simplicity itself, and through the imagination and the heart he reached the hearts of the people. Boisterous gesticulation, jumping up and down, and pounding on the desk, is not after the order of Christ, and the good that has been accomplished has not been on account of these things, but in spite of them.

Personal labor is far more effective than is preaching, and yet this essential feature of the work has been strangely neglected. The ministers of different denominations do little personal labor; but we should not wait for needy souls to come to us. We should go forth to seek and to save that which is lost. We should seek individual intercourse with the wealthy as well as with the poor; for generally the rich are poorer in spiritual knowledge and experience than are the poor. The sermons that they hear do not touch them, and laborers are needed who will dare not only to seek out the jewels from among the low and degraded, but who will also go to the rich, and bring to them a knowledge of the word of the Lord. There are some who have had a knowledge of the word of God who have once been in high position, but have become poor through misfortune and failure, and are obliged to occupy a position among the very poor. In circumstances of this kind some are seeking to keep alive the feeble flame that they have kindled at the divine altar. There are also souls who, through intemperance, have been brought very low, who are in misery hardly to be conceived of by those who have never acted the part of a true missionary. There are souls in the strongholds of sin who have nothing to give them a ray of hope, or inspire in them a spark of courage that they may live a better life.

Oh, that all who claim to be Christians might have a view of the misery, the destitution, of those who are low down in the scale of humanity, and might realize at the same time that these are souls for whom Christ died! God understands every woe. His heart is touched with human woe and sorrow, and it is time that all Christians should wear his yoke, and work in his line, identifying themselves with human sympathy in the way in which he identified himself with our fallen race.

Whatever may be your office, your position, your wealth, if you are a laborer together with Christ, you will seek out the needy and the distressed, the bereaved and afflicted, and will make their interests your own. You will possess the spirit of self-sacrifice and self-denial, which led Jesus to yield up his life as a sacrifice for man on

Calvary's cross. You will carry forward his work, and walk in his footsteps, and will look upon all as the purchase of the blood of the Son of God. Jesus died for every son and daughter of Adam, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. The love of Christ in the heart will be manifested in unselfish missionary labor, and will be more mighty to deal with the evil doer than will the sword and the courts of justice. These are necessary to strike terror to the heart of the law breaker, but the loving missionary can do more than this. The medical missionary can take up his appointed work, and relieve not only the physical maladies, but, through the grace and love of Christ, can lead the sinner to the great Physician, who can heal the soul of its leprosy of sin.

However much we may deserve rebuke, the heart will harden under reproof; but it will melt under the love of Christ. It is to manifest his love to the fallen that Jesus has enlisted every follower of his, that the transgressor may be brought back to allegiance to God. Jesus accepts all who will give themselves to his service, who will cooperate with heavenly agencies, as they seek to restore the moral image of God in man. The work we are given is to bid the sinner hope in God, and not feel that he is an outcast in the world, a discouraged, desperate sufferer, but that he is a prisoner of hope. Let your words to him be, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Present before him a love that cannot be measured, and bring the lost back to faith in God.

He who is actuated by the love of Jesus will see in every soul, whether rich or poor, a value that cannot be computed, in comparison with which the world sinks into insignificance. Oh, the love that God has revealed for the soul is infinite, beyond estimation! He who is a partaker of the divine nature will love as Christ loved; he will work as Christ worked, and will manifest sympathy and compassion. He will not fail nor be discouraged. This love can exist and be kept pure and refined and elevated only by continual communion with Jesus Christ. All coldness and hardness of heart will pass away from those who come into the sunshine of Christ's presence; and those who abide in him, and let him abide in them, will naturally, willingly obey his injunction, "Love one another as I have loved you."

March 26, 1894

Christ's Victory Gained Through Pain and Death

Charged with an embassy of mercy, Christ came to the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He saw that rebellion had overspread his provinces, and that despite was done to God in every section and by every tenant of the earth. Man was in rebellion against God; but "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

When sin first entered the world, God had promised a deliverer. He had said to the serpent, "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." When Jesus came to the world, his own nation despised him, his friends denied him, his brethren did not believe on him. The unbelief with which he was met was indeed a bruising of his heel. Christ, the world's Redeemer, was buffeted with temptation, but it had been written of him, "He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth." Through the very bruising of his heel by Satan, because of affliction, temptation, and sorrow, Christ was gaining the victory in behalf of the human family; for he triumphed over his enemy in not yielding to his temptation, and thus bruised the head of the serpent. He endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, and every pang of anguish he suffered, every temptation he resisted, as man's substitute and surety, was elevating the human family in the scale of moral worth, and was procuring for man deliverance from Satan's power and bondage. The character of Satan, through his efforts to overcome and destroy the Son of God, was developing before the universe, and was being made manifest in its true malignity before the unfallen worlds that had been created by Christ. Every time he stung the heel of Christ with his murderous fang, the serpent was making more sure his own discomfiture and ruin.

Could Satan have caused the Son of the infinite God to become in the least degree a partaker of his own hellish attributes, then Satan would have wounded the head of Christ, and in hellish exultation he would have triumphed over him, and the world would have remained his dominion, the human family his slaves. The synagogue of Satan would have been victorious, and man would have perished, without God and

without hope. Satan could cause pain to the Son of God, but he could not force him to transgress the law of God. He could cause him to suffer, but he could not defile him. He did make the Saviour's life one of sorrow and affliction; but Jesus patiently endured grief, for he knew that through his conflict with the powers of darkness, the chains of Satan could be broken from the human family, and he would place them on vantage ground before God. With his human arm Jesus encircled the human race, and with his divine arm he grasped the throne of the Infinite. To him was given power to unite whoever would consent to be drawn to him, to the Father's throne.

Jesus became the world's Redeemer, rendering perfect obedience to every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. He redeemed Adam's disgraceful fall, and threw the kingdoms of this world back into favor with God, uniting the earth, that had been divorced by sin from God, to the continent of heaven. It was in the very sight of Heaven that Satan led on the Jewish priests and rulers, and made them his agents to stir up the passions of the murderous mob against the Prince of life. It was in the hearing of Heaven that the hoarse cry was raised against the Majesty of heaven, "Crucify him; crucify him." It was in the sight of Heaven that they scourged him, that they plaited the crown of thorns, that they mocked and derided him. But in these very scenes it was made manifest to angels and principalities what is the power of Satan over the human mind. It was made plain that under the dominion of the deceiver men became liars and murderers. The railings of the multitude reached the ears of God and holy angels. The hoarse cries, that sounded like the bellowing of wild beasts, made their record for time and eternity. Those who instigated the suffering that Jesus endured as a malefactor, will yet behold him in all his glory. They will see that He whom they derided and rejected and crucified, that He whom they set aside for a robber and murderer, is none other than the King of kings, and the Lord of lords.

In the scenes that transpired at the judgment hall, and at Calvary, we see what the human heart is capable of when under the influence of Satan. Christ submitted to crucifixion, although the heavenly host could have delivered him. The angels suffered with Christ. God himself was crucified with Christ; for Christ was one with the Father. Those who reject Christ, those who will not have this man to rule over them, choose to place themselves under the rule of Satan, to do his work as his bond slaves. Yet for them Christ yielded up his life on Calvary.

In the death of Christ on Calvary's cross, the temple seemed to be destroyed, the

head seemed to have been bruised; but this was not so. Satan, in the very act of grasping his prey, demolished his own throne. Satan, evil angels, and evil men united in a desperate companionship, and thought to claim the victory, but it was in the death of Christ, in the cruel suffering and crucifixion, that the Son of God accomplished the very work for which he was ordained from before the foundation of the world. He died a victim to jealousy and hate, a victim to false religious zeal. But in his dying agony he was victor over the powers of earth and hell. He reinstated man in the position from which Satan had hurled him through temptation and sin, and, by his own perfect obedience to the law of God, placed him on vantage ground. In his death he broke the spell that had held millions in slavery, under perfect subjection to Satan's rule and jurisdiction.

A stronger than the strong man armed had come and overpowered the one who had seduced man, and led him away from allegiance to God. Against Christ evil angels and evil men had combined in an unholy confederacy of rebellion. They had made war on God and his government. But help had been laid upon One who was mighty to save, who could measure weapons with the apostate. Satan was next in power to Christ; he was highly exalted the covering cherub, and none but Christ could engage in battle with him, enduring successfully the temptations with which he had beset the human family.

Satan had come to Christ in the wilderness, representing himself as an angel of light; but though he attacked Christ in the moment of his greatest weakness, he was vanquished by the Prince of life. Thus, as man's substitute and surety, did he make it possible for every son and daughter of Adam to be an overcomer, to return to allegiance to God, and render perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. All this man is required to do, notwithstanding his weakness, his degradation and sinfulness; for moral power has been provided for him in Christ. Through faith in Christ man is made complete: for Christ gave his life in order that we might be rescued from the power of Satan.

Jesus measured weapons with the prince of darkness in the garden of Gethsemane, where the agony was so great that he sweat as it were great drops of blood. It forced from his pale and quivering lips a cry of agonizing prayer, when he besought his Father, saying, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Three times he raised this prayer to God, but at last added the submissive words, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

He had said, "Destroy this temple [speaking of the temple of his body], and in three days I will raise it up." On the cross he received the wounds that will mark his form through the ceaseless ages of eternity; but those very wounds will be his glory, the insignia of his triumph over him who bruised his heel; for he shall bruise the serpent's head. On the cross he cried, "It is finished," and bowed his head and died. He descended into the grave; but after three days a mighty angel, clothed with the panoply of heaven, parted the darkness from his track, and caused the Roman guard to fall as dead men at his feet. The angel rolled back the stone from the sepulcher, and the Roman seal was broken, and Christ came forth from the prison of death, and, over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, proclaimed himself "the resurrection and the life." Through him it was announced that every son and daughter of Adam might be emancipated from their bondage to Satan, to sin and transgression; for, as man's substitute and surety, Jesus had won the victory. The world and its inhabitants were his inheritance, purchased at infinite cost, and every soul who believed in his name, might be an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ. When Christ rose from the dead, the victory was proclaimed in triumph by the loftiest order of heavenly intelligence, and joy, inexpressible joy, filled the courts of God.

April 2, 1894

"Look and Live"

"And they journeyed from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom; and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way." The Lord does not remove all the difficulties and trials and hardships from the pathway of his people. He would have them learn to put their trust in him, believing that the invisible God is their mighty helper. The children of Israel became accustomed to the presence of the pillar of cloud, that covered them as a canopy by day, and was as a pillar of fire by night. They came to look upon the cloud as a common thing. They did not appreciate the fact that they were favored with the presence of the only-begotten Son of God, who was equal with God; and, in spite of all their perversity, their murmuring and rebellion, he had done wonderful things for them in all their journeyings.

The Lord had said: "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; than I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. For mine Angel shall go before thee." The one great object of the care and guardianship of Christ was the church in the wilderness. He said of Israel: "I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour; I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee; therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life." Egypt was desolated with plagues and became a wasted land, in order that Israel might be freed from bondage; but the people did not appreciate the goodness and mercy and love of God. The Lord, their Redeemer, undertook to lead and guide them, but when he brought them into strait places, they were discouraged because of the way, and spake against God and Moses, saying: "Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread. And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died."

The Lord had fed them with the bread of heaven, even with angels' food; and yet

they murmured against him. By his power he had held in check the wild beasts of the forests, and the reptiles of the wilderness, so that they had not hurt his people; but now he removed his restraining hand, and let the poisonous serpents do as they would have done all along the way had the Lord not restrained them. The real trouble that now came upon them served to bring them to their senses, and to awaken their paralyzed thoughts as to what course to pursue. "Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee; pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us... And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass, that everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

Throughout the camp of Israel there were the suffering and the dying who had been wounded by the deadly sting of the serpent. But Jesus Christ spoke from the pillar of cloud, and gave directions whereby the people might be healed. The promise was made that whosoever looked upon the brazen serpent should live; and to those who looked the promise was verified. But if anyone said: "What good will it do to look? I shall certainly die under the serpent's deadly sting;" if he continued to talk of his deadly wound, and declared that his case was hopeless, and would not perform the simple act of obedience, he would die. But everyone who looked, lived.

Jesus said: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 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. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." Christ is speaking to us now as certainly as he spoke to the children of Israel in the wilderness. He is the Healer of both body and soul. Our attention is now called to the Great Physician. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Just as long as we look at our sins, and talk of and deplore our wretched condition, our wounds and putrefying sores will remain. It is when we take our eyes from ourselves, and fasten them upon the uplifted Saviour, that our souls find hope and peace. The Lord speaks to us through his word, bidding us "look and live." "He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the

Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

There is every reason why we should be encouraged to hope for the salvation of our souls. In Jesus Christ every provision for our salvation has been made. No matter what may have been our sins and shortcomings, there is a fountain open in the house of David for all sin and uncleanness. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." This is the word of the Lord. Shall we accept it? Shall we believe on him?

David had been bitten by the fiery serpent,--he had been poisoned with the venom of sin,--yet hear the words that describe his experience after looking upon the uplifted Saviour: "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.... I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. For this shall everyone that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found; surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him. Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit... The Lord redeemeth the souls of his servants, and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate."

April 9, 1894

Look not to Self but to Christ

It is in looking upon our sinful condition, and talking and mourning over our wretchedness, that distress becomes more keen, and pain accumulates. Let the sinner arise in the strength of Jesus, for he has no strength of his own, and let him assert his liberty. Let him believe that the Lord has spoken truth, and trust in him, whatever may be the feelings of the heart. Let the sinner say, I will look away from my own misery, from the wound of the serpent, to the uplifted Saviour, who has said, "Him that cometh to me, I will in nowise cast out." Look upon Jesus. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Let no one make his feelings his idol, and bow his soul down to worship and serve his sensations. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." It is your privilege to believe that Christ has borne your sins; for God hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. You are under the shelter of the sure refuge, under the cover of the atoning blood of the acceptable sacrifice.

All legalism, all the sorrow and woe by which you may encompass yourself, will not give you one moment of relief. You cannot rightly estimate sin. You must accept God's estimate, and it is heavy indeed. If you bore the guilt of your sin, it would crush you; but the sinless One has taken your place, and, though, undeserving, he has borne your guilt. By accepting the provision God has made, you may stand free before God in the merit and virtue of your Substitute. You will then have a proper estimate of sin, and the godly sorrow of true repentance will take the place of hopeless discouragement and grief, for you will turn from sin with grief and abhorrence.

Jesus says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Do not think for an instant that any human being has a more loving heart, and a more tender compassion for you, than he who died on Calvary to save you. Do not turn from the divine to the human. The human messenger may bid you hope, on the ground that God's word bids you hope. Your Heavenly Father invites you to come to him as a little child to a loving parent, and say, Thou hast said: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone

that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

Christ is the friend of sinners. When the scribes and the Pharisees accused him of eating with publicans and sinners, Jesus said, "I come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." If you feel yourself to be the greatest of sinners, then Christ is just what you need; for he is the greatest of Saviours. Lift up your head, and look away from yourself, away from the poisoned wound of the serpent, to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. What will all your groaning and the torturing of your soul avail? You may entertain thoughts that condemn you, but in them there is no salvation. Put away your thoughts, and receive the thoughts of God, through which your mind may be elevated, your soul purified and uplifted. The Lord says: "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer." Why will you carry your burden of sin, when Christ has come to be your burden bearer? Roll your sins at the foot of the cross. Unload! unload! He takes away the sins of the world. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."

You have been pronounced a sinner, and Christ has announced himself a Saviour. Accept the remedy God has provided for you in a sin-pardoning Saviour. How would you have felt had you been in the camp of Israel and seen the people groaning and shrieking in distress because of their swollen and painful wounds, when the brazen serpent was uplifted, and when by one look they might be healed? Would you not have exclaimed: "Why do they not look at the uplifted serpent? How strange it is that they do not perform the one simple act by which they might receive healing!" But is it not as inconsistent for you to refuse to look at the crucified Saviour?--Heed the invitation: "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."

Why should the repenting sinner forsake his thoughts? It is because they are not in accordance with truth. He is tempted to believe that because of his sins God has given him up to the will of his enemy, and that there is no pardon for so great a sinner as he. But all these thoughts are dishonoring to God, because man is God's possession, both by creation and redemption. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him [as his personal Saviour, and accepts him as the only provision whereby he can be saved] should not perish, but have everlasting life." You are one of the whosoever may believe. But while you cherish unbelief, and permit feeling to govern you, your case will look hopeless to yourself. Forsake these unbelieving thoughts. God says: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Poor, doubting, discouraged soul, I would address you as one of that world for whom God gave his Son. He loves you, and will save you if you will but receive the gift of his only-begotten Son. Moses prayed that God would show him his glory, "and the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." This is the character of the God in whom you are to put your trust. "God is love." Repeat this sentence whenever temptation presses upon you. Remember that he is just and merciful, true and gracious, and will by no means clear the guilty. God can be just, and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. He will accept you just as you are; for there is no hope of your becoming better until you come to Jesus for pardon and sanctification. Mourning and weeping will not purify you. You may mourn your life away in unbelief, and in bitterness of soul, but the power to cleanse the vilest sinner is vested wholly in him who can save unto the uttermost.

God does not ask you to feel that Jesus is your Saviour, but to believe that he died for you, and that his blood now cleanseth you from all sin. You have been bitten by the serpent, and as the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness that the dying might look and live, so Christ was lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. Saving faith is simplicity itself. You must cry no more; you must cease to

hang down your head as a bulrush. Look to the uplifted Saviour, and, however, grievous may have been your sins, believe he saves you. All the remedies and medicines of the world would have failed to cure one soul who had been bitten by the venomous serpent; but God had provided a remedy that cannot fail. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Be not among the number to whom the Saviour said, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." Oh, how he longed to save them; for while we were yet sinners (not waiting for us to make ourselves good), Christ died for us.

Believe now that God loves you; for he hath declared it, and when Satan tries to fasten the burden of sin and horror upon you, take your Bible, and read, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." You cannot repulse the enemy by relating your fearful doubts, by telling him that you are horrified by the thought that you are lost. All this is music in his ears. He wants to make you as miserable as he is himself, but you can answer him by proclaiming the promise that you believe in the Son, and therefore shall not perish. As you turn your eyes away to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world, the controversy with the enemy will be ended for that season. You can repulse him by declaring that "Christ was wounded for my transgressions. He was bruised for my iniquities. The chastisement of my peace was upon him, and with his stripes I am healed."

Take the word of Jesus Christ as more sure and valuable than any word that can come from the human agent. Thank God with your whole heart and soul and voice that you are barricaded with the rich promises of his infallible word, so that the wicked one shall not touch you. God will give you the Holy Spirit, even though it may seem to you that it is too good to be true. "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

April 16, 1894

Christ Came to Break Sin's Chain

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

A great and infinite sacrifice has been made in our behalf. We are the objects of God's love, and he has shown to us that he identifies his interests with those of suffering humanity. As Christ has given himself for us, we should place a proper estimate upon the soul. He has given us heavenly endowments, done everything that a God could do, in order that we might not perish, but have everlasting life, the life that measures with the life of God. Can our finite minds grasp this great and wonderful fact?--Not unless we empty ourselves of vanity and break away from the bondage of Satan.

The mission of Christ to the world was to break the chain of Satan from the soul, and to set at liberty those that are bound. It cost an infinite price to deliver the captives of Satan from the captivity of sin. In the councils of heaven it was determined that Christ should die for the sins of the whole world. He laid aside his royal crown, his royal robe, clothed his divinity with humanity, that he might touch humanity, and yet he was not received by the world. Goodness, mercy, and love attended his steps. He healed the sick, he comforted the desponding, brought hope to the despairing, and preached the gospel to the poor. Those who listened to his teaching did not need to consult a dictionary to find out his meaning. His words were so simple that a child could grasp his meaning. He did not take a text and then give a discourse on science, though he could have opened the mysteries of science to the world. He could have told the world that of which they had not dreamed. He did not preach from a newspaper, but he bent his energies toward one object,--the salvation of the lost. He did not build so grand a house of worship that the poor were excluded from its doors, but he sought the great thoroughfares of travel, and sought out the people, that they might hear the gracious tidings he had to bear to them. He would lead the multitudes to the seashore, and, in a fisherman's boat, would put out a little from the shore, and there preach to the people who thronged his steps.

Ministers of the gospel who believe that the end of all things is at hand, preach the gospel in simplicity to the people, preach the truth as it is in Jesus. Christ prayed before leaving his disciples, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." When the truth is received and believed, it will have a sanctifying effect upon the heart and character. Jesus came to earth that he might transform the character and develop in man the moral image of God. Oh, we must not meet Jesus unready! We do not desire that you shall miss your way. If we knew the value of the human soul, we would not be indifferent to our own salvation or to that of others.

Jesus, the Prince of life, took the battle field to meet and to contend with the prince of darkness, and to dispute his claims. From the time of his birth until he hung on Calvary's cross he warred with the evil one in our behalf. His purity of character was a rebuke to the world, and men hated him because of his divine and holy character. He did not come to our world as an angel of glory, but as a man. He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, and condemned sin in the flesh. With his human arm he encircled the race, and with his divine arm he grasped the throne of the infinite, linked man with God, and earth with heaven. Oh, who are there who are colaborers with Christ, who are feeding the starving flock of God?

We read concerning the mission of Christ as it was announced by himself in Nazareth, and can understand what is the character of the work that the follower of Christ must do: "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, 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 the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." The work of Christ was to rescue those who were bowed down by the power of Satan, and to set them free from his yoke of bondage. Then why is it that so many choose to remain bound to Satan's chariot? Why is it that men do not accept of God's promises?--The reason is that Satan is presenting to every human intelligence the temptations he presented to Christ in the wilderness, and they are carried away with his delusions. They look on the things that are temporal, and lose sight of that which is spiritual and eternal; they do not realize the value of the exceeding and eternal weight of glory. They permit the business of this life to engross their attention and to take up their

time.

Christ has sent forth an invitation bidding men to the marriage supper of the Lamb, but, as it is represented in the Bible, "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." These matters of temporal interest were of more value in the minds of those who were bidden to the wedding than the eternal weight of glory.

On every side we see that it is the affairs of this life that are engaging the minds and affections of men. Christ came to break the spell of infatuation that Satan has wrought upon the human mind. He came to bring eternity to our view, in order that we should not lose heaven out of our reckoning, but extend our vision beyond the things of this life.

Many do not know God, they do not know Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. If they did, do you think man would engage in a business that would ruin his fellow-men? Would there be found in the world the public houses that now abound on every side? Would you see men in the possession of reason of going into public houses to sell it for a draught of liquor, and coming out madmen? Look at that man who has entered the public house and has come out again. Look at his bleared eyes, at his countenance, from which all intelligence has departed. His tongue is thick; his words are of a low, sensual character. His lips utter that which is degrading and profane. Nature protests that she has never made him what he is. He is the slave of habit, but Christ came that he might set at liberty those who are bound. The Lord declares, "Ye are laborers together with God;" but are these men who sell the vile poison which degrades men to a level below the brute creation, laborers together with God? (Concluded next week.)

April 23, 1894

Christ Came To Break Sin's Chain

Fathers and mothers, are you laborers together with God? How are you bearing the weighty responsibilities that rest upon you? How are you educating and training your children? Are you from their babyhood teaching them habits of self-control? Do you educate them to know that they cannot have everything they want? Are you teaching them to become missionaries for God, that they may go to the islands of the sea and proclaim the message of mercy to those who are in the darkness of error? Teach them that Christ, the precious Saviour, came to our world to save men from the transgression of the law of God. When God gave Jesus to the world, he gave all heaven in one rich gift. God made it manifest to the world, to angels, seraphim and cherubim, that his gift could not be excelled; for in the gift of Christ all was given.

Christ came to the world as a sin bearer. John exclaims, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Jesus takes our sins away, and then imparts his own righteousness. The whole world is lying in wickedness. We see on every side crime, murder, embezzlement, pleasure seeking, gambling, horse racing, and every manner of evil. Who is the leader in all this engrossing of the minds of men in evil? It is Satan, who soon expects to gather in the harvest of the whole earth. But when the judgment shall sit, and the books be opened, every man shall be judged out of those things which are written in the books according to his works. What preparation are we individually making to meet that great day? Are we seeking to remove temptation from the rising generation? Are we making the name of Christ a familiar one in our homes? God grant that you may educate your children for heaven.

Fathers and mothers, a sacred trust has been committed to you. You are to be godly, firm, temperate. Let no one find you smoking or drinking. Remember that you transmit these depraved appetites to your children. God wants you to keep before them the fact that there is a heaven to win, a hell to shun. He wants you to keep them pure from the vicious, vile habits of the world. Keep your children at their home, and if people say to you, "Your children will not know how to conduct themselves in the world," tell your friends that you are not so concerned about that matter, but that you do

want to take them to the Master for his blessing, even as the mothers of old took their children to Jesus. Say to your advisers: "Children are the heritage of the Lord, and I want to prove faithful to my trust. The presence of God must be in my household, in order that as a family we shall present to the world evidences of his divine power. My children must be brought up in such a way that they shall not be swayed by the influences of the world, but where, when tempted to sin, they may be able to say a square, hearty no. They must be trained in such a way as to be able to say, 'I will cling to the promises of God.'" "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Tell your friends and neighbors that you want to see your family inside the gates of the beautiful city. Teach your children to know God; teach them that eternal life is of more value to them than the fleeting pleasures and honors of the world. Train them, mothers, from their earliest years in the principles of Christianity, in love, in truth, in genuine Christian politeness.

The wealthy classes are not excused from serving Christ, and from educating their children for the courts of heaven. What difference will it make with the judgment of your children if you have lived in palaces equal to that of Solomon? Is not Christ everything to us? and is it not necessary for us to be laborers together with God? We should tell our children that we desire them to join the army of the Lord. We should teach them to have beauty and loveliness of character. Jesus says, "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." Teach your children that the beautiful flowers that God has caused to grow are the expression of his love for us. Clothe your children in simple garments, and take time to open the Scriptures to them.

It is a most grievous thing to let children grow up without the knowledge of God. The knowledge of God did not unfit Daniel to be one of the greatest statesmen in the proud court of Babylon. The God of heaven recognized him as his child. He would not defile himself with strong drink and with the rich food from the king's table. And God gave him wisdom. But would God have given him wisdom if he had not walked in his counsel? Satan does not give true wisdom to men. When Daniel and his fellows were examined by the king, they were found to be ten times better than all the astrologers that were in the king's court. The record declares: "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.... 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."

We need the wisdom of God to carry with us through this life into the future, immortal life. We know not when our probation shall end. I have just read of a man who went out with his cart to his business, and in one hour he was killed. We hear of many who are cut off in a moment. We value every human soul, because God has given great opportunities to men, and in eternity alone can the length of the chain be measured by which you are to be saved. You can measure the love of God only as you look to Calvary.

What have you done with your intellect, in order that you may be complete in Christ Jesus? If mothers and fathers had learned of Christ, the greatest Teacher the world ever knew, we should see families that would be symbols of the family of heaven. If God endowed them with wealth, they would not use it all for the adornment of their poor bodies, but would realize that God had given it to them in trust, to feed the hungry and to clothe the naked.

The Bible is the garden of God. Are you discouraged? Are you bereaved? The word of God tells you not to sorrow as those who have no hope, for there will be a relinking of the family chain. When we look upon our dead, we think of the morning when the trump of God shall sound, and when the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. Over the rent sepulcher of Joseph, Christ proclaimed, "I am the resurrection and the life." A little longer, and we shall see the King in his beauty. A little longer, and he shall wipe away all tears from our eyes. A little longer, and we shall have a robe of purity, whiter than any fuller on earth could whiten it. It is the garment woven in the loom of heaven, not to cover over our sins, for Jesus takes away the sin of the world, but to clothe us in the righteousness of Christ. I want to behold him until I shall be changed into his likeness; for by beholding we become changed. We should talk of the crown of life, of the heaven of bliss that awaits the faithful. May God help us to press the battle to the gate. He will place the crown of life upon our heads as we proclaim, "Worthy, worthy is the Conqueror." We shall exclaim, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

Do you want heaven? Then will you show the line of demarkation between you and the world, and hear at last the words of approbation, "Well done, 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."

April 30, 1894

Parents Should Be Christlike

The home circle should be an educating circle. Fathers and mothers should realize that they themselves should be in subjection to our Heavenly Father, in order that they may understand how to educate and train the children to be under discipline, and in subjection to parental authority. Parents have brought children into the world, and the children have no voice or part in the matter. Parents are under most weighty responsibility to so educate and train these children that they shall not miss the way leading to eternal life. Parents make a most terrible mistake when they neglect the work of giving their children religious training, thinking that they will come out all right in the future, and, as they get older, will of themselves be anxious for a religious experience. Cannot you see, parents, that if you do not plant the precious seeds of truth, of love, of heavenly attributes, in the heart, Satan will sow the field of the heart with tares? He will pre-occupy the field, and sow the seeds of stubbornness, of selfishness, of love, of pleasure, and turn the mind into channels of pride and sinfulness.

As parents, we shall do well to consider the case of Abraham, "the father of the faithful." He was a representative man, and his example in the home life is worthy of imitation. The Lord said of him, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment." Abraham was selected by God to introduce into society a higher standard than that found in the world. He was to cultivate home religion, and cause the fear of the Lord to permeate his household. He who blesses the habitation of the righteous, said of Abraham, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord." There would be on his part no betraying of sacred trusts, no indulgence of sin in excusing his children in evil ways. This sinful indulgence of children is the veriest cruelty that could be practiced toward them; for it confirms them in evil.

Children are the heritage of the Lord, and should be trained and disciplined in such a way that they will form characters which the Lord can approve. Both parents and children are under the government of God, and are to be ruled by him. Fathers and mothers should combine their influence and authority and affection, and rule their

homes after the direction that God has given us in his word. They are not to rule by impulse. There is to be no oppression on the part of parents, and no disobedience on the part of children. We are not to reach the standard of worldlings, but the standard that God himself has erected. Parents should inquire diligently what God has said in his holy word; for the word must be the rule from which there can be no turning aside. The motto of parents should be, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

It is very delicate work to deal with human minds. The discipline necessary for one would crush another; therefore let parents study the characters of their children. Never be abrupt and act from impulse. I have seen a mother snatch something from the hand of her child which was giving it special pleasure, and the child would not understand what to make of the deprivation. The little one burst forth into a cry, for it felt abused and injured. Then the parent, to stop its crying, gave it a sharp chastisement, and, as far as outward appearances were concerned, the battle was over. But that battle left its impression on the tender mind of the child, and it could not be easily effaced. I said to the mother: "You have deeply wronged your child. You have hurt its soul, and lost its confidence in you. How this will be restored I know not." This mother was very unwise; she followed her feelings, and did not move cautiously, reasoning from cause to effect. Her harsh, injudicious management stirred up the worst passions in the heart of her child. To act from impulse in governing a family is the very worst of policy. When parents contend with their children in such a way, it is a most unequal struggle that ensues. How unjust it is to put years and maturity of strength against a helpless, ignorant little child! Every exhibition of anger on the part of the parents confirms rebellion in the heart of the child. It is not through one act that the character is formed, but by a repetition of acts that habits are established and character confirmed. To have a Christlike character it is necessary to act in a Christlike way. Christians will exhibit a holy temper, and their actions and impulses will be prompted by the Holy Spirit.

It takes far less time and pains to spoil the disposition of a child than to imprint upon the tablets of the soul, principles that will result in habits of righteousness. Let parents be careful never to correct their children in anger. Never lay your hand upon a child when you are provoked and filled with passion. In so doing you will make him partaker of your own impulsive, passionate, unreasonable spirit. You may ask, "Shall I never punish my child by the use of the rod?" It may be necessary to whip a child at times. But every other resort should first be tried before you cause your child physical pain. If you are a Christian father or mother, you will reveal the love you have for your

poor, erring little ones. If you do have to punish your child, you will manifest real sorrow for its affliction. You will bow before God with the child, and, with a heart full of sorrow, will ask the Lord to forgive the erring little one, and not permit that Satan shall have control of his soul. Present before the little ones the sympathizing Redeemer. Speak his own words to them, telling them that Jesus said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Your prayer, uttered in contrition of soul, will bring angels to your side, and the child's heart may be all broken in penitence, and thus the victory be gained, and there be no necessity of using the rod at all.

But if you take a child and correct it in the heat of passion, you pursue a course that may make a demon of your child, and then you may wonder why it is that your children have such unlovely traits of character, when you have so faithfully tried to break their stubborn wills. Here is where so many make a great mistake, in thinking that it is necessary to break and destroy a child's will. What you are to do is to guide and discipline and train the will by precept and example. In order to do this you must first learn how to control your own hasty temper, and subdue your own will, in order that you may mould and fashion the character of your child. If you act out your hasty temper, and show an undisciplined will before your child, you will certainly educate him to imitate your words and actions, and you have no reason to wonder why your children are so bad. It is your manner of training that is ruining your household.

Have you love for your child? Do you cultivate affection for the little ones you have brought into the world, and express that love in your words and manners? If your child is playing with something that is not a proper article for him to use as a toy, do not snatch it from him; but get him to exchange it for something that will be proper for him, and that will give him as much pleasure. Let your children have evidence that you love them, and that you want to make them happy. The more unlovely they are, the greater pains you must take to win their confidence and love; and when they realize that father and mother will use every justifiable means to make them happy, the barriers will be broken down. What a victory is gained when it is possible to mould the character of your children after the character of Christ! It should be the constant aim of parents to develop the capacities of their children in such a way that they will be fitted to honor God and bless humanity.

May 7, 1894

Self-Discipline Necessary to Parents

It is the work of parents to educate and discipline themselves, in order that they may educate and discipline their children. Let parents remember that they have transmitted to their children their own hereditary tendencies. Let them deal sharply with themselves as they see themselves mirrored in the dispositions of their children. Let parents open the door of their own hearts to Jesus, that his love and grace may take possession of the soul, and bring their will and ways into conformity to Christ's will and ways; then they will be able to impart divine instruction to their children.

It is a mistake for parents to notice every little defect in the manners of their children. They should not criticise them continually, but when they see wrong traits of character developing, they should make most strenuous efforts to correct the wrong by strengthening traits of an opposite nature. If you roughly lay hold on these disagreeable developments, and battle with them concerning their objectionable traits, you will be in danger of causing two evils to exist in trying to eradicate one. When children are inclined toward evil, seek to draw their minds away from the things that will mar them, and turn their attention in a different channel.

If you would train a precious pink, or rose, or lily, how would you minister to it? Ask the gardener by what process he makes every branch and leaf to flourish so beautifully, to develop in symmetry and loveliness. He will tell you that it was by no rude touch, no violent effort, for this would only break the boughs, but by little attentions oft repeated. He moistened the soil and protected the plants from the fierce blasts and from the scorching sun, and God, by his miraculous power, caused the plants to flourish and to blossom into loveliness. Parents should follow the method of the gardener in dealing with their children, and if the grace of Christ is in the heart, parents will seek in various ways to educate and train their children, to fashion their characters after the divine model. Parents should not be satisfied until they see the image of the divine in the characters of their children. They may give God all the glory for their success, because it has been the grace of Jesus Christ that has made the fathers and mothers wise to train their children.

That cannot be a happy home where love is not cultivated between husband and wife, between parents and children. If parents have been self-centered, and have trained their children in an atmosphere where love was not manifested in affectionate words and actions, then change the atmosphere of your home as quickly as possible. Let husbands love their wives, and let the wives see that they reverence their husbands. The plan of salvation was devised in order to transform the natural character, and fashion it after the divine image. When the grace of Christ is received in the heart, it will soften whatever is harsh, and subdue that which is coarse and unkind. Courtesy will be expressed in the affairs of home life. Let father and mother remember that they themselves are but grown-up children. Though great light has shone upon their pathway, and they have had long experience, yet how easily are they stirred to envy, jealousy, and evil surmisings! Because of their own mistakes and errors, they should learn to deal gently with their erring children.

Just as you conduct yourself in your home life, you are registered in the books of heaven. He who would become a saint in heaven, must first become a saint in his own family. If fathers and mothers are true Christians in the family, they will be useful members of the church, and will be able to conduct affairs in the church and in society after the same manner in which they conduct their family concerns. Parents, let not your religion be simply a profession, but let it become a reality. When truth is brought into the inner sanctuary of the soul, it has a wonderful and powerful effect upon the life. It will expel the love of self, indulgence of self, hastiness and petulance of temper, sensitiveness, and pride. These are the things that drive Christ from the heart, and when they are manifested in the life, the professors of religion cannot experience that noble joy that makes the servant of Christ free. He who professes to love the truth, and yet does not bring it into practical life, is bearing a heavy yoke. He admits the principles of truth to be right, and yet fails to carry them out in his actions, and thus cuts off his influence. He is subject to various caprices of his own natural character, and robs God of the service for which he was purchased by the precious blood of Christ.

Until Christianity is planted in the heart, it cannot control the life, for it is the evil in the heart that must be corrected. It is not enough to have a form of godliness without holiness to the Lord, for it is like cleansing the outside of the cup while impurities remain within. A belief of doctrines, however pure they may be, will not save a soul from death, unless they are brought into contact with the life. The heart must be purified through obedience to the truth.

Parents, you need to study your Bibles in order to know how to bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. You cannot continue to indulge in your fitful manner of managing your children, and yet be accounted as true and faithful before God. You must watch for the souls of your children as those that must give an account. You should consider it your duty before God to educate your children in some useful employment. They cannot be permitted to spend their lives in amusing themselves simply, without being exposed to temptation. You should train your children to orderly habits, teaching them to bear responsibilities according to their years. You should train them also in habits of economy, instructing them to bind about their wants and restrict their desires for indulgence in dress and holiday pleasures.

Parents who profess to believe the truth should earnestly strive for the salvation of their children, teaching them, both by precept and example, that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." It is with God, who looks upon the heart, that we have to do. Have the parents given the whole heart to God? Have parents appreciated the countless blessings he has bestowed? Have they educated themselves in presenting gratitude offerings to God in response for all his blessings until their affections are set on things above, and not on things on the earth? The heart is the citadel of the whole man, and, until the heart is wholly on the Lord's side, the enemy will find his stronghold there, and no human power can dislodge him. The Lord alone can do this work.

There are many professed Christian parents whose souls are preoccupied with so many other things that there is no room in the soul temple for the presence of Jesus. They have given to their idols the devotion that is due alone to God. The door of the heart is closed against the truth, and Christ is misrepresented in spirit, in character, and in actions. Their children are unconverted, wayward, and pleasure loving, and no recommendation to the truth. Should some of these youth be cut down with disease and have no opportunity to repent, they would be lost, forever lost. They are indulging in worldly follies and pleasures, and this will not give their souls a fitness for the society of heavenly angels. Souls are perishing because they have not an experimental knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Many sit under the sound of the gospel, but they do not take it as the truth, because parents keep practical religion apart from their lives. The glad tidings that should awaken every soul is of none effect to them. They are pointed to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, but they say, There will be time enough tomorrow, and the bewitching power of sin holds

them firmly in its grasp. As they cannot serve Christ and the world at the same time, they choose the service of sin and receive its wages.

My brethren and sisters, will you not face heavenward? Will you not open the chambers of the mind to the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness? Will you not open the door of the heart, and welcome Jesus in? There is healing in his wings. He will create the kindness and love in your hearts that should be cherished and exhibited in your family, and this love will not only embrace your own household, but will flow out to those around you in the church and the world. We do not plead for a manifestation of what the world calls courtesy, but for that courtesy which everyone will take with him to the mansions of the blessed. Oh, what rays of softness and beauty shone forth in the daily life of our Saviour, and were revealed in all the associations which he cherished! There never was so perfect an illustration of genuine courtesy as that which was exemplified in the life of Jesus. He bids parents to come unto him and learn of him, for he is meek and lowly of heart. He says to the children, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." Send them not to the rabbis, send them not to the Pharisees, but take the little children to Jesus for instruction and discipline.

May 14, 1894

The Family Circle the School of Christ

The family institution is a divine ordinance. Parents stand in the place of God to their children. How grievous in the sight of heaven is the neglect of parents to train their children for the future immortal life. Christians should look upon children as the younger members of the Lord's family, intrusted to the parents and to the church to be trained up as children of God, to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The Christian family is to be a school of Christ, where parents are to be the visible teachers, but Christ himself the great invisible teacher. The lessons which Christ imparts to the parents they are to repeat to their children line upon line and precept upon precept. Patiently, tenderly, and lovingly their steps are to be guided in the narrow path of holiness. Parents are not to compel their children to have a form of religion, but they are to place eternal principles before them in an attractive light.

The mother is to teach the children through their earlier years, and in order to fulfill her great responsibility, she needs to be moulded and fashioned after the similitude of the character of Christ. She is never to use her influence fitfully, unwisely, arbitrarily, simply because it is in her power to do so. She must ever remember that she must render up an account to God for the way she has done her intrusted work. The father should see to it that the mother is not overburdened with the care of many children. Children are not to be crowded upon her so that her physical strength and training capabilities are taxed. Men and women should carefully, conscientiously consider, with an eye single to the glory of God, what is involved in bringing children into the world. When mothers bring forth children in rapid succession, the burdens of caring for and training them are so heavy that they become discouraged, and are not able to accomplish the work that they should in educating their numerous and fast-increasing flock.

A mother is but a human being, and the husband and father of the family should unite his efforts with hers in building up a proper family discipline. If he neglects to do his part, failure is registered in the books of heaven against his name, and he will have to give an account of himself before the great white throne. Many fathers think family discipline a light matter, and it does not enter their mind that they have a part to act in

cheerfully training and governing the children. The father frequently manifests passion and impatience, and alienates the hearts of his children from him, and yet he often charges the blame of this upon the poor management of the mother. Let Christian parents take heed how they deal with the younger members of the Lord's family. The father and mother should always be at agreement, not working counter to each other, in order that right impressions may be made on the minds of their children. Let parents seek wisdom of God; for he has said, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not."

It is the privilege of parents to rear their children in a divine atmosphere. As soon as the little ones are intelligent to understand, parents should tell to them the story of Jesus, that they may drink in the precious truth concerning the Babe of Bethlehem. Impress upon the children's minds sentiments of simple piety that are adapted to their years and ability. Bring your children in prayer to Jesus, for he has made it possible for them to learn religion as they learn to frame the words of the language. Let children hear from the lips of their mother words of gentleness, purity, and truth. Let her maintain her authority, permitting no disobedience on the part of her children. Command your children and your household after you (as did Abraham) to keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment. Parents must keep their hearts and minds in the love of God, and bring their children to the altar of prayer, where day by day the household may offer up supplication and thanksgiving.

When parents become old, and have young children to bring up, the father is likely to feel that the children must follow in the sturdy, rugged path in which he himself is traveling. It is difficult for him to realize that his children are in need of having life made pleasant and happy for them by their parents. Many parents deny the children an indulgence in that which is safe and innocent, and are so afraid of encouraging them in cultivating desires for unlawful things that they will not even allow their children to have the enjoyment that children should have. Through fear of evil results, they refuse permission to indulge in some simple pleasure that would have saved the very evil they seek to avoid, and thus the children think there is no use in expecting any favors, and therefore will not ask for them. They steal away to the pleasures they think will be forbidden. Confidence between the parents and children is thus destroyed. If fathers and mothers have not themselves had a happy childhood, why should they shadow the lives of their children because of their own great loss in this respect? The father may think that this is the only course that will be safe to pursue; but

let him remember that all minds are not constituted alike, and the greater the efforts made to restrict, the more uncontrollable will be the desire to obtain that which is denied, and the result will be disobedience to parental authority. The father will be grieved by what he considers the wayward course of his son, and his heart will feel sore over his rebellion. But would it not be well for him to consider the fact that the first cause of his son's disobedience was his own unwillingness to indulge him in that in which there was no sin. The father thinks that sufficient reason is given for his son's abstaining from his indulgence since he has denied it to him. But parents should remember that their children are intelligent beings, and they should deal with them as they themselves would like to be dealt with.

It is true that Christ is to be the model for children. He was subject unto his parents; but Christ is also the father's example, and his tender love should be shown by his human agent. The father should be enabled to say, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." Christ is the model of perfection, both in outward manner and inward grace, for he was meek and gentle of heart. He did not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. He enjoyed seeing children and youth happy. He never spoke an unkind, discourteous word. Even in his denunciations of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, keen and searching though they were, there was no manifestation of an irritated temper. Divine grace alone can correct our objectionable tendencies.

When circumstances arise that tempt and irritate us, we should manifest love and sympathy, and cultivate patience under every provocation to anger. Under trying circumstances parents may think it right to manifest sternness; but this is the time when they will need to apply the oil of grace in order to prevent friction in the family. Harshness of temper must be softened and subdued by the love of Christ, in order that parents may be able to deal wisely with their children. When, by the wrong course of some members of the family, a most difficult combination of things comes into existence, which is hard to harmonize, different manifestations of mind will make themselves apparent in those who are to be reprov'd. Some will be excessively sensitive, others manifest a cold, proud reserve, others be nervous and timid, and others still be excessively irritable. Under such circumstances there will always be need of forbearance, patience, and love. Let all by repentance, forgiveness, and love seek to bring all the sunshine that is possible into the home life, that alienation may be healed, and the family come into unity.

The Christian must modify his stern traits of character through the grace of Christ, and cultivate that which is gentle and peaceful. Great harm is done to the cause of Christ when Christians permit their unholy traits of character to misrepresent the gentle, courteous spirit of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Old age at times expects too much of inexperienced youth, and youth expect too much of the aged. Let all take Christ for their example, who never spoke a hasty, discourteous word, or performed a rude action. It is just as much the sacred duty of the aged to grow old gracefully, mellowing in disposition in the autumn of life, as it is for the youth to represent the graces of the character of Christ. Manners are the expression of character, and divine grace can do everything to sanctify the character. Therefore, "let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

May 28, 1894

Delusions of the Last Days

"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." Before the last developments of the work of apostasy there will be a confusion of faith. There will not be clear and definite ideas concerning the mystery of God. One truth after another will be corrupted. "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." There are many who deny the preexistence of Christ, and therefore deny his divinity; they do not accept him as a personal Saviour. This is a total denial of Christ. He was the only-begotten Son of God, who was one with the Father from the beginning. By him the worlds were made.

In denying the miraculous incarnation of Christ, many turn from other truths of heavenly origin, and accept fables of Satan's invention. They lose spiritual discernment, and practice that which is brought to them and impressed upon their minds through the agency of Satan. As the convict is branded and defaced by a hot iron, so their consciences are seared and marred by sin. They proclaim their own righteousness, and exalt themselves before the people in order to gain confidence and to draw to their side those who have not received the love of the truth. "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

Spiritualism is about to take the world captive. There are many who think that Spiritualism is upheld through trickery and imposture; but this is far from the truth. Superhuman power is working in a variety of ways, and few have any idea as to what will be the manifestations of Spiritualism in the future. The foundation for the success of Spiritualism has been laid in the assertions that have been made from the pulpits of

our land. The ministers have proclaimed, as Bible doctrines, falsehoods that have originated from the arch-deceiver. The doctrine of consciousness after death, of the spirits of the dead being in communion with the living, has no foundation in the Scriptures, and yet this theory is affirmed as truth. Through this false doctrine the way has been opened for the spirits of devils to deceive the people in representing themselves as the dead. Satanic agencies personate the dead, and thus bring souls into captivity. Satan has a religion, he has a synagogue and devout worshipers. To swell the ranks of his devotees he uses all manner of deception.

The signs and wonders of Spiritualism will become more and more pronounced as the professed Christian world rejects the plainly revealed truth of the word of God, and refuses to be guided by a plain "Thus saith the Lord," accepting instead the doctrines and the commandments of men. Through rejecting light and truth many are deciding their destiny for eternal death; and as men reject truth, the Spirit of God will gradually withdraw itself from the earth, and the prince of this earth will have more and more control over his subjects. He will show great signs and wonders as credentials of his divine claims, and through Spiritualism will work against Christ and his agencies.

The Scriptures positively forbid intercourse with evil angels on the supposition of communion with the dead. Through this deception Satan can educate souls in his school of falsehood, and make of none effect the lessons that Christ would teach, which, if practiced, would result in the eternal life of those who obey. Satan is seeking to form a great confederacy of evil by uniting fallen men and fallen angels. But the Lord says: "When they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter; should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." "And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a-whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people." "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them; I am the Lord your God."

The great power that attends Spiritualism has its origin in the great leading rebel, Satan, the prince of devils. It is through his artifice that evil angels have been able to substitute themselves for the dead, and through lying hypocrisy they have led men to have intercourse with devils. Those who commune with the supposed spirits of the dead

are communing with those who will have a corrupting, demoralizing power upon the mind. Christ commanded that we should have no intercourse with sorcerers and with those who have familiar spirits. This class are represented in the Gospel as among those who shall perish in their iniquity,--"the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone."

For years Spiritualism has been growing in strength and gaining in popularity by advocating a certain kind of faith in Christ, and thus many Protestants are becoming infatuated with this mystery of iniquity. It is little wonder that they are deluded, when they persistently retain the error that, as soon as the breath leaves the body, the spirit goes immediately to heaven or hell. Through the hold this doctrine has upon them the way is prepared for the delusive working of the prince of the power of the air. Satan personated the serpent in Eden, regarding this creature as best adapted for his line of temptations. Satan has been increasing in skillful methods by constantly practicing upon the human mind. It is his one purpose to complete the work which he began in Eden, and work the ruin of mankind. Through his mysterious workings he can insinuate himself into the circles of the most educated and refined, for he was once an exalted being, in a high position of responsibility among the heavenly hosts. It is a mistake to represent him as a monstrous being with hoofs and horns, for he is still a fallen angel. He is capable of uniting the highest intellectual greatness with the basest cruelty and the most degrading corruption. If he had not this power, many would escape his snares who are now charmed with his attractive representations and taken captive by his delusions.

As the Spirit of God shall be withdrawn from the earth, Satan's power will be more and more manifest. The knowledge that he had through being in connection with God, as a covering cherub, he will now use to subordinate his subjects who fell from their high estate. He will use every power of his exalted intellect to misrepresent God and to instigate rebellion against Jesus Christ, the Commander of heaven. In the synagogue of Satan he brings under his scepter, and into his counsels, those agents whom he can use to promote his worship. It is not a strange matter to find a species of refinement, and a manifestation of intellectual greatness, in the lives and characters of those who are inspired by fallen angels. Satan can impart scientific knowledge, and give men chapters upon philosophy. He is conversant with history, and versed in worldly wisdom.

Almost every phase of talent is now being brought into captivity to the prince of the power of darkness. Worldly minded men, because they wish to exalt themselves, and have separated from God, do not love to retain God in their knowledge, for they claim to possess a higher, grander intellect than that of Jesus Christ. Satan envies Christ, and makes the claim that he is entitled to a higher position than the Commander of heaven. His self-exaltation led him to despise the law of God, and resulted in his expulsion from heaven.

Through the Papacy he has manifested his character, and brought out the principles of his government. Of this power the apostle Paul says: "Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.... For the mystery of iniquity doth already work.... 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."

The confederacy of evil will not stand. The Lord says: "Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces.... Take counsel together, and it shall come to naught; speak the word, and it shall not stand; for God is with us. For the Lord spake thus to me with a strong hand, and instructed me that I should not walk in the way of this people, saying, Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify the Lord of hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread. And he shall be for a sanctuary."

Satan will use his agencies to carry out diabolical devices, to overpower the saints of God, as in times past he used the Roman power to stay the course of Protestantism; yet the people of God can look calmly at the whole array of evil, and come to the triumphant conclusion that because Christ lives we shall live also. The people of God are to advance in the same spirit in which Jesus met the assaults of the prince of

darkness in the past. The evil confederacy can advance only in the course which Jesus has marked out before them; every step of their advance brings the saints of God nearer the great white throne, nearer the successful termination of their warfare. The confederacy of evil will finally be destroyed; for the prophet says, "Behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Even of him whose heart was lifted up because of his beauty, who corrupted his wisdom by reason of his brightness, the Lord says: "I will bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee; thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more."

June 4, 1894

Satanic Delusions to Increase

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." Prior to and at the first advent of Christ, religious teachers set forth strange ideas that were so mingled with portions of truth that they were full of deceptive power, and led souls away from God, although they still preserved the appearance of being his true worshipers. We find a similar condition of society in these last days, and those who depart from the faith, mingle with their belief diversities of human opinion. The Bible is brought into criticism. Is it because the Scriptures are inconsistent and contradictory that ministers differ so widely in their interpretation?--No, the trouble is that men are doing today as they did in the time of Christ, and are teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Religious teachers are in the same condition as were the Pharisees of whom he said, "Ye are both ignorant of the Scriptures and of the power of God." The very men to whom these words were spoken were presumed to teach and interpret the Scriptures to the people.

Are the Scriptures vague and inconsistent? Is there any foundation for the conflicting opinions and various sentiments and doctrines that find credence in the religious world? If so, then we may entertain doubts of their divine origin; for it is not the inspiration of God that leads people to come to diverse opinions. Those who undertake to interpret the Bible, have corrupted the word of God and wrested the Scripture from its true meaning, by seeking to harmonize the truth of God with the inventions and doctrines of men. The Scriptures are perverted and misapplied, and the gems of truth are set in the framework of error. These teachers are blinded, and cannot clearly discern what is the true meaning of the Scriptures.

In the time of the apostles, teachers of this character sought to insinuate themselves among the teachers of truth. They tried to mingle the chaff with the wheat, and their theories were called "strange doctrine;" but the Lord would have us distinguish truth from error. The apostle exhorts us to "come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man unto the measure of the stature of the

fullness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." Peter, John, Jude, and Paul had to contend with men who sought to unsettle the unstable, and who made the word of truth of none effect. Those who were filled with vain philosophy and impressed with science falsely so called, were prejudiced against the truth.

Human inventions please the carnal mind, and pacify the conscience as it clings to sin. It was not palatable to men to see and practice the faith that works by love and sanctifies the soul. Sin was not forsaken and despised, and in order to excuse it a means had to be devised by which the edge of the sword of truth might be blunted; so men brought in human reasonings and assertions. If men had permitted the word of God to do its work upon the heart and intellect, they would have distinguished and separated the spurious from the true. If they had received the Scriptures in their simplicity, they would not have given themselves up to worldly pursuits, to fulfilling their temporal hopes. But they made of none effect the word of God through their traditions, and wrested the Scripture from its true meaning. The Lord says that the word of truth is able to make men wise unto salvation. It is a safeguard and shield, and protects men from the delusions of the enemy. "Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be ye not therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord; walk as children of light; for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth."

Jesus, who gave his life to save men, has given us a warning as to what shall come to pass in the last days. The disciples came to him privately to ask him concerning the end of the world, and Jesus said: "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many," Satanic delusions and deceptions will increase as we near the end of earth's history. Jesus warned his followers as to what should take place just prior to his coming. He said: "Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, go not forth; behold, he is in the secret chambers, believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and

shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be."

The deceiving power of Satan will continually increase to the very end. Through his agencies he will do great wonders, "so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do, ... saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."

Our world is fast approaching the boundary line when probation will no longer be granted.

A long-suffering God bore with the inhabitants of the world in the time of Noah; but at last he declared to his servant saying, "My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." "And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth; and God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth."

The condition of society today is similar to what it was in the time of Noah; and if Jesus was among us, he would say, "Can ye not discern the signs of the times?" "And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed."

"Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh." The world is given up to the pursuit of temporal affairs, as men were in the days of Noah. They are eating, drinking, planting, building, marrying, and giving in marriage. These things are all lawful in themselves, but it is the carrying of them to excess that is sinful. The world has had great light, and has been greatly favored, and yet the people of the world come short of living up to their responsibilities. The warning Christ gave to the cities that had been most highly favored and had not repented, applies to the world in this day: "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee."

June 11, 1894

Harmony With Apostate Powers a Sign of Enmity to God

"As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." These are the chosen of God; they are those to whom Christ addresses the words: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

The people of the world are so engrossed in temporal affairs that eternal realities seem of subordinate importance to them. They cannot distinguish truth from error. In spirit and in practice they are repeating the history of the Jews, and in these last days the chosen of God who keep his commandments will be objects of contempt, both to those in high position and those in the common walks of life. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

In this age of the world there are those who live in the midst of the corrupt society of the world to whom the Lord says: "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.... These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth: I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come, and worship before thy feet, and to know that I

have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

We are to know the meaning of the words: "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." The enmity that exists in the heart against evil has no natural existence, but is an enmity that has been created through the agency of the Holy Spirit. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." The natural man is in transgression, and his nature is in harmony with that of the first transgressor. There is no natural enmity between fallen men and fallen angels; both are partakers of the same spirit through indulgence in evil. It is according to the law of the synagogue of Satan that in the controversy of the evil against the good, fallen men and fallen angels shall unite in a desperate companionship. From the beginning Satan has worked continually to dethrone the Creator, and whatever may be the divisions among evil men and evil angels, there is no division in their opposition to God. They are banded together as with iron cords to oppose the Creator and Redeemer of man. Satan is determined to utterly deprave human nature through making of none effect the commandments of God. He originates traditions, and through his maxims he succeeds in assimilating to his own nature the nature of those who do not yield allegiance to the law of God.

The harmony of nature between Satan and evil men is the key to all religious persecution from the day when Cain killed Abel to the present time. The same principle that actuated Satan in the courts of heaven to war against God is now working in the children of disobedience, and actuates them to manufacture spurious commandments that contradict the statutes of Jehovah. It is the power of apostasy that exalts religious potentates to the place of God. The false is honored above the true; and thus it is that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is trampled in the dust, while the spurious sabbath is exalted by earthly powers.

The origin of false commandments may be clearly discerned by the principles which underlie them. All that is not in accordance with the known and expressed will of God, is at enmity with God, and has its origin in the synagogue of Satan. The will of God is expressed in his law, and sin is the transgression of the law. Those who disregard

the commandments of God, and teach for doctrines the commandments of men, are working in Satan's line, and are in harmony with the great leader of apostasy. When the Jews were claiming Abraham for their father, while not doing the works of Abraham, Jesus said to them: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do; he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it." "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."

Light is shining amid the moral darkness in this age of the world. The Holy Spirit is working on the hearts of men to convince them of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment to come. But those who refuse the light, and accept the excuses that Satan may frame as reasons why they should not obey the truth, will manifest Satanic enmity against those who obey God rather than man. Those who steadfastly follow the practice and customs of the world in the very face of light and truth, will obstinately oppose the commandments of God, and render unswerving loyalty to him who first rebelled against God, and was expelled from the courts of heaven; but in the face of the enmity of the world, those who truly believe in Christ will take him for their example in all things. Jesus says, "I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." The beloved disciple said: "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 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 so to walk, even as he walked. Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning."

Are the world keeping the law of God?--No; but, although they do not keep the law, yet the professed Christian world unite with the opposers of truth in placing contempt upon those who keep the commandments of God. There is open war both in the professed Christian church and in the world against those who keep the fourth commandment and render obedience to all the moral precepts of Jehovah. The fourth commandment reads: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day;

wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

Let every soul who reads this commandment understand that it is to be observed exactly as it is written. It is not to be misapplied or wrested from its true meaning. The man of sin thought to change the time and the law of God; but no power in heaven or earth could change that which had been written by the finger of God, and placed in the ark of the testimony under the mercy-seat.

In holy vision John was taken into the heavenly sanctuary. He says: "The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." "And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened." The sanctuary that Moses was commanded to make was to be after the pattern of the heavenly sanctuary. In the ark were placed the ten commandments which had been written by the finger of God. The law that was placed in the ark on earth was a copy of the law that is contained in the ark of the testament in heaven, and the precepts of Jehovah are immutable. The ten commandments constitute the moral standard of character. God requires on the part of man perfect conformity to his law, and a curse is pronounced against everyone who continues not in all things written in the law to do them.

The human race do not stand in the righteousness of character which Adam possessed at his creation. Although neglect to keep the requirements of God is sin, and the wages of sin is death, yet there is no claim made that man may have eternal life except through the obedience and righteousness of Jesus Christ, who is the representative and head of all humanity. The sinner can find hope only through dependence upon the perfection of Christ. We are to avail ourselves of the merit of the sinless offering that was made through the death of the only-begotten Son of God. "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. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (Concluded next week.)