Sermon/A Call to Service

Takoma Park, Maryland

May 17, 1909

This manuscript is published in entirety in GCB 05/18/1909.

Sermon by Mrs. E. G. White, Takoma Park Station, May 17, 1909.

God has given His people a great work to do in the world, and every soul who professes to be a son or daughter of God should give evidence that his heart is being impressed by the Holy Spirit. This will mean everything to the success of his labors. The Lord has placed various gifts in the church, that we may appreciate these gifts and act our part in the grand, finishing-up work of this earth’s history. Let us understand our need of communion with God. We are to experience the sanctifying power of His grace on the human heart. We are to be submissive to the will of God and willing to engage in the work that He has appointed His servants to do.24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 1

We cannot afford to lose any more time than we have already lost. We cannot afford to be careless. We need the wisdom that cometh from God, and not that wisdom which is natural to the human heart. We need to study the Word of the living God and to be sanctified through the truth. When the truth sanctifies the receiver, he will carry the light of truth to others. And when the worker is placed in a position where he is required to bear a straight testimony, God will inspire that testimony. Those who have no disposition to learn of Jesus, and who think they know all that is worth knowing, will be indifferent to the communication that God sends; but it will impress the hearts of those who are humble enough to learn of Christ.24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 2

Last night there was represented to me the danger there is that those who are assembled here will cherish their human traits of character. There is danger of their failing to see the need of individually humbling themselves before God each day, and several times each day, and of asking Him for the spiritual help they must have if they are to serve faithfully and acceptably in any office. They may be engaged in the publishing work or in some line of medical work or in the school work; but whatever our work for human beings may be, we must perfect a Christian character, or we shall miss the mark. If we neglect to humble our hearts before God, we shall fail of gaining all that we might gain.24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 3

I was instructed that a deeper work must be carried on in the hearts of those who have assembled here to worship God. We cannot afford during this meeting to have a cheap experience; we cannot afford to speak idle words; we cannot afford to lose the spirit of intercession that God will let His blessing rest upon us in rich measure. Let us at this meeting make a business of seeking the Lord. Wherever we are, even if we are walking the streets, we can lift up heart and mind and soul to Him who bids us, “Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.” [Matthew 7:7.] Let us bring these three promises to the Lord, saying, “Lord, here I am in this great assembly; keep me from doing anything that will make a wrong impression on the people.”24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 4

Here are workers who have come from foreign countries. They have come to see and to understand. They are determined to improve every privilege, that they may go back to their fields of labor with a renewal of grace and the power of the Spirit of God. As teachers and leaders in the work, they are to gather precious truths which they will present to their fellow laborers who are working in many places and in various ways to bring souls to a knowledge of the truth.24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 5

My brethren, in your field of labor, you may be surrounded by unfavorable circumstances; but the Lord knows all about this, and He will supply your lack by His own Holy Spirit. We need to have much more faith in God. Very soon the strife and oppression of foreign nations will break forth with an intensity that you do not now anticipate. You need to realize the importance of becoming acquainted with God in prayer. When you have the assurance that He hears you, you will be cheerful in tribulation; you will rise above despondency, because you experience the quickening influence of the power of God in your hearts.24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 6

What we need is the truth. Nothing can take the place of this—the sacred, solemn truth that is to enable us to stand the test of trial, even as Christ endured. Early in His ministry the disciples wanted the Saviour to go up to Jerusalem and show Himself there. “If Thou be the Christ,” they said, “show Thyself to the world.” [See John 7:4.] Christ was doing this very thing, but He was doing it in a way that they did not perceive. Speaking to the people on the streets, and healing the sick, Christ was working to make impressions that would arouse the sensibilities of the people. Even to the last He exercised His miracle-working power. These were the very deeds He came to the world to do.24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 7

We each need to experience a thorough conversion. Many of us take so much of self along with us that we fail entirely of representing Christ. We cannot afford to have such an experience as this; for the eyes of the world are upon us.24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 8

My brethren, when you speak to others, and they reply in a way that is not pleasant, do not allow yourself to be aroused. Remember that Jesus was met in the same way. His precious words of truth were met with scorn. But did He cease His work because of this?—No; He would continue His work until He had gathered about Him a multitude of hearers. The Saviour would have us study our words and actions and follow His example. Let us not, when we meet with insults and taunts, take up these things, and try to answer them. Let us rather go right on as though they had not been spoken.24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 9

Often as you seek to teach the present truth, opposition will be aroused; and if you seek to meet the opposition with argument, you will only multiply it, and that you cannot afford to do. Hold to the affirmative. Angels of God are watching you, and they understand how to impress those whose opposition you refuse to meet with argument. If Christ had not held to the affirmative in the wilderness of temptation, He would have lost all that He desired to gain. Christ’s way is the best way to meet our opponents. We strengthen their arguments when we repeat what they say. Keep always to the affirmative. It may be that the very man who is opposing you will carry your words home, and be converted to the sensible truth that has reached his understanding.24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 10

In Europe and in Australia I said to our brethren, “Your opponents will make statements about your work that are false. Do not repeat their statements, but hold to your assertions of the living truth, and angels of God will open the way before you. We have a great work to carry forward, and we must carry it in a sensible way. Let us never get excited or allow evil feelings to arise. Christ did not do this, and He is our example in all things. For the work given us to do, we need much more of heavenly, sanctified, humble wisdom and much less of self. We need to lay hold firmly of divine power.”24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 11

The work to be done in the warning of our cities has been presented to me over and over again; yet very little has been accomplished in the warning of these cities. We need to work more, to pray more. We need to exercise our faith until we can grasp the hand of Omnipotent power. Then we shall be able to carry the message of present truth to the multitudes who are ignorant of it.24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 12

Those who have departed from the faith will come to our congregations to divert our attention from the work that God would have done. You cannot afford to turn your ears from the truth to fables. Do not stop to try to convert the one who is speaking words of reproach against your work; but let it be seen that you are inspired by the Spirit of Jesus Christ; and angels of God will put into your lips words that will reach the hearts of opposers. If these men persist in pressing their way in, those who are of a sensible mind in the congregation will understand that yours is the higher standard. So speak that it will be known that Jesus Christ is speaking through you.24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 13

This morning I read the following words and was comforted and encouraged. The words are not spoken to those who seek the lord occasionally, but to those who “follow after righteousness.” “Hearken unto me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. ... For the Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord.” When the Lord comforts you, you will speak that comfort to others. You will choose to speak words of comfort rather than blame. When the Lord makes your wilderness like Eden, you will want to go forth to the people. You will want the light that is so precious and glorious to you to shine upon their pathway. “Joy and gladness shall be found therein; thanksgiving and the voice of melody.” [Isaiah 51:1, 3.]24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 14

“Hearken unto Me, My people; and give ear unto Me, O My nation: for a law shall proceed from before Me, and I will make My judgment to rest for a light to the people. My righteousness is near; My salvation is gone forth, and Mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon Me, and on Mine arm shall they trust. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but My salvation shall be forever, and My righteousness shall not be abolished.” [Verses 4-6.]24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 15

This is the salvation that we need. Let us seek for it, pray for it. Let us confess our sins one to another and clear the King’s highway. **Let us present to our Saviour all our difficulties, and receive His help and encouragement, that we may learn how to be a blessing in the world.**24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 16

The prophet continues: “The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain joy and gladness; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” [Verse 11.] God is not glorified when His professed people morn and groan as though they had no helper; and there are many who act as though they had no help in God. “Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads,” the Word declares; “they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” Those who do not fear God have not before them this hope of entering with joy and gladness into the city of God.24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 17

“I have put My words in thy mouth,” God declares, “I have covered thee with the shadow of Mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art My people.” [Verse 16.] O if we would only lay hold of these assurances by living faith in the One who has abundance of comfort and encouragement for us all. Then we would praise the Lord in the morning and at noon and at night. We would have a message of mercy to carry to others. The Lord of heaven wants us to have an advanced experience. Will you study these words? Will you accept them? Will you be sanctified by the truths they teach?24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 18

My brethren and sisters, when you follow out the principles of the Word of God, your influence will be of value to any church, any organization. There is a world to save. You cannot afford to waste any time. Every one who professes to have a connection with God has responsibilities resting upon him for which he must answer to God. You are to come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty. All frivolous words, all lightness and trifling are enticements of the devil to deprive you of spiritual strength. Brace yourselves against this evil in the name of the God of Israel. If you will humble your souls before God, He will give you a message for our churches. He will give you a message for those in the highways and in the hedges, and for those in foreign countries who need your help. Trim your lamps and keep them burning, that wherever you go you may reveal, in speech and actions, precious rays of light.24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 19

Let there be no scolding, no fretting in the home. Exact obedience in your family; but while you do this, seek the Lord with your children, and ask Him to come in and rule. Your children may have done something that demands punishment; but if you deal with them in the spirit of Christ, their arms will be thrown about your neck, they will humble themselves before the Lord, and will acknowledge their wrong. That is enough. They do not then need punishment. Let us thank the Lord that He has opened the way by which we may reach every soul.24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 20

My brethren and sisters, seek the Lord while He may be found. There is a time coming when those who have wasted their time and opportunities will wish they had sought Him. I see before me men who have no reason for doubt and hesitancy. God has given you reasoning faculties. He wants you to keep in the line of reason and in the line of labor. He wants you to go forth to our churches to labor earnestly for Him. He wants you to institute meetings for those outside of the churches, that they may learn the truths of this last message of warning. There are places where you will be gladly received, where souls will thank you for coming to their help. May the Lord help you to take hold of this work as you have never yet taken hold of it. Will you do this? Will you here rise to your feet and testify that you will make God your trust and your helper? (Congregation rises)—Praying—I thank Thee, Lord God of Israel. Accept this pledge of this Thy people. Put Thy Spirit upon them. Let Thy glory be seen in them. As they shall speak the word of truth, let us see of the salvation of God. Amen. 24LtMs, Ms 21, 1909, par. 21