**A Call to Consecrated Service**

SW July 17, 1906

Men and women are God's agencies for the salvation of souls. Of his true followers the Lord says, “This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise.” They are my witnesses, my chosen representatives in an apostate world. Filled with a desire to win souls to Christ, they have the sympathy and co-operation of the heavenly universe. SW July 17, 1906, par. 1

The church on earth is to become the court of holy love. Those who by the Lord's appointment occupy in it positions of trust are to bring into it the pity and self-sacrifice of the great Head of the church. Christian fellowship is one means by which character is formed. Thus selfishness is purged from the life, and men and women are drawn to Christ, the great center, and thus is answered his prayer that his followers may be one, as he is one with the Father. SW July 17, 1906, par. 2

Christ has promised to make his people harmonious on every point, not pleasant and agreeable and kind today, and tomorrow harsh and disagreeable and unkind, falsifying their profession of faith. But many refuse to place themselves where he can help them. They are breaking the commandments of God; for they have left their first love. SW July 17, 1906, par. 3

There are in human nature elements of destruction, which, under certain conditions, break forth to consume. The moral powers are prostrated. The excited passions tyrannize over the higher, nobler faculties; and Christlikeness is not revealed. The infinite One—he who alone was able to bring order and beauty out of the chaos and confusion of nature's darkness—is able to subdue the rebellious heart of man, and bring his life into conformity to the divine will. His Spirit can quell man's rebellious temper. But unless men possess the love of Christ, the qualifications that otherwise would be of value in God's work will be controlled by the selfishness of the human heart. In order to be true Christian workers, we must surrender ourselves unreservedly to Christ. SW July 17, 1906, par. 4

The Lord has called, and he still calls, for those who are apparently blind to their deficiencies, the self-complacent ones, who plan and devise how they can best situate themselves. God help the spiritually blind to see that there is a world to be saved. The truth is to be made manifest to those who know it not, and this work calls for the self-denying grace of Jesus Christ. SW July 17, 1906, par. 5

Thousands who are now spiritually useless should be digging up their buried talents and putting them to the exchangers. Many have written for themselves their resolves to do as little as possible, and these have sealed their resolutions for the judgment of that great day when every talent will be required by God, that he may see how much each one of his servants has gained by trading. Those who think they will surely reach heaven while they follow their own ways and imaginations, might better break the seal, and re-examine their title to the treasures of heaven. SW July 17, 1906, par. 6

The men and women who feel at ease in Zion might better become anxious about themselves, and inquire, What am I doing in the Lord's vineyard? Why am I not learning in Christ's school his meekness and lowliness of heart? Why have I no burdens to bear in his service? Why am I not a decided and earnest Christian, employing all my powers in laboring for the salvation of souls who are perishing all around me? Saith not the Word, “We are laborers together with God; ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building”? Shall I not, with my Saviour's help, build a character for time and eternity, and promote godliness in myself, and in others the sanctification of the truth? SW July 17, 1906, par. 7

Come, my brethren and sisters, unfold your napkin and begin to trade with your Lord's goods. In so doing, you will gain other talents. Every soul entrusted with talents is to use his talents to benefit others. Who in the great day of final reckoning will say, “I was afraid, and went and hid thy money in the earth; lo, there thou hast that is thine”? To such the Lord will answer, “Thou wicked and slothful servant, ... thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.” SW July 17, 1906, par. 8

Man is only required to do according to his ability. But his ability will surely grow if it is exercised. Wake up, brethren; for your own souls’ sake, wake up. Without the grace of Christ you can do nothing. Work while you can. Be not deceived into thinking that your lot in life is to be constantly favored, that you can shirk the path of self-denial and self-sacrifice, which Christ bids all share with him. You will gain a valuable experience in being partakers of the self-denial and self-sacrifice of Christ. SW July 17, 1906, par. 9