

Ellen G. White Estate

# COUNSELS FOR THE CHURCH

ELLEN G. WHITE



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# **Counsels for the Church**

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**Ellen G. White**

**1991**

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### **About the Author**

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

### **Further Links**

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## Foreword

As the Seventh-day Adventist movement has grown in all parts of the world, members who speak and read the various languages have yearned for the *Testimonies for the Church*, which, in full or in part, have edified and blessed the church throughout the world. It is not possible to publish in each language the full content of the nine *Testimony* volumes and the many other spirit of prophecy books. There is presented in this volume, however, a selection of general counsels drawn from these sources which will prove of great service and practical help to the church.

The selection of materials, which have been conveniently grouped in the sixty-six chapters of this volume, is the work of the trustees of the Ellen G. White Estate, who are responsible for the care of Mrs. White's writings at the world headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Silver Spring, Maryland, in the United States of America. It has been a painstaking task to gather, arrange, translate, and publish in this book a comprehensive selection of materials from the many E. G. White books. Because of the limitation of space, only the more essential counsels on vital themes could be included. Even this presents a wide range of subjects. In some cases the selection is confined to a few paragraphs at a time taken from scattered sources. Reference to the books from which the selections have been drawn are found in abbreviated form at the close of each chapter. By reference to the *Key to Abbreviations* you can easily find the books to which the letters refer. No attempt has been made to indicate by ellipsis marks that paragraphs or sentences have been deleted.

Do not confuse the introduction, written by the Trustees, with the writings of Mrs. White herself, which commence with chapter 1.

It is with satisfaction and joy that this book is now made available to those who have waited so long for its appearance. That the precious counsel and instructions that fills these pages may deepen the conviction of each reader in the truths of the advent message,

broaden his Christian experience, and heighten his expectation of victory in the final day when our Lord shall return, is the sincere prayer of

The Trustees of the Ellen G. White Estate.



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## **Introduction—The Prophetic Gift and Ellen G. White**

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### **Preparing to Meet Christ**

All Seventh-day Adventists look forward longingly to the time when Jesus will come to take them to the heavenly home that he has gone to prepare for them. In that better land there will be no more sin, no disappointments, no hunger, no poverty, no sickness, and no death. When the apostle John contemplated the privileges that await the faithful, he exclaimed: “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.... 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.” [1 John 3:1, 2](#).

To be like Jesus in character is God’s aim for his people. From the beginning it was God’s plan that members of the human family, created in his image, should develop God-like characters. To accomplish this, our first parents in Eden were to receive instruction from Christ and the angels in face-to-face converse. But after Adam and Eve sinned, they could no longer freely speak to heavenly beings in this manner.

So that the human family might not be left without guidance, God chose other ways to reveal his will to his people, one of which was the medium of prophets. To Israel, God explained, “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.” [Numbers 12:6](#).

It is God’s purpose that his people shall be informed and enlightened, knowing and understanding not only the times in which they live but also what is yet to come. “Surely the Lord will do nothing, but he revealeth his secrets unto his servants the prophets.” [Amos 3:7](#). This contrasts God’s people, “the children of light,” [1 Thessalonians 5:5](#), with the people of the world.

The work of the prophet includes much more than just making predictions. Moses, a prophet of God who wrote six books of the Bible, wrote very little about what was to come in the future. His work is described by Hosea in its broader sense, “By a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved.” [Hosea 12:13](#).

[10] A prophet is not one who is appointed by his fellow men, nor is he self-appointed. The choice of a person to be a prophet is entirely in the hands of God. Both men and women have from time to time been chosen by God to speak for him. These prophets, these men and women chosen of God as channels of communication, have spoken and written what God has revealed to them in holy vision. The precious word of God comprises these messages. Through these prophets members of the human family have been led to an understanding of the conflict that goes on for the souls of men, the conflict between Christ and his angels and Satan and his angels. We are led to an understanding of this conflict in earth’s closing days, and of the means provided by God to care for his work and to perfect the characters of his people.

The apostles, the last of the Bible writers, gave us a clear picture of the events of the last days. Paul wrote of “perilous times,” and Peter warned of scoffers, walking after their own lusts, asking, “where is the promise of his coming?” The church at this time will be in conflict, for John saw Satan as he “went to make war with the remnant.” The apostle John identifies the members of the last-day church, “the remnant church,” as those “which keep the commandments of God,” [Revelation 12:17](#), thus making them a commandment-keeping church. This remnant church would also have “the testimony of Jesus,” which is “the spirit of prophecy.” [Revelation 19:10](#). Paul states that the church that is expectantly waiting for the coming of Christ would come behind in no gift. [1 Corinthians 1:7, 8](#). It would be blessed with the gift of the testimony of Christ.

It is clear, then, that in God’s plan the church of the last days would, when it came into being, have in its midst the spirit of prophecy. How reasonable it is that God should speak to his people in earth’s last days just as he spoke to his people in time of special need in centuries past.

When this church of prophecy—the Seventh-day Adventist church—came into being in the mid-1800s, a voice was heard among us, saying, “God has shown me in holy vision.” These were not boasting words, but the utterance of a maiden of seventeen years who had been called to speak for God. Through seventy years of faithful ministry that voice was heard, guiding, correcting, instructing. And that voice is still heard today through the thousands of pages written by the Lord’s chosen messenger, Ellen G. White.

### **The Vision of the Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan**

The little schoolhouse in a village in the eastern part of America was filled with men and women that Sunday afternoon in mid-March, 1858, as they gathered for a service. Elder James White conducted the funeral of a young man, preaching the sermon. As he finished speaking, Mrs. White felt impressed to say a few words to those who mourned. She rose to her feet, spoke for a minute or two, and then paused. The people looked up to catch the next words from her lips. They were a bit startled by the exclamation of “Glory to God!” repeated three times with increasing emphases. Mrs. White was in vision.

Elder White told the people about the visions given to Mrs. White. He explained that visions had been given to her since she was a young woman of seventeen. He told them that although her eyes were open, and it seemed as if she were watching something in the distance, she was absolutely unconscious of her surroundings and knew nothing of what was going on about her. He referred to [Numbers 24:4](#) and [Numbers 24:16](#), where we read of one “which heard the words of God, and know the knowledge of the Most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open.”

[11]

He explained to the people that she did not breathe while in vision. Then he turned to [Daniel 10:17](#) and read Daniel’s experience while in vision: “There remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me.” Elder White next invited those who cared to do so to come forward and examine Mrs. White. He always gave freedom

for such an examination and was pleased if a physician was present who could examine her while in vision.

As the people pressed close, they saw that Mrs. White did not breathe, yet her heart continued to beat normally, and the color of her cheeks was natural. A mirror was brought and held before her face, but no moisture gathered on the mirror. Then they brought a candle and lit it and held it close to her nose and mouth. But the flame stood erect, without a flicker. The people could see that she did not breathe. She walked about the room, moving her arms gracefully as she spoke in short exclamations of what was being revealed to her. Like Daniel, there had at first been a loss of natural strength; then supernatural strength was imparted to her. See [Daniel 10:7, 8, 18, 19](#).

For two hours Mrs. White was in vision. For two hours she did not breathe. Then as the vision came to a close, she took a deep inhalation, paused for about a minute, breathed again, and soon was breathing naturally. At the same time she began to recognize her surroundings, becoming conscious of what was going on about her.

One who often saw Mrs. White in vision, Mrs. Martha Amadon, gives the following description:

“In vision her eyes were open. There was no breath, but there were graceful movements of the shoulder, arms, the hands, expressive of what she saw. It was impossible for anyone else to move her hands or arms. She often uttered words singly and sometimes sentences which expressed to those about her the nature of the view she was having, either of heaven or of earth.

“Her first word in vision was ‘glory,’ sounding at first close by, and then dying away in the distance, seemingly far away. This was sometimes repeated....

“There was no excitement among those present during a vision; nothing caused fear. It was a solemn, quiet scene....

“When the vision was ended, and she lost sight of the heavenly light, as it were coming back to the earth once more, she would exclaim with a long-draw sigh, as she took her first natural breath, [12] ‘D-a-r-k.’ She was then limp and strengthless.”

But we must return to our story of the two-hour vision in the schoolhouse. Of this vision Mrs. White later wrote:

“Most of the matter which I had seen ten years before concerning the great controversy of the ages between Christ and Satan, was repeated, and I was instructed to write it out.”

In the vision it seemed to her that she was present, witnessing the scenes as they appeared before her. First it seemed that she was in heaven, where she witnessed the fall of Lucifer. Then she witnessed the creation of the world and saw our first parents in their Eden home. She saw them yield to the temptations of the serpent and lose their garden home. In quick succession Bible history passed before her. She saw the experience of the patriarchs and prophets of Israel. She witnessed the life and death of our Saviour Jesus Christ and his ascension to heaven, where he has been ministering as our high priest ever since.

Following these she saw the disciples go forth to spread the gospel message to the ends of the earth. Quickly this was followed by the apostasy and the dark ages! Then she saw in vision the reformation, as noble men and women at the risk of their lives stood for truth. She was brought down to the scenes of the judgment which began in heaven in 1844, and on to our day; then she was taken into the future and saw the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven. She witnessed the scenes of the millennium and the earth made new.

With these vivid representations before her, Mrs. White, after returning to her home, undertook to write out what she had seen and heard in the vision. About six months later a little 219-page volume came from the press bearing the title *The Great Controversy between Christ and his Angels and Satan and his Angels*.

The little book was received enthusiastically, for it portrayed vividly the experience that was before the church, and unmasked the plans of Satan and the manner in which he will attempt to mislead the church and the world in the last conflict of earth. How thankful the Adventists were that God was speaking to them in these last days through the spirit of prophecy, just as he had promised to do.

The account of the Great Controversy, so briefly told in the little volume of *Spiritual Gifts*, was later reprinted in the last half of *Early Writings*, and may be found there today.

But as the church grew and time went on, the Lord in many succeeding visions opened up the Great Controversy story in greater detail, and Mrs. White rewrote it, between 1870 and 1884, in four

volumes called *The Spirit of Prophecy*. The book *The Story of Redemption* presents the more important parts of the Great Controversy story drawn from these books. This volume, published in many languages, brings to many people what was shown in these vision of the Great Controversy. Later, in the five volumes of the “Conflict of the Ages Series”—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, *Prophets and Kings*, [13] *The Desire of Ages*, *The Acts of the Apostles*, and *The Great Controversy*—Mrs. White presented, in minute detail, the entire history of the conflict between good and evil.

These volumes, which parallel the Bible account from creation to the Christian era and take the story through to the close of time, give great light and encouragement. These are books that help to make Seventh-day Adventists “the children of light” and “children of the day.” We see in this experience the fulfillment of the assurance: “Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.” [Amos 3:7](#).

Writing of how the light came to her, Mrs. White says: “Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the scenes of the long-continued conflict between good and evil have been opened to the writer of these pages. From time to time I have been permitted to behold the working, in different ages, of the Great Controversy between Christ, the Prince of Life, the Author of our salvation, and Satan, the prince of evil, the author of sin, the first transgressor of God’s holy law.... “As the Spirit of God has opened to my mind the great truths of His word, and the scenes of the past and the future, I have been bidden to make known to others that which has thus been revealed—to trace the history of the controversy in past ages, and especially so to present it as to shed a light on the fast-approaching struggle of the future.”

### How the Light Came to the Prophet

At one time in the experience of the children of Israel, as we have already seen, the Lord told the people how he would communicate with them through the prophets. He said: “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.” [Numbers 12:6](#).



We stated above that the 1858 Great Controversy vision was accompanied by certain physical phenomena. One might very logically ask why visions were given in this way. Undoubtedly it was to establish the confidence of the people and to assure them that the Lord was truly speaking to the prophet. Not often did Mrs. White refer in detail to her condition while in vision, but on one occasion she said, “These messages were thus given to substantiate the faith of all, that in these last days we might have confidence in the spirit of prophecy.”

As Mrs. White’s work developed, it could be tested by its results. “By their fruits ye shall know them.” But it takes time for fruit to develop, and the Lord at the outset gave evidences in connection with the giving of the visions, which helped the people to believe.

But not all of the visions were given in public, accompanied by marked physical phenomena. The Lord promised to communicate with the prophets through dreams as well. [Numbers 12:6](#). These are prophetic dreams, such as Daniel had. He declares: “In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed: then he wrote the dream, and told the sum of the matters.” [Daniel 7:1](#). As Daniel tells of what was revealed to him, in several instances he says, “I saw in the night visions.” Likewise, in Mrs. White’s experience visions were given to her when her mind was at rest during the hours of the night. Her writings often contain the introductory statement: “In the visions of the night some things were clearly presented to me.” Frequently God spoke to the prophet in a prophetic dream. Questions may arise concerning the relationship between a prophetic dream or night vision, and an ordinary dream. Of this Mrs. White wrote in 1868:

[14]

“There are many dreams arising from the common things of life, with which the Spirit of God has nothing to do. There are also false dreams, as well as false visions, which are inspired by the spirit of Satan. But dreams from the Lord are classed in the word of God with visions. Such dreams, taking into account the persons who have them, and the circumstances under which they are given, contain their own proofs of their genuineness.”

At one time, quite late in Mrs. White’s life, her son, Elder W. C. White, seeking information to help those who were less informed, made this inquiry of her: “Mother, you often speak of matters being

revealed to you in the night season. You speak of dreams in which light comes to you. We all have dreams. How do you know that God is speaking to you in the dream of which you so frequently speak?"

"Because," she answered, "the same angel messenger stands beside me instructing me in the visions of the night as stands beside me instructing me in the visions of the day." The heavenly being referred to was at other times spoken of as "the angel," "my guide," "my instructor," etc.

There was no confusion in the mind of the prophet, no question as to the revelation that came during the hours of the night, for the very circumstances in connection with it made it clear that it was instruction from God.

At other times while Mrs. White was praying, speaking, or writing, visions were given to her. Those about her would not be aware of the vision, unless there was a brief pause if she was speaking or praying publicly. At one time she wrote:

"While engaged in earnest prayer, I was lost to everything around me; the room was filled with light, and I was hearing a message to an assembly that seemed to be the General Conference."

Of the many visions given to Mrs. White through her long ministry of seventy years, the longest vision lasted four hours and the shortest just a brief moment. Often they were for a half hour, or a little longer. But no single rule can be stated which would cover all the visions, for it was as Paul wrote:

[15] "God, who at sundry times and *in divers manners* spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets." [Hebrews 1:1](#). The light was imparted to the prophet through visions, but the prophet did not write while in vision. His work was not a mechanical task. Except on rare occasions, the Lord did not give him the very words to speak. Nor did the angel guide the hand of the prophet in the precise words to record. From the mind, enlightened by visions, the prophet spoke or wrote the words that would convey the light and instruction to his audience, whether they read the message or heard it orally.

We might ask how the mind of the prophet was enlightened—how did he gain the information and instruction he was to impart to the people? Just as no one rule can be established for the giving of the visions, so no one rule can be established governing the way the prophet received the inspired message. In each case, however, it was

a very vivid experience that made an indelible impression on the mind of the prophet. And just as that which we see and experience makes a much deeper impression on our minds than what we only hear, so the representations to the prophets, where they seemed to witness dramatic events, made deep and lasting impressions on their minds. Mrs. White wrote once, “My attention is often directed to scenes transpiring upon earth. At times I am carried far ahead into the future and shown what is to take place. Then again, I am shown things as they have occurred in the past.”

From this it becomes evident that Ellen White saw these events take place, seemingly as an eyewitness. They were reenacted before her in vision, and thus they made a vivid impression on her mind.

At other times it seemed to her that she was actually taking part in the scene presented to her, and that she was feeling, seeing, hearing, and obeying, when, of course, she was not, but the impression was made on her mind in an unforgettable manner. Her very first vision, presented on pages 33 to 36, was of this nature.

On other occasions while in vision, Mrs. White seemed to be present at gatherings or in homes or institutions located at distant places. So vivid was this sense of being present at such gatherings that she could report in detail the actions and words spoken by various persons. Once, while in vision, Mrs. White had the sensation that she was being taken on a tour of one of our medical institutions, visiting the rooms, as it were, seeing everything that was going on. Of this experience she wrote:

“The frivolous talk, the foolish jesting, the meaningless laugh, fell painfully on the ear.... I was astonished as I saw the jealousy indulged, and listened to the words of envy, the reckless talk, which made the angels of God ashamed.”

Then other more pleasant conditions at the same institution were revealed. She was conducted to the rooms “from which came the voice of prayer. How welcome was the sound!” A message of instruction was written based on the seeming visit to the institution and on the words of

Often light was given to Mrs. White in vivid symbolic representations. One such representation is clearly described in the following sentences, taken from a personal message sent to a leading worker, who was seen to be in peril:

“At another time you were represented to me as a general, mounted on a horse, and carrying a banner. One came and took out of your hand the banner bearing the words, ‘The Commandments of God and the Faith of Jesus,’ and it was trampled in the dust. I saw you surrounded by men who were linking you up with the world.”

There were times, also, when different, contrasting views were presented to Mrs. White—one illustrating what would take place if certain plans or policies were followed, and in another view the outworking of other plans or policies. An excellent illustration of this may be found in connection with the locating of the health food factory at Loma Linda, in the western part of the United States. The manager and his associates were planning to erect a large building very near the main sanitarium building. While plans were developing, Mrs. White, at her home hundreds of miles away, was one night given two visions. Of the first vision she says:

“I was shown a large building where many foods were made. There were also some smaller buildings near the bakery. As I stood by, I heard loud voices in dispute over the work that was being done. There was a lack of harmony among the workers, and confusion had come in.”

She then saw the distressed manager in his attempts to reason with the workers to bring about harmony. She saw patients who overheard these disputes, and who “were expressing words of regret that a food factory should be established on these beautiful grounds,” so near the sanitarium. “Then one appeared on the scene and said: ‘All this has been caused to pass before you as an object lesson, that you might see the result of carrying out certain plans.’”

Then the scene changed, and she saw the food factory “at a distance from the sanitarium buildings, on the road toward the railroad.” Here the work was being conducted in a humble way and in harmony with God’s plan. Within a few hours of the vision, Mrs. White was writing to the workers at Loma Linda, and this settled the question of where the food factory should be built. Had their original plan been carried out, we would have been much embarrassed in later years with a large commercial building right near the sanitarium. Thus it can be seen that in varied ways the messenger of the Lord

received information and instruction through the visions by day or by night.

It was from an enlightened mind that the prophet spoke forth or wrote, conveying the message of instruction and information to the people. In doing this Mrs. White was aided by the spirit of the Lord, but there was no mechanical control. She was left to choose words by which to convey the message. In the early years of her ministry [17] she declared:

Although I am as dependent upon the aid of the Spirit of God in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they are those spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation.”

Like several Bible writers, Mrs. White at times elected, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, to use the language of other authors, where she especially appreciated their wording and their expressions.

### **The Life and Work of Mrs. E. G. White**

Ellen G. Harmon and her twin sister were born November 16, 1827, at Gorham, Maine, in the northeastern part of the United States. When nine years of age, Ellen was involved in an accident in which a stone was thrown by a thoughtless classmate. The severe face injury nearly cost her life and left her in a weakened condition so that she was unable to continue her schooling.

At the age of eleven she gave her heart to God. When she was fourteen years old, she was baptized by immersion in the sea and was received as a member of the Methodist church. With other members of her family she attended the Adventist meetings in Portland, Maine, accepting fully the views of the nearness of the second advent of Christ, presented by William Miller and his associates.

One morning in December 1844, while she was praying with four other women, the power of God rested upon her. At first she was lost to earthly things; then in a figurative revelation she witnessed the travels of the advent people to the city of God and the reward of the faithful. With fear and trembling this seventeen-year-old girl related this and succeeding visions to her fellow believers in Portland. Then as opportunity afforded, she recounted the vision

to companies of Adventists in Maine and nearby states. In August, 1846, Ellen Harmon was united in marriage with James White, a youthful Adventist minister. Through the next thirty-five years, her life was closely linked with that of her husband in strenuous gospel work until his death, August 6, 1881. They traveled extensively in the United States, preaching and writing, planting and building, organizing and administering.

Time and test have proved how broad and firm were the foundations James and Ellen White and their associates laid, and how wisely and well they built. They led out among the sabbathkeeping Adventists in inaugurating the publishing work in 1849 and 1850, and in developing church organization with a sound system of church finance in the late 1850s. This was culminated by the organization of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in 1863. The year 1866 marked the beginning of our medical work, and the great educational work of the denomination had its inception in the early seventies. The plan of holding annual camp meetings [18] was developed in 1868, and in 1874 Seventh-day Adventists sent out their first overseas missionary.

All of these developments were guided by the many oral and written counsels that God gave this people through Ellen White.

Most of the early communications were written out in the form of personal letters, or through articles in the *Present Truth*, our first regular publication. It was not until 1851 that Mrs. White issued her first book of sixty-four pages, entitled *A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White*.

Beginning in 1855 a series of numbered pamphlets was published, each bearing the title of *Testimony for the Church*. These made available messages of instruction and correction which, from time to time, God chose to send his people. To meet the continued demand for this instruction, the first thirty pamphlets were republished in 1885 in the form of four bound books. With the addition of other volumes, which appeared from 1889-1909, these now constitute a set of nine volumes known as *Testimonies for the Church*.

Four children were born to the Whites. The eldest boy, Henry, lived to the age of sixteen; the youngest boy, Herbert, died at the age of three months. The two middle boys, Edson and William, lived

to maturity. Each engaged actively in the work of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination.

In response to the request of the General Conference, Mrs. White went to Europe in the summer of 1885. There she spent two years in strengthening the newly developed work on the continent. Making her home in Basel, Switzerland, she traveled extensively through Southern, Central, and Northern Europe, attending the general gatherings of the church.

After four years back in the United States, Mrs. White at the age of sixty-three, in response to the request of the General Conference, sailed to Australia. There she ministered for nine years, aiding in pioneering and developing the work, especially in educational and medical lines. Mrs. White returned in 1900 to make her home in the western part of the United States, at St. Helena, California, where she lived until her death in 1915.

During Mrs. White's long service of sixty years in America and ten years overseas, she was given approximately 2,000 visions which, through her tireless effort in counsel to individuals, churches, public gatherings, and General Conference sessions, largely shaped the growth of this great movement. The task of presenting to all concerned the messages God gave her was never laid down.

Her writings aggregate about 100,000 pages. The messages from her pen reached the people through personal communication, week-by-week articles in our denominational journals, and in her many books. The subjects dealt with relate to Bible history, everyday Christian experience, health, education, evangelism, and other practical topics. Many of her books are printed in the leading languages of the world, and millions of copies have been sold. The book *Steps to Christ* alone from 1892 to 1990 sold an estimated 50,000,000 copies in 127 languages. [19]

At the age of eighty-one Mrs. White crossed the American continent for the last time to attend the General Conference session of 1909. The remaining six years of her life were spent in completing her literary work. Near the close of her life she penned these words: "whether or not my life is spared, my writings will continually speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last."

With undaunted courage and in full confidence of her Redeemer, she died at her California home, July 16, 1915, and was laid to rest

by the side of her husband and children in the Oak Hill Cemetery in Battle Creek, Michigan.

By her fellow workers, the church, and the members of her family, Mrs. White was esteemed and honored as a devoted mother and as an earnest, tireless, religious worker. She never held official church office; by the church and by herself it was known that she was “a messenger” with a message of God for his people. Never did she ask others to look to her, nor did she ever use her gift to build herself up financially or in popularity. Her life and all that she had were dedicated to the cause of God.

On her death, the editor of a popular weekly magazine, *The Independent*, in the issue of August 23, 1915, closed his comments on her fruitful life with these words: “she was absolutely honest in her belief in her revelations. Her life was worthy of them. She showed no spiritual pride, and she sought no filthy lucre. She lived the life and did the work of a worthy prophetess.”

A few years before her death, Mrs. White created a board of trustees, made up of church leaders, to whom she left her writings with the charge that they should be responsible for their care and their continued publication. With offices at the world headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, this board fosters the continued issuance of the E. G. White books in English and encourages their publication in whole or in part in other languages. They have also issued numerous compilations of periodical articles and manuscripts, this being in harmony with Mrs. White’s instruction. It is under the authorization of this board that the present volume is issued.

### **Mrs. E. G. White as Others Knew Her**

Having learned of the unusual experience of Mrs. White in being the messenger of the Lord, some have asked, what kind of person was she? Did she have the same problems that we have? Was she wealthy, or was she poor? Did she ever smile?

Mrs. White was a thoughtful mother. She was a careful housewife. She was a genial hostess, often entertaining church members in her home. She was a helpful neighbor. She was a woman of conviction, pleasant of disposition, gentle in her manner and voice.

[20] There was no place in her experience for a long-faced, smileless,



joyless religion. One felt at perfect ease in her presence. Perhaps the best way to get acquainted with Mrs. White is to call at her home in 1859, the first year she kept a day-by-day diary account.

We find that the Whites lived in the outskirts of Battle Creek, in a little cottage on a large lot, giving opportunity for a garden, a few fruit trees, a cow, some chickens, and a place for their sons to work and play. Mrs. White at the time was thirty-one years of age. James White was thirty-six. There were at that time three boys in the home, four, nine, and twelve years of age.

We would find a good Christian young woman in the home employed to assist with the housework, for Mrs. White often was away from home and was often busy with her speaking and writing. Yet Mrs. White carried the responsibilities of the home, the cooking, the cleaning, the washing, and the sewing. On some days she would go down to the publishing house, where she had a quiet place to write. Other days we find her in the garden, planting flowers and vegetables, and at times exchanging flower plants with the neighbors. She was determined to make home just as pleasant as she could for her family, that the children might ever consider home the most desirable place to be.

Ellen White was a careful buyer, and the Adventist neighbors were happy when they could go shopping with her, for she knew values. Her mother had been a very practical woman and had taught her daughters many valuable lessons. She found that poorly made things were in the long run much more expensive than good quality merchandise.

Sabbath was made the most pleasant day of the week for the children. Of course the family would attend the church service, and if Elder and Mrs. White were free from speaking responsibilities, the family would sit together during the service. For dinner there would be some choice dish not had on other days, and then, if it was a pleasant day, Mrs. White would walk with the children in the woods or by the river, and they would observe the beauties of nature and study the created works of God. If the day was rainy or cold, she would gather the children around the fire in the house and read to them, often reading from materials she had gathered from here and there as she made her journeys. Some of these stories were later

printed in books so other parents might have them to read to their children.

Mrs. White was not too well at this time, and she often fainted during the day, but this did not deter her from going forward with her work in the home as well as her work for the Lord. A few years later, in 1863, she was given a vision concerning health and the care of the sick. She was shown in vision the proper clothes to wear, the food to eat, the necessity of proper exercise and rest, as well as the importance of trust in God in order to maintain a strong, healthy body.

[21] The light from God concerning diet, and the harmfulness of flesh food, cut right across Mrs. White's own personal opinion that flesh meat was essential to health and strength. With the light of the vision to illuminate her mind, she instructed the girl who assisted in preparing the food for the family to put on the table only the wholesome, simple foods made from grains, vegetables, nuts, milk, cream, and eggs. There was an abundance of fruit. At that time the White family adopted essentially a vegetarian diet. In the year 1894 Ellen White banished meat from her table completely. The health reform was a great blessing to the White family, as it has been to thousands of Adventist families around the world.

After the vision on health reform in 1863, and the adoption of the simple methods of treating the sick, the Whites were often called upon by their neighbors in times of illness to help in giving treatments, and the Lord greatly blessed their efforts. At other times the sick were brought to their home and tenderly cared for until they had made a full recovery.

Mrs. White enjoyed periods of relaxation and recreation, whether in the mountains, on some lake, or on the open water. In midlife, while she was living near the Pacific Press in Northern California, it was proposed that a day be spent in rest and recreation. Mrs. White, with her home and office family, were asked to join the publishing house family, and she readily accepted the invitation. Her husband was in the east on denominational business. It is in a letter to him that we find her account of this experience.

After enjoying a wholesome lunch on the beach, the entire group went for a boat ride on San Francisco Bay. The captain of the sailing craft was a member of the church, and it was a pleasant afternoon.

Then it was proposed that they go out into the open ocean. In recounting the experience Ellen White wrote:

“The waves ran high, and we were tossed up and down so very grandly. I was highly elevated in my feelings, but had no words to say to anyone. It was grand! The spray dashed over us. The wind was strong outside the golden gate, and I never enjoyed anything as much in my life!”

Then she observed the watchful eyes of the captain and the readiness of the crew to obey his commands, and she commented:

“God holds the winds in His hands. He controls the waters. We are mere specks upon the broad, deep waters of the Pacific; yet angels of heaven are sent to guard this little sailboat as it races over the waves. Oh, the wonderful works of God! So far beyond our understanding! At one glance He beholds the highest heavens and the midst of the sea!”

Mrs. White had early adopted an attitude of cheerfulness. One time she asked, “do you ever see me gloomy, desponding, complaining? I have a faith that forbids this. It is a misconception of the true ideal of Christian character and Christian service, that leads to these conclusions.... A hearty, willing service to Jesus produces a sunny religion. Those who follow Christ the most closely have not been gloomy.”

On another occasion she wrote: “In some cases the idea has been entertained that cheerfulness is inconsistent with the dignity of Christian character; but this is a mistake. Heaven is all joy.” She discovered that if you give smiles, smiles will be returned to you; if you speak kind words, kind words will be spoken in return.

[22]

Nevertheless there were times when she suffered a great deal. One such period occurred soon after she went to Australia to assist in the work there. She was very ill for nearly a year and suffered intensely. She was confined to her bed for months and could sleep but a few hours at night. Of this experience she wrote in a letter to a friend:

“When I first found myself in a state of helplessness, I deeply regretted having crossed the broad waters. Why was I not in America? Why at such expense was I in this country? Time and again I could have buried my face in the bed quilts and had a good cry. But I did not long indulge in this luxury of tears. I said to myself, Ellen G.

White, what do you mean? Have you not come to Australia because you felt that it was your duty to go where the Conference judged it best for you to go? Has this not been your practice?

“I said, ‘yes.’

“Then why do you feel almost forsaken and discouraged? Is not this the enemy’s work? I said, ‘I believe it is!’

“I dried my tears as quickly as possible and said, ‘It is enough. I will not look on the dark side any more. Live or die, I commit the keeping of my soul to him who died for me.’

“I then believed that the Lord would do all things well, and during this eight months of helplessness I have not had any despondency or doubt. I now look upon this matter as a part of the Lords’ great plan, for the good of His people here in this country, and for those in America, and for my good. I cannot explain why or how, but I believe it. And I am happy in my affliction. I can trust my Heavenly Father. I will not doubt His love.”

Mrs. White lived in her home in California during the last fifteen years of her life and, although she was growing older, she took an interest in the work about the little farm, and in the welfare of the families of those who assisted her in her work. We find her busy with her writing, often beginning soon after midnight, as she retired early. If it was a pleasant day, she would, if her work permitted, go for a little drive in the country, stopping to talk with a mother she might see in the garden or on the porch of a home she passed. Sometimes she found a need for food and clothes, and she would go home and get some things from her home supply. Years after her death she was remembered by the neighbors of the valley where she lived, as the little white-haired woman who always spoke lovingly of Jesus.

When she died, she had little more than the necessities and basic comforts of life. She was A Seventh-day Adventist Christian, trusting in the merits of her risen Lord and faithfully attempting to do the work the Lord assigned to her. Thus with the confidence

[23] in her heart she came to the close of a full life, consistent in her Christian experience.

## Messages that Changed Lives

An evangelist held a series of meetings in Bushnell, Michigan. Soon after the baptism, however, he left the people without properly grounding the believers in the message. The people slowly became discouraged, and some began their bad habits again. Finally the church became so small that the ten or twelve members who were left decided that it was no use to continue any longer. Just after they dispersed for what they thought was their last meeting, the mail arrived and among the letters was the *Review and Herald*. In the itinerary section was a notice that James and Ellen White were to be at Bushnell for meetings on July 20, 1867. This was only one week away. The children were sent to call the people back who were on their way home. It was decided to prepare a place in the grove and invite their neighbors, especially the backslidden members.

On Sabbath morning, July 20, the Whites arrived at the grove where sixty persons had gathered. Elder White spoke in the morning. In the afternoon Mrs. White rose to speak, but after reading her text, she looked perplexed. Without further comment she closed her Bible and began to speak to the people in a very personal way.

“As I stand before you this afternoon, I am looking into the faces of those who were shown to me in vision two years ago. As I look into your faces, your experience comes back clearly to my mind, and I have a message for you from the Lord.

“There is this brother over near the pine tree. I can’t call your name for I haven’t been introduced to you, but your face is familiar to me, and your experience stands out clearly before me.” Then she spoke to this brother of his backsliding. She encouraged him to come back and walk with God’s people.

Then, turning to a woman in another part of the audience, she said, “this sister seated by sister Maynard of the Greenville church—I can’t speak your name because I haven’t been told what it is—but two years ago your case was shown to me in vision, and your experience is familiar to me.” Then Mrs. White gave encouragement to this sister.

“Then there is this brother back there by the oak tree. I can’t call you by name either, for I haven’t met you yet, but your case is clear

to me.” Then she spoke of this man, opening to everyone there his inmost thoughts and telling of his experience.

[24] From one to another she turned in that congregation, telling of what had been shown to her two years before in vision. After Mrs. White had finished her sermon, speaking not only words of reproof but words of encouragement as well, she sat down. One of the company stood up. He said, “I want to know if what sister White has told us this afternoon is true. Elder and Mrs. White have never been here before; they are not acquainted with us at all. Sister White does not even know the names of most of us, and yet she comes here this afternoon and tells us that two years ago a vision was given to her in which our cases were shown to her, and then one by one she proceeds to speak to us individually, opening up to everyone here our course of living and our inmost thoughts. Are these all true in every case? Or has sister White made some mistake? I want to know.”

One by one the people stood up. The man over by the pine tree stood to his feet and said that Mrs. White had described his case better than he could have described it. He confessed his wayward course. He expressed his resolution to come back and walk with God’s people. The woman seated by sister Maynard from the Greenville church also testified. She said that Mrs. White had told her experience better than she could have told it. The man by the oak tree said that sister White had described his case better than he could have described it. Confessions were made. Sins were put aside. The Spirit of God came in, and there was a revival at Bushnell.

Elder and Mrs. White came back on the next Sabbath, when a baptism was held, and the church at Bushnell was well established.

The Lord loved his people in Bushnell, as he does all those who look to him. “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent,” [Revelation 3:19](#), must have come to the minds of some present. When the people saw their own hearts as the Lord saw them, they understood their true condition and longed for a change in their lives. This is the true purpose of the many visions given to Mrs. White.

Shortly after James White’s death in 1881, Mrs. White lived close to Healdsburg College. Several young women stayed in her home while they attended school. It was the custom at that time

to wear a simple net over the head so as to keep the hair neat and orderly throughout the day. One day while passing through Mrs. White's room, one of the girls saw a well-made hairnet that she wanted. Thinking that it would not be missed, she took it and put it in the top of her trunk. A little later while dressing to go out, Mrs. White missed her net and had to do without it. In the evening when the family were together Mrs. White inquired about her missing net, but no one gave any indication of knowing where it was.

A day or so later when Mrs. White was passing through the girl's room, a voice said, "Open that trunk." Because the trunk was not hers, she did not wish to do so. At the second command she recognized the voice as that of the angel. When she lifted the lid, she saw why the angel had spoken, for there was her net. When the family met again Mrs. White again asked about the net, stating that it could not disappear by itself. No one spoke up, so Mrs. White did not pursue the matter.

A few days later while Mrs. White was resting from her writing, she was given a very short vision. She saw the hand of a girl lower a hairnet into a kerosene lamp. When the net touched the flame it was gone in a flash of fire. That was the end of the vision.

[25]

When the family were next together, Mrs. White again pressed the matter of the disappearance of the hairnet, but still there was no confession, and no one seemed to know of its whereabouts. Then a little later Mrs. White called this young woman aside, told her of the voice and what she saw in the trunk, and then related the very short vision in which she saw the hairnet burn over the lamp. With this information before her, the girl confessed taking the net, and burning it lest she be detected. She made the matter right with Mrs. White and with the Lord.

We may think that this is a very small matter for God to bother about—just a hairnet. But it was a matter of much greater importance than the value of the object stolen. Here was a young woman, a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. She felt she was all right, but she did not see the defects in her own character. She did not see the selfishness there, which led her to steal and deceive. Now when she realized how important the little things are—that God would give a vision to his busy messenger here on earth just

about a hairnet—this young woman began to see matters in their true light. This experience was the turning point in her life.

That is one reason visions were given to Mrs. White. Though many of the testimonies written by Mrs. White had very specific applications, yet they present principles that meet the needs of the church in every country of the world. Mrs. White has made plain the purpose and place of the testimonies in these words:

“The written testimonies are not to give new light, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed. Man’s duty to God and to his fellow man has been distinctly specified in God’s word, yet but few of you are obedient to the light given. Additional truth is not brought out; but God has through the testimonies simplified the great truths already given.... The testimonies are not to belittle the word of God, but to exalt it, and attract minds to it, that the beautiful simplicity of truth may impress all.”

All through her life Mrs. White kept the word of God before the people. As she closed her very first book she stated:

“I recommend to you, dear reader, the word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that word we are to be judged. God has, in that word, promised to give visions in the ‘*last days*’; not for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of his people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth.”

### **The Vision that Could not Be Told**

[26] During a series of meetings in Salamanca, New York, in November 1890, in which Mrs. White was making some public addresses to large gatherings, she became quite weak, as she had caught a severe cold on the trip to the city. After one of the meetings she left for her room discouraged and sick. She was thinking about pouring out her soul before God and pleading for mercy and for health and strength. She knelt by her chair, and in her own words, in telling about what happened, she said:

“I had not uttered a word when the whole room seemed filled with a soft silvery light, and my pain of disappointment and discouragement was removed. I was filled with comfort and hope—the peace of Christ.”



And then she was given a vision. After the vision she did not wish to sleep. She did not wish to rest. She was healed—she was rested.

In the morning a decision must be given. Could she go on to the place where the next meetings were to be held, or must she go back to her home at Battle Creek? A. T. Robinson, who had charge of the work, and William White, Mrs. White's son, called at her room to get her answer. They found her dressed and well. She was ready to go. She told of the healing. She told of the vision. She said, "I want to tell you what was revealed to me last night. In the vision I seemed to be in Battle Creek, and the angel messenger said, 'Follow me.'" And then she hesitated. She could not recall it to mind. Twice she attempted to tell it, but could not recall what had been shown to her. In the days that followed she wrote about what she was shown. It was about plans being made for our religious liberty journal, then called the *American Sentinel*.

"In the night season I was present in several councils, and there I heard words repeated by influential men to the effect that if the *American Sentinel* would drop the words 'Seventh-day Adventist' from its column, and would say nothing about the sabbath, the great men of the world would patronize it; it would become popular, and do a larger work. This looked very pleasing.

"I saw their countenances brighten, and they began to work on a policy to make the *Sentinel* a popular success. The whole matter was introduced by men who needed the truth in the chambers of the mind and soul."

It is clear that she saw a group of men discussing the editorial policy of this paper. When the General Conference was opened in March 1891, Mrs. White was asked to speak to the workers each morning at half past five and to address the whole conference of 4,000 on Sabbath afternoon. Her text on Sabbath afternoon was, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." The entire discourse was an appeal to Seventh-day Adventists to hold forth the distinctive features of their faith. Three times during the meeting she started to tell of the Salamanca vision, but each time she was restrained. The events of the vision would simply leave her mind. Then she said, "Of this, I shall have more to say later." She rounded out her sermon

[27] in about an hour's time, and the meeting was dismissed. All had noticed that she was unable to call the vision to mind. The president of the General Conference came to her and asked if she would take the morning meeting.

"No," she replied, "I'm weary; I've borne my testimony. You must make other plans for the morning meeting." Other plans were made.

As Mrs. White returned to her home, she told the members of her family that she would not be attending the morning meeting. She was weary, and she was going to have a good rest. She was going to sleep in on Sunday morning, and plans were laid accordingly.

That night, after the close of the Conference session, a small group of men met in one of the offices in the Review and Herald building. At that meeting were representatives of the publishing house that issued the *American Sentinel*, and there were present also the representatives of the Religious Liberty Association. They met to discuss and settle a very vexing question—the editorial policy of the *American Sentinel*. The door was then locked, and all agreed that the door would not be unlocked until the question was settled.

A little before three o'clock on Sunday morning the meeting ended in a deadlock, with the assertion on the part of the religious liberty men that unless the pacific press would accede to their demands and drop the term "Seventh-day Adventist" and "the Sabbath" from the columns of that paper, they would no longer use it as the organ of the religious liberty association. That meant killing the paper. They unlocked the door, and the men went to their rooms, went to bed, and went to sleep.

But God, who never slumbers nor sleeps, sent his angel messenger to Ellen White's room at three o'clock that morning. She was aroused from her sleep and instructed that she must go into the workers' meeting at half-past five, and there she must present what was shown to her at Salamanca. She dressed, went to her bureau, took from it the journal in which she had made the record of what had been shown to her at Salamanca. As the scene came clearly to her mind, she wrote more to go with it.

The ministers were just getting up from prayer in the tabernacle as Mrs. White was seen coming in the door, a bundle of manuscripts

under her arm. The president of the General Conference was the speaker, and he addressed her:

“Sister White,” he said, “we are happy to see you. Do you have a message for us?”

“Indeed I do,” she said, and stepped to the front. Then she began right where she left off the day before. She told them that at three o’clock that morning she had been aroused from her sleep and instructed to go to the workers’ meeting at half-past five and there present what had been shown to her at Salamanca.

“In the vision,” she said, “I seemed to be in Battle Creek. I was taken to the Review and Herald office, and the angel messenger bade me, ‘Follow me.’ I was taken to a room where a group of men were earnestly discussing a matter. There was a zeal manifest, but not according to knowledge.” She told of how they were discussing the editorial policy of the *American Sentinel*, and she said, “I saw one of the men take a copy of the *Sentinel*, hold it high over his head, and say, ‘unless these articles on the sabbath and the second advent come out of this paper, we can no longer use it as the organ of the Religious Liberty Association.’” Ellen White spoke for an hour, describing the meeting that had been shown to her in vision months before, and giving counsel based upon that revelation. Then she sat down. [28]

The president of the General Conference did not know what to think of it. He had never heard of any such meeting. But they did not wait very long for an explanation, for a man stood up in the back of the room and began to speak:

“I was in that meeting last night.”

“Last night!” Sister White remarked, “Last night? I thought that meeting took place months ago, when it was shown to me in vision.”

“I was in that meeting last night,” he said, “and I am the man who made the remarks about the articles in the paper, holding it high over my head. I am sorry to say that I was on the wrong side, but I take this opportunity to place myself on the right side.” He sat down.

Another man stood to speak. He was the president of the Religious Liberty Association. Note his words: “I was in that meeting. Last night after the close of the conference some of us met in my room in the Review office where we locked ourselves in and there took up and discussed the questions and the matter that has been

presented to us this morning. We remained in that room until three o'clock this morning. If I should begin to give a description of what took place and the personal attitude of those in the room, I could not give it as exactly and as correctly as it has been given by sister White. I now see that I was in error and that the position that I took was not correct. From the light that has been given this morning, I acknowledge that I was wrong."

Others spoke that day. Every man who was in the meeting the night before stood to his feet and bore his testimony, saying that Ellen White had accurately described the meeting and the attitude of those in the room. Before that meeting closed that Sunday morning, the Religious Liberty group were called together, and they rescinded the action they had taken only a few hours before.

Had Mrs. White not been restrained and had she related the vision on Sabbath afternoon, her message would not have served the purpose that God had intended, for the meeting had not yet taken place.

[29] Somehow the men did not apply the general counsel given Sabbath afternoon. They thought they knew better. Perhaps they reasoned as some do today, "well, perhaps sister White did not understand," or, "we are living in a different day now." The thoughts that Satan whispers to us in these days are the same with which he tempted our ministers in 1891. God, in His own time and in His own way, made it clear that it was His work; He was guiding; He was guarding; He had His hand upon the wheel. Ellen White tells us that God "has often permitted matters to come to a crisis, that His interference might become marked. Then He has made it manifest that there is a God in Israel."

### **The Testimonies and the Reader**

For seventy years Ellen G. White spoke and wrote of the things God had revealed to her. Many times the counsels were given to correct those who erred from Bible truth. Many times they pointed out the course God would have his people follow. At times the testimonies dealt with the manner of life, the home, and the church. How did the members of the church receive these messages?

From the outset of her work, responsible leaders examined her work to assure themselves that the manifestation of the gift of prophecy was genuine. The apostle Paul admonishes, “Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” [1 Thessalonians 5:20, 21](#). The Bible tests of a prophet were brought to bear on Mrs. White’s work, and this is as she would have it, for she wrote:

“This work is of God, or it is not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work for the past thirty years bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter.”

The Bible gives four basic tests by which a prophet is to be examined. Mrs. White’s work stands each test.

The message of the true prophet must be in harmony with the law of God and the messages of the prophets. [Isaiah 8:20](#).

The E. G. White writings elevate the law of God and ever lead men and women to the Bible in its entirety. She points to the Bible as the sole rule of faith and practice and as the great light to which her writings, “the lesser light,” lead.

The predictions of the true prophet must come to pass within the context of conditionality. [Jeremiah 18:7-10; 28:9](#). While the work of Mr. White was much like that of Moses in leading and guiding the people, yet she wrote in a predictive manner of the many events to take place. At the outset of our publishing work in 1848, she spoke of how it would grow to encircle the world with light. Today Seventh-day Adventists publish literature in 200 languages valued at more than \$100,000,000 a year.

In 1890, when the world declared that there would be no more war and the millennium was about to dawn, Ellen White wrote: “the tempest is coming, and we must get ready for its fury.... We shall see trouble 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.” This was fulfilled in World Wars I and II.

The true prophet will confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, that God was incarnate in human flesh. [1 John 4:2](#).

[30]

The reading of *The Desire of Ages* makes it clear that the work of Ellen G. White measured up to this test. Observe these words:

“Jesus might have remained at the Father’s side. He might have retained the glory of heaven, and the homage of the angels. But He

chose to give back the scepter into the Father's hands, and to step down from the throne of the universe, that He might bring light to the benighted, and life to the perishing.

“Nearly two thousand years ago, a voice of mysterious import was heard in heaven, from the throne of God, ‘Lo, I come.’ ‘Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body has thou prepared me.... Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me,) to do Thy will O God.’ [Hebrews 10:5-7](#). In these words is announced the fulfillment of the purpose that had been hidden from eternal ages. Christ was about to visit our world, and to become incarnate... In the eyes of the world He possessed no beauty that they should desire Him; yet He was the incarnate God, the light of heaven and earth. His glory was veiled. His greatness and majesty were hidden that He might draw near to sorrowful, tempted man.” [U+009D]

Perhaps the most crucial test of the true prophet is found in his life, his work, and the influence of his teachings. Christ enunciated this test in [Matthew 7:15, 16](#): “Ye shall know them by their fruits.”

As we look at the fruit as manifested in the lives of those who have followed the spirit of prophecy counsels, we see that it is good. The testimonies have yielded good fruit. As we look at the church, knowing that we have been lead into various lines of activity by these counsels, we must acknowledge that Mrs. White's work measures up to this test. The unity of teaching in the writings penned over a period of seventy years also bears positive witness to the integrity of the gift.

### **Practical Test of a Good Prophet**

In addition to these four major Bible tests, the Lord has given evidences that make it clear that the work is of His direction. Among these are:

The timeliness of the message. God's people are in some special need, and the message comes just in time to meet the need, as did the first vision given to Mrs. White.

The practical nature of the messages. The information revealed to Mrs. White in the visions was of practical value, meeting practical

needs. Look at the way in which the testimony counsels enter in a practical way into our everyday lives.

The high spiritual plane of the messages. They do not deal with matters that are childish or common, but with grand, elevated themes. The language itself is sublime.

The manner in which the visions were given. Many of the visions were accompanied by physical phenomena as described earlier. Mrs. White's experience in vision was similar to that of the Bible prophets, the visions were definite experiences, not just impressions. In vision, Mrs. White saw, heard, felt, and received instruction from the angels. The visions could not be accounted for by excitement or imagination. [31]

Mrs. White was not controlled by those about her. To one man she wrote: "You think individuals have prejudiced my mind. If I am in this state I am not fitted to be entrusted with the work of God."

Her work was recognized by her contemporaries. Both those in the church who lived and worked with Mrs. White, and many outside the church recognized her as the "messenger of the Lord." Those closest to her had the greatest confidence in her call and work.

These four Bible tests and the additional evidences outlined above assure us that Ellen White's work is of God and is worthy of unquestioned confidence.

The many E. G. White books are filled with counsel and instruction of permanent value to the church. Whether these testimonies were of a more general nature or personal testimonies to families and individuals, they are of service to us today. Concerning this point, Mrs. White says:

"Since the warning and instruction given in testimonies for individual cases applied with equal force to many others who had not been specially pointed out in this manner, it seemed to be my duty to publish the personal testimonies for the benefit of the church.... I know of no better way to present my views of general dangers and errors, and the duty of all who love God and keep His commandments, than by giving these testimonies." It is a mistaken use of the testimonies to read them to find some point on which condemnation of a fellow church member can be based. The testimonies must never be used as a club to bring some brother or sister to see things just as we see them. There are matters that must be left for the individual to settle alone with God.

The counsels should be studied to find the basic principles that apply in our own lives today. The human heart is much the same the world over; the problems of one are often the problems of another. “In rebuking the wrongs of one,” Mrs. White wrote, God “designs to correct many.” “He makes plain the wrongs of some that others may thus be warned.”

Near the close of her life, Mrs. White gave the following counsel:

“Through His Holy Spirit the voice of God has come to us continually in warning and instruction.... Time and trial have not made void the instruction given.... The instruction that was given in the early days of the message is to be held as safe instruction to follow in these its closing days.”

[32] The counsels that follow are drawn from a number of the E. G. White books—but mainly from the three volumes of *Testimony Treasures*, the world edition of the *Testimonies for the Church*—and represent the lines of instruction thought to be most helpful to the church in areas where the limitations of church membership make it impossible to publish more than a single volume of moderate size. The work of selecting and arranging these counsels was done by a large committee, working under the authorization of the board of trustees of the Ellen G. White Estate, to whom was assigned the responsibility of the care of the spirit of prophecy counsels. The selections are often brief and confined to a statement of practical basic principles, and thus a wide range of subjects is included.

“Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.” [2 Chronicles 20:20](#).

The trustees of the Ellen G. White Estate

*Washington, D.C.,*

*July 22, 1957.*

Revised, Silver Spring, MD

*January 1, 1990.*



## Chapter 1—A Vision of the Reward of the Faithful [33]

### My First Vision

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

The 144,000 were all sealed and perfectly united. On their foreheads was written, God, New Jerusalem, and a glorious star containing Jesus’ new name. At our happy, holy state the wicked

were enraged, and would rush violently up to lay hands on us to thrust us into prison, when we would stretch forth the hand in the name of the Lord, and they would fall helpless to the ground. Then it was that the synagogue of Satan [those who chose to follow Satan] knew that God had loved us who could wash one another's feet and salute the brethren with a holy kiss, and they worshiped at our feet.

[34] Soon our eyes were drawn to the east, for a small black cloud had appeared, about half as large as a man's hand, which we all knew was the sign of the Son of man. We all in solemn silence gazed on the cloud as it drew nearer and became lighter, glorious, and still more glorious, till it was a great white cloud. The bottom appeared like fire; a rainbow was over the cloud, while around it were ten thousand angels, singing a most lovely song; and upon it sat the Son of man. His hair was white and curly and lay on His shoulders; and upon His head were many crowns. His feet had the appearance of fire; in His right hand was a sharp sickle; in His left, a silver trumpet. His eyes were as a flame of fire, which searched His children through and through. Then all faces gathered paleness, and those that God had rejected gathered blackness. Then we all cried out, "Who shall be able to stand? Is my robe spotless?" Then the angels ceased to sing, and there was some time of awful silence, when Jesus spoke: "Those who have clean hands and pure hearts shall be able to stand; My grace is sufficient for you." At this our faces lighted up, and joy filled every heart. And the angels struck a note higher and sang again, while the cloud drew still nearer the earth.

Then Jesus' silver trumpet sounded, as He descended on the cloud, wrapped in flames of fire. He gazed on the graves of the sleeping saints, then raised His eyes and hands to heaven, and cried, "Awake! awake! awake! ye that sleep in the dust, and arise." Then there was a mighty earthquake. The graves opened, and the dead came up clothed with immortality. The 144,000 shouted, "Alleluia!" as they recognized their friends who had been torn from them by death, and in the same moment we were changed and caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air.

We all entered the cloud together, and were seven days ascending to the sea of glass, when Jesus brought the crowns, and with His own right hand placed them on our heads. He gave us harps of gold

and palms of victory. Here on the sea of glass the 144,000 stood in a perfect square. Some of them had very bright crowns, others not so bright. Some crowns appeared heavy with stars, while others had but few. All were perfectly satisfied with their crowns. And they were all clothed with a glorious white mantle from their shoulders to their feet. Angels were all about us as we marched over the sea of glass to the gate of the city. Jesus raised His mighty, glorious arm, laid hold of the pearly gate, swung it back on its glittering hinges, and said to us, "You have washed your robes in My blood, stood stiffly for My truth, enter in." We all marched in and felt that we had a perfect right in the city.

Here we saw the tree of life and the throne of God. Out of the throne came a pure river of water, and on either side of the river was the tree of life. On one side of the river was a trunk of a tree, and a trunk on the other side of the river, both of pure, transparent gold. At first I thought I saw two trees. I looked again, and saw that they were united at the top in one tree. So it was the tree of life on either side of the river of life. Its branches bowed to the place where we stood, and the fruit was glorious; it looked like gold mixed with silver. [35]

We all went under the tree and sat down to look at the glory of the place, when Brethren Fitch and Stockman, who had preached the gospel of the kingdom, and whom God had laid in the grave to save them, came up to us and asked us what we had passed through while they were sleeping. We tried to call up our greatest trials, but they looked so small compared with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that surrounded us that we could not speak them out, and we all cried out, "Alleluia, heaven is cheap enough!" and we touched our glorious harps and made heaven's arches ring.

With Jesus at our head we all descended from the city down to this earth, on a great and mighty mountain, which could not bear Jesus up, and it parted asunder, and there was a mighty plain. Then we looked up and saw the great city, with twelve foundations, and twelve gates, three on each side, and an angel at each gate. We all cried out, "The city, the great city, it's coming, it's coming down from God out of heaven," and it came and settled on the place where we stood. Then we began to look at the glorious things outside of the city. There I saw most glorious houses, that had the appearance

of silver, supported by four pillars set with pearls most glorious to behold. These were to be inhabited by the saints. In each was a golden shelf. I saw many of the saints go into the houses, take off their glittering crowns and lay them on the shelf, then go out into the field by the houses to do something with the earth; not as we have to do with the earth here; no, no. A glorious light shone all about their heads, and they were continually shouting and offering praises to God.

I saw another field full of all kinds of flowers, and as I plucked them, I cried out, “They will never fade.” Next I saw a field of tall grass, most glorious to behold; it was living green and had a reflection of silver and gold, as it waved proudly to the glory of King Jesus. Then we entered a field full of all kinds of beasts—the lion, the lamb, the leopard, and the wolf, all together in perfect union. We passed through the midst of them, and they followed on peaceably after. Then we entered a wood, not like the dark woods we have here; no, no; but light, and all over glorious; the branches of the trees moved to and fro, and we all cried out, “We will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.” We passed through the woods, for we were on our way to Mount Zion.

[36] As we were traveling along, we met a company who also were gazing at the glories of the place. I noticed red as a border on their garments; their crowns were brilliant; their robes were pure white. As we greeted them, I asked Jesus who they were. He said they were martyrs that had been slain for Him. With them was an innumerable company of little ones; they also had a hem of red on their garments. Mount Zion was just before us, and on the mount was a glorious temple, and about it were seven other mountains, on which grew roses and lilies. And I saw the little ones climb, or, if they chose, use their little wings and fly, to the top of the mountains and pluck the never-fading flowers. There were all kinds of trees around the temple to beautify the place: the box, the pine, the fir, the oil, the myrtle, the pomegranate, and the fig tree bowed down with the weight of its timely figs—these made the place all over glorious. And as we were about to enter the holy temple, Jesus raised His lovely voice and said, “Only the 144,000 enter this place,” and we shouted, “Alleluia.”

This temple was supported by seven pillars, all of transparent gold, set with pearls most glorious. The wonderful things I there saw

I cannot describe. Oh, that I could talk in the language of Canaan, then could I tell a little of the glory of the better world. I saw there tables of stone in which the names of the 144,000 were engraved in letters of gold. After we beheld the glory of the temple, we went out, and Jesus left us and went to the city. Soon we heard His lovely voice again, saying, "Come, My people, you have come out of great tribulation, and done My will; suffered for Me; come in to supper, for I will gird Myself, and serve you." We shouted, "Alleluia! glory!" and entered into the city. And I saw a table of pure silver; it was many miles in length, yet our eyes could extend over it. I saw the fruit of the tree of life, the manna, almonds, figs, pomegranates, grapes, and many other kinds of fruit. I asked Jesus to let me eat of the fruit. He said, "Not now. Those who eat of the fruit of this land go back to earth no more. But in a little while, if faithful, you shall both eat of the fruit of the tree of life and drink of the water of the fountain." And He said, "You must go back to the earth again and relate to others what I have revealed to you." Then an angel bore me gently down to this dark world. Sometimes I think I can stay here no longer; all things of earth look so dreary. I feel very lonely here, for I have seen a better land. Oh, that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest!<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Early Writings, 14-20

## Chapter 2—The Time of The End

We are living in the time of the end. The fast-fulfilling signs of the times declare that the coming of Christ is near at hand. The days in which we live are solemn and important. The Spirit of God is gradually but surely being withdrawn from the earth. Plagues and judgments are already falling upon the despisers of the grace of God. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude.

The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones.

The condition of things in the world shows that troublous times are right upon us. The daily papers are full of indications of a terrible conflict in the near future. Bold robberies are of frequent occurrence. Strikes are common. Thefts and murders are committed on every hand. Men possessed of demons are taking the lives of men, women, and little children. Men have become infatuated with vice, and every species of evil prevails. The enemy has succeeded in perverting justice and in filling men's hearts with the desire for selfish gain. "Justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter." [Isaiah 59:14](#). In the great cities there are multitudes living in poverty and wretchedness, well-nigh destitute of food, shelter, and clothing; while in the same cities are those who have more than heart could wish, who live luxuriously, spending their money on richly furnished houses, on personal adornment, or worse still, upon the gratification of sensual appetites, upon liquor, tobacco, and other things that destroy the powers of the brain, unbalance the mind, and debase the soul. The cries of starving humanity are coming up before God, while by every species of oppression and extortion men are piling up colossal fortunes.

I was in the night season called upon to behold buildings rising story after story toward heaven. These buildings were warranted to be fireproof, and they were erected to glorify the owners and builders. Higher and still higher these buildings rose, and in them the most costly material was used. Those to whom these buildings belonged were not asking themselves: "How can we best glorify God?" The Lord was not in their thoughts.

As these lofty buildings went up, the owners rejoiced with ambitious pride that they had money to use in gratifying self and provoking the envy of their neighbors. Much of the money that they thus invested had been obtained through exaction, through grinding down the poor. They forgot that in heaven an account of every business transaction is kept; every unjust deal, every fraudulent act, is there recorded. The time is coming when in their fraud and insolence men will reach a point that the Lord will not permit them to pass, and they will learn that there is a limit to the forbearance of Jehovah.

[38]

The scene that next passed before me was an alarm of fire. Men looked at the lofty and supposedly fireproof buildings and said: "They are perfectly safe." But these buildings were consumed as if made of pitch. The fire engines could do nothing to stay the destruction. The firemen were unable to operate the engines.

I am instructed that when the Lord's time comes, should no change have taken place in the hearts of proud, ambitious human beings, men will find that the hand that had been strong to save will be strong to destroy. No earthly power can stay the hand of God. No material can be used in the erection of buildings that will preserve them from destruction when God's appointed time comes to send retribution on men for their disregard of His law and for their selfish ambition.

There are not many, even among educators and statesmen, who comprehend the causes that underlie the present state of society. Those who hold the reins of government are not able to solve the problem of moral corruption, poverty, pauperism, and increasing crime. They are struggling in vain to place business operations on a more secure basis. If men would give more heed to the teaching of God's word, they would find a solution of the problems that perplex them.

The Scriptures describe the condition of the world just before Christ's second coming. Of the men who by robbery and extortion are amassing great riches, it is written: "Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you." [James 5:3-6](#).

But who reads the warnings given by the fast-fulfilling signs of the times? What impression is made upon worldlings? What change is seen in their attitude? No more than was seen in the attitude of the inhabitants of the Noachian world. Absorbed in worldly business and pleasure, the antediluvians "knew not until the Flood came, and took them all away." [Matthew 24:39](#). They had heaven-sent warnings, but they refused to listen. And today the world, utterly regardless of the warning voice of God, is hurrying on to eternal ruin.

The world is stirred with the spirit of war. The prophecy of the eleventh chapter of Daniel has nearly reached its complete fulfillment. Soon the scenes of trouble spoken of in the prophecies will take place.

[39] "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.... Because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate.... The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth." [Isaiah 24:1-8](#).

"Alas for the day! for the day of the Lord is at hand, and as a destruction from the Almighty shall it come...." [Joel 1:15](#).

"I beheld the earth, and, lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down." [Jeremiah 4:23-26](#).



“Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.” [Jeremiah 30:7](#).

Not all in this world have taken sides with the enemy against God. Not all have become disloyal. There are a faithful few who are true to God; for John writes: “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” [Revelation 14:12](#). Soon the battle will be waged fiercely between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. Soon everything that can be shaken will be shaken, that those things that cannot be shaken may remain.

Satan is a diligent Bible student. He knows that his time is short, and he seeks at every point to counterwork the work of the Lord upon this earth. It is impossible to give any idea of the experience of the people of God who shall be alive upon the earth when celestial glory and a repetition of the persecutions of the past are blended. They will walk in the light proceeding from the throne of God. By means of the angels there will be constant communication between heaven and earth. And Satan, surrounded by evil angels, and claiming to be God, will work miracles of all kinds, to deceive, if possible, the very elect. God’s people will not find their safety in working miracles, for Satan will counterfeit the miracles that will be wrought. God’s tried and tested people will find their power in the sign spoken of in [Exodus 31:12-18](#). They are to take their stand on the living word: “It is written.” This is the only foundation upon which they can stand securely. Those who have broken their covenant with God will in that day be without God and without hope.

The worshipers of God will be especially distinguished by their regard for the fourth commandment, since this is the sign of God’s creative power and the witness to His claim upon man’s reverence and homage. The wicked will be distinguished by their efforts to tear down the Creator’s memorial and to exalt the institution of Rome. In the issue of the conflict all Christendom will be divided into two great classes, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark. Although church and state will unite their power to compel all, “both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,” to receive the mark of the beast, yet the people of God will not receive it. [Revelation 13:16](#). The prophet of Patmos beholds “them that had

gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God,” and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb. [Revelation 15:2](#).

Fearful tests and trials await the people of God. The spirit of war is stirring the nations from one end of the earth to the other. But in the midst of the time of trouble that is coming,—a time of trouble such as has not been since there was a nation—God’s chosen people will stand unmoved. Satan and his host cannot destroy them, for angels that excel in strength will protect them.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 9:11-17](#)

## Chapter 3—Prepare to Meet the Lord

[41]

I saw that we should not put off the coming of the Lord. Said the angel: “Prepare, prepare, for what is coming upon the earth. Let your works correspond with your faith.” I saw that the mind must be stayed upon God, and that our influence should tell for God and His truth. We cannot honor the Lord when we are careless and indifferent. We cannot glorify Him when we are desponding. We must be in earnest to secure our own soul’s salvation, and to save others. All importance should be attached to this, and everything besides should come in secondary.

I saw the beauty of heaven. I heard the angels sing their rapturous songs, ascribing praise, honor, and glory to Jesus. I could then realize something of the wondrous love of the Son of God. He left all the glory, all the honor which He had in heaven, and was so interested for our salvation that He patiently and meekly bore every indignity and slight which man could heap upon Him. He was wounded, smitten, and bruised; He was stretched on Calvary’s cross and suffered the most agonizing death to save us from death, that we might be washed in His blood and be raised up to live with Him in the mansions He is preparing for us, to enjoy the light and glory of heaven, to hear the angels sing, and to sing with them.

I saw that all heaven is interested in our salvation; and shall we be indifferent? Shall we be careless, as though it were a small matter whether we are saved or lost? Shall we slight the sacrifice that has been made for us? Some have done this. They have trifled with offered mercy, and the frown of God is upon them. God’s Spirit will not always be grieved. It will depart if grieved a little longer. After all has been done that God could do to save men, if they show by their lives that they slight Jesus’ offered mercy, death will be their portion, and it will be dearly purchased. It will be a dreadful death; for they will have to feel the agony that Christ felt upon the cross to purchase for them the redemption which they have refused. And they will then realize what they have lost—eternal life and the

immortal inheritance. The great sacrifice that has been made to save souls shows us their worth. When the precious soul is once lost, it is lost forever.

[42] I have seen an angel standing with scales in his hands weighing the thoughts and interest of the people of God, especially the young. In one scale were the thoughts and interest tending heavenward; in the other were the thoughts and interest tending to earth. And in this scale were thrown all the reading of storybooks, thoughts of dress and show, vanity, pride, etc. Oh, what a solemn moment! the angels of God standing with scales, weighing the thoughts of His professed children—those who claim to be dead to the world and alive to God. The scale filled with thoughts of earth, vanity, and pride quickly went down, notwithstanding weight after weight rolled from the scale. The one with the thoughts and interest tending to heaven went quickly up as the other went down, and oh, how light it was! I can relate this as I saw it; but never can I give the solemn and vivid impression stamped upon my mind, as I saw the angel with the scales weighing the thoughts and interest of the people of God. Said the angel: “Can such enter heaven? No, no, never. Tell them the hope they now possess is vain, and unless they speedily repent, and obtain salvation, they must perish.”

A form of godliness will not save any. All must have a deep and living experience. This alone will save them in the time of trouble. Then their work will be tried of what sort it is; and if it is gold, silver, and precious stones, they will be hid as in the secret of the Lord’s pavilion. But if their work is wood, hay, and stubble, nothing can shield them from the fierceness of Jehovah’s wrath.

I saw that many measure themselves among themselves, and compare their lives with the lives of others. This should not be. No one but Christ is given us as an example. He is our true Pattern, and each should strive to excel in imitating Him. We are co-workers with Christ, or co-workers with the enemy. We either gather with Christ or scatter abroad. We are decided, wholehearted Christians, or none at all. Says Christ: “I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of My mouth.”

I saw that some hardly know as yet what self-denial or sacrifice is, or what it is to suffer for the truth’s sake. But none will enter heaven

without making a sacrifice. A spirit of self-denial and sacrifice should be cherished. Some have not sacrificed themselves, their own bodies, on the altar of God. They indulge in hasty, fitful temper, gratify their appetites, and attend to their own self-interest, regardless of the cause of God. Those who are willing to make any sacrifice for eternal life, will have it; and it will be worth suffering for, worth crucifying self for, and sacrificing every idol for. The far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory swallows up everything and eclipses every earthly pleasure.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:123-126

## [43] **Chapter 4—Union With Christ and Brotherly Love**

### **One With Christ in God**

It is the purpose of God that His children shall blend in unity. Do they not expect to live together in the same heaven? Is Christ divided against Himself? Will He give His people success before they sweep away the rubbish of evil surmising and discord, before the laborers, with unity of purpose, devote heart and mind and strength to the work so holy in God's sight? Union brings strength; disunion, weakness. United with one another, working together in harmony for the salvation of men, we shall indeed be "laborers together with God." Those who refuse to work in harmony greatly dishonor God. The enemy of souls delights to see them working at cross purposes with one another. Such ones need to cultivate brotherly love and tenderness of heart. If they could draw aside the curtain veiling the future and see the result of their disunion they would surely be led to repent.<sup>4</sup>

### **Union With Christ and One Another Our Only Safety**

The world is looking with gratification at the disunion amongst Christians. Infidelity is well pleased. God calls for a change among His people. Union with Christ and with one another is our only safety in these last days. Let us not make it possible for Satan to point to our church members, saying: "Behold how these people, standing under the banner of Christ, hate one another. We have nothing to fear from them while they spend more strength fighting one another than in warfare with my forces."

After the descent of the Holy Spirit the disciples went forth to proclaim a risen Saviour, their one desire the salvation of souls. They rejoiced in the sweetness of the communion with saints. They were tender, thoughtful, self-denying, willing to make any sacrifice

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<sup>4</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 8:240](#)

for the truth's sake. In their daily association with one another they revealed the love that Christ had commanded them to reveal. By unselfish words and deeds they strove to kindle this love in other hearts.

The believers were ever to cherish the love that filled the hearts of the apostles after the descent of the Holy Spirit. They were to go forward in willing obedience to the new commandment: "As I have loved you, that ye also love one another." [John 13:34](#). So closely were they to be united to Christ that they would be enabled to fulfill His requirements. The power of a Saviour who could justify them by His righteousness was to be magnified.

[44]

But the early Christians began to look for defects in one another. Dwelling upon mistakes, giving place to unkind criticism, they lost sight of the Saviour and of the great love He had revealed for sinners. They became more strict in regard to outward ceremonies, more particular about the theory of the faith, more severe in their criticisms. In their zeal to condemn others they forgot their own errors. They forgot the lesson of brotherly love that Christ had taught. And, saddest of all, they were unconscious of their loss. They did not realize that happiness and joy were going out of their lives, and that soon they would walk in darkness, having shut the love of God out of their hearts.

The apostle John realized that brotherly love was waning in the church, and he dwelt particularly upon this point. Up to the day of his death he urged upon believers the constant exercise of love for one another. His letters to the churches are filled with this thought. "Beloved, let us love one another," he writes; for love is of God.... God sent His only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him.... Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." [1 John 4:7-11](#).

In the church of God today brotherly love is greatly lacking. Many of those who profess to love the Saviour neglect to love those who are united with them in Christian fellowship. We are of the same faith, members of one family, all children of the same heavenly Father, with the same blessed hope of immortality. How close and tender should be the tie that binds us together. The people of the world are watching us to see if our faith is exerting a sanctifying influence upon our hearts. They are quick to discern every defect in

our lives, every inconsistency in our actions. Let us give them no occasion to reproach our faith.<sup>5</sup>

### **Harmony and Union Is Our Strongest Witness**

It is not the opposition of the world that endangers us the most; it is the evil cherished in the hearts of professed believers that works our most grievous disaster and most retards the progress of God's cause. There is no surer way of weakening our spirituality than by being envious, suspicious of one another, full of faultfinding and evil surmising. "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." [James 3:15-18](#).

[45] Harmony and union existing among men of varied dispositions is the strongest witness that can be borne that God has sent His Son into the world to save sinners. It is our privilege to bear this witness. But, in order to do this, we must place ourselves under Christ's command. Our characters must be molded in harmony with His character, our wills must be surrendered to His will. Then we shall work together without a thought of collision.

Little differences dwelt upon lead to actions that destroy Christian fellowship. Let us not allow the enemy thus to gain the advantage over us. Let us keep drawing nearer to God and to one another. Then we shall be as trees of righteousness, planted by the Lord, and watered by the river of life. And how fruitful we shall be! Did not Christ say: "Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit"? [John 15:8](#).

When Christ's prayer is fully believed, when its instruction is brought into the daily life of God's people, unity of action will be seen in our ranks. Brother will be bound to brother by the golden bonds of the love of Christ. The Spirit of God alone can bring about this oneness. He who sanctified Himself can sanctify His disciples. United with Him, they will be united with one another in the most

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<sup>5</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 8:240-242](#)



holy faith. When we strive for this unity as God desires us to strive for it, it will come to us.<sup>6</sup>

It is not a great number of institutions, large buildings, and outward display that God requires, but the harmonious action of a peculiar people, a people chosen by God and precious, united with one another, their life hid with Christ in God. Every man is to stand in his lot and place, exerting a right influence in thought, word, and deed. When all God's workers do this, and not till then, His work will be a complete, symmetrical whole.<sup>7</sup>

The Lord calls for men of genuine faith and sound minds, men who recognize the distinction between the true and the false. Each one should be on his guard, studying and practicing the lessons given in the seventeenth chapter of John, and preserving a living faith in the truth for this time. We need that self-control which will enable us to bring our habits into harmony with the prayer of Christ.<sup>8</sup>

The heart of the Saviour is set upon His followers' fulfilling God's purpose in all its height and depth. They are to be one in Him, even though they are scattered the world over. But God cannot make them one in Christ unless they are willing to give up their own way for His way.<sup>9</sup>

### Cooperation

In the establishment of institutions in new fields it is often necessary to place responsibilities upon persons not fully acquainted with the details of the work. These persons labor at great disadvantage, and, unless they and their fellow workers have an unselfish interest in the Lord's institution, there will result a condition of things that will hinder its prosperity.

Many feel that the line of work they are doing belongs solely to them and that no one else should make any suggestions in regard to it. These very ones may be ignorant as to the best methods of conducting the work; yet, if one ventures to offer them advice, they are offended and become more determined to follow their independent

[46]

<sup>6</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:242, 243

<sup>7</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:183

<sup>8</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:239

<sup>9</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:243

judgment. Again, some of the workers are not willing to help or instruct their fellow workmen. Others who are inexperienced do not wish their ignorance to be known. They make mistakes, at a cost of much time and material, because they are too proud to ask counsel.

The cause of the trouble it is not difficult to determine. The workers have been independent threads, when they should have regarded themselves as threads that must be woven together to help form the pattern.

These things grieve the Holy Spirit. God desires us to learn of one another. Unsanctified independence places us where He cannot work with us. With such a state of things Satan is well pleased.

Every worker will be tested as to whether he is laboring for the advancement of the Lord's institution, or to serve his own interests.

The sin that is most nearly hopeless and incurable is pride of opinion, self-conceit. This stands in the way of all growth. When a man has defects of character, yet fails of realizing this; when he is so imbued with self-sufficiency that he cannot see his fault, how can he be cleansed? "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." [Matthew 9:12](#). How can one improve when he thinks his ways perfect?

None but a wholehearted Christian can be a true gentleman.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Testimonies for the Church 7:197-200

## Chapter 5—Christ Our Righteousness

[47]

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” [1 John 1:9](#).

God requires that we confess our sins and humble our hearts before Him; but at the same time we should have confidence in Him as a tender Father, who will not forsake those who put their trust in Him. Many of us walk by sight and not by faith. We believe the things that are seen but do not appreciate the precious promises given us in God’s Word; and yet we cannot dishonor God more decidedly than by showing that we distrust what He says and question whether the Lord is in earnest with us or is deceiving us.

God does not give us up because of our sins. We may make mistakes and grieve His Spirit, but when we repent and come to Him with contrite hearts, He will not turn us away. There are hindrances to be removed. Wrong feelings have been cherished, and there have been pride, self-sufficiency, impatience, and murmurings. All these separate us from God. Sins must be confessed; there must be a deeper work of grace in the heart. Those who feel weak and discouraged may become strong men of God and do noble work for the Master. But they must work from a high standpoint; they must be influenced by no selfish motives.

We must learn in the school of Christ. Nothing but His righteousness can entitle us to one of the blessings of the covenant of grace. We have long desired and tried to obtain these blessings but have not received them because we have cherished the idea that we could do something to make ourselves worthy of them. We have not looked away from ourselves, believing that Jesus is a living Saviour. We must not think that our own grace and merits will save us; the grace of Christ is our only hope of salvation. Through His prophet the Lord promises, “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.” [Isaiah 55:7](#). We must believe the naked promise, and not accept

feeling for faith. When we trust God fully, when we rely upon the merits of Jesus as a sin-pardoning Saviour, we shall receive all the help that we can desire.

[48] We look to self, as though we had power to save ourselves; but Jesus died for us because we are helpless to do this. In Him is our hope, our justification, our righteousness. We should not despond and fear that we have no Saviour or that He has no thoughts of mercy toward us. At this very time He is carrying on His work in our behalf, inviting us to come to Him in our helplessness and be saved. We dishonor Him by our unbelief. It is astonishing how we treat our very best Friend, how little confidence we repose in Him who is able to save to the uttermost and who has given us every evidence of His great love.

My brethren, are you expecting that your merit will recommend you to the favor of God, thinking that you must be free from sin before you trust His power to save? If this is the struggle going on in your mind, I fear you will gain no strength and will finally become discouraged.

In the wilderness, when the Lord permitted poisonous serpents to sting the rebellious Israelites, Moses was directed to lift up a brazen serpent and bid all the wounded look to it and live. But many saw no help in this Heaven-appointed remedy. The dead and dying were all around them, and they knew without divine help their fate was certain; but they would lament their wounds, their pains, their sure death, until their strength was gone, and their eyes were glazed, when they might have had instant healing.

“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,” even so was “the Son of man lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” [John 3:14, 15](#). If you are conscious of your sins, do not devote all your powers to mourning over them, but look and live. Jesus is our only Saviour; and although millions who need to be healed will reject His offered mercy, not one who trusts in His merits will be left to perish. While we realize our helpless condition without Christ, we must not be discouraged; we must rely upon a crucified and risen Saviour. Poor, sin-sick, discouraged soul, look and live. Jesus has pledged His word; He will save all who come unto Him.

Come to Jesus, and receive rest and peace. You may have the blessing even now. Satan suggests that you are helpless and cannot bless yourself. It is true; you are helpless. But lift up Jesus before him: "I have a risen Saviour. In Him I trust, and He will never suffer me to be confounded. In His name I triumph. He is my righteousness and my crown of rejoicing." Let no one here feel that his case is hopeless, for it is not. You may see that you are sinful and undone, but it is just on this account that you need a Saviour. If you have sins to confess, lose no time. These moments are golden. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." [1 John 1:9](#). Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will be filled, for Jesus has promised it. Precious Saviour! His arms are open to receive us, and His great heart of love is waiting to bless us.

Some seem to feel that they must be on probation and must prove to the Lord that they are reformed, before they can claim His blessing. But these dear souls may claim the blessing even now. They must have His grace, the Spirit of Christ, to help their infirmities, or they cannot form a Christian character. Jesus loves to have us come to Him, just as we are—sinful, helpless, dependent. [49]

Repentance, as well as forgiveness, is the gift of God through Christ. It is through the influence of the Holy Spirit that we are convicted of sin and feel our need of pardon. None but the contrite are forgiven; but it is the grace of God that makes the heart penitent. He is acquainted with all our weaknesses and infirmities, and He will help us.

Some who come to God by repentance and confession, and even believe that their sins are forgiven, still fail of claiming, as they should, the promises of God. They do not see that Jesus is an ever-present Saviour; and they are not ready to commit the keeping of their souls to Him, relying upon Him to perfect the work of grace begun in their hearts. While they think they are committing themselves to God, there is a great deal of self-dependence. There are conscientious souls that trust partly to God and partly to themselves. They do not look to God, to be kept by His power, but depend upon watchfulness against temptation and the performance of certain duties for acceptance with Him. There are no victories in this kind of faith. Such persons toil to no purpose; their souls are in continual

bondage, and they find no rest until their burdens are laid at the feet of Jesus.

There is need of constant watchfulness and of earnest, loving devotion, but these will come naturally when the soul is kept by the power of God through faith. We can do nothing, absolutely nothing, to commend ourselves to divine favor. We must not trust at all to ourselves or to our good works; but when as erring, sinful beings we come to Christ, we may find rest in His love. God will accept every one that comes to Him trusting wholly in the merits of a crucified Saviour. Love springs up in the heart. There may be no ecstasy of feeling, but there is an abiding, peaceful trust. Every burden is light; for the yoke which Christ imposes is easy. Duty becomes a delight, and sacrifice a pleasure. The path that before seemed shrouded in darkness becomes bright with beams from the Sun of Righteousness. This is walking in the light as Christ is in the light.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Selected Messages 1:350-354.

Our Saviour claims all there is of us; He asks our first and holiest thoughts, our purest and most intense affection. If we are indeed partakers of the divine nature, His praise will be continually in our hearts and upon our lips. Our only safety is to surrender our all to Him and to be constantly growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.<sup>12</sup> The sanctification set forth in the Sacred Scriptures has to do with the entire being—spirit, soul, and body. Here is the true idea of entire consecration. Paul prays that the church at Thessalonica may enjoy this great blessing. “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” [1 Thessalonians 5:23](#).

There is in the religious world a theory of sanctification which is false in itself and dangerous in its influence. In many cases those who profess sanctification do not possess the genuine article. Their sanctification consists in talk and will worship.

They lay aside reason and judgment, and depend wholly upon their feelings, basing their claims to sanctification upon emotions which they have at some time experienced. They are stubborn and perverse in urging their tenacious claims of holiness, giving many words, but bearing no precious fruit as proof. These professedly sanctified persons are not only deluding their own souls by their pretensions, but are exerting an influence to lead astray many who earnestly desire to conform to the will of God. They may be heard to reiterate again and again, “God leads me! God teaches me! I am living without sin!” Many who come in contact with this spirit encounter a dark, mysterious something which they cannot comprehend. But it is that which is altogether unlike Christ, the only true pattern.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>[The Sanctified Life, 95](#)

<sup>13</sup>[The Sanctified Life, 7-10](#)

[51] Sanctification is a progressive work. The successive steps are set before us in the words of Peter: “Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if 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 Christ.” [2 Peter 1:5-8](#). “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.” [verses 10, 11](#).

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.<sup>14</sup>

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

The Christian life is constantly an onward march. Jesus sits as a refiner and purifier of His people; and when His image is perfectly reflected in them, they are perfect and holy, and prepared for translation. A great work is required of the Christian. We are exhorted to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Here we see where the great labor rests. There is a constant work for the Christian. Every branch in the parent vine must derive life and strength from that vine, in order to yield fruit.<sup>15</sup>

Let none deceive themselves with the belief that God will pardon and bless them while they are trampling upon one of His require-

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<sup>14</sup>[The Sanctified Life, 94-95](#)

<sup>15</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 1:340](#)



ments. The willful commission of a known sin silences the witnessing voice of the Spirit and separates the soul from God. Whatever may be the ecstasies of religious feeling, Jesus cannot abide in the heart that disregards the divine law. God will honor those only who honor Him.<sup>16</sup>

When Paul wrote, “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly,” [1 Thessalonians 5:23](#), he did not exhort his brethren to aim at a standard which it was impossible for them to reach; he did not pray that they might have blessings which it was not the will of God to give. He knew that all who would be fitted to meet Christ in peace must possess a pure and holy character. Read [1 Corinthians 9:25-27](#); [6:19, 20](#).

True Christian principle will not stop to weigh consequences. It does not ask, What will people think of me if I do this? or, How will it affect my worldly prospects if I do that? With the most intense longing the children of God desire to know what He would have them do, that their works may glorify Him. The Lord has made ample provision that the hearts and lives of all His followers may be controlled by divine grace, that they may be as burning and shining lights in the world.<sup>17</sup>

### True Evidences of Sanctification

Our Saviour was the light of the world, but the world knew Him not. He was constantly employed in works of mercy, shedding light upon the pathway of all; yet He did not call upon those with whom He mingled to behold His unexampled virtue, His self-denial, self-sacrifice, and benevolence. The Jews did not admire such a life. They considered His religion worthless, because it did not accord with their standard of piety. They decided that Christ was not religious in spirit or character; for their religion consisted in display, in praying publicly, and in doing works of charity for effect. The most precious fruit of sanctification is the grace of meekness. When this grace presides in the soul, the disposition is molded by its influence. There is a continual waiting upon God and a submission of the will to His.

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<sup>16</sup>SL 92

<sup>17</sup>[The Sanctified Life, 26, 39](#)

Self-denial, self-sacrifice, benevolence, kindness, love, patience, fortitude, and Christian trust are the daily fruits borne by those who are truly connected with God. Their acts may not be published to the world, but they themselves are daily wrestling with evil, and gaining precious victories over temptation and wrong. Solemn vows are renewed, and kept through the strength gained by earnest prayer and constant watching thereunto. The ardent enthusiast does not discern the struggles of these silent workers; but the eye of Him who seeth the secrets of the heart, notices and regards with approval every effort put forth in lowliness and meekness. It requires the testing time to reveal the pure gold of love and faith in the character. When trials and perplexities come upon the church, then the steadfast zeal and warm affections of Christ's true followers are developed.

All who come within the sphere of his [the true religious man] influence perceive the beauty and fragrance of his Christian life, while he himself is unconscious of it, for it is in harmony with his habits and inclinations. He prays for divine light, and loves to walk in that light. It is his meat and drink to do the will of his heavenly Father. His life is hid with Christ in God; yet he does not boast of this, nor seem conscious of it. God smiles upon the humble and lowly ones who follow closely in the footsteps of the Master. Angels are attracted to them, and love to linger about their path. They may be passed by as unworthy of notice by those who claim exalted attainments and who delight in making prominent their good works, but heavenly angels bend lovingly over them and are as a wall of fire round about them.<sup>18</sup>

### **Daniel—An Example of a Sanctified Life**

The life of Daniel is an inspired illustration of what constitutes a sanctified character. It presents a lesson for all, and especially for the young. A strict compliance with the requirements of God is beneficial to the health of body and mind. In order to reach the highest standard of moral and intellectual attainments, it is necessary to seek wisdom and strength from God and to observe strict temperance in all the habits of life.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>The Sanctified Life, 11-15

<sup>19</sup>The Sanctified Life, 23

The more blameless the conduct of Daniel, the greater was the hatred excited against him by his enemies. They were filled with madness, because they could find nothing in his moral character or in the discharge of his duties upon which to base a complaint against him. “Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God.” [Daniel 6:5](#).

What a lesson is here presented for all Christians. The keen eyes of jealousy were fixed upon Daniel day after day; their watchings were sharpened by hatred; yet not a word or act of his life could they make appear wrong. And still he made no claim to sanctification, but he did that which was infinitely better—he lived a life of faithfulness and consecration.

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The decree goes forth from the king. Daniel is acquainted with the purpose of his enemies to ruin him. But he does not change his course in a single particular. With calmness he performs his accustomed duties, and at the hour of prayer he goes to his chamber, and with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he offers his petitions to the God of heaven. By his course of action he fearlessly declares that no earthly power has the right to come between him and his God and tell him to whom he should or should not pray. Noble man of principle! he stands before the world today a praiseworthy example of Christian boldness and fidelity. He turns to God with all his heart, although he knows that death is the penalty for his devotion.

“Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.” [Verse 16](#).

Early in the morning the monarch hastened to the den of lions, and cried, “Daniel, Oh Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?” [Verse 20](#). The voice of the prophet was heard in reply, “Oh king, live for ever. 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, Oh king, have I done no hurt.

“Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up

out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God.” [Verses 22, 23](#). Thus was the servant of God delivered. And the snare which his enemies had laid for his destruction proved to be their own ruin. At the command of the king they were cast into the den, and instantly devoured by the wild beasts.

As the time approached for the close of the seventy years’ captivity, Daniel’s mind became greatly exercised upon the prophecies of Jeremiah.

[54] Daniel does not proclaim his own fidelity before the Lord. Instead of claiming to be pure and holy, this honored prophet humbly identifies himself with the really sinful of Israel. The wisdom which God had imparted to him was as far superior to the wisdom of the great men of the world as the light of the sun shining in the heavens at noonday is brighter than the feeblest star. Yet ponder the prayer from the lips of this man so highly favored of Heaven. With deep humiliation, with tears and rending of heart, he pleads for himself and for his people. He lays his soul open before God, confessing his own unworthiness and acknowledging the Lord’s greatness and majesty.

As Daniel’s prayer is going forth, the angel Gabriel comes sweeping down from the heavenly courts to tell him that his petitions are heard and answered. This mighty angel has been commissioned to give him skill and understanding—to open before him the mysteries of future ages. Thus, while earnestly seeking to know and understand the truth, Daniel was brought into communion with Heaven’s delegated messenger.

In answer to his petition, Daniel received not only the light and truth which he and his people most needed, but a view of the great events of the future, even to the advent of the world’s Redeemer. Those who claim to be sanctified, while they have no desire to search the Scriptures or to wrestle with God in prayer for a clearer understanding of Bible truth, know not what true sanctification is.

Daniel talked with God. Heaven was opened before him. But the high honors granted him were the result of humiliation and earnest seeking. All who believe with the heart the word of God will hunger and thirst for a knowledge of His will. God is the author of truth. He

enlightens the darkened understanding and gives to the human mind power to grasp and comprehend the truths which He has revealed.

The great truths revealed by the world's Redeemer are for those who search for truth as for hid treasures. Daniel was an aged man. His life had been passed amid the fascinations of a heathen court, his mind cumbered with the affairs of a great empire. Yet he turns aside from all these to afflict his soul before God, and seek a knowledge of the purposes of the Most High. And in response to his supplications, light from the heavenly courts was communicated for those who should live in the latter days. With what earnestness, then, should we seek God, that He may open our understanding to comprehend the truths brought to us from heaven.

Daniel was a devoted servant of the Most High. His long life was filled up with noble deeds of service for his Master. His purity of character and unwavering fidelity are equaled only by his humility of heart and his contrition before God. We repeat, The life of Daniel is an inspired illustration of true sanctification.<sup>20</sup>

### God Tests Those Whom He Values

The fact that we are called upon to endure trial proves that the Lord Jesus sees in us something very precious, which He desires to develop. If He saw in us nothing whereby He might glorify His name He would not spend time in refining us. We do not take special pains in pruning brambles. Christ does not cast worthless stones into His furnace. It is valuable ore that He tests.<sup>21</sup>

To men whom God designs shall fill responsible positions, He in mercy reveals their hidden defects, that they may look within and examine critically the complicated emotions and exercises of their own hearts, and detect that which is wrong; thus they may modify their dispositions and refine their manners. The Lord in His providence brings men where He can test their moral powers and reveal their motives of action, that they may improve what is right in themselves and put away that which is wrong. God would have His servants become acquainted with the moral machinery of their own hearts. In order to bring this about, He often permits the fire of

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<sup>20</sup>The Sanctified Life, 43-52

<sup>21</sup>Testimonies for the Church 7:214

affliction to assail them that they may become purified. “But who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap: 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.” [Malachi 3:2, 3 4<sup>22</sup>](#) .

God leads His people on, step by step. He brings them up to different points calculated to manifest what is in the heart. Some endure at one point, but fall off at the next. At every advanced point the heart is tested and tried a little closer. If the professed people of God find their hearts opposed to this straight work, it should convince them that they have a work to do to overcome, if they would not be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord.<sup>23</sup>

Just as soon as we realize our inability to do God’s work and submit to be guided by His wisdom, the Lord can work with us. If we will empty the soul of self, He will supply all our necessities.<sup>24</sup>

### **Counsel to Those Who Seek Assurance of God’s Acceptance**

How are you to know that you are accepted of God? Study His word prayerfully. Lay it not aside for any other book. This 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. Do not neglect secret prayer, for it is the soul of religion. With earnest, fervent prayer, plead for purity of soul. Plead as earnestly, as eagerly, as you would for your mortal life, were it at stake. Remain before God until unutterable longings are begotten within you for salvation, and the sweet evidence is obtained of pardoned sin.<sup>25</sup>

Jesus has not left you to be amazed at the trials and difficulties you meet. He has told you all about them, and He has told you also not to be cast down and oppressed when trials come. Look to Jesus, your Redeemer, and be cheerful and rejoice. The trials hardest to

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<sup>22</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 4:84](#)

<sup>23</sup>1T 187

<sup>24</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 7:213](#)

<sup>25</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 1:163](#)

bear are those that come from our brethren, our own familiar friends; but even these trials may be borne with patience. Jesus is not lying in Joseph's new tomb. He has risen and has ascended to heaven, there to intercede in our behalf. We have a Saviour who so loved us that He died for us, that through Him we might have hope and strength and courage, and a place with Him upon His throne. He is able and willing to help you whenever you call upon Him.

Do you feel your insufficiency for the position of trust that you occupy? Thank God for this. The more you feel your weakness, the more you will be inclined to seek for a helper. "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you." [James 4:8](#). Jesus wants you to be happy, to be cheerful. He wants you to do your best with the ability that God has given you and then trust the Lord to help you and to raise up those who will be your helpers in carrying burdens.

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Let not the unkind speeches of men hurt you. Did not men say unkind things about Jesus? You err, and may sometimes give occasion for unkind remarks; but Jesus never did. He was pure, spotless, undefiled. Do not expect a better portion in this life than the Prince of glory had. When your enemies see that they can make you feel hurt, they will rejoice, and Satan will rejoice. Look to Jesus, and work with an eye single to His glory. Keep your heart in the love of God.<sup>26</sup>

### **Feelings Alone Are Not an Indication of Sanctification**

Happy feelings or the absence of joy is no evidence that a person is or is not sanctified. There is no such thing as instantaneous sanctification. True sanctification is a daily work, continuing as long as life shall last. Those who are battling with daily temptations, overcoming their own sinful tendencies, and seeking for holiness of heart and life, make no boastful claims of holiness. They are hungry and thirsting for righteousness. Sin appears to them exceedingly sinful.<sup>27</sup>

God does not give us up because of our sins. We may make mistakes and grieve His Spirit, but when we repent and come to Him with contrite hearts, He will not turn us away. There are hindrances

<sup>26</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:128, 129

<sup>27</sup>The Sanctified Life, 10

to be removed. Wrong feelings have been cherished, and there have been pride, self-sufficiency, impatience, and murmurings. All these separate us from God. Sins must be confessed; there must be a deeper work of grace in the heart. Those who feel weak and discouraged may become strong men of God and do noble work for the Master. But they must work from a high standpoint; they must be influenced by no selfish motives.

Some seem to feel that they must be on probation and must prove to the Lord that they are reformed, before they can claim His blessing. But these dear souls may claim the blessing even now. They must have His grace, the Spirit of Christ, to help their infirmities, or they cannot form a Christian character. Jesus loves to have us come to Him, just as we are—sinful, helpless, dependent.

Repentance, as well as forgiveness, is the gift of God through Christ. It is through the influence of the Holy Spirit that we are convicted of sin, and feel our need of pardon. None but the contrite are forgiven; but it is the grace of God that makes the heart penitent. He is acquainted with all our weaknesses and infirmities, and He will help us.<sup>28</sup> Darkness and discouragement will sometimes come upon the soul and threaten to overwhelm us, but we should not cast away our confidence. We must keep the eye fixed on Jesus, feeling [57] or no feeling. We should seek to faithfully perform every known duty, and then calmly rest in the promises of God.

At times a deep sense of our unworthiness will send a thrill of terror through the soul, but this is no evidence that God has changed toward us, or we toward God. No effort should be made to rein the mind up to a certain intensity of emotion. We may not feel today the peace and joy which we felt yesterday; but we should by faith grasp the hand of Christ, and trust Him as fully in the darkness as in the light.

By faith look upon the crowns laid up for those who shall overcome; listen to the exultant song of the redeemed, Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain and hast redeemed us to God! Endeavor to regard these scenes as real.

If we would permit our minds to dwell more upon Christ and the heavenly world, we should find a powerful stimulus and support

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<sup>28</sup>[Selected Messages 1:350, 351, 353](#)



in fighting the battles of the Lord. Pride and love of the world will lose their power as we contemplate the glories of that better land so soon to be our home. Beside the loveliness of Christ, all earthly attractions will seem of little worth.

Though Paul was at last confined in a Roman prison—shut away from the light and air of heaven, cut off from his active labors in the gospel, and momentarily expecting to be condemned to death—yet he did not yield to doubt or despondency. From that gloomy dungeon came his dying testimony, full of a sublime faith and courage that has inspired the hearts of saints and martyrs in all succeeding ages. His words fitly describe the results of that sanctification which we have in these pages endeavored to set forth: “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.” [2 Timothy 4:6-8](#).<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>The Sanctified Life, 89-96

## Chapter 7—God Has a Work for You to Do

The work of God in this earth can never be finished until the men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work and unite their efforts with those of ministers and church officers.<sup>30</sup>

The words “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,” [Mark 16:15](#) are spoken to each one of Christ’s followers. All who are ordained unto the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellow men. The same longing of soul that He felt for the saving of the lost is to be manifest in them. Not all can fill the same place, but for all there is a place and a work. All upon whom God’s blessings have been bestowed are to respond by actual service; every gift is to be employed for the advancement of His kingdom.<sup>31</sup>

Preaching is a small part of the work to be done for the salvation of souls. God’s Spirit convicts sinners of the truth, and He places them in the arms of the church. The ministers may do their part, but they can never perform the work that the church should do. God requires His church to nurse those who are young in faith and experience, to go to them, not for the purpose of gossiping with them, but to pray, to speak unto them words that are “like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”<sup>32</sup>

God has called His church in this day, as He called ancient Israel, to stand as a light in the earth. By the mighty cleaver of truth—the messages of the first, second, and third angels—He has separated them from the churches and from the world to bring them into a sacred nearness to Himself. He has made them the depositaries of His law and has committed to them the great truths of prophecy for this time. Like the holy oracles committed to ancient Israel, these are a sacred trust to be communicated to the world.

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<sup>30</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 9:117](#)

<sup>31</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 8:16](#)

<sup>32</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 4:69](#)

The three angels of [Revelation 14](#) represent the people who accept the light of God's messages and go forth as His agents to sound the warning throughout the length and breadth of the earth. Christ declares to His followers: "Ye are the light of the world." [Matthew 5:14](#). To every soul that accepts Jesus the cross of Calvary speaks: "Behold the worth of the soul: 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.'" [Mark 16:15](#). Nothing is to be permitted to hinder this work. It is the all-important work for time; it is to be far-reaching as eternity. The love that Jesus manifested for the souls of men in the sacrifice which He made for their redemption, will actuate all His followers.<sup>33</sup>

Christ accepts, oh, so gladly! every human agency that is surrendered to Him. He brings the human into union with the divine, that He may communicate to the world the mysteries of incarnate love. Talk it, pray it, sing it, fill the world with the message of His truth, and keep pressing on into the regions beyond.<sup>34</sup> [59]

### **Christ's True Followers Will Witness for Him**

Were every one of you a living missionary, the message for this time would speedily be proclaimed in all countries, to every people and nation and tongue.<sup>35</sup>

All who would enter the city of God must during their earthly life set forth Christ in their dealings. It is this that constitutes them the messengers of Christ, His witnesses. They are to bear a plain, decided testimony against all evil practices, pointing sinners to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. He gives to all who receive Him, power to become the sons of God. Regeneration is the only path by which we can enter the city of God. It is narrow, and the gate by which we enter is strait; but along it we are to lead men and women and children, teaching them that, in order to be saved, they must have a new heart and a new spirit. The old, hereditary traits of character must be overcome. The natural desires of the soul must be changed. All deception, all falsifying, all evilspeaking, must

<sup>33</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:455, 456](#)

<sup>34</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 9:30](#)

<sup>35</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:438](#)

be put away. The new life, which makes men and women Christlike, is to be lived.<sup>36</sup>

My brethren and sisters, do you desire to break the spell that holds you? Would you arouse from this sluggishness that resembles the torpor of death? Go to work, whether you feel like it or not. Engage in personal effort to bring souls to Jesus and the knowledge of the truth. In such labor you will find both a stimulus and a tonic; it will both arouse and strengthen. By exercise your spiritual powers will become more vigorous, so that you can with better success work out your own salvation. The stupor of death is upon many who profess Christ. Make every effort to arouse them. Warn, entreat, expostulate. Pray that the melting love of God may warm and soften their icebound natures. Though they may refuse to hear, your labor will not be lost. In the effort to bless others your own souls will be blessed.<sup>37</sup>

Let none feel that because they are uneducated they cannot take part in the Lord's work. God has a work for you to do. He has given to every man his work. You can search the Scriptures for yourselves. "The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." [Psalm 119:130](#). You can pray for the work. The prayer of the sincere heart, offered in faith, will be heard in heaven. And you are to work according to your ability.<sup>38</sup>

[60] Heavenly intelligences are waiting to co-operate with human instrumentalities, that they may reveal to the world what human beings may become and what, through their influence, they may accomplish for the saving of souls that are ready to perish. Christ calls upon us to labor patiently and perseveringly for the thousands perishing in their sins, scattered in all lands, like wrecks on a desert shore. Those who share in Christ's glory must share also in His ministry, helping the weak, the wretched, and the despondent.<sup>39</sup>

Every believer should be wholehearted in his attachment to the church. Its prosperity should be his first interest, and unless he feels under sacred obligations to make his connection with the church a benefit to it in preference to himself, it can do far better without

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<sup>36</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 9:23](#)

<sup>37</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:387](#)

<sup>38</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:433](#)

<sup>39</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 9:30, 31](#)

him. It is in the power of all to do something for the cause of God. There are those who spend a large amount for needless luxuries; they gratify their appetites, but feel it a great tax to contribute means to sustain the church. They are willing to receive all the benefit of its privileges, but prefer to leave others to pay the bills.<sup>40</sup>

The church of Christ may be fitly compared to an army. The life of every soldier is one of toil, hardship, and danger. On every hand are vigilant foes, led on by the prince of the powers of darkness, who never slumbers and never deserts his post. Whenever a Christian is off his guard, this powerful adversary makes a sudden and violent attack. Unless the members of the church are active and vigilant, they will be overcome by his devices. What if half the soldiers in an army were idling or asleep when ordered to be on duty; the result would be defeat, captivity, or death. Should any escape from the hands of the enemy, would they be thought worthy of a reward? No; they would speedily receive the sentence of death. And is the church of Christ careless or unfaithful, far more important consequences are involved. A sleeping army of Christian soldiers—what could be more terrible! What advance could be made against the world, who are under the control of the prince of darkness? Those who stand back indifferently in the day of battle, as though they had no interest and felt no responsibility as to the issue of the contest, might better change their course or leave the ranks at once.<sup>41</sup>

### **A Place for Each Member of the Family**

Women as well as men can engage in the work of hiding the truth where it can work out and be made manifest. They can take their place in the work at this crisis, and the Lord will work through them. If they are imbued with a sense of their duty, and labor under the influence of the Spirit of God, they will have just the self-possession required for this time. The Saviour will reflect upon these self-sacrificing women the light of His countenance, and this will give them a power that will exceed that of men. They can do in families a work that men cannot do, a work that reaches the inner life. They can come close to the hearts of those whom men cannot reach. Their

<sup>40</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:18

<sup>41</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:394

work is needed. Discreet and humble women can do a good work in explaining the truth to the people in their homes. The word of God thus explained will do its leavening work, and through its influence whole families will be converted.<sup>42</sup>

- [61] All can do something. In an effort to excuse themselves, some say: “My home duties, my children, claim my time and my means.” Parents, your children should be your helping hand, increasing your power and ability to work for the Master. Children are the younger members of the Lord’s family. They should be led to consecrate themselves to God, whose they are by creation and by redemption. They should be taught that all their powers of body, mind, and soul are His. They should be trained to help in various lines of unselfish service. Do not allow your children to be hindrances. With you the children should share spiritual as well as physical burdens. By helping others they increase their own happiness and usefulness.<sup>43</sup>

Our work for Christ is to begin with the family in the home. The education of the youth should be of a different order from that which has been given in the past. Their welfare demands far more labor than has been given them. There is no missionary field more important than this. By precept and example parents are to teach their children to labor for the unconverted. The children should be so educated that they will sympathize with the aged and afflicted and will seek to alleviate the sufferings of the poor and distressed. They should be taught to be diligent in missionary work; and from their earliest years self-denial and sacrifice for the good of others and the advancement of Christ’s cause should be inculcated, that they may be laborers together with God.<sup>44</sup>

### **Witnessing by Moving Into New Localities**

It is not the purpose of God that His people should colonize or settle together in large communities. The disciples of Christ are His representatives upon the earth, and God designs that they shall be scattered all over the country, in the towns, cities, and villages, as lights amidst the darkness of the world. They are to be missionaries

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<sup>42</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:128, 129

<sup>43</sup>Testimonies for the Church 7:63

<sup>44</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:429

for God, by their faith and works testifying to the near approach of the coming Saviour.

The lay members of our churches can accomplish a work which, as yet, they have scarcely begun. None should move into new places merely for the sake of worldly advantage; but where there is an opening to obtain a livelihood, let families that are well grounded in the truth enter, one or two families in a place, to work as missionaries. They should feel a love for souls, a burden of labor for them, and should make it a study how to bring them into the truth. They can distribute our publications, hold meetings in their homes, become acquainted with their neighbors, and invite them to come to these meetings. Thus they can let their light shine in good works.

Let the workers stand alone in God, weeping, praying, laboring for the salvation of their fellow men. Remember that you are running a race, striving for a crown of immortality. While so many love the praise of men more than the favor of God, let it be yours to labor in humility. Learn to exercise faith in presenting your neighbors before the throne of grace and pleading with God to touch their hearts. In this way effectual missionary work may be done. Some may be reached who would not listen to a minister or a colporteur. And those who thus labor in new places will learn the best ways of approaching the people and can prepare the way for other laborers.<sup>45</sup>

[62]

Visit your neighbors and show an interest in the salvation of their souls. Arouse every spiritual energy to action. Tell those whom you visit that the end of all things is at hand. The Lord Jesus Christ will open the door of their hearts and will make upon their minds lasting impressions.

Even while engaged in their daily employment, God's people can lead others to Christ. And while doing this they will have the precious assurance that the Saviour is close beside them. They need not think that they are left to depend on their own feeble efforts. Christ will give them words to speak that will refresh and encourage and strengthen poor, struggling souls who are in darkness. Their own faith will be strengthened as they realize that the Redeemer's

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<sup>45</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 8:244, 245](#)

promise is being fulfilled. Not only are they a blessing to others, but the work they do for Christ brings blessing to themselves.<sup>46</sup>

A great work can be done by presenting to the people the Bible just as it reads. Carry the word of God to every man's door, urge its plain statements upon every man's conscience, repeat to all the Saviour's command: "Search the Scriptures." [John 5:39](#). Admonish them to take the Bible as it is, to implore divine enlightenment, and then, when the light shines, to gladly accept each precious ray and fearlessly abide the consequences.<sup>47</sup>

Among the members of our churches there should be more house-to-house labor in giving Bible readings and distributing literature. A Christian character can be symmetrically and completely formed only when the human agent regards it as a privilege to work disinterestedly in the proclamation of the truth and to sustain the cause of God with means. We must sow beside all waters, keeping our souls in the love of God, working while it is day, and using the means the Lord has given us to do whatever duty comes next. Whatever our hands find to do, we are to do it with faithfulness; whatever sacrifice we are called upon to make, we are to make it cheerfully. As we sow beside all waters we shall realize that "he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." [2 Corinthians 9:6](#).<sup>48</sup>

### **Practical Manifestation of Religion**

[63] Anything less than active, earnest service for the Master gives the lie to our profession of faith. Only the Christianity that is revealed by earnest, practical work will make an impression upon those who are dead in trespasses and sins. Praying, humble, believing Christians, those who show by their actions that their greatest desire is to make known the saving truth which is to test all people, will gather a rich harvest of souls for the Master. There is no excuse for the faith of our churches to be so faint and feeble. "Turn you to the Stronghold, ye prisoners of hope." [Zechariah 9:12](#). There is strength for us in Christ. He is our Advocate before the Father. He dispatches His messengers to every part of His dominion to communicate His will

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<sup>46</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 9:38, 39](#)

<sup>47</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:388](#)

<sup>48</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 9:127](#)



to His people. He walks in the midst of His churches. He desires to sanctify, elevate, and ennoble His followers. The influence of those who truly believe in Him will be a savor of life in the world. He holds the stars in His right hand, and it is His purpose to let His light shine through these to the world. Thus He desires to prepare His people for higher service in the church above. He has given us a great work to do. Let us do it with accuracy and determination. Let us show in our lives what the truth has done for us.

It has cost self-denial, self-sacrifice, indomitable energy, and much prayer, to bring up the various missionary enterprises where they now stand. There is danger that some of those now coming upon the stage of action will rest content to be inefficient, feeling that there is now no need of so great self-denial and diligence, such hard and disagreeable labor, as the leaders in this message experienced; that times have changed; and that since there is now more means in the cause of God, it is not necessary for them to place themselves in such trying circumstances as many were called to meet in the rise of the message.

But were there the same diligence and self-sacrifice manifest at the present stage of the work as at its beginning, we should see a hundred times more than is now accomplished.<sup>49</sup>

Our profession is an exalted one. As Sabbathkeeping Adventists we profess to obey all God's commandments and to be looking for the coming of our Redeemer. A most solemn message of warning has been entrusted to God's faithful few. We should show by our words and works that we recognize the great responsibility laid upon us. Our light should shine so clearly that others can see that we glorify the Father in our daily lives; that we are connected with heaven and are joint heirs with Jesus Christ, that when He shall appear in power and great glory, we shall be like Him.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:417-419

<sup>50</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:16

## Chapter 8—“Here Am I, Lord, Send Me”

The end is near, stealing upon us stealthily, imperceptibly, like the noiseless approach of a thief in the night. May the Lord grant that we shall no longer sleep as do others, but that we shall watch and be sober. The truth is soon to triumph gloriously, and all who now choose to be laborers together with God will triumph with it. The time is short; the night soon cometh when no man can work. Let those who are rejoicing in the light of present truth, now make haste to impart the truth to others. The Lord is inquiring, “Whom shall I send?” Those who wish to sacrifice for the truth’s sake, are now to respond, “Here am I, Lord; send me.”

We have done only a small part of the evangelical work that God desires us to do among our neighbors and friends. In every city of our land there are those who know not the truth. And out in the broad world beyond the seas there are many new fields in which we must plow the ground and sow the seed.<sup>51</sup>

We are on the very verge of the time of trouble, and perplexities that are scarcely dreamed of are before us. A power from beneath is leading men to war against Heaven. Human beings have confederated with satanic agencies to make void the law of God. The inhabitants of the world are fast becoming as the inhabitants of the world in Noah’s day, who were swept away by the Flood, and as the inhabitants of Sodom, who were consumed by fire from heaven. The powers of Satan are at work to keep minds diverted from eternal realities. The enemy has arranged matters to suit his own purposes. Worldly business, sports, the fashions of the day—these things occupy the minds of men and women. Amusements and unprofitable reading spoil the judgment. In the broad road that leads to eternal ruin there walks a long procession. The world, filled with violence, reveling, and drunkenness, is converting the church. The law of God, the divine standard of righteousness, is declared to be of no effect.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>51</sup>“An Appeal to Ministers and Church Officers”

<sup>52</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 9:43, 44](#)

Are we to wait until the fulfillment of the prophecies of the end before we say anything concerning them? Of what value will our words be then? Shall we wait until God’s judgments fall upon the transgressor before we tell him how to avoid them? Where is our faith in the word of God? Must we see things foretold come to pass before we will believe what He has said? In clear, distinct rays light has come to us, showing us that the great day of the Lord is near at hand, “even at the doors.” Let us read and understand before it is too late.<sup>53</sup>

[65]

### **Your Talents Fit a Need**

The Lord has a place for everyone in His great plan. Talents that are not needed are not bestowed. Supposing that the talent is small. God has a place for it, and that one talent, if faithfully used, will do the very work God designs that it should do. The talents of the humble cottager are needed in the house-to-house labor and can accomplish more in this work than brilliant gifts.<sup>54</sup>

When men use their powers as God directs, their talents will increase, their ability will enlarge, and they will have heavenly wisdom in seeking to save the lost. But while the church members are listless and neglectful of their God-given responsibility to impart to others, how can they expect to receive the treasure of heaven? When professed Christians feel no burden to enlighten those in darkness, when they cease to impart grace and knowledge, they become less discerning, they lose their appreciation of the richness of the heavenly endowment; and, failing to value it themselves, they fail to realize the necessity of presenting it to others.

We see large churches gathered in different localities. Their members have gained a knowledge of the truth, and many are content to hear the word of life without seeking to impart light. They feel little responsibility for the progress of the work, little interest in the salvation of souls. They are full of zeal in worldly things, but they do not bring their religion into their business. They say: “Religion is religion, and business is business.” They believe that each has its proper sphere, but they say: “Let them be separated.”

<sup>53</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:20

<sup>54</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:37, 38

Because of neglected opportunities and abuse of privileges, the members of these churches are not growing “in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” [2 Peter 3:18](#). Therefore they are weak in faith, deficient in knowledge, and children in experience. They are not rooted and grounded in the truth. If they remain thus, the many delusions of the last days will surely deceive them, for they will have no spiritual eyesight to distinguish truth from error.<sup>55</sup>

### **God Desires to Bestow the Gift of the Holy Spirit**

When a special effort is put forth by laborers of experience in a community where our own people live, there rests upon the believers in that field a most solemn obligation to do all in their power to open the way for the Lord to work. They should search their hearts prayerfully, and clear the King’s highway by putting away every sin that would hinder them from co-operating with God and with their brethren.

In visions of the night, representations passed before me of a great reformatory movement among God’s people. Many were praising God.

[66] The sick were healed, and other miracles were wrought. A spirit of intercession was seen, even as was manifested before the great Day of Pentecost. Hundreds and thousands were seen visiting families and opening before them the word of God. Hearts were convicted by the power of the Holy Spirit, and a spirit of genuine conversion was manifest. On every side doors were thrown open to the proclamation of the truth. The world seemed to be lightened with the heavenly influence. Great blessings were received by the true and humble people of God. I heard voices of thanksgiving and praise, and there seemed to be a reformation such as we witnessed in 1844.<sup>56</sup>

God desires to refresh His people by the gift of the Holy Spirit, baptizing them anew in His love. There is no need for a dearth of the Spirit in the church. After Christ’s ascension the Holy Spirit came upon the waiting, praying, believing disciples with a fullness

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<sup>55</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:424](#)

<sup>56</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 9:125, 126](#)

and power that reached every heart. In the future the earth is to be lightened with the glory of God. A holy influence is to go forth to the world from those who are sanctified through the truth. The earth is to be encircled with an atmosphere of grace. The Holy Spirit is to work on human hearts, taking the things of God and showing them to men.<sup>57</sup>

The Lord is willing to do a great work for all who truly believe in Him. If the lay members of the church will arouse to do the work that they can do, going on a warfare at their own charges, each seeing how much he can accomplish in winning souls to Jesus, we shall see many leaving the ranks of Satan to stand under the banner of Christ. If our people will act upon the light that is given in these few words of instruction, we shall surely see of the salvation of God. Wonderful revivals will follow. Sinners will be converted, and many souls will be added to the church. When we bring our hearts into unity with Christ, and our lives into harmony with His work, the Spirit that fell on the disciples on the Day of Pentecost will fall on us.<sup>58</sup>

### **Danger in Delay**

In the visions of the night a very impressive scene passed before me. I saw an immense ball of fire fall among some beautiful mansions, causing their instant destruction. I heard someone say: “We knew that the judgments of God were coming upon the earth, but we did not know that they would come so soon.” Others, with agonized voices, said: “You knew! Why then did you not tell us? We did not know.” On every side I heard similar words of reproach spoken.

In great distress I awoke. I went to sleep again, and I seemed to be in a large gathering. One of authority was addressing the company, before whom was spread out a map of the world. He said that the map pictured God’s vineyard, which must be cultivated. As light from heaven shone upon anyone, that one was to reflect the light to others. Lights were to be kindled in many places, and from these lights still other lights were to be kindled. The words were repeated: “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost

[67]

<sup>57</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:40

<sup>58</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:246

his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden underfoot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an 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.” [Matthew 5:13-16](#).

Every day that passes brings us nearer the end. Does it bring us also near to God? Are we watching unto prayer? Those with whom we associate day by day need our help, our guidance. They may be in such a condition of mind that a word in season will be sent home by the Holy Spirit as a nail in a sure place. Tomorrow some of these souls may be where we can never reach them again. What is our influence over these fellow travelers? What effort do we make to win them to Christ?<sup>59</sup>

While the angels hold the four winds, we are to work with all our capabilities. We must bear our message without any delay. We must give evidence to the heavenly universe, and to men in this degenerate age, that our religion is a faith and a power of which Christ is the Author and His word the divine oracle. Human souls are hanging in the balance. They will either be subjects for the kingdom of God or slaves to the despotism of Satan. All are to have the privilege of laying hold of the hope set before them in the gospel, and how can they hear without a preacher? The human family is in need of a moral renovation, a preparation of character, that they may stand in God’s presence. There are souls ready to perish because of the theoretical errors which are prevailing, and which are calculated to counterwork the gospel message. Who will now fully consecrate themselves to become laborers together with God?<sup>60</sup>

Today a large part of those who compose our congregations are dead in trespasses and sins. They come and go like the door upon its hinges. For years they have complacently listened to the most solemn, soul-stirring truths, but they have not put them in practice. Therefore they are less and less sensible of the preciousness of truth. The stirring testimonies of reproof and warning do not arouse

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<sup>59</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 9:27](#)

<sup>60</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:21](#)

them to repentance. The sweetest melodies that come from God through human lips—justification by faith, and the righteousness of Christ—do not call forth from them a response of love and gratitude. Though the heavenly Merchantman displays before them the richest jewels of faith and love, though He invites them to buy of Him “gold tried in the fire,” and white raiment” that they may be clothed, and “eyesalve” that they may see, they steel their hearts against Him, and fail to exchange their lukewarmness for love and zeal. While making a profession, they deny the power of godliness. If they continue in this state, God will reject them. They are unfitting themselves to be members of His family.<sup>61</sup>

Let church members bear in mind that the fact that their names are registered on the church books will not save them. They must show themselves approved of God, workmen that need not be ashamed. Day by day they are to build their characters in accordance with Christ’s directions. They are to abide in Him, constantly exercising faith in Him. Thus they will grow up to the full stature of men and women in Christ—wholesome, cheerful, grateful Christians, led by God into clearer and still clearer light. If this is not their experience, they will be among those whose voices will one day be raised in the bitter lamentation: “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and my soul is not saved! Why did I not flee to the Stronghold for refuge? Why have I trifled with my soul’s salvation, and done despite to the Spirit of grace?”<sup>62</sup>

[68]

Brethren and sisters who have long claimed to believe the truth, I ask you individually, Have your practices been in harmony with the light, the privileges, and the opportunities granted you of heaven? This is a serious question. The Sun of Righteousness has risen upon the church, and it is the duty of the church to shine. It is the privilege of every soul to make advancement. Those who are connected with Christ will grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Son of God, to the full stature of men and women. If all who claim to believe the truth had made the most of their ability and opportunities to learn and to do, they would have become strong in Christ. Whatever their occupation—whether they were farmers, mechanics, teachers, or

<sup>61</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:426

<sup>62</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:48

pastors—if they had wholly consecrated themselves to God they would have become efficient workers for the heavenly Master.<sup>63</sup>

### **Workers to Train Church Members**

It is evident that all the sermons that have been preached have not developed a large class of self-denying workers. This subject is to be considered as involving the most serious results. Our future for eternity is at stake. The churches are withering up because they have failed to use their talents in diffusing light. Careful instruction should be given which will be as lessons from the Master, that all may put their light to practical use. Those who have the oversight of the churches should select members of ability and place them under responsibilities, at the same time giving them instruction as to how they may best serve and bless others.<sup>64</sup>

Mechanics, lawyers, merchants, men of all trades and professions, educate themselves that they may become masters of their business. Should the followers of Christ be less intelligent, and while professedly engaged in His service be ignorant of the ways and means to be employed? The enterprise of gaining everlasting life is above every earthly consideration. In order to lead souls to Jesus there must be a knowledge of human nature and a study of the human mind. Much careful thought and fervent prayer are required to know how to approach men and women upon the great subject of truth.<sup>65</sup>

[69] Just as soon as a church is organized, let the minister set the members at work. They will need to be taught how to labor successfully. Let the minister devote more of his time to educating than to preaching. Let him teach the people how to give to others the knowledge they have received. While the new converts should be taught to ask counsel from those more experienced in the work, they should also be taught not to put the minister in the place of God.

The greatest help that can be given our people is to teach them to work for God, and to depend on Him, not on the ministers. Let them

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<sup>63</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:423

<sup>64</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:431

<sup>65</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:67



learn to work as Christ worked. Let them join His army of workers and do faithful service for Him.<sup>66</sup>

Let the teachers lead the way in working among the people, and others, uniting with them, will learn from their example. One example is worth more than many precepts.<sup>67</sup>

Those who have the spiritual oversight of the church should devise ways and means by which an opportunity may be given to every member of the church to act some part in God’s work. This has not always been done in the past. Plans have not been fully carried out whereby the talent of all might be employed in active service. There are but few who realize how much has been lost because of this.

In every church there is talent, which, with the right kind of labor, might be developed to become a great help in this work. There should be a well-organized plan for the employment of workers to go into all our churches, large and small, to instruct the members how to labor for the upbuilding of the church, and also for unbelievers. It is training, education, that is needed. Let all set their hearts and minds to become intelligent in regard to the work for this time, qualifying themselves to do that for which they are best adapted.

That which is needed now for the upbuilding of our churches is the nice work of wise laborers to discern and develop talent in the church,—talent that can be educated for the Master’s service. Those who shall labor in visiting the churches should give the brethren and sisters instruction in practical methods of doing missionary work. Let there be a class for the training of the youth as well. Young men and women should be educated to become workers at home, in their own neighborhoods, and in the church.<sup>68</sup>

Heavenly angels have long been waiting for human agents—the members of the church—to co-operate with them in the great work to be done. They are waiting for you. So vast is the field, so comprehensive the design, that every sanctified heart will be pressed into service as an instrument of divine power.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>66</sup>Testimonies for the Church 7:19, 20

<sup>67</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 149

<sup>68</sup>“An Appeal to Ministers and Church Officers”

<sup>69</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:46

If Christians were to act in concert, moving forward as one, under the direction of one Power, for the accomplishment of one purpose, they would move the world.<sup>70</sup>

[70] The call to be given in “the highways” is to be proclaimed to all who have an active part in the world’s work, to the teachers and leaders of the people. Those who bear heavy responsibilities in public life—physicians and teachers, lawyers and judges, public officers and businessmen—should be given a clear, distinct message. 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?” [Mark 8:36, 37](#).

We talk and write much of the neglected poor; should not some attention be given also to the neglected rich? Many look upon this class as hopeless, and they do little to open the eyes of those who, blinded and dazed by the power of Satan, have lost eternity out of their reckoning. Thousands of wealthy men have gone to their graves unwarned because they have been judged by appearance and passed by as hopeless subjects. But, indifferent as they may appear, I have been shown that most of this class are soul-burdened. There are thousands of rich men who are starving for spiritual food. Many in official life feel their need of something which they have not. Few among them go to church, for they feel that they receive no benefit. The teaching they hear does not touch the soul. Shall we make no personal effort in their behalf?

Some will ask: Can we not reach them with publications? There are many who cannot be reached in this way. It is personal effort that they need. Are they to perish without a special warning? It was not so in ancient times. God’s servants were sent to tell those in high places that they could find peace and rest only in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Majesty of heaven came to our world to save lost, fallen humanity. His efforts included not merely the outcasts but those in places of high honor. Ingeniously He worked to obtain access to souls in the higher classes who knew not God and did not keep His commandments.

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<sup>70</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 9:221](#)

The same work was continued after Christ’s ascension. My heart is made very tender as I read of the interest manifested by the Lord in Cornelius. Cornelius was a man in high position, an officer in the Roman army, but he was walking in strict accordance with all the light he had received. The Lord sent a special message from heaven to him, and by another message directed Peter to visit him and give him light. It ought to be a great encouragement to us in our work to think of the compassion and tender love of God for those who are seeking and praying for light.

There are many who are represented to me as being like Cornelius, men whom God desires to connect with His church. Their sympathies are with the Lord’s commandment-keeping people. But the threads that bind them to the world hold them firmly. They have not the moral courage to take their position with the lowly ones. We are to make special efforts for these souls, who are in need of special labor because of their responsibilities and temptations.

From the light given me I know that a plain “Thus saith the Lord” should now be spoken to men who have influence and authority in the world. They are stewards to whom God has committed important trusts. If they will accept His call, God will use them in His cause....

There are some who are especially fitted to work for the higher classes. These should seek the Lord daily, making it a study how to reach these persons, not to have merely a casual acquaintance with them, but to lay hold of them by personal effort and living faith, manifesting a deep love for their souls, a real concern that they shall have a knowledge of the truth as it is in the word of God.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:78-81

## Chapter 9—The Publications of the Church

Our publishing work was established by the direction of God and under His special supervision. It was designed to accomplish a specific purpose. Seventh-day Adventists have been chosen by God as a peculiar people, separate from the world. By the great cleaver of truth He has cut them out from the quarry of the world and brought them into connection with Himself. He has made them His representatives and has called them to be ambassadors for Him in the last work of salvation. The greatest wealth of truth ever entrusted to mortals, the most solemn and fearful warnings ever sent by God to man, have been committed to them to be given to the world; and in the accomplishment of this work our publishing houses are among the most effective agencies. The publications sent forth from our printing houses are to prepare a people to meet God.<sup>72</sup>

If there is one work more important than another, it is that of getting our publications before the public, thus leading them to search the Scriptures. Missionary work—introducing our publications into families, conversing, and praying with and for them—is a good work and one which will educate men and women to do pastoral labor.<sup>73</sup>

Canvassing for our publications is an important and most profitable line of evangelistic work. Our publications can go to places where meetings cannot be held. In such places the faithful evangelistic canvasser takes the place of the living preacher. By the canvassing work the truth is presented to thousands who otherwise would never hear it. Canvassers must go out into various parts of the country. The importance of this work is fully equal to that of the ministry. The living preacher and the silent messenger are both required for the accomplishment of the great work before us.<sup>74</sup>

God has ordained the canvassing work as a means of presenting before the people the light contained in our books, and canvassers

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<sup>72</sup>Testimonies for the Church 7:138, 139

<sup>73</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:390

<sup>74</sup>Colporteur Ministry, 8

should be impressed with the importance of bringing before the world as fast as possible the books necessary for their spiritual education and enlightenment. This is the very work the Lord would have His people do at this time. All who consecrate themselves to God to work as canvassers are assisting to give the last message of warning to the world. We cannot too highly estimate this work; for were it not for the efforts of the canvasser, many would never hear the warning.<sup>75</sup>

Our publications should go everywhere. Let them be issued in many languages. The third angel's message is to be given through this medium and through the living teacher. You who believe the truth for this time, wake up. It is your duty now to bring in all the means possible to help those who understand the truth to proclaim it. Part of the money that comes in from the sale of our publications should be used to increase our facilities for the production of more literature that will open blind eyes and break up the fallow ground of the heart.<sup>76</sup>

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I have been instructed that even where the people hear the message from the living preacher, the canvasser should carry on his work in co-operation with the minister; for though the minister may faithfully present the message, the people are not able to retain it all. The printed page is therefore essential, not only in awakening them to the importance of the truth for this time, but in rooting and grounding them in the truth and establishing them against deceptive error. Papers and books are the Lord's means of keeping the message for this time continually before the people. In enlightening and confirming souls in the truth the publications will do a far greater work than can be accomplished by the ministry of the word alone. The silent messengers that are placed in the homes of the people through the work of the canvasser will strengthen the gospel ministry in every way; for the Holy Spirit will impress minds as they read the books, just as He impresses the minds of those who listen to the preaching of the word. The same ministry of angels attends the books that contain the truth as attends the work of the minister.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>75</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:313

<sup>76</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:62

<sup>77</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:315, 316

Let wise plans be laid to help worthy students to earn their own schooling by handling these books, if they so desire. Those who earn sufficient means in this way to pay their way through a course at one of our training schools will gain a most valuable practical experience that will help fit them for pioneer missionary work in other fields.<sup>78</sup>

When church members realize the importance of the circulation of our literature, they will devote more time to this work.<sup>79</sup>

And as long as probation continues, there will be opportunity for the canvasser to work.<sup>80</sup>

Brethren and sisters, the Lord will be pleased if you will take hold heartily to sustain the publishing institution with your prayers and your means. Pray every morning and evening that it may receive God's richest blessing. Do not encourage criticism and complaining. Let no murmurs or complaints come from your lips; remember that angels hear these words. All must be led to see that these institutions are of God's appointment. Those who disparage them in order to serve their own interests must render an account to God. He designs that everything connected with His work shall be treated as sacred.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:79

<sup>79</sup>Colporteur Ministry, 7

<sup>80</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:478

<sup>81</sup>Testimonies for the Church 7:182, 183

## Chapter 10—Belief in a Personal God

[74]

It will be found in the day of final settlement that God was acquainted with everyone by name. There is an unseen witness to every action of the life. “I know thy works,” says He that “walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.” [Revelation 2:1](#). It is known what opportunities have been slighted, how untiring have been the efforts of the Good Shepherd to search out those who were wandering in crooked ways, and to bring them back to the path of safety and peace. Again and again God has called after the pleasure lovers; again and again He has flashed the light of His word across their path, that they might see their peril, and escape. But on and on they go, jesting and joking as they travel the broad road, until at length their probation is ended. God’s ways are just and equal; and when sentence is pronounced against those who are found wanting, every mouth will be stopped.<sup>82</sup>

The mighty power that works through all nature and sustains all things is not, as some men of science represent, merely an all-pervading principle, an actuating energy. God is a spirit; yet He is a personal being, for man was made in His image.

God’s handiwork in nature is not God Himself in nature. The things of nature are an expression of God’s character; by them we may understand His love, His power, and His glory; but we are not to regard nature as God. The artistic skill of human beings produces very beautiful workmanship, things that delight the eye and these things give us something of the idea of the designer; but the thing made is not the man. It is not the work, but the workman, that is counted worthy of honor. So, while nature is an expression of God’s thought, it is not nature but the God of nature that is to be exalted.

In the creation of man was manifest the agency of a personal God. When God had made man in His image, the human form was perfect in all its arrangements, but it was without life. Then a personal, self-existing God breathed into that form the breath of life,

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<sup>82</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:435](#)

and man became a living, breathing, intelligent being. All parts of the human organism were put in action. The heart, the arteries, the veins, the tongue, the hands, the feet, the senses, the perceptions of the mind—all began their work, and all were placed under law. Man became a living soul. Through Jesus Christ a personal God created man and endowed him with intelligence and power.

Our substance was not hid from Him when we were made in secret.

[75] His eyes saw our substance, yet being imperfect; and in His book all our members were written, when as yet there were none of them.

Above all lower orders of being, God designed that man, the crowning work of His creation, should express His thought and reveal His glory. But man is not to exalt himself as God.

### **God the Father Revealed in Christ**

As a personal being, God has revealed Himself in His Son. Jesus, the outshining of the Father's glory, "and the express image of His person," [Hebrews 1:3](#), was on earth found in fashion as a man. As a personal Saviour He came to the world. As a personal Saviour He ascended on high. As a personal Saviour He intercedes in the heavenly courts. Before the throne of God in our behalf ministers "One like unto the Son of man." [Revelation 1:13](#).

Christ, the Light of the world, veiled the dazzling splendor of His divinity and came to live as a man among men, that they might, without being consumed, become acquainted with their Creator. No man has seen God at any time except as He is revealed through Christ.

Christ came to teach human beings what God desires them to know. In the heavens above, in the earth, in the broad waters of the ocean, we see the handiwork of God. All created things testify to His power, His wisdom, His love. But not from the stars or the ocean or the cataract can we learn of the personality of God as it is revealed in Christ.

God saw that a clearer revelation than nature was needed to portray both His personality and His character. He sent His Son into the world to reveal, so far as could be endured by human sight, the nature and the attributes of the invisible God.



Had God desired to be represented as dwelling personally in the things of nature—in the flower, the tree, the spire of grass—would not Christ have spoken of this to His disciples when He was on the earth? But never in the teaching of Christ is God thus spoken of. Christ and the apostles taught clearly the truth of the existence of a personal God.

Christ revealed all of God that sinful human beings could bear without being destroyed. He is the divine Teacher, the Enlightener. Had God thought us in need of revelations other than those made through Christ and in His written word, He would have given them.

### **Christ Gives Men Power to Become Sons of God**

Let us study the words that Christ spoke in the upper chamber on the night before His crucifixion. He was nearing His hour of trial, and He sought to comfort His disciples, who were to be so severely tempted and tried.

The disciples did not yet understand Christ's words concerning His relation to God. Much of His teaching was still dark to them. They had asked many questions that revealed their ignorance of God's relation to them and to their present and future interests. Christ desired them to have a clearer, more distinct knowledge of God. [76]

When on the Day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples, they understood the truths that Christ had spoken in parables. The teachings that had been mysteries to them were made clear. The understanding that came to them with the outpouring of the Spirit made them ashamed of their fanciful theories. Their suppositions and interpretations were foolishness when compared with the knowledge of heavenly things which they now received. They were led by the Spirit, and light shone into their once darkened understanding.

But the disciples had not yet received the complete fulfillment of Christ's promise. They received all the knowledge of God that they could bear, but the complete fulfillment of the promise that Christ would show them plainly of the Father was yet to come. Thus it is today. Our knowledge of God is partial and imperfect. When the conflict is ended and the Man Christ Jesus acknowledges before

the Father His faithful workers, who, in a world of sin, have borne true witness for Him, they will understand clearly what now are mysteries to them.

Christ took with Him to the heavenly courts His glorified humanity. To those who receive Him, He gives power to become the sons of God, that at last God may receive as His, to dwell with Him throughout eternity. If, during this life, they are loyal to God, they will at last “see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads.” [Revelation 22:4](#). And what is the happiness of heaven but to see God? What greater joy could come to the sinner saved by the grace of Christ than to look upon the face of God and know Him as Father?

### **God’s Individual Interests in His Children**

The Scriptures clearly indicate the relation between God and Christ, and they bring to view as clearly the personality and individuality of each.

God is the Father of Christ; Christ is the Son of God. To Christ has been given an exalted position. He has been made equal with the Father. All the counsels of God are opened to His Son.

This unity is expressed also in the seventeenth chapter of John, in the prayer of Christ for His disciples: “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.” [John 17:20-23](#).

[77] Wonderful statement! The unity that exists between Christ and His disciples does not destroy the personality of either. They are one in purpose, in mind, in character, but not in person. It is thus that God and Christ are one....

Our God has heaven and earth at His command, and He knows just what we need. We can see only a little way before us; “but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.” [Hebrews 4:13](#). Above the distractions of the earth He

sits enthroned; all things are open to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He orders that which His providence sees best.

Not even a sparrow falls to the ground without the Father's notice. Satan's hatred against God leads him to delight in destroying even the dumb creatures. It is only through God's protecting care that the birds are preserved to gladden us with their songs of joy. But He does not forget even the sparrows. "Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." [Matthew 10:31](#).<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>83</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:263-273

## Chapter 11—Christians to Represent God

It is God's purpose to manifest through His people the principles of His kingdom.

That in life and character they may reveal these principles, He desires to separate them from the customs, habits, and practices of the world. He seeks to bring them near to Himself, that He may make known to them His will.

The purpose which God seeks to accomplish through His people today is the same that He desired to accomplish through Israel when He brought them forth out of Egypt. By beholding the goodness, the mercy, the justice, and the love of God revealed in the church, the world is to have a representation of His character. And when the law of God is thus exemplified in the life, even the world will recognize the superiority of those who love and fear and serve God above every other people on the earth.

The Lord has His eye upon every one of His people; He has His plans concerning each. It is His purpose that those who practice His holy precepts shall be a distinguished people. To the people of God today as well as to ancient Israel belong the words written by Moses through the Spirit of Inspiration: "Thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." [Deuteronomy 7:6](#).<sup>84</sup>

### The Forming of a Christlike Character

The religion of Christ never degrades the receiver; it never makes him coarse or rough, discourteous or self-important, passionate or hardhearted. On the contrary, it refines the taste, sanctifies the judgment, and purifies and ennobles the thoughts, bringing them into captivity to Christ. God's ideal for His children is higher than

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<sup>84</sup>T 9, 12

the highest human thought can reach. He has given in His holy law a transcript of His character.

The ideal of Christian character is Christlikeness. There is opened before us a path of constant advancement. We have an object to gain, a standard to reach, that includes everything good and pure and noble and elevated. There should be continual striving and constant progress onward and upward toward perfection of character.<sup>85</sup>

We shall be individually, for time and eternity, what our habits make us. The lives of those who form right habits, and are faithful in the performance of every duty, will be as shining lights, shedding bright beams upon the pathway of others; but if habits of unfaithfulness are indulged, if lax, indolent, neglectful habits are allowed to strengthen, a cloud darker than midnight will settle on the prospects in this life and forever debar the individual from the future life.<sup>86</sup>

[79]

Blessed is he who heeds the words of eternal life. Guided by “the Spirit of truth,” he will be led into all truth. He will not be loved, honored, and praised by the world; but he will be precious in the sight of heaven. “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not.” 1 John 3:1 5<sup>87</sup>

### Live Courageously Today

The truth of God received into the heart is able to make you wise unto salvation. In believing and obeying it you will receive grace sufficient for the duties and trials of today. Grace for tomorrow you do not need. You should feel that you have only to do with today. Overcome for today; deny self for today; watch and pray for today; obtain victories in God for today. Our circumstances and surroundings, the changes daily transpiring around us, and the written word of God which discerns and proves all things—these are sufficient to teach us our duty and just what we ought to do, day by day. Instead of suffering your mind to run in a channel of thought

<sup>85</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:63, 64

<sup>86</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:452

<sup>87</sup>T 439

from which you will derive no benefit, you should be searching the Scriptures daily and doing those duties in daily life which may now be irksome to you, but which must be done by someone.<sup>88</sup>

Many fix their eyes upon the terrible wickedness existing around them, the apostasy and weakness on every side, and they talk of these things until their hearts are filled with sadness and doubt. They keep uppermost before the mind the masterly working of the archdeceiver and dwell upon the discouraging features of their experience, while they seem to lose sight of the heavenly Father's power and His matchless love. All this is as Satan would have it. It is a mistake to think of the enemy of righteousness as clothed with so great power, when we dwell so little upon the love of God and His might. We must talk of the mightiness of Christ. We are utterly powerless to rescue ourselves from the grasp of Satan; but God has appointed a way of escape. The Son of the Highest has strength to fight the battle for us, and "through Him that loved us" we may come off "more than conquerors."

[80] There is no spiritual strength for us in constantly brooding over our weakness and backslidings, and bemoaning the power of Satan. This great truth must be established as a living principle in our minds and hearts—the efficacy of the offering made for us; that God can and does save to the uttermost all who come unto Him complying with the conditions specified in His word. Our work is to place our will on the side of God's will. Then, through the blood of the atonement, we become partakers of the divine nature; through Christ we are children of God, and we have the assurance that God loves us even as He loved His Son. We are one with Jesus. We walk where Christ leads the way; He has power to dispel the dark shadows which Satan casts across our path; and, in place of darkness and discouragement, the sunlight of His glory shines into our hearts.

Brethren and sisters, it is by beholding that we become changed. By dwelling upon the love of God and our Saviour, by contemplating the perfection of the divine character and claiming the righteousness of Christ as ours by faith, we are to be transformed into the same image. Then let us not gather together all the unpleasant pictures—the iniquities and corruptions and disappointments, the evidences

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<sup>88</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 3:333](#)

of Satan's power—to hang in the halls of our memory, to talk over and mourn over until our souls are filled with discouragement. A discouraged soul is a body of darkness, not only failing himself to receive the light of God, but shutting it away from others. Satan loves to see the effect of the pictures of his triumphs, making human beings faithless and disheartened.<sup>89</sup>

### **Represent God by an Unselfish Life**

The sin which is indulged to the greatest extent, and which separates us from God and produces so many contagious spiritual disorders, is selfishness. There can be no returning to the Lord except by self-denial. Of ourselves we can do nothing; but, through God strengthening us, we can live to do good to others, and in this way shun the evil of selfishness. We need not go to heathen lands to manifest our desire to devote all to God in a useful, unselfish life. We should do this in the home circle, in the church, among those with whom we associate and with whom we do business. Right in the common walks of life is where self is to be denied and kept in subordination. Paul could say: "I die daily." It is the daily dying to self in the little transactions of life that makes us overcomers. We should forget self in the desire to do good to others. With many there is a decided lack of love for others. Instead of faithfully performing their duty, they seek rather their own pleasure.

In heaven none will think of self, nor seek their own pleasure; but all, from pure, genuine love, will seek the happiness of the heavenly beings around them. If we wish to enjoy heavenly society in the earth made new, we must be governed by heavenly principles here.<sup>90</sup>

I was shown that there was too much comparing ourselves among ourselves, taking fallible mortals for a pattern, when we have a sure, unerring pattern. We should not measure ourselves by the world, nor by the opinions of men, nor by what we were before we embraced the truth. But our faith and position in the world, as they now are, must be compared with what they would have been if our course had been continually onward and upward since we professed to be followers of Christ. This is the only safe comparison that can be

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<sup>89</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:741-745

<sup>90</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:132, 133

made. In every other there will be self-deception. If the moral character and spiritual state of God's people do not correspond with the blessings, privileges, and light which have been conferred upon them, they are weighed in the balance, and angels make the report, WANTING.<sup>91</sup>

### **The Unpardonable Sin**

What constitutes the sin against the Holy Ghost? It is willfully attributing to Satan the work of the Holy Spirit. For example, suppose that one is a witness of the special work of the Spirit of God. He has convincing evidence that the work is in harmony with the Scriptures, and the Spirit witnesses with his spirit that it is of God. Afterward, however, he falls under temptation; pride, self-sufficiency, or some other evil trait, controls him; and rejecting all the evidence of its divine character, he declares that that which he had before acknowledged to be the power of the Holy Spirit was the power of Satan. It is through the medium of His Spirit that God works upon the human heart; and when men willfully reject the Spirit and declare it to be from Satan, they cut off the channel by which God can communicate with them. By denying the evidence which God has been pleased to give them, they shut out the light which had been shining in their hearts, and as the result they are left in darkness. Thus the words of Christ are verified: "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" [Matthew 6:23](#). For a time, persons who have committed this sin may appear to be children of God; but when circumstances arise to develop character and show what manner of spirit they are of, it will be found that they are on the enemy's ground, standing under his black banner.<sup>92</sup>

### **Confessing or Denying Christ**

In our mingling in society, in families or in whatever relations of life we are placed, either limited or extended, there are many ways wherein we may acknowledge our Lord and many ways wherein we may deny Him. We may deny Him in our words, by speaking evil

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<sup>91</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 1:406](#)

<sup>92</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:634](#)



of others, by foolish talking, jesting and joking, by idle or unkind words, or by prevaricating, speaking contrary to truth. In our words we may confess that Christ is not in us. In our character we may deny Him by loving our ease, by shunning the duties and burdens of life which someone must bear if we do not, and by loving sinful pleasure. We may also deny Christ by pride of dress and conformity to the world, or by uncourteous behavior. We may deny Him by loving our own opinions and by seeking to maintain and justify self. We may also deny Him in allowing the mind to run in the channel of lovesick sentimentalism and to brood over our supposed hard lot and trials. No one can truly confess Christ before the world unless the mind and spirit of Christ live in him. It is impossible to communicate that which we have not. The conversation and the deportment should be a real and visible expression of grace and truth within. If the heart is sanctified, submissive, and humble, the fruits will be seen outwardly and will be a most effectual confession of Christ.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>93</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:331, 332

## Chapter 12—In the World but Not of the World

I was shown our danger, as a people, of becoming assimilated to the world rather than to the image of Christ. We are now upon the very borders of the eternal world, but it is the purpose of the adversary of souls to lead us to put far off the close of time. Satan will in every conceivable manner assail those who profess to be the commandment-keeping people of God and to be waiting for the second appearing of our Saviour in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. He will lead as many as possible to put off the evil day and become in spirit like the world, imitating its customs. I felt alarmed as I saw that the spirit of the world was controlling the hearts and minds of many who make a high profession of the truth. Selfishness and self-indulgence are cherished by them, but true godliness and sterling integrity are not cultivated.<sup>94</sup>

### Christian Integrity

In every business transaction be rigidly honest. However tempted, never deceive or prevaricate in the least matter. At times a natural impulse may bring temptation to diverge from the straight-forward path of honesty, but do not vary one hairsbreadth. If in any matter you make a statement as to what you will do, and afterward find that you have favored others to your own loss, do not vary a hairsbreadth from principle. Carry out your agreement.<sup>95</sup>

The Bible condemns in the strongest terms all falsehood, false dealing, and dishonesty. Right and wrong are plainly stated. But I was shown that God's people have placed themselves on the enemy's ground; they have yielded to his temptations and followed his devices until their sensibilities have become fearfully blunted. A slight deviation from truth, a little variation from the requirements of God, is thought to be, after all, not so very sinful, when pecuniary gain or

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<sup>94</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:306

<sup>95</sup>Child Guidance, 154

loss is involved. But sin is sin, whether committed by the possessor of millions or by the beggar in the streets. Those who secure property by false representations are bringing condemnation on their souls. All that is obtained by deceit and fraud will be only a curse to the receiver.<sup>96</sup>

He [one who utters falsehood or practices deception] loses his own self-respect. He may not be conscious that God sees him and is acquainted with every business transaction, that holy angels are weighing his motives and listening to his words, and that his reward will be according to his works; but if it were possible to conceal his wrongdoing from human and divine inspection, the fact that he himself knows it, is degrading to his mind and character. One act does not determine the character, but it breaks down the barrier, and the next temptation is more readily entertained, until finally a habit of prevarication and dishonesty in business is formed, and the man cannot be trusted.<sup>97</sup>

[84]

God wants men in His service, under His banner, to be strictly honest, unimpeachable in character, that their tongues shall not utter a semblance of untruth. The tongue must be true, the eyes must be true, the actions wholly and entirely such as God can commend. We are living in the sight of a holy God, who solemnly declares, "I know thy works." The divine eye is ever upon us. We cannot cover one act of unjust deal from God. The witness of God to our every action is a truth which but few realize.<sup>98</sup>

### **The Believer—A Better Man in Business**

An honest man, according to Christ's measurement, is one who will manifest unbending integrity. Deceitful weights and false balances, with which many seek to advance their interests in the world, are abomination in the sight of God. Yet many who profess to keep the commandments of God are dealing with false weights and false balances. When a man is indeed connected with God, and is keeping His law in truth, his life will reveal the fact; for all his actions will be in harmony with the teachings of Christ. He will not sell his

<sup>96</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:311

<sup>97</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:396

<sup>98</sup>Child Guidance, 152

honor for gain. His principles are built upon the sure foundation, and his conduct in worldly matters is a transcript of his principles. Firm integrity shines forth as gold amid the dross and rubbish of the world.

Deceit, falsehood, and unfaithfulness may be glossed over and hidden from the eyes of man, but not from the eyes of God. The angels of God, who watch the development of character and weigh moral worth, record in the books of heaven these minor transactions which reveal character. If a workman in the daily vocations of life is unfaithful and slights his work, the world will not judge incorrectly if they estimate his standard in religion according to his standard in business.

Belief in the near coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven will not cause the true Christian to become neglectful and careless of the ordinary business of life. The waiting ones who look for the soon appearing of Christ will not be idle, but diligent in business. Their work will not be done carelessly and dishonestly, but with fidelity, promptness, and thoroughness. Those who flatter themselves that careless inattention to the things of this life is an evidence of their spirituality and of their separation from the world are under a great deception. Their veracity, faithfulness, and integrity are tested and proved in temporal things. If they are faithful in that which is least they will be faithful in much.

I have been shown that here is where many will fail to bear the test. They develop their true character in the management of temporal concerns.

[85] They manifest unfaithfulness, scheming, dishonesty, in dealing with their fellow men. They do not consider that their hold upon the future, immortal life depends upon how they conduct themselves in the concerns of this life, and that the strictest integrity is indispensable to the formation of a righteous character. Dishonesty is ... the cause of lukewarmness on the part of many who profess to believe the truth. They are not connected with Christ and are deceiving their own souls. I am pained to make the statement that there is an alarming lack of honesty even among Sabbathkeepers.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>99</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:309-311

### **Business Alliances With the World**

Some have no tact at wise management of worldly matters. They lack the necessary qualifications, and Satan takes advantage of them. When this is the case, such should not remain in ignorance of their task. They should be humble enough to counsel with their brethren, in whose judgment they can have confidence, before they carry out plans. I was directed to this text: “Bear ye one another’s burdens.” Some are not humble enough to let those who have judgment calculate for them until they have followed their own plans, and have involved themselves in difficulties. Then they see the necessity of having the counsel and judgment of their brethren; but how much heavier the burden then than at first. Brethren should not go to law if it can be possibly avoided; for they thus give the enemy great advantage to entangle and perplex them. It would be better to make a settlement at some loss.

I saw that God was displeased with His people for becoming surety for unbelievers. I was directed to these texts: [Proverbs 22:26](#): “Be not thou one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts.” [Proverbs 11:15](#): “He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it: and he that hateth suretyship is sure.” Unfaithful stewards! They pledge that which belongs to another,—their heavenly Father,—and Satan stands ready to aid his children to wrench it out of their hands. Sabbathkeepers should not be in partnership with unbelievers. God’s people trust too much to the words of strangers, and ask their advice and counsel when they should not. The enemy makes them his agents, and works through them to perplex and take from God’s people.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>100</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:200, 201

## Chapter 13—The Bible

In the Scriptures thousands of gems of truth lie hidden from the surface seeker. The mine of truth is never exhausted. The more you search the Scriptures with humble hearts, the greater will be your interest, and the more you will feel like exclaiming with Paul: “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!” [Romans 11:33](#)<sup>101</sup>

Christ and His word are in perfect harmony. Received and obeyed, they open a sure path for the feet of all who are willing to walk in the light as Christ is in the light. If the people of God would appreciate His word, we should have a heaven in the church here below. Christians would be eager, hungry, to search the word. They would be anxious for time to compare scripture with scripture and to meditate upon the word. They would be more eager for the light of the word than for the morning paper, magazines, or novels. Their greatest desire would be to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of God. And as a result their lives would be conformed to the principles and promises of the word. Its instruction would be to them as the leaves of the tree of life. It would be in them a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. Refreshing showers of grace would refresh and revive the soul, causing them to forget all toil and weariness. They would be strengthened and encouraged by the words of inspiration.<sup>102</sup>

In its wide range of style and subjects the Bible has something to interest every mind and appeal to every heart. In its pages are found history the most ancient; biography the truest to life; principles of government for the control of the state, for the regulation of the household—principles that human wisdom has never equaled. It contains philosophy the most profound, poetry the sweetest and the most sublime, the most impassioned and the most pathetic. Immea-

<sup>101</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:266](#)

<sup>102</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 8:193](#)

surably superior in value to the productions of any human author are the Bible writings, even when thus considered; but of infinitely wider scope, of infinitely greater value, are they when viewed in their relation to the grand central thought. Viewed in the light of this thought, every topic has a new significance. In the most simply stated truths are involved principles that are as high as heaven and that compass eternity.<sup>103</sup>

Every day you should learn something new from the Scriptures. Search them as for hid treasures, for they contain the words of eternal life. Pray for wisdom and understanding to comprehend these holy writings. If you would do this you would find new glories in the word of God; you would feel that you had received new and precious light on subjects connected with the truth, and the Scriptures would be constantly receiving a new value in your estimation.<sup>104</sup>

[87]

The truths of the Bible, received, will uplift the mind from its earthliness and debasement. If the word of God were appreciated as it should be, both young and old would possess an inward rectitude, a strength of principle, that would enable them to resist temptation.<sup>105</sup>

### **Study Diligently and Systematically**

Parents, if you would educate your children to serve God and do good in the world, make the Bible your textbook. It exposes the wiles of Satan. It is the great elevator of the race, the reprover 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.<sup>106</sup>

“It is written” was the only weapon that Christ used when the tempter came with his deceptions. The teaching of Bible truth is the great and grand work which every parent should undertake. In a

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<sup>103</sup>Education, 125

<sup>104</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:266

<sup>105</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:319

<sup>106</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:322

pleasant, happy frame of mind place the truth as spoken by God before the children. As fathers and mothers, you can be object lessons to the children in the daily life by practicing patience, kindness, and love, by attaching them to yourself. Do not let them do as they please, but show them that your work is to practice the Word of God and to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Observe system in the study of the Scriptures in your families. Neglect anything of a temporal nature, ... but be sure that the soul is fed with the bread of life. It is impossible to estimate the good results of one hour or even half an hour each day devoted in a cheerful, social manner to the Word of God. Make the Bible its own expositor, bringing together all that is said concerning a given subject at different times and under varied circumstances. Do not break up your home class for callers or visitors. If they come in during the exercise, invite them to take part in it. Let it be seen that you consider it more important to obtain a knowledge of God's Word than to secure the gains or pleasures of the world.

If we would study the Bible diligently and prayerfully every day, we should every day see some beautiful truth in a new, clear, and forcible light.<sup>107</sup>

[88] 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 whole 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.<sup>108</sup>

### **Divine Enlightenment Is Promised the Reader**

The Word of God, like the character of its divine Author, presents mysteries which can never be fully comprehended by finite beings.

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<sup>107</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:510, 511

<sup>108</sup>Child Guidance, 515



It directs our minds to the Creator, who dwelleth “in the light which no man can approach unto.” [1 Timothy 6:16](#). It presents to us His purposes, which embrace all the ages of human history, and which will reach their fulfillment only in the endless cycles of eternity. It calls our attention to subjects of infinite depth and importance relating to the government of God and the destiny of man. The entrance of sin into the world, the incarnation of Christ, regeneration, the resurrection, and many other subjects presented in the Bible, are mysteries too deep for the human mind to explain or even to fully comprehend. But God has given us in the Scriptures sufficient evidence of their divine character, and we are not to doubt His word because we cannot understand all the mysteries of His providence.

If it were possible for created beings to attain to a full understanding of God and His works, then, having reached this point, there would be for them no further discovery of truth, no growth in knowledge, no further development of mind or heart. God would no longer be supreme; and men, having reached the limit of knowledge and attainment, would cease to advance. Let us thank God that it is not so. God is infinite; in Him are “all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” And to all eternity men may be ever searching, ever learning, and yet they can never exhaust the treasures of His wisdom, His goodness, and His power.

Without the guidance of the Holy Spirit we shall be continually liable to wrest the Scriptures or to misinterpret them. There is much reading of the Bible that is without profit and in many cases is a positive injury. When the word of God is opened without reverence and without prayer; when the thoughts and affections are not fixed upon God or in harmony with His will, the mind is clouded with doubt; and in the very study of the Bible, skepticism strengthens. The enemy takes control of the thoughts, and he suggests interpretations that are not correct.<sup>109</sup>

### **Love for Bible Study Is Not Natural**

Both old and young neglect the Bible. They do not make it their study, the rule of their life. Especially are the young guilty of this neglect. Most of them find time to read other books, but the Book

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<sup>109</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:699-705](#)

that points out the way to eternal life is not daily studied. Idle stories are attentively read, while the Bible is neglected. This Book is our guide to a higher, holier life. The youth would pronounce it the most interesting book they ever read had not their imagination been perverted by the reading of fictitious stories.<sup>110</sup>

As a people who have had great light, we are to be uplifting in our habits, in our words, in our domestic life and association. Give the Word its honored position as a guide in the home. Let it be regarded as the counselor in every difficulty, the standard of every practice. Will my brethren and sisters be convinced that there can never be true prosperity to any soul in the family circle unless the truth of God, the wisdom of righteousness, presides? Every effort should be made by fathers and mothers to bring their own minds up from the lazy habit of regarding the service of God as a burden. The power of the truth must be a sanctifying agency in the home.<sup>111</sup>

In their early years children are to be taught the claims of God's law and faith in Jesus our Redeemer to cleanse from the stains of sin. This faith must be taught day by day, by precept and example.<sup>112</sup>

### **Bible Study Strengthens the Intellect**

If the Bible were studied as it should be, men would become strong in intellect. The subjects treated upon in the Word of God, the dignified simplicity of its utterance, the noble themes which it presents to the mind, develop faculties in man which cannot otherwise be developed. In the Bible a boundless field is opened for the imagination. The student will come from a contemplation of its grand themes, from association with its lofty imagery, more pure and elevated in thought and feeling than if he had spent the time reading any work of mere human origin, to say nothing of those of a trifling character. Youthful minds fail to reach their noblest development when they neglect the highest source of wisdom—the Word of God. The reason why we have so few men of good mind, of stability and solid worth, is that God is not feared, God is not loved, the principles of religion are not carried out in the life as they should be.

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<sup>110</sup>[Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 138, 139](#)

<sup>111</sup>[Child Guidance, 508, 509](#)

<sup>112</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:329](#)

God would have us avail ourselves of every means of cultivating and strengthening our intellectual powers.... If the Bible were read more, if its truths were better understood, we should be a far more enlightened and intelligent people. Energy is imparted to the soul by searching its pages.<sup>113</sup>

The teaching of the Bible has a vital bearing upon man's prosperity in all the relations of this life. It unfolds the principles that are the cornerstone of a nation's prosperity—principles with which is bound up the well-being of society, and which are the safeguard of the family—principles without which no man can attain usefulness, happiness, and honor in this life, or can hope to secure the future, immortal life. There is no position in life, no phase of human experience, for which the teaching of the Bible is not an essential preparation.<sup>114</sup>

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### Christ in All the Bible

The power of Christ, the crucified Saviour, to give eternal life, should be presented to the people. We should show them that the Old Testament is as verily the gospel in types and shadows as the New Testament is in its unfolding power. The New Testament does not present a new religion; the Old Testament does not present a religion to be superseded by the New. The New Testament is only the advancement and unfolding of the Old.

Abel was a believer in Christ, and was as verily saved by His power as was Peter or Paul. Enoch was a representative of Christ as surely as was the beloved disciple John. Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. To him was committed the message of the second coming of Christ. "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all." [Jude 14, 15](#). The message preached by Enoch and his translation to heaven were a convincing argument to all who lived in his time. These things were an argument that Methuselah and Noah could use with power to show that the righteous could be translated.

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<sup>113</sup>[Child Guidance, 507](#)

<sup>114</sup>[Patriarchs and Prophets, 599](#)

That God who walked with Enoch was our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He was the light of the world then just as He is now. Those who lived then were not without teachers to instruct them in the path of life; for Noah and Enoch were Christians. The gospel is given in precept in Leviticus. Implicit obedience is required now, as then. How essential it is that we understand the importance of this word!

The question is asked: What is the cause of the dearth in the church? The answer is: We allow our minds to be drawn away from the word. If the word of God were eaten as the food for the soul, if it were treated with respect and deference, there would be no necessity for the many and repeated testimonies that are borne. The simple declarations of Scripture would be received and acted upon.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>115</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:392, 393

## Chapter 14—The Testimonies for the Church

[91]

As the end draws near and the work of giving the last warning to the world extends, it becomes more important for those who accept present truth to have a clear understanding of the nature and influence of the Testimonies, which God in His providence has linked with the work of the third angel's message from its very rise.

In ancient times God spoke to men by the mouth of prophets and apostles. In these days He speaks to them by the testimonies of His Spirit. There was never a time when God instructed His people more earnestly than He instructs them now concerning His will and the course that He would have them pursue.

Warnings and reproofs are not given to the erring among Seventh-day Adventists because their lives are more blameworthy than are the lives of professed Christians of the nominal churches...but because they have great light, and have by their profession taken their position as God's special, chosen people, having the law of God written in their hearts.

The messages given me for different individuals I often wrote out for them, in many cases doing this at their urgent request. As my work extended, this became an important and taxing part of my labors.

In a view given me about twenty years ago [1871], "I was then directed to bring out general principles, in speaking and in writing, and at the same time specify the dangers, errors, and sins of some individuals, that all might be warned, reproved, and counseled. I saw that all should search their own hearts and lives closely to see if they had not made the same mistakes for which others were corrected and if the warnings given for others did not apply to their own cases. If so, they should feel that the counsel and reproofs were given especially for them and should make as practical an application of them as though they were especially addressed to themselves.

God designs to test the faith of all who claim to be followers of Christ. He will test the sincerity of the prayers of all those who claim

to earnestly desire to know their duty. He will make duty plain. He will give all an ample opportunity to develop what is in their hearts.

The Lord reproveth and corrects the people who profess to keep His law. He points out their sins and lays open their iniquity because He wishes to separate all sin and wickedness from them, that they may perfect holiness in His fear. God rebukes, reproveth, and corrects them, that they may be refined, sanctified, elevated, and finally exalted to His own throne.<sup>116</sup>

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### To Point Men to the Bible

The written testimonies are not to give new light, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed. Man's duty to God and to his fellow man has been distinctly specified in God's word, yet but few of you are obedient to the light given. Additional truth is not brought out; but God has through the Testimonies simplified the great truths already given and in His own chosen way brought them before the people to awaken and impress the mind with them, that all may be left without excuse. The *Testimonies* are not to belittle the word of God, but to exalt it and attract minds to it, that the beautiful simplicity of truth may impress all.<sup>117</sup>

The Spirit was not given—nor can it ever be bestowed—to supersede the Bible; for the Scriptures explicitly state that the word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. Says the apostle John, “Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.” [1 John 4:1](#). And Isaiah 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.” [Isaiah 8:20](#).<sup>118</sup>

Brother J would confuse the mind by seeking to make it appear that the light God has given through the Testimonies is an addition to the Word of God, but in this he presents the matter in a false light. God has seen fit in this manner to bring the minds of His people to His word, to give them a clearer understanding of it. The word

<sup>116</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:654-662](#)

<sup>117</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:665](#)

<sup>118</sup>[The Great Controversy vii.](#)

of God is sufficient to enlighten the most beclouded mind and may be understood by those who have any desire to understand it. But notwithstanding all this, some who profess to make the Word of God their study are found living in direct opposition to its plainest teachings. Then, to leave men and women without excuse, God gives plain and pointed testimonies, bringing them back to the word that they have neglected to follow. The word of God abounds in general principles for the formation of correct habits of living, and the testimonies, general and personal, have been calculated to call their attention more especially to these principles.

I took the precious Bible and surrounded it with the several *Testimonies for the Church*, given for the people of God. Here, said I, the cases of nearly all are met. The sins they are to shun are pointed out. The counsel that they desire can be found here, given for other cases situated similarly to themselves. God has been pleased to give you line upon line and precept upon precept.

But there are not many of you that really know what is contained in the *Testimonies*. You are not familiar with the Scriptures. If you had made God's Word your study, with a desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection, you would not have needed the *Testimonies*. It is because you have neglected to acquaint yourselves with God's inspired Book that He has sought to reach you by simple, direct testimonies, calling your attention to the words of inspiration which you had neglected to obey, and urging you to fashion your lives in accordance with its pure and elevated teachings.<sup>119</sup>

### Judge the "Testimonies" by Their Fruits

[93]

Let the *Testimonies* be judged by their fruits. What is the spirit of their teaching? What has been the result of their influence? All who desire to do so can acquaint themselves with the fruits of these visions. For seventeen years God has seen fit to let them survive and strengthen against the opposition of Satan's forces and the influence of human agencies that have aided Satan in his work.

God is either teaching His church, reproofing their wrongs and strengthening their faith, or He is not. This work is of God, or it is

<sup>119</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:663-665](#)

not. God does nothing in partnership with Satan. My work ... bears the stamp of God or the stamp of the enemy. There is no halfway work in the matter. The *Testimonies* are of the Spirit of God, or of the devil. As the Lord has manifested Himself through the Spirit of prophecy, past, present, and future have passed before me. I have been shown faces that I had never seen, and years afterward I knew them when I saw them. I have been aroused from my sleep with a vivid sense of subjects previously presented to my mind; and I have written, at midnight, letters that have gone across the continent and, arriving at a crisis, have saved great disaster to the cause of God. This has been my work for many years. A power has impelled me to reprove and rebuke wrongs that I had not thought of. Is this work from above or from beneath.<sup>120</sup>

### **Satan's Aim Is to Cause Doubt**

In many cases the *Testimonies* are fully received, the sin and indulgence broken off, and reformation at once commences in harmony with the light God has given. In other instances sinful indulgences are cherished, the *Testimonies* are rejected, and many excuses which are untrue are offered to others as the reason for refusing to receive them. The true reason is not given. It is a lack of moral courage—a will, strengthened and controlled by the Spirit of God, to renounce hurtful habits.

Satan has ability to suggest doubts and to devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue, a mark of intelligence in them, to be unbelieving and to question and quibble. Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and a teachable spirit, and all should decide from the weight of evidence. God gives sufficient evidence for the candid mind to believe; but he who turns from the weight of evidence because there are a few things which he cannot make plain to his finite understanding will be left in the cold, chilling atmosphere of unbelief and questioning doubts, and will make shipwreck of faith.

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<sup>120</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:671



It is Satan's plan to weaken the faith of God's people in the *Testimonies*. Satan knows how to make his attacks. He works upon minds to excite jealousy and dissatisfaction toward those at the head of the work.

The gifts are next questioned; then, of course, they have but little weight, and instruction given through vision is disregarded. Next follows skepticism in regard to the vital points of our faith, the pillars of our position, then doubt as to the Holy Scriptures, and then the downward march to perdition. When the *Testimonies*, which were once believed, are doubted and given up, Satan knows the deceived ones will not stop at this; and he redoubles his efforts till he launches them into open rebellion, which becomes incurable and ends in destruction. By giving place to doubts and unbelief in regard to the work of God, and by cherishing feelings of distrust and cruel jealousies, they are preparing themselves for complete deception. They rise up with bitter feelings against the ones who dare to speak of their errors and reprove their sins. [94]

It is not alone those who openly reject the *Testimonies*, or who cherish doubt concerning them, that are on dangerous ground. To disregard light is to reject it.

If you lose confidence in the *Testimonies* you will drift away from Bible truth. I have been fearful that many would take a questioning, doubting position, and in my distress for your souls I would warn you. How many will heed the warning?<sup>121</sup>

### **Ignorance of the "Testimonies" Is No Excuse**

Many are going directly contrary to the light which God has given to His people, because they do not read the books which contain the light and knowledge in cautions, reproofs, and warnings. The cares of the world, the love of fashion, and the lack of religion have turned the attention from the light God has so graciously given, while books and periodicals containing error are traveling all over the country. Skepticism and infidelity are increasing everywhere. Light so precious, coming from the throne of God, is hid under a bushel. God will make His people responsible for this neglect. An account must be rendered to Him for every ray of light He has let shine upon

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<sup>121</sup> [Testimonies for the Church 5:672-680](#)

our pathway, whether it has been improved to our advancement in divine things or rejected because it was more agreeable to follow inclination.

The *Testimonies* should be introduced into every Sabbathkeeping family, and the brethren should know their value and be urged to read them. It was not the wisest plan to place these books at a low figure and have only one set in a church. They should be in the library of every family and be read again and again. Let them be kept where they can be read by many.<sup>122</sup>

I have been shown that unbelief in the testimonies of warning, encouragement, and reproof is shutting away the light from God's people. Unbelief is closing their eyes so that they are ignorant of their true condition. They think the testimony of the Spirit of God in reproof is uncalled for or that it does not mean them. Such are in the greatest need of the grace of God and spiritual discernment, that they may discover their deficiency in spiritual knowledge.

[95] Many who have backslidden from the truth assign as a reason for their course that they do not have faith in the *Testimonies*. The question now is: Will they yield their idol which God condemns, or will they continue in their wrong course of indulgence and reject the light God has given them reproving the very things in which they delight? The question to be settled with them is: Shall I deny myself and receive as of God the Testimonies which reprove my sins, or shall I reject the Testimonies because they reprove my sins?<sup>123</sup>

### Wrong Use of the "Testimonies"

The first number of the *Testimonies* ever published contains a warning against the injudicious use of the light which is thus given to God's people. I stated that some had taken an unwise course; when they had talked their faith to unbelievers, and the proof had been asked for, they had read from my writings instead of going to the Bible for proof. It was shown me that this course was inconsistent and would prejudice unbelievers against the truth. The *Testimonies* can have no weight with those who know nothing of their spirit. They should not be referred to in such cases.

<sup>122</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:681

<sup>123</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:674, 675

Other warnings concerning the use of the *Testimonies* have been given from time to time, as follows:

“Some of the preachers are far behind. They profess to believe the testimony borne, and some do harm by making them an iron rule for those who have had no experience in reference to them, but they fail to carry them out themselves. They have had repeated testimonies which they have utterly disregarded. The course of such is not consistent.”

“I saw that many have taken advantage of what God has shown in regard to the sins and wrongs of others. They have taken the extreme meaning of what has been shown in vision, and then have pressed it until it has a tendency to weaken the faith of many in what God has shown, and also to discourage and dishearten the church.”<sup>124</sup>

### Danger in Criticizing the “Testimonies”

In a recent dream I was brought before an assembly of people, some of whom were making efforts to remove the impression of a most solemn testimony of warning that I had given them. They said: “We believe Sister White’s testimonies; but when she tells us things that she has not directly seen in vision in the particular case under consideration, her words are of no more account to us than the words of any other person.” The Spirit of the Lord came upon me, and I arose and rebuked them in the name of the Lord.

Now if those to whom these solemn warnings are addressed say, “It is only Sister White’s individual opinion, I shall still follow my own judgment,” and if they continue to do the very things they were warned not to do, they show that they despise the counsel of God, and the result is just what the Spirit of God has shown me it would be—injury to the cause of God and ruin to themselves. Some who wish to strengthen their own position will bring forward from the *Testimonies* statements which they think will support their views, and will put the strongest possible construction upon them; but that which questions their course of action, or which does not coincide with their views, they pronounce Sister White’s opinion, denying its heavenly origin and placing it on a level with their own judgment.

[96]

<sup>124</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:669, 670

And now, brethren, I entreat you not to interpose between me and the people, and turn away the light which God would have come to them. Do not by your criticisms take out all the force, all the point and power, from the *Testimonies*. Do not feel that you can dissect them to suit your own ideas, claiming that God has given you ability to discern what is light from heaven and what is the expression of mere human wisdom. If the Testimonies speak not according to the word of God, reject them. Christ and Belial cannot be united. For Christ's sake do not confuse the minds of the people with human sophistry and skepticism, and make of none effect the work that the Lord would do. Do not, by your lack of spiritual discernment, make of this agency of God a rock of offense whereby many shall be caused to stumble and fall, "and be snared, and be taken."<sup>125</sup>

### How to Receive Reproof

Those who are reproofed by the Spirit of God should not rise up against the humble instrument. It is God, and not an erring mortal, who has spoken to save them from ruin. It is not pleasing to human nature to receive reproof, nor is it possible for the heart of man, unenlightened by the Spirit of God, to realize the necessity of reproof or the blessing it is designed to bring. As man yields to temptation, and indulges in sin, his mind becomes darkened. The moral sense is perverted. The warnings of conscience are disregarded, and its voice is less clearly heard. He gradually loses the power to distinguish between right and wrong, until he has no true sense or his standing before God. He may observe the forms of religion and zealously maintain its doctrines, while destitute of its spirit. His condition is that described by the True Witness: "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." [Revelation 3:17](#). When the Spirit of God, by message of reproof, declares this to be his condition, he cannot see that the message is true. Is he therefore to reject the warning? No.

God has given sufficient evidence, so that all who desire to do so may satisfy themselves as to the character of the *Testimonies*; and, having acknowledged them to be from God, it is their duty to accept

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<sup>125</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:687-691](#)

reproof, even though they do not themselves see the sinfulness of their course. If they fully realized their condition, what would be the need of reproof? Because they know it not, God mercifully sets it before them, so that they may repent and reform before it shall be too late. Those who despise the warning will be left in blindness to become self-deceived; but those who heed it, and zealously go about the work of separating their sins from them in order to have the needed graces, will be opening the door of their hearts that the dear Saviour may come in and dwell with them. Those who are most closely connected with God are the ones who know His voice when He speaks to them. Those who are spiritual discern spiritual things. Such will feel grateful that the Lord has pointed out their errors. [97]

David learned wisdom from God's dealings with him and bowed in humility beneath the chastisement of the Most High. The faithful portrayal of his true state by the prophet Nathan made David acquainted with his own sins and aided him to put them away. He accepted counsel meekly and humiliated himself before God. "The law of the Lord," he exclaims, "is perfect, converting the soul." [Psalm 19:7](#).

"If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye ... not sons." [Hebrews 12:8](#). Our Lord has said: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." [Revelation 3:19](#). "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." [Hebrews 12:11](#). Though bitter the discipline, it is appointed by a Father's tender love, "that we might be partakers of His holiness."<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>126</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:682, 683

## Chapter 15—The Holy Spirit

It is the privilege of every Christian, not only to look for, but to hasten the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Were all who profess His name bearing fruit to His glory, how quickly the whole world would be sown with the seed of the gospel. Quickly the last harvest would be ripened, and Christ would come to gather the precious grain.

My brethren and sisters, plead for the Holy Spirit, God stands back of every promise He has made. With your Bibles in your hands, say: “I have done as Thou hast said, I present Thy promise, ‘Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.’” Christ declares: “What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” “Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.” [Matthew 7:7](#); [Mark 11:24](#); [John 14:13](#).

Christ dispatches His messengers to every part of His dominion to communicate His will to His servants. He walks in the midst of His churches. He desires to sanctify, elevate, and ennoble His followers. The influence of those who believe in Him will be in the world a savor of life unto life. Christ holds the stars in His right hand, and it is His purpose to let His light shine forth through them to the world. Thus He desires to prepare His people for higher service in the church above. He has given us a great work to do. Let us do it faithfully. Let us show forth in our lives what divine grace can do for humanity.<sup>127</sup>

### Unity Must Precede the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit

Notice that it was after the disciples had come into perfect unity, when they were no longer striving for the highest place, that the Spirit was poured out. They were of one accord. All differences had

<sup>127</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 8:22, 23](#)

been put away. And the testimony borne of them after the Spirit had been given is the same. Mark the word: “The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul.” [Acts 4:32](#). The Spirit of Him who died that sinners might live animated the entire congregation of believers.

The disciples did not ask for a blessing for themselves. They were weighted with the burden of souls. The gospel was to be carried to the ends of the earth, and they claimed the endowment of power that Christ had promised. Then it was that the Holy Spirit was poured out, and thousands were converted in a day.

So it may be now. Let Christians put away all dissension and give themselves to God for the saving of the lost. Let them ask in faith for the promised blessing, and it will come. The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was “the former rain,” and glorious was the result. But the latter rain will be more abundant. What is the promise to those living in these last days? “Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even today do I declare that I will render double unto thee.” “Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.” [Zechariah 9:12; 10:1](#).<sup>128</sup>

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### **One’s Usefulness Depends Upon His Surrender to the Holy Spirit**

God does not ask us to do in our own strength the work before us. He has provided divine assistance for all the emergencies to which our human resources are unequal. He gives the Holy Spirit to help in every strait, to strengthen our hope and assurance, to illuminate our minds and purify our hearts.

Christ has made provision that His church shall be a transformed body, illumined with the light of heaven, possessing the glory of Immanuel. It is His purpose that every Christian shall be surrounded with a spiritual atmosphere of light and peace. There is no limit to the usefulness of the one who, putting self aside, makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart and lives a life wholly consecrated to God.

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<sup>128</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 8:20, 21](#)

What was the result of the outpouring of the Spirit upon the Day of Pentecost? The glad tidings of a risen Saviour were carried to the utmost bounds of the inhabited world. The hearts of the disciples were surcharged with a benevolence so full, so deep, so far-reaching, that it impelled them to go to the ends of the earth, testifying: “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” [Galatians 6:14](#). As they proclaimed the truth as it is in Jesus, hearts yielded to the power of the message. The church beheld converts flocking to her from all directions. Backsliders were reconverted. Sinners united with Christians in seeking the pearl of great price. Those who had been the bitterest opponents of the gospel became its champions. The prophecy was fulfilled: The weak shall be “as David,” and the house of David “as the angel of the Lord.” Every Christian saw in his brother the divine similitude of love and benevolence. One interest prevailed. One subject of emulation swallowed up all others. The only ambition of the believers was to reveal the likeness of Christ’s character and to labor for the enlargement of His kingdom.

To us today, as verily as to the first disciples, the promise of the Spirit belongs. God will today endow men and women with power from above, as He endowed those who on the Day of Pentecost heard the word of salvation. At this very hour His Spirit and His grace are for all who need them and will take Him at His word. <sup>129</sup>

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### **The Holy Spirit Will Abide Unto the End**

Christ declared that the divine influence of the Spirit was to be with His followers unto the end. But the promise is not appreciated as it should be; and therefore its fulfillment is not seen as it might be. The promise of the Spirit is a matter little thought of; and the result is only what might be expected—spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Minor matters occupy the attention, and the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in its infinite plenitude.

It is the absence of the Spirit that makes the gospel ministry so powerless. Learning, talent, eloquence, every natural or acquired

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<sup>129</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 8:19, 20](#)



endowment, may be possessed; but, without the presence of the Spirit of God, no heart will be touched, no sinner won to Christ. On the other hand, if they are connected with Christ, if the gifts of the Spirit are theirs, the poorest and most ignorant of His disciples will have a power that will tell upon hearts. God makes them channels for the outflowing of the highest influence in the universe.

Zeal for God moved the disciples to bear witness to the truth with mighty power. Should not this zeal fire our hearts with a determination to tell the story of redeeming love, of Christ and Him crucified? Is not the Spirit of God to come today, in answer to earnest, persevering prayer, and fill men with power for service? Why, then, is the church so weak and spiritless?<sup>130</sup>

When the Holy Spirit controls the minds of our church members, there will be seen in our churches a much higher standard in speech, in ministry, in spirituality, than is now seen. The church members will be refreshed by the water of life, and the laborers, working under one Head, even Christ, will reveal their Master in spirit, in word, in deed, and will encourage one another to press forward in the grand, closing work in which we are engaged. There will be a healthy increase of unity and love, which will bear testimony to the world that God sent His Son to die for the redemption of sinners. Divine truth will be exalted; and as it shines forth as a lamp that burneth, we shall understand it more and still more clearly.<sup>131</sup>

I was shown that if God's people make no efforts on their part, but wait for the refreshing to come upon them and remove their wrongs and correct their errors; if they depend upon that to cleanse them from filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and fit them to engage in the loud cry of the third angel, they will be found wanting. The refreshing or power of God comes only on those who have prepared themselves for it by doing the work which God bids them, namely, cleansing themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>130</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:21, 22

<sup>131</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:211

<sup>132</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:619

[101] **Chapter 16—Keep Clear God’s Connection With  
Man**

The brain nerves which communicate with the entire system are the only medium through which Heaven can communicate to man and affect his inmost life. Whatever disturbs the circulation of the electric currents in the nervous system lessens the strength of the vital powers, and the result is a deadening of the sensibilities of the mind.<sup>133</sup>

Intemperance of any kind benumbs the perceptive organs and so weakens the brain-nerve power that eternal things are not appreciated, but placed upon a level with the common. 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 the moral.<sup>134</sup>

Satan exults to see the human family plunging themselves deeper, and deeper, into suffering and misery. He knows that persons who have wrong habits, and unsound bodies, cannot serve God so earnestly, perseveringly, and purely as though sound. A diseased body affects the brain. With the mind we serve the Lord. The head is the capital of the body. Satan triumphs in the ruinous work he causes by leading the human family to indulge in habits which destroy themselves, and one another; for by this means he is robbing God of the service due Him.

Satan is constantly on the alert to bring the race fully under his control. His strongest hold on man is through the appetite, and this he seeks to stimulate in every possible way.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>133</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:347

<sup>134</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:50, 51

<sup>135</sup>Temperance, 13, 14

### **Satan's Most Destructive Device**

Satan gathered the fallen angels together to devise some way of doing the most possible evil to the human family. One proposition after another was made, till finally Satan himself thought of a plan. He would take the fruit of the vine, also wheat, and other things given by God as food, and would convert them into poisons, which would ruin man's physical, mental, and moral powers, and so overcome the senses that Satan should have full control. Under the influence of liquor, men would be led to commit crimes of all kinds. Through perverted appetite the world would be made corrupt. By leading men to drink alcohol, Satan would cause them to descend lower and lower in the scale.<sup>136</sup>

Satan is taking the world captive through the use of liquor and tobacco, tea and coffee. The God-given mind, which should be kept clear, is perverted by the use of narcotics. The brain is no longer able to distinguish correctly. The enemy has control. Man has sold his reason for that which makes him mad. He has no sense of what is right.<sup>137</sup>

[102]

Our Creator has bestowed His bounties upon man with a liberal hand. Were all these gifts of Providence wisely and temperately employed, poverty, sickness, and distress would be well-nigh banished from the earth. But alas, we see on every hand the blessings of God changed to a curse by the wickedness of men.

There is no class guilty of greater perversion and abuse of His precious gifts than are those who employ the products of the soil in the manufacture of intoxicating liquors. The nutritive grains, the healthful, delicious fruits, are converted into beverages that pervert the senses and madden the brain. As a result of the use of these poisons, thousands of families are deprived of the comforts and even the necessities of life, acts of violence and crime are multiplied, and disease and death hurry myriads of victims to a drunkard's grave.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>136</sup>Temperance, 12

<sup>137</sup>Evangelism, 529

<sup>138</sup>Gospel Workers, 385, 386

## Intoxicating Wine

The wine that Christ made from water at the marriage feast of Cana was the pure juice of the grape. This is the “new wine found in the cluster,” of which the Scripture says, “Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it.” [Isaiah 65:8](#).

“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging:  
 And whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.”  
 “Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions?  
 who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause?  
 Who hath redness of eyes?  
 They that tarry long at the wine;  
 They that go to seek mixed wine.  
 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red,  
 When it giveth his color in the cup,  
 When it moveth itself aright.  
 At the last it biteth like a serpent,  
 And stingeth like an adder.”

—[Proverbs 20:1](#); [Proverbs 23:29-32](#).

Never was traced by human hand a more vivid picture of the debasement and the slavery of the victim of intoxicating drink. Enthrilled, degraded, even when awakened to a sense of his misery, he has no power to break from the snare; he “will seek it yet again.” [Proverbs 23:35](#).

Intoxication is just as really produced by wine, beer, and cider as by stronger drinks. The use of these drinks awakens the taste for those that are stronger, and thus the liquor habit is established. Moderate drinking is the school in which men are educated for the drunkard’s career. Yet so insidious is the work of these milder stimulants that the highway to drunkenness is entered before the victim suspects his danger.

[103] No argument is needed to show the evil effects of intoxicants on the drunkard. The bleared, besotted wrecks of humanity—souls for whom Christ died, and over whom angels weep—are everywhere.

They are a blot on our boasted civilization. They are the shame and curse and peril of every land.<sup>139</sup>

### **Liquor Makes Man a Slave**

When the appetite for spirituous liquor is indulged, the man voluntarily places to his lips the draft which debases below the level of the brute him who was made in the image of God. Reason is paralyzed, the intellect is benumbed, the animal passions are excited, and then follow crimes of the most debasing character.<sup>140</sup>

Under the influence of the drink they take, they [men] are led to do things from which, if they had not tasted the maddening drug, they would have shrunk in horror. When they are under the influence of the liquid poison, they are in Satan's control. He rules them, and they co-operate with him.<sup>141</sup>

Thus he [Satan] works when he entices men to sell the soul for liquor. He takes possession of body, mind, and soul, and it is no longer the man, but Satan, who acts. And the cruelty of Satan is expressed as the drunkard lifts his hand to strike down the wife he has promised to love and cherish as long as life shall last. The deeds of the drunkard are an expression of Satan's violence.<sup>142</sup>

Men who use liquor make themselves the slaves of Satan. Satan tempts those who occupy positions of trust on railways, on steamships, those who have charge of the boats or cars laden with people flocking to idolatrous amusement, to indulge perverted appetite, and thus forget God and His laws.

They cannot see what they are about. Signals are made incorrectly, and cars collide with each other. Then comes horror, mutilation, and death. This condition of things will become more and more marked.

The drunkard's corrupt tendencies are transmitted to his posterity, and through them to the coming generations.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>139</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 330-333

<sup>140</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:561

<sup>141</sup>Temperance, 24

<sup>142</sup>Medical Ministry, 114

<sup>143</sup>Temperance, 34, 38

### **Tobacco a Slow Poison**

Tobacco is a slow, insidious, but most malignant poison. In whatever form it is used, it tells upon the constitution; it is all the more dangerous because its effects are slow and at first hardly perceptible. It excites and then paralyzes the nerves. It weakens and clouds the brain. Often it affects the nerves in a more powerful manner than does intoxicating drink. It is more subtle, and its effects are difficult to eradicate from the system. Its use excites a thirst for strong drink and in many cases lays the foundation for the liquor habit.

The use of tobacco is inconvenient, expensive, uncleanly, defiling to the user, and offensive to others.

[104] Among children and youth the use of tobacco is working untold harm. Boys begin the use of tobacco at a very early age. The habit thus formed when body and mind are especially susceptible to its effects, undermines the physical strength, dwarfs the body, stupefies the mind, and corrupts the morals.<sup>144</sup>

There is no natural appetite for tobacco in nature unless inherited. By the use of tea and coffee an appetite is formed for tobacco.

Food prepared with condiments and spices inflames the stomach, corrupts the blood, and paves the way to stronger stimulants.<sup>145</sup>

The highly seasoned flesh meats and the tea and coffee, which some mothers encourage their children to use, prepare the way for them to crave stronger stimulants, as tobacco. The use of tobacco encourages the appetite for liquor.<sup>146</sup>

### **Tobacco Smoke Harmful to Women and Children**

Women and children suffer from having to breathe the atmosphere that has been polluted by the pipe, the cigar, or the foul breath of the tobacco user. Those who live in this atmosphere will always be ailing.<sup>147</sup>

By inhaling the poisonous tobacco effluvia, which is thrown from the lungs and pores of the skin, the system of the infant is filled

<sup>144</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 327, 329

<sup>145</sup>Temperance, 56, 57

<sup>146</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:488, 489

<sup>147</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:440

with poison. While it acts upon some infants as a slow poison, and affects the brain, heart, liver, and lungs, and they waste away and fade gradually, upon others, it has a more direct influence, causing spasms, fits, paralysis, and sudden death. Every exhalation of the lungs of the tobacco slave [user] poisons the air about him.<sup>148</sup>

The unhealthful practices of past generations affect the children and youth of today. Mental inability, physical weakness, disordered nerves, and unnatural cravings are transmitted as a legacy from parents to children. And the same practices, continued by the children, are increasing and perpetuating the evil results.<sup>149</sup>

### **Tea and Coffee do Not Nourish the System**

Tea acts as a stimulant and, to a certain extent, produces intoxication. The action of coffee and many other popular drinks is similar. The first effect is exhilarating. The nerves of the stomach are excited; these convey irritation to the brain, and this in turn is aroused to impart increased action to the heart and short-lived energy to the entire system. Fatigue is forgotten; the strength seems to be increased. The intellect is aroused, the imagination becomes more vivid.

Because of these results, many suppose that their tea or coffee is doing them great good. But this is a mistake. Tea and coffee do not nourish the system. Their effect is produced before there has been time for digestion and assimilation, and what seems to be strength is only nervous excitement. When the influence of the stimulant is gone, the unnatural force abates, and the result is a corresponding degree of languor and debility.

The continued use of these nerve irritants is followed by headache, wakefulness, palpitation of the heart, indigestion, trembling, and many other evils; for they wear away the life forces. Tired nerves need rest and quiet instead of stimulation and overwork.<sup>150</sup> Some have backslidden and tampered with tea and coffee. Those

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<sup>148</sup>Temperance, 58, 59

<sup>149</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 328

<sup>150</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 326, 327

who break the laws of health will become blinded in their minds and break the law of God.<sup>151</sup>

### **The Use of Drugs**

A practice that is laying the foundation of a vast amount of disease and of even more serious evils is the free use of poisonous drugs. When attacked by disease, many will not take the trouble to search out the cause of their illness. Their chief anxiety is to rid themselves of pain and inconvenience.

By the use of poisonous drugs, many bring upon themselves lifelong illness, and many lives are lost that might be saved by the use of natural methods of healing. The poisons contained in many so-called remedies create habits and appetites that mean ruin to both soul and body. Many of the popular nostrums called patent medicines, and even some of the drugs dispensed by physicians, act a part in laying the foundation of the liquor habit, the opium habit, the morphine habit, that are so terrible a curse to society.<sup>152</sup>

Drug medication, as it is generally practiced, is a curse. Educate away from drugs. Use them less and less, and depend more upon hygienic agencies; then nature will respond to God's physicians—pure air, pure water, proper exercise, a clear conscience. Those who persist in the use of tea, coffee, and flesh meats will feel the need of drugs, but many might recover without one grain of medicine if they would obey the laws of health. Drugs need seldom be used.<sup>153</sup>

### **Seventh-day Adventists—An Example to the World**

As a people we profess to be reformers, to be light bearers in the world, to be faithful sentinels for God, guarding every avenue whereby Satan could come in with his temptations to pervert the appetite. Our example and influence must be a power on the side of reform. We must abstain from any practice which will blunt the conscience or encourage temptation. We must open no door that

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<sup>151</sup>Temperance, 80

<sup>152</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 126, 127

<sup>153</sup>Counsels on Health, 261



will give Satan access to the mind of one human being formed in the image of God.<sup>154</sup>

The only safe course is to touch not, taste not, handle not, tea, coffee, wines, tobacco, opium, and alcoholic drinks. The necessity for the men of this generation to call to their aid the power of the will, strengthened by the grace of God, in order to withstand the temptations of Satan and resist the least indulgence of perverted appetite is twice as great as it was several generations ago. But the present generation have less power of self-control than had those who lived then. Those who have indulged the appetite for these stimulants have transmitted their depraved appetites and passions to their children, and greater moral power is required to resist intemperance in all its forms. The only perfectly safe course to pursue is to stand firmly on the side of temperance and not venture in the path of danger.

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If the moral sensibilities of Christians were aroused upon the subject of temperance in *all things*, they could, by their example, commencing at their tables, help those who are weak in self-control, who are almost powerless to resist the cravings of appetite. If we could realize that the habits we form in this life will affect our eternal interests, that our eternal destiny depends upon strictly temperate habits, we would work to the point of strict temperance in eating and drinking. By our example and personal effort we may be the means of saving many souls from the degradation of intemperance, crime, and death. Our sisters can do much in the great work for the salvation of others by spreading their tables with only healthful, nourishing food. They may employ their precious time in educating the tastes and appetites of their children, in forming habits of temperance in all things, and in encouraging self-denial and benevolence for the good of others.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>154</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:360

<sup>155</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:488, 489

## Chapter 17—Purity of Heart and Life

God has given you a habitation to care for and preserve in the best condition for His service and glory. Your bodies are not your own. “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.” “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.”<sup>156</sup>

In this age of corruption when our adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour, I see the necessity of lifting my voice in warning. “Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.” There are many who possess brilliant talents who wickedly devote them to the service of Satan. What warning can I give to a people who profess to have come out from the world and to have left its works of darkness? to a people whom God has made the repositories of His law, but who, like the pretentious fig tree, flaunt their apparently flourishing branches in the very face of the Almighty, yet bear no fruit to the glory of God? Many of them cherish impure thoughts, unholy imaginations, unsanctified desires, and base passions. God hates the fruit borne upon such a tree. Angels, pure and holy, look upon the course of such with abhorrence, while Satan exults. Oh, that men and women would consider what is to be gained by transgressing God’s law! Under any and every circumstance, transgression is a dishonor to God and a curse to man. We must regard it thus, however fair its guise, and by whomsoever committed.<sup>157</sup>

The pure in heart shall see God. Every impure thought defiles the soul, impairs the moral sense, and tends to obliterate the impressions of the Holy Spirit. It dims the spiritual vision, so that men cannot

<sup>156</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:352, 353

<sup>157</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:146

behold God. The Lord may and does forgive the repenting sinner; but though forgiven, the soul is marred. All impurity of speech or of thought must be shunned by him who would have clear discernment of spiritual truth.<sup>158</sup> Some will acknowledge the evil of sinful indulgences, yet will excuse themselves by saying that they cannot overcome their passions. This is a terrible admission for any person to make who names Christ. “Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” [2 Timothy 2:19](#). Why is this weakness? It is because the animal propensities have been strengthened by exercise until they have gained the ascendancy over the higher powers. Men and women lack principle. They are dying spiritually because they have so long pampered their natural appetites that their power of self-government seems gone. The lower passions of their nature have taken the reins, and that which should be the governing power has become the servant of corrupt passion. The soul is held in lowest bondage. Sensuality has quenched the desire for holiness and withered spiritual prosperity.<sup>159</sup>

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### Defile Not the Temple of God

It is the special work of Satan in these last days to take possession of the minds of youth, to corrupt the thoughts and inflame the passions; for he knows that by so doing he can lead to impure actions, and thus all the noble faculties of the mind will become debased, and he can control them to suit his own purposes.<sup>160</sup>

My soul mourns for the youth who are forming characters in this degenerate age. I tremble for their parents also; for I have been shown that as a general thing they do not understand their obligations to train up their children in the way they should go. Custom and fashion are consulted, and the children soon learn to be swayed by these and are corrupted; while their indulgent parents are themselves benumbed and asleep to their danger. But very few of the youth are free from corrupt habits. They are excused from physical exercise to a great degree for fear they will overwork. The parents bear burdens themselves which their children should bear.

<sup>158</sup>[The Desire of Ages, 302](#)

<sup>159</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 2:348](#)

<sup>160</sup>[Child Guidance, 440](#)

Overwork is bad, but the result of indolence is more to be dreaded. Idleness leads to the indulgence of corrupt habits. Industry does not weary and exhaust one-fifth part as much as the pernicious habit of self-abuse. If simple, well-regulated labor exhausts your children, be assured, parents, there is something, aside from their labor, which is enervating their systems and producing a sense of constant weariness. Give your children physical labor, which will call into exercise the nerves and muscles. The weariness attending such labor will lessen their inclination to indulge in vicious habits.<sup>161</sup>

Avoid reading and seeing things which will suggest impure thoughts. Cultivate the moral and intellectual powers.<sup>162</sup>

Not only does God require you to control your thoughts, but also your passions and affections. Your salvation depends upon your governing yourself in these things. Passion and affection are powerful agents. If misapplied, if set in operation through wrong motives, if misplaced, they are powerful to accomplish your ruin and leave you a miserable wreck, without God and without hope.

If you indulge in vain imaginations, permitting your mind to dwell upon impure subjects, you are, in a degree, as guilty before God as if your thoughts were carried into action. All that prevents the action is the lack of opportunity. Day and night dreaming and castle-building are bad and exceedingly dangerous habits. When once established, it is next to impossible to break up such habits, and direct the thoughts to pure, holy, elevated themes. You will have to become a faithful sentinel over your eyes, ears, and all your senses if you would control your mind and prevent vain and corrupt thoughts from staining your soul. The power of grace alone can accomplish this most desirable work.<sup>163</sup>

Excessive study, by increasing the flow of blood to the brain, creates morbid excitability that tends to lessen the power of self-control, and too often gives sway to impulse or caprice. Thus the door is opened to impurity. The misuse or nonuse of the physical powers is largely responsible for the tide of corruption that is overspreading the world. "Pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness," are

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<sup>161</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:348, 349

<sup>162</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:410

<sup>163</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:561

as deadly foes to human progress in this generation as when they led to the destruction of Sodom.<sup>164</sup>

Indulgence of the baser passions will lead very many to shut their eyes to the light, for they fear that they will see sins which they are unwilling to forsake. All may see if they will. If they choose darkness rather than light, their criminality will be none the less.<sup>165</sup>

Death before dishonor or the transgression of God's law should be the motto of every Christian. As a people professing to be reformers, treasuring the most solemn, purifying truths of God's word, we must elevate the standard far higher than it is at the present time. Sin and sinners in the church must be promptly dealt with, that others may not be contaminated. Truth and purity require that we make more thorough work to cleanse the camp from Achans. Let those in responsible positions not suffer sin in a brother. Show him that he must either put away his sins or be separated from the church.<sup>166</sup>

The youth may have principles so firm that the most powerful temptations of Satan will not draw them away from their allegiance. Samuel was a child surrounded by the most corrupting influences. He saw and heard things that grieved his soul. The sons of Eli, who ministered in holy office, were controlled by Satan. These men polluted the whole atmosphere which surrounded them. Men and women were daily fascinated with sin and wrong, yet Samuel walked untainted. His robes of character were spotless. He did not fellowship, or have the least delight in, the sins which filled all Israel with fearful reports. Samuel loved God; he kept his soul in such close connection with heaven that an angel was sent to talk with him in reference to the sins of Eli's sons, which were corrupting Israel.<sup>167</sup>

### **The Result of Moral Pollution**

Some who make a high profession do not understand the sin of self-abuse and its sure results. Long-established habit has blinded their understanding. They do not realize the exceeding sinfulness

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<sup>164</sup>Education, 209

<sup>165</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:352

<sup>166</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:147

<sup>167</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:472-474

[110] of this degrading sin, which is enervating the system and destroying their brain nerve power. Moral principle is exceedingly weak when it conflicts with established habit. Solemn messages from heaven cannot forcibly impress the heart that is not fortified against the indulgence of this degrading vice. The sensitive nerves of the brain have lost their healthy tone by morbid excitation to gratify an unnatural desire for sensual indulgence.<sup>168</sup>

Moral pollution has done more than every other evil to cause the race to degenerate. It is practiced to an alarming extent and brings on disease of almost every description.

Parents do not generally suspect that their children understand anything about this vice. In very many cases the parents are the real sinners. They have abused their marriage privileges, and by indulgence have strengthened their animal passions. And as these have strengthened, the moral and intellectual faculties have become weak. The spiritual has been overborne by the brutish. Children are born with the animal propensities largely developed, the parents' own stamp of character having been given to them. Children born to these parents will almost invariably take naturally to the disgusting habits of secret vice. The sins of the parents will be visited upon their children because the parents have given them the stamp of their own lustful propensities.

Those who have become fully established in this soul-and-body-destroying vice can seldom rest until their burden of secret evil is imparted to those with whom they associate. Curiosity is at once aroused, and the knowledge of vice is passed from youth to youth, from child to child, until there is scarcely one to be found ignorant of the practice of this degrading sin.<sup>169</sup>

The practice of secret habits surely destroys the vital forces of the system. All unnecessary vital action will be followed by corresponding depression. Among the young the vital capital, the brain, is so severely taxed at an early age that there is a deficiency and great exhaustion, which leaves the system exposed to disease of various kinds.

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<sup>168</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:347

<sup>169</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:391, 392

If the practice is continued from the ages of fifteen and upward, nature will protest against the abuse she has suffered, and continues to suffer, and will make them pay the penalty for the transgression of her laws, especially from the ages of thirty to forty-five, by numerous pains in the system and various diseases, such as affection of the liver and lungs, neuralgia, rheumatism, affection of the spine, diseased kidneys, and cancerous humors. Some of nature's fine machinery gives way, leaving a heavier task for the remaining to perform, which disorders nature's fine arrangement; and there is often a sudden breaking down of the constitution, and death is the result.

To take one's life instantly is no greater sin in the sight of heaven than to destroy it gradually, but surely. Persons who bring upon themselves sure decay, by wrongdoing, will suffer the penalty here, and without a thorough repentance, will not be admitted into heaven hereafter any sooner than the one who destroys life instantly. The will of God establishes the connection between cause and its effects.

We do not include all the youth who are feeble as guilty of wrong habits. There are those who are pure-minded and conscientious who are sufferers from different causes over which they have no control.

Secret vice is the destroyer of high resolve, earnest endeavor, and strength of will to form a good religious character. All who have any true sense of what is embraced in being a Christian know that the followers of Christ are under obligation as His disciples to bring all their passions, their physical powers and mental faculties into perfect subordination to His will. Those who are controlled by their passions cannot be followers of Christ. They are too much devoted to the service of their master, the originator of every evil, to leave their corrupt habits and choose the service of Christ.<sup>170</sup>

[111]

When the young adopt vile practices while the spirit is tender, they will never obtain force to fully and correctly develop physical, intellectual, and moral character.<sup>171</sup>

The only hope for those who practice vile habits is to forever leave them if they place any value upon health here and salvation hereafter. When these habits have been indulged in for quite a length

<sup>170</sup>Child Guidance, 444-446

<sup>171</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:351

of time, it requires a determined effort to resist temptation and refuse the corrupt indulgence.<sup>172</sup>

The only sure safety for our children against every vicious practice is to seek to be admitted into the fold of Christ and to be taken under the watch care of the faithful and true Shepherd. He will save them from every evil, shield them from all dangers, if they will heed His voice. He says, “My sheep hear my voice, ... and they follow me.” In Christ they will find pasture, obtain strength and hope, and will not be troubled with restless longings for something to divert the mind and satisfy the heart. They have found the pearl of great price, and the mind is at peaceful rest. Their pleasures are of a pure, peaceful, elevated, heavenly character. They leave no painful reflections, no remorse. Such pleasures do not impair health or prostrate the mind, but are of a healthful nature.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>172</sup>Child Guidance, 464

<sup>173</sup>Child Guidance, 467



## Chapter 18—The Choosing of a Husband or Wife

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Marriage is something that will influence and affect your life both in this world and in the world to come. A sincere Christian will not advance his plans in this direction without the knowledge that God approves his course. He will not want to choose for himself, but will feel that God must choose for him. We are not to please ourselves, for Christ pleased not Himself. I would not be understood to mean that anyone is to marry one whom he does not love. This would be sin. But fancy and the emotional nature must not be allowed to lead on to ruin. God requires the whole heart, the supreme affections.

Those who are contemplating marriage should consider what will be the character and influence of the home they are founding. As they become parents, a sacred trust is committed to them. Upon them depends in a great measure the well-being of their children in this world, and their happiness in the world to come. To a great extent they determine both the physical and the moral stamp that the little ones receive. And upon the character of the home depends the condition of society; the weight of each family's influence will tell in the upward or the downward scale.

Great care should be taken by Christian youth in the formation of friendships and in the choice of companions. Take heed, lest what you now think to be pure gold turns out to be base metal. Worldly associations tend to place obstructions in the way of your service to God, and many souls are ruined by unhappy unions, either business or matrimonial, with those who can never elevate or ennoble.

Weigh every sentiment, and watch every development of character in the one with whom you think to link your life destiny. The step you are about to take is one of the most important in your life, and should not be taken hastily. While you may love, do not love blindly.

Examine carefully to see if your married life would be happy or inharmonious and wretched. Let the questions be raised, Will this union help me heavenward? Will it increase my love for God? And

will it enlarge my sphere of usefulness in this life? If these reflections present no drawback, then in the fear of God move forward.

The choice of a life companion should be such as best to secure physical, mental, and spiritual well-being for parents and for their children—such as will enable both parents and children to bless their fellow men and to honor their Creator.

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### **Qualities to Be Sought in a Prospective Wife**

Let a young man seek one to stand by his side who is fitted to bear her share of life's burdens, one whose influence will ennoble and refine him, and who will make him happy in her love.

“A prudent wife is from the Lord.” “The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.” “She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her,” saying, “Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.” He who gains such a wife “findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord.”

Here are things which should be considered: Will the one you marry bring happiness to your home? Is [she] an economist, or will she, if married, not only use all her own earnings, but all of yours to gratify a vanity, a love of appearance? Are her principles correct in this direction? Has she anything now to depend upon?... I know that to the mind of a man infatuated with love and thoughts of marriage these questions will be brushed away as though they were of no consequence. But these things should be duly considered, for they have a bearing upon your future life.

In your choice of a wife study her character. Will she be one who will be patient and painstaking? Or will she cease to care for your mother and father at the very time when they need a strong son to lean upon? And will she withdraw him from their society to carry out her plans and to suit her own pleasure, and leave the father and mother who, instead of gaining an affectionate daughter, will have lost a son?

### **Qualities to Be Sought in a Prospective Husband**

Before giving her hand in marriage, every woman should inquire whether he with whom she is about to unite her destiny is worthy. What has been his past record? Is his life pure? Is the love which he expresses of a noble, elevated character, or is it a mere emotional fondness? Has he the traits of character that will make her happy? Can she find true peace and joy in his affection? Will she be allowed to preserve her individuality, or must her judgment and conscience be surrendered to the control of her husband? ... Can she honor the Saviour's claims as supreme? Will body and soul, thoughts and purposes, be preserved pure and holy? These questions have a vital bearing upon the well-being of every woman who enters the marriage relation.

Let the woman who desires a peaceful, happy union, who would escape future misery and sorrow, inquire before she yields her affections, Has my lover a mother? What is the stamp of her character? Does he recognize his obligations to her? Is he mindful of her wishes and happiness? If he does not respect the honor his mother, will he manifest respect and love, kindness and attention, toward his wife? When the novelty of marriage is over, will he love me still? Will he be patient with my mistakes, or will he be critical, overbearing, and dictatorial? True affection will overlook many mistakes; love will not discern them. [114]

Let a young woman accept as a life companion only one who possesses pure, manly traits of character, one who is diligent, aspiring, and honest, one who loves and fears God.

Shun those who are irreverent. Shun one who is a lover of idleness; shun the one who is a scoffer of hallowed things. Avoid the society of one who uses profane language, or is addicted to the use of even one glass of liquor. Listen not to the proposals of a man who has no realization of his responsibility to God. The pure truth which sanctifies the soul will give you courage to cut yourself loose from the most pleasing acquaintance whom you know does not love and fear God, and knows nothing of the principles of true righteousness. We may always bear with a friend's infirmities and with his ignorance, but never with his vices.

### **Love Is a Precious Gift From Jesus**

Love is a precious gift, which we receive from Jesus. Pure and holy affection is not a feeling, but a principle. Those who are actuated by true love are neither unreasonable nor blind.

There is but little real, genuine, devoted, pure love. This precious article is very rare. Passion is termed love.

True love is a high and holy principle, altogether different in character from that love which is awakened by impulse, and which suddenly dies when severely tested.

Love is a plant of heavenly growth, and it must be fostered and nourished. Affectionate hearts, truthful, loving words, will make happy families and exert an elevating influence upon all who come within the sphere of their influence.

While pure love will take God into all its plans, and will be in perfect harmony with the Spirit of God, passion will be headstrong, rash, unreasonable, defiant of all restraint, and will make the object of its choice an idol. In all the deportment of one who possesses true love, the grace of God will be shown. Modesty, simplicity, sincerity, morality, and religion will characterize every step toward an alliance in marriage. Those who are thus controlled will not be absorbed in each other's society, at a loss of interest in the prayer meeting and the religious service. Their fervor for the truth will not die on account of the neglect of the opportunities and privileges that God has graciously given to them.

[115] That love which has no better foundation than mere sensual gratification will be headstrong, blind, and uncontrollable. Honor, truth, and every noble, elevated power of the mind are brought under the slavery of passions. The man who is bound in the chains of this infatuation is too often deaf to the voice of reason and conscience; neither argument nor entreaty can lead him to see the folly of his course.

True love is not a strong, fiery, impetuous passion. On the contrary, it is calm and deep in its nature. It looks beyond mere externals, and is attracted by qualities alone. It is wise and discriminating, and its devotion is real and abiding.

Love, lifted out of the realm of passion and impulse, becomes spiritualized, and is revealed in words and acts. A Christian must

have a sanctified tenderness and love in which there is no impatience or fretfulness; the rude, harsh manners must be softened by the grace of Christ.

### **Prayer and Bible Study Necessary to Make the Right Decision**

Instituted by God, marriage is a sacred ordinance and should never be entered upon in a spirit of selfishness. Those who contemplate this step should solemnly and prayerfully consider its importance and seek divine counsel that they may know whether they are pursuing a course in harmony with the will of God. The instruction given in God's word on this point should be carefully considered. Heaven looks with pleasure upon a marriage formed with an earnest desire to conform to the directions given in the Scripture. If there is any subject that should be considered with calm reason and unimpassioned judgment, it is the subject of marriage. If ever the Bible is needed as a counselor, it is before taking a step that binds persons together for life. But the prevailing sentiment is that in this matter the feelings are to be the guide, and in too many cases lovesick sentimentalism takes the helm and guides to certain ruin. It is here that the youth show less intelligence than on any other subject; it is here that they refuse to be reasoned with. The question of marriage seems to have a bewitching power over them. They do not submit themselves to God. Their senses are enchained, and they move forward in secretiveness, as if fearful that their plans would be interfered with by someone.

Many are sailing in a dangerous harbor. They need a pilot; but they scorn to accept the much-needed help, feeling that they are competent to guide their own bark, and not realizing that it is about to strike a hidden rock that may cause them to make shipwreck of faith and happiness.... Unless they are diligent students of that Word [the Bible], they will make grave mistakes which will mar their happiness and that of others, both for the present and the future life.

If men and women are in the habit of praying twice a day before they contemplate marriage, they should pray four times a day when such a step is anticipated. Marriage is something that will influence and affect your life, both in this world and in the world to come....

[116] The majority of the marriages of our time and the way in which they are conducted make them one of the signs of the last days. Men and women are so persistent, so headstrong, that God is left out of the question. Religion is laid aside, as if it had no part to act in this solemn and important matter.

### **The Counsel of God-fearing Parents**

When so much misery results from marriage, why will not the youth be wise? Why will they continue to feel that they do not need the counsel of older and more experienced persons? In business, men and women manifest great caution. Before engaging in any important enterprise, they prepare themselves for their work. Time, money, and much careful study are devoted to the subject, lest they shall make a failure in their undertaking.

How much greater caution should be exercised in entering the marriage relation—a relation which affects future generations and the future life? Instead of this, it is often entered upon with jest and levity, impulse and passion, blindness and lack of calm consideration. The only explanation of this is that Satan loves to see misery and ruin in the world, and he weaves this net to entangle souls. He rejoices to have these inconsiderate persons lose their enjoyment of this world and their home in the world to come.

Shall children consult only their own desires and inclinations irrespective of the advice and judgment of their parents? Some seem never to bestow a thought upon their parents' wishes or preferences, nor to regard their matured judgment. Selfishness has closed the door of their hearts to filial affection. The minds of the young need to be aroused in regard to this matter. The fifth commandment is the only commandment to which is annexed a promise, but it is held lightly and is even positively ignored by the lover's claim. Slighting a mother's love, dishonoring a father's care are sins that stand registered against many youth.

One of the greatest errors connected with this subject is that the young and inexperienced must not have their affections disturbed, that there must be no interference in their love experience. If there ever was a subject that needed to be viewed from every standpoint, it is this. The aid of the experience of others and a calm, careful

weighing of the matter on both sides are positively essential. It is a subject that is treated altogether too lightly by the great majority of people. Take God and your God-fearing parents into your counsel, young friends. Pray over the matter.

“Should parents,” you ask, “select a companion without regard to the mind or feelings of son or daughter?” I put the question to you as it should be: Should a son or daughter select a companion without first consulting the parents, when such a step must materially affect the happiness of parents if they have any affection for their children? And should that child, notwithstanding the counsel and entreaties of his parents, persist in following his own course? I answer decidedly: No; not if he never marries. The fifth commandment forbids such a course. “Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.” Here is a commandment with a promise which the Lord will surely fulfill to those who obey. Wise parents will never select companions for their children without respect to their wishes. [117]

Fathers and mothers should feel that a duty devolves upon them to guide the affections of the youth, that they may be placed upon those who will be suitable companions. They should feel it a duty, by their own teaching and example, with the assisting grace of God, to so mold the character of the children from their earliest years that they will be pure and noble and will be attracted to the good and true. Like attracts like; like appreciates like. Let the love for truth and purity and goodness be early implanted in the soul, and the youth will seek the society of those who possess these characteristics.

### **Cautions to Those Contemplating Marriage**

The youth trust altogether too much to impulse. They should not give themselves away too easily, nor be captivated too readily by the winning exterior of the lover. Courtship as carried on in this age is a scheme of deception and hypocrisy, with which the enemy of souls has far more to do than the Lord. Good common sense is needed here if anywhere; but the fact is, it has little to do in the matter.

Imagination, lovesick sentimentalism, should be guarded against as would be the leprosy. Very many of the young men and women

in this age of the world are lacking in virtue; therefore great caution is needed.

There is much of this low sentimentalism mingled with the religious experience of the young in this age of the world. My sister, God requires you to be transformed. Elevate your affections, I implore you. Devote your mental and physical powers to the service of your Redeemer, who has bought you. Sanctify your thoughts and feelings that all your works may be wrought in God.

Satan's angels are keeping watch with those who devote a large share of the night to courting. Could they have their eyes opened, they would see an angel making a record of their words and acts. The laws of health and modesty are violated. It would be more appropriate to let some of the hours of courtship before marriage run through the married life. But as a general thing, marriage ends all the devotion manifested during the days of courtship.

[118] Satan knows just what elements he has to deal with, and he displays his infernal wisdom in various devices to entrap souls to their ruin. He watches every step that is taken, and makes many suggestions, and often these suggestions are followed rather than the counsel of God's word. This finely woven, dangerous net is skillfully prepared to entangle the young and unwary. It may often be disguised under a covering of light; but those who become its victims pierce themselves through with many sorrows. As the result, we see wrecks of humanity everywhere.

### **Improper Conduct**

To trifle with hearts is a crime of no small magnitude in the sight of a holy God. And yet some will show preference for young ladies and call out their affections, and then go their way and forget all about the words they have spoken and their effect. A new face attracts them, and they repeat the same words, devote to another the same attentions.

This disposition will reveal itself in the married life. The marriage relation does not always make the fickle mind firm, the wavering steadfast and true to principle. They tire of constancy, and unholy thoughts will manifest themselves in unholy actions. How essential it is, then, that the youth so gird up the loins of their mind



and guard their conduct that Satan cannot beguile them from the path of uprightness.

A young man who enjoys the society and wins the friendship of a young lady unbeknown to her parents does not act a noble Christian part toward her or toward her parents. Through secret communications and meetings he may gain an influence over her mind, but in so doing he fails to manifest that nobility and integrity of soul which every child of God will possess. In order to accomplish their ends, they act a part that is not frank and open and according to the Bible standard, and prove themselves untrue to those who love them and try to be faithful guardians over them. Marriages contracted under such influences are not according to the word of God. He who would lead a daughter away from duty, who would confuse her ideas of God's plain and positive commands to obey and honor her parents, is not one who would be true to the marriage obligations.

"Thou shalt not steal" was written by the finger of God upon the tables of stone, yet how much underhand stealing of affections is practiced and excused! A deceptive courtship is maintained, private communications are kept up, until the affections of one who is inexperienced, and knows not whereunto these things may grow, are in a measure withdrawn from her parents and placed upon him who shows by the very course he pursues that he is unworthy of her love. The Bible condemns every species of dishonesty.

Professed Christians, whose lives are marked with integrity, and who seem sensible upon every other subject, make fearful mistakes here. They manifest a set, determined will that reason cannot change. They become so fascinated with human feelings and impulses that they have no desire to search the Bible and come into close relationship with God. When once the barriers of female modesty are removed, the basest licentiousness does not appear exceeding sinful. Alas, what terrible results of woman's influence for evil may be witnessed in the world today! Through the allurements of "strange women," thousands are incarcerated in prison cells, many take their own lives, and many cut short the lives of others. How true the words of Inspiration, "Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell."

Beacons of warning are placed on every side in the pathway of life to prevent men from approaching the dangerous, forbidden ground; but, notwithstanding this, multitudes choose the fatal path, contrary to the dictates of reason, regardless of God's law, and in defiance of His vengeance.

Those who would preserve physical health, a vigorous intellect, and sound morals must "flee ... youthful lusts." Those who will put forth zealous and decided efforts to check the wickedness that lifts its bold, presumptuous head in our midst are hated and maligned by all wrongdoers, but they will be honored and recompensed of God.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>174</sup>The Adventist Home, 43-57, 70-75

## Chapter 19—Marry Not an Unbeliever

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There is in the Christian world an astonishing, alarming indifference to the teaching of God's word in regard to the marriage of Christians with unbelievers. Many who profess to love and fear God choose to follow the bent of their own minds rather than take counsel of Infinite Wisdom. In a matter which vitally concerns the happiness and well-being of both parties for this world and the next, reason, judgment, and the fear of God are set aside; and blind impulse, stubborn determination are allowed to control.

Men and women who are otherwise sensible and conscientious close their ears to counsel; they are deaf to the appeals and entreaties of friends and kindred and of the servants of God. The expression of a caution or warning is regarded as impertinent meddling, and the friend who is faithful enough to utter a remonstrance is treated as an enemy. All this is as Satan would have it. He weaves his spell about the soul, and it becomes bewitched, infatuated. Reason lets fall the reins of self-control upon the neck of lust; unsanctified passion bears sway, until, too late, the victim awakens to a life of misery and bondage. This is not a picture drawn by the imagination, but a recital of facts. God's sanction is not given to unions which He has expressly forbidden.

The Lord commanded ancient Israel not to intermarry with the idolatrous nations around them: "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son." The reason is given. Infinite Wisdom, foreseeing the result of such unions, declares: "For they will turn away thy son from following Me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly." "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." In the New Testament are similar prohibitions concerning the marriage of Christians with the ungodly. The Apostle Paul, in his first letter

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to the Corinthians, declares: “The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord.” Again, in his second epistle, he writes: “Be ye 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 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.”

Never should God’s people venture upon forbidden ground. Marriage between believers and unbelievers is forbidden by God. But too often the unconverted heart follows its own desires, and marriages unsanctioned by God are formed. Because of this many men and women are without hope and without God in the world. Their noble aspirations are dead; by a chain of circumstances they are held in Satan’s net. Those who are ruled by passion and impulse will have a bitter harvest to reap in this life, and their course may result in the loss of their souls.

Those who profess the truth trample on the will of God in marrying unbelievers; they lose His favor and make bitter work for repentance. The unbelieving may possess an excellent moral character, but the fact that he or she has not answered to the claims of God and has neglected so great salvation is sufficient reason why such a union should not be consummated. The character of the unbelieving may be similar to that of the young man to whom Jesus addressed the words, “One thing thou lackest”; that was the one thing needful.

### **Can Two Walk Together Except They Be Agreed?**

The plea is sometimes made that the unbeliever is favorable to religion and is all that could be desired in a companion except in one thing—he is not a Christian. Although the better judgment of the believer may suggest the impropriety of a union for life with

an unbeliever, yet, in nine cases out of ten, inclination triumphs. Spiritual declension commences the moment the vow is made at the altar; religious fervor is dampened, and one stronghold after another is broken down, until both stand side by side under the black banner of Satan. Even in the festivities of the wedding the spirit of the world triumphs against conscience, faith, and truth. In the new home the hour of prayer is not respected. The bride and bridegroom have chosen each other and dismissed Jesus.

At first the unbelieving one may make no show of opposition in the new relation; but when the subject of Bible truth is presented for attention and consideration, the feeling at once arises: "You married me, knowing that I was what I am; I do not wish to be disturbed. From henceforth let it be understood that conversation upon your peculiar views is to be interdicted." If the believer should manifest any special earnestness in regard to his faith, it might seem like unkindness toward the one who has no interest in the Christian experience.

The believing one reasons that in his new relation he must concede somewhat to the companion of his choice. Social, worldly amusements are patronized. At first there is great reluctance of feeling in doing this, but the interest in the truth becomes less and less, and faith is exchanged for doubt and unbelief. No one would have suspected that the once firm, conscientious believer and devoted follower of Christ could ever become the doubting, vacillating person that he now is. Oh, the change wrought by that unwise marriage!

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It is a dangerous thing to form a worldly alliance. Satan well knows that the hour that witnesses the marriage of many young men and women closes the history of their religious experience and usefulness. They are lost to Christ. They may for a time make an effort to live a Christian life, but all their strivings are made against a steady influence in the opposite direction. Once it was a privilege and joy to them to speak of their faith and hope; but they become unwilling to mention the subject, knowing that the one with whom they have linked their destiny takes no interest in it. As the result, faith in the precious truth dies out of the heart, and Satan insidiously weaves about them a web of skepticism.

Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" "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.” But how strange the sight! While one of those so closely united is engaged in devotion, the other is indifferent and careless; while one is seeking the way to everlasting life, the other is in the broad road to death.

Hundreds have sacrificed Christ and heaven in consequence of marrying unconverted persons. Can it be that the love and fellowship of Christ are of so little value to them that they prefer the companionship of poor mortals? Is heaven so little esteemed that they are willing to risk its enjoyments for one who has no love for the precious Saviour?

### **The Christian’s Answer to the Unbeliever**

What ought every Christian to do when brought into the trying position which tests the soundness of religious principle? With a firmness worthy of imitation he should say frankly: “I am a conscientious Christian. I believe the seventh day of the week to be the Sabbath of the Bible. Our faith and principles are such that they lead in opposite directions. We cannot be happy together, for if I follow on to gain a more perfect knowledge of the will of God, I shall become more and more unlike the world and assimilated to the likeness of Christ. If you continue to see no loveliness in Christ, no attractions in the truth, you will love the world, which I cannot love, while I shall love the things of God, which you cannot love. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. Without spiritual discernment you will be unable to see the claims of God upon me, or to realize my obligations to the Master whom I serve; therefore you will feel that I neglect you for religious duties. You will not be happy; you will be jealous on account of the affections which I give to God, and I shall be alone in my religious belief. When your views shall change, when your heart shall respond to the claims of God, and you shall learn to love my Saviour, then our relationship may be renewed.”

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The believer thus makes a sacrifice for Christ which his conscience approves, and which shows that he values eternal life too highly to run the risk of losing it. He feels that it would be better to remain unmarried than to link his interest for life with one who chooses the world rather than Jesus, and who would lead away from the cross of Christ.

### **Better to Break an Unwise Engagement**

It is only in Christ that a marriage alliance can be safely formed. Human love should draw its closest bonds from divine love. Only where Christ reigns can there be deep, true, unselfish affection.

Even if an engagement has been entered into without a full understanding of the character of the one with whom you intend to unite, do not think that the engagement makes it a positive necessity for you to take upon yourself the marriage vow and link yourself for life to one whom you cannot love and respect. Be very careful how you enter into conditional engagements; but better, far better, break the engagement before marriage than separate afterward, as many do.

You may say, "But I have given my promise, and shall I now retract it?" I answer, If you have made a promise contrary to the Scriptures, by all means retract it without delay, and in humility before God repent of the infatuation that led you to make so rash a pledge. Far better take back such a promise, in the fear of God, than keep it, and thereby dishonor your Maker.

Let every step toward a marriage alliance be characterized by modesty, simplicity, sincerity, and an earnest purpose to please and honor God. Marriage affects the afterlife both in this world and in the world to come. A sincere Christian will make no plans that God cannot approve.

The heart yearns for human love, but this love is not strong enough, or pure enough, or precious enough to supply the place of the love of Jesus. Only in her Saviour can the wife find wisdom, strength, and grace to meet the cares, responsibilities, and sorrows of life. She should make Him her strength and her guide. Let woman give herself to Christ before giving herself to any earthly friend, and enter into no relation which shall conflict with this. Those who would find true happiness must have the blessing of Heaven upon all that they possess and all that they do. It is disobedience to God that fills so many hearts and homes with misery. My sister, unless you would have a home where the shadows are never lifted, do not unite yourself with one who is an enemy of God.

### **Counsel to One Who Alone Becomes Converted After Marriage**

[124] He who has entered the marriage relation while unconverted is by his conversion placed under stronger obligation to be faithful to his companion, however widely they may differ in regard to religious faith; yet the claims of God should be placed above every earthly relationship, even though trials and persecution may be the result. With the spirit of love and meekness, this fidelity may have an influence to win the unbelieving one.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>175</sup>The Adventist Home, 48, 49, 61-69



God made from the man a woman, to be a companion and helpmeet for him, to be one with him, to cheer, encourage, and bless him, he in his turn to be her strong helper. All who enter into matrimonial relations with a holy purpose—the husband to obtain the pure affections of a woman's heart, the wife to soften and improve her husband's character and give it completeness—fulfill God's purpose for them.

Christ came not to destroy this institution, but to restore it to its original sanctity and elevation. He came to restore the moral image of God in man, and He began His work by sanctioning the marriage relation.

He who gave Eve to Adam as a helpmeet performed His first miracle at a marriage festival. In the festal hall where friends and kindred rejoiced together, Christ began His public ministry. Thus He sanctioned marriage, recognizing it as an institution that He Himself had established. He ordained that men and women should be united in holy wedlock, to rear families whose members, crowned with honor, should be recognized as members of the family above.

### **The Wedding Should Be a Simple, Happy Occasion**

The divine love emanating from Christ never destroys human love, but includes it. By it human love is refined and purified, elevated and ennobled. Human love can never bear its precious fruit until it is united with the divine nature and trained to grow heavenward. Jesus wants to see happy marriages, happy firesides.

The Scriptures state that both Jesus and His disciples were called to this marriage feast [at Cana]. Christ has given Christians no sanction to say when invited to a marriage, We ought not to be present on so joyous an occasion. By attending this feast Christ taught that He would have us rejoice with those who do rejoice in the observance of His statutes. He never discouraged the innocent

festivities of mankind when carried on in accordance with the laws of Heaven. A gathering that Christ honored by His presence, it is right that His followers should attend. After attending this feast, Christ attended many others, sanctifying them by His presence and instruction. There is no reason why we should make great parade or display, even if the parties were perfectly suited to each other.

[126] It has always seemed so very inappropriate to me to see the marriage ordinance associated with hilarity and glee and a pretense of something. No. It is an ordinance ordained of God, to be looked upon with the greatest solemnity. As the family relation is formed here below, it is to give a demonstration of what they shall be, the family in heaven above. The glory of God is ever to be made first.<sup>176</sup>

### Counsel to Newlyweds

*My Dear Brother and Sister,*

You have united in a life long covenant. Your education in married life has begun. The first year of married life is a year of experience, a year in which husband and wife learn each other's different traits of character, as a child learns lessons in school. In this, the first year of your married life, let there be no chapters that will mar your future happiness.

To gain a proper understanding of the marriage relation is the work of a lifetime. Those who marry enter a school from which they are never in this life to be graduated. My brother, your wife's time and strength and happiness are now bound up with yours. Your influence over her may be a savor of life unto life or of death unto death. Be very careful not to spoil her life.

My sister, you are now to learn your first practical lessons in regard to the responsibilities of married life. Be sure to learn these lessons faithfully day by day. Do not give way to discontent or moodiness. Do not long for a life of ease and inactivity. Guard constantly against giving way to selfishness.

In your life union your affections are to be tributary to each other's happiness. Each is to minister to the happiness of the other. This is the will of God concerning you. But while you are to blend as one, neither of you is to lose his or her individuality in the other.

<sup>176</sup>[The Adventist Home, 99-101](#)

God is the owner of your individuality. Of Him you are to ask: What is right? What is wrong? How may I best fulfill the purpose of my creation? 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." [1 Corinthians 6:19, 20](#). Your love for that which is human is to be secondary to your love for God. The wealth of your affection is to flow forth to Him who gave His life for you. Living for God, the soul sends forth to Him its best and highest affections. Is the greatest outflow of your love toward Him who died for you? If it is, your love for each other will be after heaven's order.

Affection may be as clear as crystal and beautiful in its purity, yet it may be shallow because it has not been tested and tried. Make Christ first and last and best in everything. Constantly behold Him, and your love for Him will daily become deeper and stronger as it is submitted to the test of trial. And as your love for Him increases, your love for each other will grow deeper and stronger. "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." [2 Corinthians 3:18](#). You now have duties to perform that before your marriage you did not have. "Put on therefore, ... kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering." Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us." Give careful study to the following instruction: Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church.... Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it." [Colossians 3:12](#); [Ephesians 5:2, 22-25](#).

[127]

Marriage, a union for life, is a symbol of the union between Christ and His church. The spirit that Christ manifests toward the church is the spirit that husband and wife are to manifest toward each other.

Neither husband nor wife is to make a plea for rulership. The Lord has laid down the principle that is to guide in this matter. The husband is to cherish his wife as Christ cherishes the church. And the wife is to respect and love her husband. Both are to cultivate the spirit of kindness, being determined never to grieve or injure the other.

My brother and sister, both of you have strong will power. You may make this power a great blessing or a great curse to yourselves and to those with whom you come in contact. Do not try to compel each other to do as you wish. You cannot do this and retain each other's love. Manifestations of self-will destroy the peace and happiness of the home. Let not your married life be one of contention. If you do you will both be unhappy. Be kind in speech and gentle in action, giving up your own wishes. Watch well your words, for they have a powerful influence for good or for ill. Allow no sharpness to come into your voices. Bring into your united life the fragrance of Christ-likeness.

Before a man enters a union as close as the marriage relation, he should learn how to control himself and how to deal with others.

My brother, be kind, patient, forbearing. Remember that your wife accepted you as her husband, not that you might rule over her, but that you might be her helper. Never be overbearing and dictatorial. Do not exert your strong will power to compel your wife to do as you wish. Remember that she has a will and that she may wish to have her way as much as you wish to have yours. Remember, too, that you have the advantage of your wider experience. Be considerate and courteous. "The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits." [James 3:17](#).

Remember, my dear brother and sister, that God is love and that by His grace you can succeed in making each other happy, as in your marriage pledge you promised to do. And in the strength of the Redeemer you can work with wisdom and power to help some crooked life to be straight in God. What is there that Christ cannot do? He is perfect in wisdom, in righteousness, in love. Do not shut yourselves up to yourselves, satisfied to pour out all your affection upon each other. Seize every opportunity to contribute to the happiness of those around you, sharing with them your affection. Words of kindness, looks of sympathy, expressions of appreciation, [128] would to many a struggling, lonely one be as a cup of cold water to a thirsty soul. A word of cheer, an act of kindness, would go far to lighten the burdens that are resting heavily upon weary shoulders. It is in unselfish ministry that true happiness is found. And every word and deed of such service is recorded in the books of heaven

as done for Christ. “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren,” He declares, “ye have done it unto Me.” [Matthew 25:40](#).

Live in the sunshine of the Saviour’s love. Then your influence will bless the world. Let the Spirit of Christ control you. Let the law of kindness be ever on your lips. Forbearance and unselfishness mark the words and actions of those who are born again, to live the new life in Christ.<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>177</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 7:45-50](#)

## Chapter 21—A Happy, Successful Partnership

God has ordained that there should be perfect love and harmony between those who enter into the marriage relation. Let bride and bridegroom, in the presence of the heavenly universe, pledge themselves to love each other as God has ordained they should.... The wife is to respect and reverence her husband, and the husband is to love and cherish his wife.

Men and women, at the beginning of married life, should consecrate themselves to God.

However carefully and wisely marriage may have been entered into, few couples are completely united when the marriage ceremony is performed. The real union of the two in wedlock is the work of the after years.

As life with its burden of perplexity and care meets the newly wedded pair, the romance with which imagination so often invests marriage disappears. Husband and wife learn each other's character as it was impossible to learn it in their previous association. This is a most critical period in their experience. The happiness and usefulness of their whole future life depend upon their taking a right course now. Often they discern in each other unsuspected weaknesses and defects; but the hearts that love has united will discern excellencies also heretofore unknown. Let all seek to discover the excellencies rather than the defects. Often it is our own attitude, the atmosphere that surrounds ourselves, which determines what will be revealed to us in another.

There are many who regard the expression of love as a weakness, and they maintain a reserve that repels others. This spirit checks the current of sympathy. As the social and generous impulses are repressed, they wither, and the heart becomes desolate and cold. We should beware of this error. Love cannot long exist without expression. Let not the heart of one connected with you starve for the want of kindness and sympathy.

Let each give love rather than exact it. Cultivate that which is noblest in yourselves, and be quick to recognize the good qualities in each other. The consciousness of being appreciated is a wonderful stimulus and satisfaction. Sympathy and respect encourage the striving after excellence, and love itself increases as it stimulates to nobler aims.

### **The Blending of Two Lives**

[130]

Though difficulties, perplexities, and discouragements may arise, let neither husband nor wife harbor the thought that their union is a mistake or a disappointment. Determine to be all that it is possible to be to each other. Continue the early attentions. In every way encourage each other in fighting the battles of life. Study to advance the happiness of each other. Let there be mutual love, mutual forbearance. Then marriage, instead of being the end of love, will be as it were the very beginning of love. The warmth of true friendship, the love that binds heart to heart, is a foretaste of the joys of heaven.

All should cultivate patience by practicing patience. By being kind and forbearing, true love may be kept warm in the heart, and qualities will be developed that Heaven will approve.

Satan is ever ready to take advantage when any matter of variance arises, and by moving upon the objectionable, hereditary traits of character in husband or wife, he will try to cause the alienation of those who have united their interests in a solemn covenant before God. In the marriage vows they have promised to be as one, the wife covenanting to love and obey her husband, the husband promising to love and cherish his wife. If the law of God is obeyed, the demon of strife will be kept out of the family, and no separation of interests will take place, no alienation of affection will be permitted.

This is an important period in the history of the ones who have stood before you to unite their interests, their sympathies, their love, their labor, with each other in the ministry of the saving of souls. In the marriage relation there is a very important step taken—the blending of two lives into one. It is in accord with the will of God that man and wife should be linked together in His work, to carry it forward in a wholeness and a holiness. They can do this.

The blessing of God in the home where this union shall exist is as the sunshine of heaven, because it is the Lord's ordained will that man and wife should be linked together in holy bonds of union, under Jesus Christ, with Him to control, and His spirit to guide.

God wants the home to be the happiest place on earth, the very symbol of the home in heaven. Bearing the marriage responsibilities in the home, linking their interests with Jesus Christ, leaning upon His arm and His assurance, husband and wife may share a happiness in this union that angels of God commend.<sup>178</sup>

### **When Differences Arise**

[131]

It is a hard matter to adjust family difficulties, even when husband and wife seek to make a fair and just settlement in regard to their several duties, if they have failed to submit the heart to God. How can husband and wife divide the interests of their home life and still keep a loving, firm hold upon each other? They should have a united interest in all that concerns their homemaking, and the wife, if a Christian, will have her interest with her husband as his companion; for the husband is to stand as the head of the household.

Your spirit is wrong. When you take a position, you do not weigh the matter well and consider what must be the effect of your maintaining your views and in an independent manner weaving them into your prayers and conversation, when you know that your wife does not hold the same views that you do. Instead of respecting the feelings of your wife and kindly avoiding, as a gentleman would, those subjects upon which you know you differ, you have been forward to dwell upon objectionable points, and have manifested a persistency in expressing your views regardless of any around you. You have felt that others had no right to see matters differently from yourself. These fruits do not grow upon the Christian tree.

My brother, my sister, open the door of the heart to receive Jesus. Invite him into the soul-temple. Help each other to overcome the obstacles which enter the married life of all. You will have a fierce conflict to overcome your adversary the devil, and if you expect God to help you in this battle, you must both unite in deciding to overcome, to seal your lips against speaking any words of wrong,

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<sup>178</sup>[The Adventist Home, 101-107](#)



even if you have to fall upon your knees and cry aloud, “Lord, rebuke the adversary of my soul.”

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 regard the marriage relation as one of God’s sacred ordinances, guarded by His holy precept, will be controlled by the dictates of reason.

In the married life men and women sometimes act like undisciplined, perverse children. The husband wants his way, and the wife wants her way, and neither is willing to yield. Such a condition of things can bring only the greatest unhappiness. Both husband and wife should be willing to yield his or her way or opinion. There is no possibility of happiness while they both persists in doing as they please.<sup>179</sup>

Without mutual forbearance and love no earthly power can hold you and your husband in the bonds of Christian unity. Your companionship in the marriage relation should be close and tender, holy and elevated, breathing a spiritual power into your lives, that you may be everything to each other that God’s word requires. When you reach the condition that the Lord desires you to reach, you will find heaven below and God in your life.

[132]

Remember, my dear brother and sister, that God is love and that by His grace you can succeed in making each other happy, as in your marriage pledge you promised to do.<sup>180</sup>

<sup>179</sup>The Adventist Home, 118-121

<sup>180</sup>The Adventist Home, 112

By the grace of Christ you can gain the victory over self and selfishness. As you live His life, showing self-sacrifice at every step, constantly revealing a stronger sympathy for those in need of help, you will gain victory after victory. Day by day you will learn better how to conquer self and how to strengthen your weak points of character. The Lord Jesus will be your light, your strength, your crown of rejoicing, because you yield your will to His will.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>181</sup>Testimonies for the Church 7:49

## **Chapter 22—The Relationship Between Husband and Wife**

[133]

Those who regard the marriage relation as one of God's sacred ordinances, guarded by His holy precept, will be controlled by the dictates of reason.

Jesus did not enforce celibacy upon any class of men. He came not to destroy the sacred relationship of marriage, but to exalt it and restore it to its original sanctity. He looks with pleasure upon the family relationship where sacred and unselfish love bears sway.

### **Marriage Is Lawful and Holy**

There is in itself no sin in eating and drinking, or in marrying and giving in marriage. It was lawful to marry in the time of Noah, and it is lawful to marry now, if that which is lawful is properly treated and not carried to sinful excess. But in the days of Noah men married without consulting God or seeking His guidance and counsel.

The fact that all the relations of life are of a transitory nature should have a modifying influence on all we do and say. In Noah's day it was the inordinate, excessive love of that which in itself was lawful, when properly used, that made marriage sinful before God. There are many who are losing their souls in this age of the world by becoming absorbed in the thoughts of marriage and in the marriage relation itself.

The marriage relation is holy, but in this degenerate age it covers vileness of every description. It is abused and has become a crime which now constitutes one of the signs of the last days, even as marriages, managed as they were previous to the Flood, were then a crime. When the sacred nature and the claims of marriage are understood, it will even now be approved of Heaven; and the result will be happiness to both parties, and God will be glorified.

### **The Privileges of Marriage**

Those professing to be Christians should duly consider the result of every privilege of the marriage relation, and sanctified principle should be the basis of every action.

In very many cases the parents have abused their marriage privileges, and by indulgence have strengthened their animal passions.

[On another occasion Mrs. White speaks of the “privacy and privileges of the family relation.”]

[134] It is carrying that which is lawful to excess that makes it a grievous sin.

Many parents do not obtain the knowledge that they should in the married life. They are not guarded lest Satan take advantage of them and control their minds and their lives. They do not see that God requires them to control their married lives from any excesses. But very few feel it to be a religious duty to govern their passions. They have united themselves in marriage to the object of their choice and, therefore, reason that marriage sanctifies the indulgence of the baser passions. Even men and women professing godliness give loose rein to their lustful passions and have no thought that God holds them accountable for the expenditure of vital energy, which weakens their hold on life and enervates the entire system.

### **Practice Self-Denial and Temperance**

Oh, that I could make all understand their obligation to God to preserve the mental and physical organism in the best condition to render perfect service to their Maker! Let the Christian wife refrain, both in word and act, from exciting the animal passions of her husband. Many have no strength at all to waste in this direction. From their youth up they have weakened the brain and sapped the constitution by the gratification of animal passions. Self-denial and temperance should be the watchword in their married life.

We are under solemn obligations to God to keep the spirit pure and the body healthy, that we may be a benefit to humanity and render to God perfect service. The apostle utters these words of warning: “Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.” He urges us onward by telling

us that “every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things.” He exhorts all who call themselves Christians to present their bodies “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.” He says: “I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”

It is not pure love which actuates a man to make his wife an instrument to minister to his lust. It is the animal passions which clamor for indulgence. How few men show their love in the manner specified by the apostle: “Even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might [not pollute it, but] sanctify and cleanse it; ... that it should be holy and without blemish.” This is the quality of love in the marriage relation which God recognizes as holy. Love is a pure and holy principle, but lustful passion will not admit of restraint and will not be dictated to or controlled by reason. It is blind to consequences; it will not reason from cause to effect.

### **Satan Seeks to Weaken Self-Control**

Satan seeks to lower the standard of purity and to weaken the self-control of those who enter the marriage relation, because he knows that while the baser passions are in the ascendancy, the moral powers grow steadily weaker, and he need have no concern as to their spiritual growth. He knows, too, that in no way can he better stamp his own hateful image upon their offspring, and that he can thus mold their character even more readily than he can the character of the parents. [135]

Men and women, you will one day learn what is lust and the result of its gratification. Passion of just as base a quality may be found in the marriage relation as outside of it.

What is the result of giving loose rein to the lower passions? The bedchamber, where angels of God should preside, is made unholy by unholy practices. And because shameful animalism rules, bodies are corrupted; loathsome practices lead to loathsome diseases. That which God has given as a blessing is made a curse.

Sexual excess will effectually destroy a love for devotional exercises, will take from the brain the substance needed to nourish the system, and will most effectively exhaust the vitality. No woman

should aid her husband in this work of self-destruction. She will not do it if she is enlightened and has true love for him.

The more the animal passions are indulged, the stronger do they become, and the more violent will be their clamors for indulgence. Let God-fearing men and women awake to their duty. Many professed Christians are suffering with paralysis of nerve and brain because of their intemperance in this direction.

### **Husbands to Be Considerate**

Husbands should be careful, attentive, constant, faithful, and compassionate. They should manifest love and sympathy. If they fulfill the words of Christ, their love will not be of a base, earthly, sensual character that will lead to the destruction of their own bodies and bring upon their wives debility and disease. They will not indulge in the gratification of base passions, while ringing in the ears of their wives that they must be subject to the husband in everything. When the husband has the nobility of character, purity of heart, elevation of mind that every true Christian must possess, it will be made manifest in the marriage relation. If he has the mind of Christ, he will not be a destroyer of the body, but will be full of tender love, seeking to reach the highest standard in Christ.

[136] No man can truly love his wife when she will patiently submit to become his slave and minister to his depraved passions. In her passive submission she loses the value she once possessed in his eyes. He sees her dragged down from everything elevating to a low level, and soon he suspects that she will as tamely submit to be degraded by another as by himself. He doubts her constancy and purity, tires of her, and seeks new objects to arouse and intensify his hellish passions. The law of God is not regarded. These men are worse than brutes; they are demons in human form. They are unacquainted with the elevating, ennobling principles of true, sanctified love.

The wife also becomes jealous of the husband and suspects that if opportunity should offer, he would just as readily pay his addresses to another as to her. She sees that he is not controlled by conscience or the fear of God; all these sanctified barriers are broken down by lustful passions; all that is Godlike in the husband is made the servant of low, brutish lust.

### **When Unreasonable Demands Are Made**

The matter now to be settled is: Shall the wife feel bound to yield implicitly to the demands of her husband when she sees that nothing but base passions control him, and when her reason and judgment are convinced that she does it to the injury of her body, which God has enjoined upon her to possess in sanctification and honor, to preserve as a living sacrifice to God?

It is not pure, holy love which leads the wife to gratify the animal propensities of her husband at the expense of health and life. If she possesses true love and wisdom, she will seek to divert his mind from the gratification of lustful passions to high and spiritual themes by dwelling upon interesting spiritual subjects. It may be necessary to humbly and affectionately urge, even at the risk of his displeasure, that she cannot debase her body by yielding to sexual excess. She should, in a tender, kind manner, remind him that God has the first and highest claim upon her entire being, and that she cannot disregard this claim, for she will be held accountable in the great day of God.

If she will elevate her affections, and in sanctification and honor preserve her refined, womanly dignity, woman can do much by her judicious influence to sanctify her husband, and thus fulfill her high mission. In so doing she can save both her husband and herself, thus performing a double work. In this matter, so delicate and so difficult to manage, much wisdom and patience are necessary, as well as moral courage and fortitude. Strength and grace can be found in prayer. Sincere love is to be the ruling principle of the heart. Love to God and love to the husband can alone be the right ground of action.

When the wife yields her body and mind to the control of her husband, being passive to his will in all things, sacrificing her conscience, her dignity, and even her identity, she loses the opportunity of exerting that mighty influence for good which she should possess to elevate her husband. She could soften his stern nature, and her sanctifying influence could be exerted in a manner to refine and purify, leading him to strive earnestly to govern his passions and be more spiritually minded, that they might be partakers together of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. The power of influence can be great to lead the

[137] mind to high and noble themes, above the low, sensual indulgences for which the heart unrenewed by grace naturally seeks. If the wife feels that in order to please her husband she must come down to his standard, when animal passion is the principal basis of his love and controls his actions, she displeases God; for she fails to exert a sanctifying influence upon her husband. If she feels that she must submit to his animal passions without a word of remonstrance, she does not understand her duty to him or to her God.

### **Ye Are Bought With a Price**

The lower passions have their seat in the body and work through it. The words “flesh” or “fleshly” or “carnal lusts” embrace the lower, corrupt nature; the flesh of itself cannot act contrary to the will of God. We are commanded to crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts. How shall we do it? Shall we inflict pain on the body? No; but put to death the temptation to sin. The corrupt thought is to be expelled. Every thought is to be brought into captivity to Jesus Christ. All animal propensities are to be subjected to the higher powers of the soul. The love of God must reign supreme; Christ must occupy an undivided throne. Our bodies are to be regarded as His purchased possession. The members of the body are to become the instruments of righteousness.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>182</sup>The Adventist Home, 121-128



## Chapter 23—The Mother and Her Child

[138]

Instead of sinking into a mere household drudge, let the wife and mother take time to read, to keep herself well informed, to be a companion to her husband, and to keep in touch with the developing minds of her children. Let her use wisely the opportunities now hers to influence her dear ones for the higher life. Let her take time to make the dear Saviour a daily Companion and familiar Friend. Let her take time for the study of His word, take time to go with the children into the fields and learn of God through the beauty of His works.

Let her keep cheerful and buoyant. Instead of spending every moment in endless sewing, make the evening a pleasant social season, a family reunion after the day's duties. Many a man would thus be led to choose the society of his home before that of the clubhouse or the saloon. Many a boy would be kept from the street or the corner grocery. Many a girl would be saved from frivolous, misleading associations. The influence of the home would be to parents and children what God designed it should be, a lifelong blessing.

The question is often asked, "Shall a wife have no will of her own?" The Bible plainly states that the husband is the head of the family. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands." If this injunction ended here, we might say that the position of the wife is not an enviable one; it is a very hard and trying position in very many cases, and it would be better were there fewer marriages. Many husbands stop at the words, "Wives, submit yourselves," but we will read the conclusion of the same injunction, which is. "As it is fit in the Lord."

God requires that the wife shall keep the fear and glory of God ever before her. Entire submission is to be made only to the Lord Jesus Christ, who has purchased her as His own child by the infinite price of His life. God has given her a conscience, which she cannot violate with impunity. Her individuality cannot be merged into that of her husband, for she is the purchase of Christ. It is a mistake to

imagine that with blind devotion she is to do exactly as her husband says in all things, when she knows that in so doing, injury would be worked for her body and her spirit, which have been ransomed from the slavery of Satan. There is One who stands higher than the husband to the wife; it is her Redeemer, and her submission to her husband is to be rendered as God has directed—“as it is fit in the Lord.”

We must have the Spirit of God, or we can never have harmony in the home. The wife, if she has the spirit of Christ, will be careful of her words; she will control her spirit, she will be submissive, and yet will not feel that she is a bonds slave, but a companion to her husband. If the husband is a servant of God, he will not lord it over his wife; he will not be arbitrary and exacting. We cannot cherish home affection with too much care; for the home, if the Spirit of the Lord dwells there, is a type of heaven. If one errs, the other will exercise Christlike forbearance and not draw coldly away.<sup>183</sup>

### **Parenthood**

[139] Every woman about to become a mother, whatever may be her surroundings, should encourage constantly a happy, cheerful, contented disposition, knowing that for all her efforts in this direction she will be repaid tenfold in the physical, as well as the moral, character of her offspring. Nor is this all. She can, by habit, accustom herself to cheerful thinking, and thus encourage a happy state of mind and cast a cheerful reflection of her own happiness of spirit upon her family and those with whom she associates. And in a very great degree will her physical health be improved. A force will be imparted to the lifespings, the blood will not move sluggishly, as would be the case if she were to yield to despondency and gloom. Her mental and moral health are invigorated by the buoyancy of her spirits. The power of the will can resist impressions of the mind and will prove a grand soother of the nerves. Children who are robbed of that vitality which they should have inherited of their parents should have the utmost care. By close attention to the laws of their being a much better condition of things can be established.

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<sup>183</sup>The Adventist Home, 110-118

She who expects to become a mother should keep her soul in the love of God. Her mind should be at peace; she should rest in the love of Jesus, practicing the words of Christ. She should remember that the mother is a laborer together with God.

The husband and the wife are to co-operate. What a world we would have if all mothers would consecrate themselves on the altar of God, and would consecrate their offspring to God, both before and after its birth!

The effect of prenatal influences is by many parents looked upon as a matter of little moment; but heaven does not so regard it. The message sent by an angel of God, and twice given in the most solemn manner, shows it to be deserving of our most careful thought.

In the words spoken to the Hebrew mother [the wife of Manoah], God speaks to all mothers in every age. "Let her beware," the angel said; "all that I commanded her let her observe." The well-being of the child will be affected by the habits of the mother. Her appetites and passions are to be controlled by principle. There is something for her to shun, something for her to work against, if she fulfills God's purpose for her in giving her a child.

The world is full of snares for the feet of the young. Multitudes are attracted by a life of selfish and sensual pleasure. They cannot discern the hidden dangers or the fearful ending of the path that seems to them the way of happiness. Through the indulgence of appetite and passion, their energies are wasted, and millions are ruined for this world and for the world to come. Parents should remember that their children must encounter these temptations. Even before the birth of the child, the preparation should begin that will enable it to fight successfully the battle against evil.

If before the birth of her child she is self-indulgent, if she is selfish, impatient, and exacting, these traits will be reflected in the disposition of the child. Thus many children have received as a birthright almost unconquerable tendencies to evil.

But if the mother unswervingly adheres to right principles, if she is temperate and self-denying, if she is kind, gentle, and unselfish, she may give her child these same precious traits of character.

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's Duties Should Be Lightened**

It is an error generally committed to make no difference in the life of a woman previous to the birth of her children. At this important period the labor of the mother should be lightened. Great changes are going on in her system. It requires a greater amount of blood, and therefore an increase of food of the most nourishing quality to convert into blood. Unless she has an abundant supply of nutritious food, she cannot retain her physical strength, and her offspring is robbed of vitality.

Her clothing also demands attention. Care should be taken to protect the body from a sense of chilliness. She should not call vitality unnecessarily to the surface to supply the want of sufficient clothing. If the mother is deprived of an abundance of wholesome, nutritious food, she will lack in the quantity and quality of blood. Her circulation will be poor, and her child will lack in the very same things. There will be an inability in the offspring to appropriate food which it can convert into good blood to nourish the system. The prosperity of mother and child depends much upon good, warm clothing and a supply of nourishing food.

### **The Attitude of the Nursing Mother**

The best food for the infant is the food that nature provides. Of this it should not be needlessly deprived. It is a heartless thing for a mother, for the sake of convenience or social enjoyment, to seek to free herself from the tender office of nursing her little one.

The period in which the infant receives its nourishment from the mother is critical. Many mothers, while nursing their infants, have been permitted to overlabor and to heat their blood in cooking; and the nursling has been seriously affected, not only with fevered nourishment from the mother's breast, but its blood has been poisoned by the unhealthy diet of the mother, which has fevered her whole system, thereby affecting the food of the infant. The infant will also be affected by the condition of the mother's mind. If she

is unhappy, easily agitated, irritable, giving vent to outbursts of passion, the nourishment the infant receives from its mother will be inflamed, often producing colic, spasms, and in some instances causing convulsions and fits.

The character also of the child is more or less affected by the nature of the nourishment received from the mother. How important then that the mother, while nursing her infant, should preserve a happy state of mind, having the perfect control of her own spirit. By thus doing, the food of the child is not injured, and the calm, self-possessed course the mother pursues in the treatment of her child has very much to do in molding the mind of the infant. If it is nervous and easily agitated, the mother's careful, unhurried manner will have a soothing and correcting influence, and the health of the infant can be very much improved.

[141]

### **Regularity in Tender, Loving Care**

Children are committed to their parents as a precious trust, which God will one day require at their hands. We should give to their training more time, more care, and more prayer. They need more of the right kind of instruction.

In many cases the sickness of children can be traced to errors in management. Irregularities in eating, insufficient clothing in the chilly evening, lack of vigorous exercise to keep the blood in healthy circulation, or lack of abundance of air for its purification, may be the cause of the trouble. Let the parents study to find the causes of the sickness and then remedy the wrong conditions as soon as possible.

Children are generally brought up from the cradle to indulge the appetite and are taught that they live to eat. The mother does much toward the formation of the character of her children in their childhood. She can teach them to control the appetite, or she can teach them to indulge the appetite and become gluttons. The mother often arranges her plans to accomplish a certain amount through the day; and when the children trouble her, instead of taking time to soothe their little sorrows and divert them, something is given them to eat to keep them still, which answers the purpose for a short time but eventually makes things worse. The children's stomachs

have been pressed with food, when they had not the least want of it. All that was required was a little of the mother's time and attention. But she regarded her time as altogether too precious to devote to the amusement of her children. Perhaps the arrangement of her house in a tasteful manner for visitors to praise, and to have her food cooked in a fashionable style, are with her higher considerations than the happiness and health of her children.

In the preparation of the baby's wardrobe, convenience, comfort, and health should be sought before fashion or a desire to excite admiration. The mother should not spend time in embroidery and fancywork to make the little garments beautiful, thus taxing herself with unnecessary labor at the expense of her own health and the health of her child. She should not bend over sewing that severely taxes eyes and nerves, at a time when she needs much rest and pleasant exercise. She should realize her obligation to cherish her strength, that she may be able to meet the demands that will be made upon her.<sup>184</sup>

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### **Need of Self-Control in Child Discipline**

In the training of a child there are times when the firm, matured will of the mother meets the unreasoning, undisciplined will of the child. At such times there is need of great wisdom on the part of the mother. By unwise management, by stern compulsion, great harm may be done the child.

Whenever possible, this crisis should be avoided; for it means a severe struggle for both mother and child. But once such a crisis is entered into, the child must be led to yield its will to the wiser will of the parent.

The mother should keep herself under perfect control, doing nothing that will arouse in the child a spirit of defiance. She is to give no loud-voiced commands. She will gain much by keeping the voice low and gentle. She is to deal with the child in a way that will draw him to Jesus. She is to realize that God is her Helper; love, her power.

If she is a wise Christian she does not attempt to force the child to submit. She prays earnestly that the enemy shall not obtain the

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<sup>184</sup>[The Adventist Home, 255-267](#)

victory, and, as she prays, she is conscious of a renewal of spiritual life. She sees that the same power that is working in her is working also in the child. He becomes more gentle, more submissive. The battle is won. Her patience, her kindness, her words of wise restraint, have done their work. There is peace after the storm, like the shining of the sun after rain. And the angels, who have been watching the scene, break forth into songs of joy.

These crises come also in the life of husband and wife, who, unless controlled by the Spirit of God, will at such times manifest the impulsive, unreasoning spirit so often manifested by children. As flint striking flint will be the conflict of will with will.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>185</sup>Testimonies for the Church 7:47, 48

## Chapter 24—The Christian Father and Mother

As you faithfully do your duty in the home, the father as a priest of the household, the mother as a home missionary, you are multiplying agencies for doing good outside of the home. As you improve your own powers, you are becoming better fitted to labor in the church and in the neighborhood. By binding your children to yourselves and to God, fathers and mothers and children become laborers together with God.<sup>186</sup>

### The Sacredness of a Mother's Work

Woman should fill the position which God originally designed for her, as her husband's equal. The world needs mothers who are mothers not merely in name but in every sense of the word. We may safely say that the distinctive duties of woman are more sacred, more holy, than those of man. Let woman realize the sacredness of her work and in the strength and fear of God take up her life mission. Let her educate her children for usefulness in this world and for a home in the better world.

The wife and mother should not sacrifice her strength and allow her powers to lie dormant, leaning wholly upon her husband. Her individuality cannot be merged in his. She should feel that she is her husband's equal—to stand by his side, she faithful at her post of duty and he at his. Her work in the education of her children is in every respect as elevating and ennobling as any post of duty he may be called to fill, even if it is to be the chief magistrate of the nation.

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

<sup>186</sup>Testimonies for the Church 7:67



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.

If married men go into the work, leaving their wives to care for the 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. The husband in the open missionary field may receive the honors of men, while the home toiler may receive no earthly credit for her labor. But if she works for the best interest of her family, seeking 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.

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The world teems with corrupting influences. Fashion and custom exert a strong power over the young. If the mother fails in her duty to instruct, guide, and restrain, her children will naturally accept the evil and turn from the good. Let every mother go often to her Saviour with the prayer, "Teach us, how shall we order the child, and what shall we do unto him?" Let her heed the instruction which God has given in His word, and wisdom will be given her as she shall have need.

Let every mother feel that her moments are priceless; her work will be tested in the solemn day of accounts. Then it will be found that many of the failures and crimes of men and women have resulted from the ignorance and neglect of those whose duty it was to guide their childish feet in the right way. Then it will be found that many who have blessed the world with the light of genius and truth and holiness owe the principles that were the mainspring of their influence and success to a praying, Christian mother.

### **The Mother's Power for Good**

The sphere of the mother may be humble; but her influence, united with the father's, is as abiding as eternity. Next to God, the mother's power for good is the strongest known on earth.

A Christian mother will ever be wide-awake to discern the dangers that surround her children. She will keep her own soul in a pure, holy atmosphere; she will regulate her temper and principles by the word of God and will faithfully do her duty, living above the petty temptations which will always assail her.

The perception of children is quick, and they discern patient, loving tones from the impatient, passionate command, which dries up the moisture of love and affection in the hearts of children. The true Christian mother will not drive her children from her presence by her fretfulness and lack of sympathizing love.

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.

[145] Very many husbands and children who find nothing attractive at home, who are continually greeted by scolding and murmuring, seek comfort and amusement away from home, in the dramshop or in other forbidden scenes of pleasure. The wife and mother, occupied with her household cares, frequently becomes thoughtless of the little courtesies that make home pleasant to the husband and children, even if she avoids dwelling upon her peculiar vexations and difficulties in their presence. While she is absorbed in preparing something to eat or to wear, the husband and sons go in and come out as strangers.

If mothers allow themselves to wear untidy garments at home, they are teaching their children to follow in the same slovenly way. Many mothers think that anything is good enough for home wear, be it ever so soiled and shabby. But they soon lose their influence in the family. The children draw comparisons between their mother's dress and that of others who dress neatly, and their respect for her is weakened.

The true wife and mother 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.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>187</sup>[The Adventist Home, 231-254](#)

### **The Head of the Family to Imitate Christ**

All members of the family center in the father. He is the law-maker, illustrating in his own manly bearing the sterner virtues: energy, integrity, honesty, patience, courage, diligence, and practical usefulness. 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 or by the mother when he is absent, will result in blessings to the family.

To the man who is a husband and a father, I would say, Be sure that a pure, holy atmosphere surrounds your soul. You are to learn daily of Christ. Never, never are you to show a tyrannical spirit in the home. The man who does this is working in partnership with satanic agencies. Bring your will into submission to the will of God. Do all in your power to make the life of your wife pleasant and happy. Take the word of God as the man of your counsel. In the home live out the teachings of the word. Then you will live them out in the church and will take them with you to your place of business. The principles of heaven will ennoble all your transactions. Angels of God will cooperate with you, helping you to reveal Christ to the world.

Do not allow the vexations of your business to bring darkness into your home life. If, when little things occur that are not exactly as you think they should be, you fail to reveal patience, long forbearance, kindness, and love, you show that you have not chosen as a companion Him who so loved you that He gave His life for you, that you might be one with Him.

It is no evidence of manliness in the husband for him to dwell constantly upon his position as head of the family. It does not increase respect for him to hear him quoting Scripture to sustain his claims to authority. It will not make him more manly to require his

wife, the mother of his children, to act upon his plans as if they were infallible. The Lord has constituted the husband the head of the wife to be her protector; he is the house-band of the family, binding the members together, even as Christ is the head of the church and the Saviour of the mystical body. Let every husband who claims to love God carefully study the requirements of God in his position. Christ's authority is exercised in wisdom, in all kindness and gentleness; so let the husband exercise his power and imitate the great Head of the church.<sup>188</sup>

### **Parents, Labor Together for Your Children's Salvation**

Could the veil be withdrawn and father and mother see as God sees the work of the day, and see how His infinite eye compares the work of the one with that of the other, they would be astonished at the heavenly revelation. The father would view his labors in a more modest light, while the mother would have new courage and energy to pursue her labor with wisdom, perseverance, and patience. Now she knows its value. While the father has been dealing with the things which must perish and pass away, the mother has been dealing with developing minds and character, working not only for time but for eternity.<sup>189</sup>

The father's duty to his children cannot be transferred to the mother. If she performs her own duty, she has burden enough to bear. Only by working in unison can the father and mother accomplish the work which God has committed to their hands.

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.

The father of boys should come into close contact with his sons, giving them the benefit of his larger experience and talking with them in such simplicity and tenderness that he binds them to his heart. He should let them see that he has their best interest, their happiness, in view all the time.

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<sup>188</sup>The Adventist Home, 212-215

<sup>189</sup>The Adventist Home, 233

He who has a family of boys must understand that, whatever his calling, he is never to neglect the souls placed in his care. He has brought these children into the world and has made himself responsible to God to do everything in his power to keep them from unsanctified associations, from evil companionship. He should not leave his restless boys wholly to the care of the mother. This is too heavy a burden for her. He must arrange matters for the best interests of the mother and the children. It may be very hard for the mother to exercise self-control and to manage wisely in the training of her children. If this is the case, the father should take more of the burden upon his soul. He should be determined to make the most decided efforts to save his children.<sup>190</sup>

### Counsel in the Number of Children

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Children are the heritage of the Lord, and we are answerable to Him for our management of His property. In love, faith, and prayer let parents work for their households, until with joy they can come to God saying, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me."

God would have parents act as rational beings and live in such a manner that each child may be properly educated, that the mother may have strength and time to employ her mental powers in disciplining her little ones for the society of the angels. She should have courage to act nobly her part and to do her work in the fear and love of God, that her children may prove a blessing to the family and to society.

The husband and father should consider all these things lest the wife and mother of his children be overtaxed and thus overwhelmed with despondency. He should see to it that the mother of his children is not placed in a position where she cannot possibly do justice to her numerous little ones, so that they have to come up without proper training.

There are parents who, without consideration as to whether or not they can do justice to a large family, fill their houses with these helpless little beings, who are wholly dependent upon their parents

<sup>190</sup>The Adventist Home, 216-221

for care and instruction. This is a grievous wrong, not only to the mother, but to her children and to society.

A child in the mother's arms from year to year is great injustice to her. It lessens, and often destroys, social enjoyment and increases domestic wretchedness. It robs their children of that care, education, and happiness which parents should feel it their duty to bestow upon them.

[Parents] should calmly consider what provision can be made for their children. They have no right to bring children into the world to be a burden to others.

How little is the destiny of the child considered! The gratification of passion is the only thought, and burdens are brought upon the wife and mother which undermine her vitality and paralyze her spiritual power. In broken health and with discouraged spirits she finds herself surrounded by a little flock whom she cannot care for as she should. Lacking the instruction they should have, they grow up to dishonor God and to communicate to others the evil of their own natures, and thus an army is raised up whom Satan manages as he pleases.<sup>191</sup>

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<sup>191</sup>The Adventist Home, 159-164

## Chapter 25—The Christian Home

[148]

In choosing a home, God would have us consider, first of all, the moral and religious influences that will surround us and our families.

As the location for a home is sought, let this purpose direct the choice. Be not controlled by the desire for wealth, the dictates of fashion, or the customs of society. Consider what will tend most to simplicity, purity, health, and real worth.

Instead of dwelling where only the works of men can be seen, where the sights and sounds frequently suggest thoughts of evil, where turmoil and confusion bring weariness and disquietude, go where you can look upon the works of God. Find rest of spirit in the beauty and quietude and peace of nature. Let the eye rest on the green fields, the groves, and the hills. Look up to the blue sky, unobscured by the city's dust and smoke, and breathe the invigorating air of heaven.

The time has come when, as God opens the way, families should move out of the cities. The children should be taken into the country. The parents should get as suitable a place as their means will allow. Though the dwelling may be small, yet there should be land in connection with it that may be cultivated.

Fathers and mothers who possess a piece of land and a comfortable home are kings and queens.

If possible, the home should be out of the city, where the children can have ground to cultivate. Let them each have a piece of ground of their own; and as you teach them how to make a garden, how to prepare the soil for seed, and the importance of keeping all the weeds pulled out, teach them also how important it is to keep unsightly, injurious practices out of the life. Teach them to keep down wrong habits as they keep down the weeds in their gardens. It will take time to teach these lessons, but it will pay, greatly pay.

The earth has blessings hidden in her depths for those who have courage and will and perseverance to gather her treasures. Many farmers have failed to secure adequate returns from their land be-

cause they have undertaken the work as though it was a degrading employment; they do not see that there is a blessing in it for themselves and their families.

[149] Parents are under obligation to God to make their surroundings such as will correspond to the truth they profess. They can then give correct lessons to their children, and the children will learn to associate the home below with the home above. The family here must, as far as possible, be a model of the one in heaven. Then temptations to indulge in what is low and groveling will lose much of their force. Children should be taught that they are only probationers here, and educated to become inhabitants of the mansions which Christ is preparing for those who love Him and keep His commandments. This is the highest duty which parents have to perform.

So far as possible, all buildings intended for human habitation should be placed on high, well-drained ground. This will ensure a dry site. This matter is often too lightly regarded. Continuous ill health, serious diseases, and many deaths result from the dampness and malaria of low-lying, ill-drained situations.

In the building of houses it is especially important to secure thorough ventilation and plenty of sunlight. Let there be a current of air and an abundance of light in every room in the house. Sleeping rooms should be so arranged as to have a free circulation of air day and night. No room is fit to be occupied as a sleeping room unless it can be thrown open daily to the air and sunshine.

A yard beautified with scattering trees and some shrubbery, at a proper distance from the house, has a happy influence upon the family, and, if well taken care of, will prove no injury to the health. But shade trees and shrubbery close and dense around a house make it unhealthful, for they prevent the free circulation of air and shut out the rays of the sun. In consequence, a dampness gathers in the house, especially in wet seasons.

### **Furniture Should Be Simple and Inexpensive**

Furnish your home with things plain and simple, things that will bear handling, that can be easily kept clean, and that can be replaced without great expense. By exercising taste, you can make a very



simple home attractive and inviting, if love and contentment are there.

Happiness is not found in empty show. The more simple the order of a well-regulated household, the happier will that home be. 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.<sup>192</sup>

You are under obligation to God always to be patterns of propriety in your home. Remember that in heaven there is no disorder, and that your home should be a heaven here below. Remember that in doing faithfully from day to day the little things to be done in the home, you are a laborer together with God, perfecting a Christian character.

Bear in mind, parents, that you are working for the salvation of your children. If your habits are correct, if you reveal neatness and order, virtue and righteousness, sanctification of soul, body, and spirit, you respond to the words of the Redeemer, "Ye are the light of the world."

Begin early to teach the little ones to take care of their clothing. Let them have a place to lay their things away and be taught to fold every article neatly and put it in its place. If you cannot afford even a cheap bureau, use a dry-goods box, fitting it with shelves and covering it with some bright, pretty-figured cloth. This work of teaching neatness and order will take a little time each day, but it will pay in the future of your children, and in the end will save you much time and care.

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Some parents allow their children to be destructive, to use as playthings things which they have no right to touch. Children should be taught that they must not handle the property of other people. For the comfort and happiness of the family, they must learn to observe the rules of propriety. Children are no happier when they are allowed to handle everything they see. If they are not educated to be caretaking, they will grow up with unlovely, destructive traits of character.

Do not give the children playthings that are easily broken. To do this is to teach lessons in destructiveness. Let them have a few

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<sup>192</sup>[The Adventist Home, 131-154](#)

playthings, and let these be strong and durable. Such suggestions, small though they may seem, mean much in the education of the child.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>193</sup>Child Guidance, 110, 111; 101, 102

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. 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. 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.

The Spirit of Christ will be an abiding influence in the home life. If men and women will open their hearts to the heavenly influence of truth and love, these principles will flow forth again like streams in the desert, refreshing all and causing freshness to appear where now is barrenness and dearth.<sup>194</sup>

The neglect of home religion, the neglect to train your children, is most displeasing to God. If one of your children were in the river, battling with the waves and in imminent danger of drowning, what a stir there would be! What efforts would be made, what prayers offered, what enthusiasm manifested, to save the human life! But here are your children out of Christ, their souls unsaved. Perhaps they are even rude and uncourteous, a reproach to the Adventist name. They are perishing without hope and without God in the world, and you are careless and unconcerned.

Satan makes every effort to lead people away from God; and he is successful in his purpose when the religious life is drowned in business cares, when he can so absorb their minds in business that they will not take time to read their Bibles, to pray in secret, and to keep the offering of praise and thanksgiving burning on the altar of sacrifice morning and evening. How few realize the wiles of the archdeceiver! how many are ignorant of his devices!<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>194</sup>Child Guidance, 484

<sup>195</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:424, 426

### Morning and Evening Worship

Fathers and mothers, each morning and evening gather your children around you, and in humble supplication lift the heart to God for help. Your dear ones are exposed to temptation. Daily annoyances beset the path of young and old. Those who would live patient, loving, cheerful lives must pray. Only by receiving constant help from God can we gain the victory over self.

If ever there was a time when every house should be a house of prayer, it is now. Infidelity and skepticism prevail. Iniquity abounds. Corruption flows in the vital currents of the soul, and rebellion against God breaks out in the life. Enslaved by sin, the moral powers are under the tyranny of Satan. The soul is made the sport of his temptations; and unless some mighty arm is stretched out to rescue him, man goes where the arch-rebel leads the way.

And yet, in this time of fearful peril, some who profess to be Christians have no family worship. They do not honor God in the home; they do not teach their children to love and fear Him. Many have separated themselves so far from Him 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.” [Hebrews 4:16](#); [1 Timothy 2:8](#). They have not a 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 communion with God, the Fountain of wisdom, the Source of strength, and peace, and happiness. 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, making known their requests to God. “Pray one for another,” James says. “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” [Hebrews 5:7](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:17](#); [James 5:16](#).

By sincere, earnest prayer parents should make a hedge about their children. They should pray with full faith that God will abide with them and that holy angels will guard them and their children from Satan’s cruel power.

In every family there should be a fixed time for morning and evening worship. How appropriate it is for parents to gather their children about them before the fast is broken, to thank the heavenly Father for His protection during the night, and to ask Him for His help and guidance and watchcare during the day! How fitting, also, when evening comes, for parents and children to gather once more before Him and thank Him for the blessings of the day that is past!

Each morning consecrate yourselves and your children to God for that day. Make no calculation for months or years; these are not yours. One brief day is given you. As if it were your last on earth, work during its hours for the Master. Lay all your plans before God, to be carried out or given up, as His providence shall indicate. Accept His plans instead of your own, even though their acceptance requires the abandonment of cherished projects. Thus the life will be molded more and more after the divine example; and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” [Philippians 4:7](#).

The father, or, in his absence, the mother, should conduct the worship, selecting a portion of Scripture that is interesting and easily understood. The service should be short. When a long chapter is read and a long prayer offered, the service is made wearisome, and at its close a sense of relief is felt. God is dishonored when the hour of worship is made dry and irksome, when it is so tedious, so lacking in interest, that the children dread it

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Fathers and mothers, make the hour of worship intensely interesting. There is no reason why this hour should not be the most pleasant and enjoyable of the day. A little thought given to preparation for it will enable you to make it full of interest and profit. From time to time let the service be varied. Questions may be asked on the portion of Scripture read, and a few earnest, timely remarks may be made. A song of praise may be sung. The prayer offered should be short and pointed. In simple, earnest words let the one who leads in prayer praise God for His goodness and ask Him for help. As circumstances permit, let the children join in the reading and the prayer.

Eternity alone will reveal the good with which such seasons of worship are fraught.<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>196</sup>Testimonies for the Church 7:42-44

## Chapter 27—Finance in the Home

[154]

The Lord would have His people thoughtful and caretaking. He would have them study economy in everything, and waste nothing.

You should learn to know when to spare and when to spend. We cannot be Christ's followers unless we deny self and lift the cross. We should pay up squarely as we go; gather up the dropped stitches; bind off your raveling edges, and know just what you can call your own. You should reckon up all the littles spent in self-gratification. You should notice what is used simply to gratify taste and in cultivating a perverted, epicurean appetite. The money expended for useless delicacies might be used to add to your substantial home comforts and conveniences. You are not to be penurious; you are to be honest with yourself and your brethren. Penuriousness is an abuse of God's bounties. Lavishness is also an abuse. The little outgoes that you think of as not worth mentioning amount to considerable in the end.

When you are tempted to spend money for knickknacks, you should remember the self-denial and self-sacrifice that Christ endured to save fallen man. Our children should be taught to exercise self-denial and self-control. The reason so many ministers feel that they have a hard time in financial matters is that they do not bind about their tastes, their appetites and inclinations. The reason so many men become bankrupt and dishonestly appropriate means is because they seek to gratify the extravagant tastes of their wives and children. How careful should fathers and mothers be to teach economy by precept and example to their children!

It is not best to pretend to be rich, or anything above what we are—humble followers of the meek and lowly Saviour. We are not to feel disturbed if our neighbors build and furnish their houses in a manner that we are not authorized to follow. How must Jesus look upon our selfish provision for the indulgence of appetite, to please our guests, or to gratify our own inclination! It is a snare to us to

aim at making a display or to allow our children, under our control, to do so.<sup>197</sup>

Nothing that can be utilized should be thrown away. This will require wisdom, and forethought, and constant care. It has been presented to me that the inability to save, in little things, is one reason why so many families suffer for lack of the necessities of life.<sup>198</sup>

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### “Owe No Man Any Thing”

Many poor families are poor because they spend their money as soon as they receive it.

Abstracting and using money for any purpose, before it is earned, is a snare.<sup>199</sup>

The world has a right to expect strict integrity in those who profess to be Bible Christians. By one man’s indifference in regard to paying his just dues, all our people are in danger of being regarded as unreliable.

Those who make any pretensions to godliness should adorn the doctrine they profess and not give occasion for the truth to be reviled through their inconsiderate course of action. “Owe no man anything,” says the apostle.<sup>200</sup>

Many, very many, have not so educated themselves that they can keep their expenditures within the limit of their income. They do not learn to adapt themselves to circumstances, and they borrow and borrow again and again and become overwhelmed in debt, and consequently they become discouraged and disheartened.<sup>201</sup>

You must see that one should not manage his affairs in a way that will incur debt. When one becomes involved in debt, he is in one of Satan’s nets, which he sets for souls.

Be determined never to incur another debt. Deny yourself a thousand things rather than run in debt. This has been the curse of your life, getting into debt. Avoid it as you would the smallpox.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>197</sup>The Adventist Home, 379-384

<sup>198</sup>Child Guidance, 135

<sup>199</sup>The Adventist Home, 392

<sup>200</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:179-182

<sup>201</sup>The Adventist Home, 374

<sup>202</sup>The Adventist Home, 392, 393



### Neglect of Essentials Is Not Economy

God is not honored when the body is neglected or abused and is thus unfitted for His service. To care for the body by providing for it food that is relishable and strengthening is one of the first duties of the householder. It is far better to have less expensive clothing and furniture than to stint the supply of food.

Some householders stint the family table in order to provide expensive entertainment for visitors. This is unwise. In the entertainment of guests there should be greater simplicity. Let the needs of the family have first attention.

Unwise economy and artificial customs often prevent the exercise of hospitality where it is needed and would be a blessing. The regular supply of food for our tables should be such that the unexpected guest can be made welcome without burdening the housewife to make extra preparation.<sup>203</sup>

Economy does not mean niggardliness, but a prudent expenditure of means because there is a great work to be done.

God does not require that His people should deprive themselves of that which is really necessary for their health and comfort, but He does not approve of wantonness and extravagance and display.<sup>204</sup>

### Duty of Parents in Teaching the Children

[156]

Teach your children that God has a claim upon all they possess, and that nothing can ever cancel this claim; all they have is theirs only in trust, to prove whether they will be obedient. Money is a needed treasure; let it not be lavished upon those who do not need it. Someone needs your willing gifts. If you have extravagant habits, cut them away from the life as soon as possible. Unless you do this, you will be bankrupt for eternity.<sup>205</sup>

The natural turn of youth in this age is to neglect and despise economy, and to confound it with stinginess and narrowness. But economy is consistent with the most broad and liberal views and feelings; there can be no true generosity where it is not practiced.

<sup>203</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 322

<sup>204</sup>The Adventist Home, 378, 379

<sup>205</sup>Child Guidance, 134

No one should think it beneath him to study economy and the best means of taking care of the fragments.<sup>206</sup>

In the study of figures the work should be made practical. Let every youth and every child be taught, not merely to solve imaginary problems, but to keep an accurate account of his own income and outgoes. Let him learn the right use of money by using it. Whether supplied by their parents or by their own earnings, let boys and girls learn to select and purchase their own clothing, their books, and other necessities; and by keeping an account of their expenses they will learn, as they could learn in no other way, the value and the use of money.<sup>207</sup>

There is such a thing as giving unwise help to our children. Those who work their way through college appreciate their advantages more than those who are provided with them at someone else's expense, for they know their cost. We must not carry our children until they become helpless burdens.

Parents mistake their duty when they freely hand out money to any youth who has physical strength to enter on a course of study to become a minister or a physician before he has had an experience in useful, taxing labor.<sup>208</sup>

Habits of self-indulgence or a want of tact and skill on the part of the wife and mother may be a constant drain upon the treasury; and yet that mother may think she is doing her best because she has never been taught to restrict her wants or the wants of her children and has never acquired skill and tact in household matters. Hence one family may require for its support twice the amount that would suffice for another family of the same size.

The Lord has been pleased to present before me the evils which result from spendthrift habits, that I might admonish parents to teach their children strict economy. Teach them that money spent for that which they do not need is perverted from its proper use.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>206</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:400

<sup>207</sup>Counsels on Stewardship, 294

<sup>208</sup>The Adventist Home, 387

<sup>209</sup>The Adventist Home, 374, 375

### **Counsel to Husbands and Wives on Matters of Money**

All should learn how to keep accounts. Some neglect this work as non-essential, but this is wrong. All expenses should be accurately stated.<sup>210</sup> [157]

The means you have earned has not been wisely and economically expended so as to leave a margin should you be sick and your family deprived of the means you bring to sustain them. Your family should have something to rely upon if you should be brought into straitened places.<sup>211</sup>

You must help each other. Do not look upon it as a virtue to hold fast the purse strings, refusing to give your wife money.

You should allow your wife a certain sum weekly and should let her do what she please with this money. You have not given her opportunity to exercise her tact or her taste because you have not a proper realization of the position that a wife should occupy. Your wife has an excellent and a well-balanced mind.

Give your wife a share of the money that you receive. Let her have this as her own, and let her use it as she desires. She should have been allowed to use the means that she earned as she in her judgment deemed best. If she had had a certain sum to use as her own, without being criticized, a great weight would have been lifted from her mind.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>210</sup>The Adventist Home, 374

<sup>211</sup>The Adventist Home, 395, 396

<sup>212</sup>The Adventist Home, 378

[158] **Chapter 28—Family Activities During Holidays and Anniversaries**

I saw that our holidays should not be spent in patterning after the world, yet they should not be passed by unnoticed, for this will bring dissatisfaction to our children. On these days when there is danger that our children will be exposed to evil influences and become corrupted by the pleasures and excitement of the world, let the parents study to get up something to take the place of more dangerous amusements. Give your children to understand that you have their good and happiness in view.

Through the observance of holidays the people both of the world and of the churches have been educated to believe that these lazy days are essential to health and happiness, but the results reveal that they are full of evil.

We have tried earnestly to make the holidays as interesting as possible to the youth and children, while changing this order of things. Our object has been to keep them away from scenes of amusement among unbelievers.

After a day of pleasure seeking is ended, where is the satisfaction to the pleasure seeker? As Christian workers, whom have they helped to a better, higher, and purer life? What would they see if they should look over the record the angel wrote? A day lost! To their own souls a day lost, a day lost in the service of Christ, because no good was accomplished. They may have other days but never that day which was idled away in cheap, foolish talk, of girls with boys, and boys with girls.

Never will these same opportunities offer themselves again. They had better been doing the hardest kind of labor on that holiday. They did not make the right use of their holiday, and it passed into eternity to confront them in the judgment as a day misspent.

### **Making God's Cause First**

Would it not be well for us to observe holidays unto God, when we could revive in our minds the memory of His dealing with us? Would it not be well to consider His past blessings, to remember the impressive warnings that have come home to our souls so that we shall not forget God?

The world has many holidays, and men become engrossed with games, with horse races, with gambling, smoking, and drunkenness.

Shall not the people of God more frequently have holy convocations in which to thank God for His rich blessings? We want men in the church who have ability to develop in the line of organizing and giving practical work to young men and women in the line of relieving the wants of humanity and working for the salvation of the souls of men, women, youth, and children. It will not be possible for all to give their whole time to the work because of the labor they must do to earn their daily living. Yet these have their holidays and times that they can devote to Christian work and do good in this way if they cannot give much of their means.

[159]

When you have a holiday, make it a pleasant and happy day for your children, and make it also a pleasant day for the poor and the afflicted. Do not let the day pass without bringing thanksgiving and thank offerings to Jesus.

### **Birthdays—A Time to Praise God**

Under the Jewish economy on the birth of children an offering was made to God, by His own appointment. Now we see parents taking special pains to present gifts to their children upon their birthdays; they make this an occasion of honoring the child, as though honor were due to the human being. Satan has had his own way in these things; he has diverted the minds and the gifts to human beings; thus the thoughts of the children are turned to themselves, as if they were to be made the objects of special favor.

On birthday occasions the children should be taught that they have reason for gratitude to God for His loving-kindness in preserving their lives for another year. Precious lessons might thus be given. For life, health, food, and clothing, no less than for the hope of eter-

nal life, we are indebted to the Giver of all mercies; and it is due to God to recognize His gifts and to present our offerings of gratitude to our greatest benefactor. These birthday gifts are recognized of Heaven.

Teach them to review the past year of their life, to consider whether they would be glad to meet its record just as it stands in the books of heaven. Encourage in them serious thoughts, whether their deportment, their words, their works, are of a character pleasing to God. Have they been making their lives more like Jesus, beautiful and lovely in the sight of God? Teach them the knowledge of the Lord, His ways, His precepts.

I have said to my family and my friends, I desire that no one shall make me a birthday or Christmas gift, unless it be with permission to pass it on into the Lord's treasury, to be appropriated in the establishment of missions.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>213</sup>The Adventist Home, 472-476

## Chapter 29—Recreation

[160]

Christians have many sources of happiness at their command, and they may tell with unerring accuracy what pleasures are lawful and right. They may enjoy such recreations as will not dissipate the mind or debase the soul, such as will not disappoint and leave a sad after-influence to destroy self-respect or bar the way to usefulness. If they can take Jesus with them and maintain a prayerful spirit, they are perfectly safe.

Any amusement in which you can engage asking the blessing of God upon it in faith will not be dangerous. But any amusement which disqualifies you for secret prayer, for devotion at the altar of prayer, or for taking part in the prayer meeting is not safe, but dangerous.

We are of that class who believe that it is our privilege every day of our lives to glorify God upon the earth, that we are not to live in this world merely for our own amusement, merely to please ourselves. We are here to benefit humanity and to be a blessing to society; and if we let our minds run in that low channel that many who are seeking only vanity and folly permit their minds to run in, how can we be a benefit to our race and generation? How can we be a blessing to society around us? We cannot innocently indulge in any amusement which will unfit us for the more faithful discharge of ordinary duties.

There are many things which are right in themselves, but which, perverted by Satan, prove a snare to the unwary.

There is great need of temperance in amusements, as in every other pursuit. And the character of these amusements should be carefully and thoroughly considered. Every youth should ask himself, What influence will these amusements have on physical, mental, and moral health? Will my mind become so infatuated as to forget God? Shall I cease to have His glory before me?<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>214</sup>[The Adventist Home, 512-514](#)

It is the privilege and duty of Christians to seek to refresh their spirits and invigorate their bodies by innocent recreation, with the purpose of using their physical and mental powers to the glory of God. Our recreations should not be scenes of senseless mirth, taking the form of the nonsensical. We can conduct them in such a manner as will benefit and elevate those with whom we associate, and better qualify us and them to more successfully attend to the duties devolving upon us as Christians.<sup>215</sup>

[161] The time spent in physical exercise is not lost. A proportionate exercise of all the organs and faculties of the body is essential to the best work of each. When the brain is constantly taxed while the other organs of the living machinery are inactive, there is a loss of strength, physical and mental. The physical system is robbed of its healthful tone, the mind loses its freshness and vigor, and a morbid excitability is the result.

Those who are engaged in study should have relaxation. The mind must not be constantly confined to close thought, for the delicate mental machinery becomes worn. The body as well as the mind must have exercise.<sup>216</sup>

### **Recreation That May Be Enjoyed by Rich and Poor Alike**

Youth cannot be made as sedate and grave as old age, the child as sober as the sire. While sinful amusements are condemned, as they should be, let parents, teachers, and guardians of youth provide in their stead innocent pleasures, which will not taint or corrupt the morals. Do not bind down the young to rigid rules and restraints that will lead them to feel themselves oppressed and to break over and rush into paths of folly and destruction. With a firm, kind, considerate hand, hold the lines of government, guiding and controlling their minds and purposes, yet so gently, so wisely, so lovingly, that they will still know that you have their best good in view.<sup>217</sup>

There are modes of recreation which are highly beneficial to both mind and body. An enlightened, discriminating mind will find

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<sup>215</sup>The Adventist Home, 493

<sup>216</sup>The Adventist Home, 494, 495

<sup>217</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 335



abundant means for the entertainment and diversion, from sources not only innocent, but instructive. Recreation in the open air, the contemplation of the works of God in nature, will be of highest benefit.<sup>218</sup>

No recreation helpful only to themselves will prove so great a blessing to the children and youth as that which makes them helpful to others. Naturally enthusiastic and impressible, the young are quick to respond to suggestion.<sup>219</sup>

God has provided for everyone pleasure that may be enjoyed by rich and poor alike—the pleasure found in cultivating pureness of thought and unselfishness of action, the pleasure that comes from speaking sympathizing words and doing kindly deeds. From those who perform such service, the light of Christ shines to brighten lives darkened by many sorrows.<sup>220</sup>

There are plenty of necessary, useful things to do in our world that would make the pleasure amusement exercise almost wholly unnecessary. Brain, bone, and muscle will acquire solidity and strength in using them to a purpose, doing good, hard thinking, and devising plans which shall train them to develop powers of intellect and strength of the physical organs, which will be putting into practical use their God-given talents with which they may glorify God.<sup>221</sup>

I do not condemn the simple exercise of playing ball; but this, even in its simplicity, may be overdone.

I shrink always from the almost sure result which follows in the wake of these amusements. It leads to an outlay of means that should be expended in bringing the light of truth to souls that are perishing out of Christ. The amusements and expenditures of means for self-pleasing, which lead on step by step to self-glorifying, and the educating in these games for pleasure produce a love and passion for such things that is not favorable to the perfection of Christian character.<sup>222</sup>

[162]

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<sup>218</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:653

<sup>219</sup>Education, 212

<sup>220</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:57

<sup>221</sup>The Adventist Home, 509

<sup>222</sup>The Adventist Home, 499

### **Association and Correct Habits**

Young persons who are thrown into one another's society may make their association a blessing or a curse. They may edify, bless, and strengthen one another, improving in deportment, in disposition, in knowledge; or, by permitting themselves to become careless and unfaithful, they may exert only a demoralizing influence.

Jesus will be the helper of all who put their trust in Him. Those who are connected with Christ have happiness at their command. They follow in the path where their Saviour leads, for His sake crucifying self with the affections and lusts. These persons have built their hopes on Christ, and the storms of earth are powerless to sweep them from the sure foundation.

It rests with yourselves, young men and women, whether you will become persons of trust, of integrity and real usefulness. You should be ready and resolute to take your stand for the right, under all circumstances. Our wrong habits cannot be taken to heaven with us, and unless overcome here, they will shut us out of the abode of the righteous. Bad habits, when opposed, will offer the most vigorous resistance; but if the warfare is kept up with energy and perseverance, they may be conquered.

In order to form correct habits, we should seek the company of persons of sound moral and religious influence.<sup>223</sup>

If the youth could be persuaded to associate with the pure, the thoughtful, and the amiable, the effect would be most salutary. If choice is made of companions who fear the Lord, the influence will lead to truth, to duty, and to holiness. A truly Christian life is a power for good. But, on the other hand, those who associate with men and women of questionable morals, of bad principles and practices, will soon be walking in the same path. The tendencies of the natural heart are downward. He who associates with the skeptic will soon become skeptical; he who chooses the companionship of the vile will most assuredly become vile. To walk in the counsel of the ungodly is the first step toward standing in the way of sinners and sitting in the seat of the scornful.

Let all who would form a right character choose associates who are of a serious, thoughtful turn of mind and who are religiously

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<sup>223</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 4:655](#)

inclined. Those who have counted the cost and wish to build for eternity must put good material into their building. If they accept of rotten timbers, if they are content with deficiencies of character, the building is doomed to ruin. Let all take heed how they build. The storm of temptation will sweep over the building, and unless it is firmly and faithfully constructed it will not stand the test. [163]

A good name is more precious than gold. There is an inclination with the youth to associate with those who are inferior in mind and morals. What real happiness can a young person expect from a voluntary connection with persons who have a low standard of thoughts, feelings, and deportment? Some are debased in taste and depraved in habits, and all who choose such companions will follow their example.<sup>224</sup>

You may see no real danger in taking the first step in frivolity and pleasure seeking, and think that when you desire to change your course you will be able to do right as easily as before you yielded yourselves to do wrong. But this is a mistake. By the choice of evil companions many have been led step by step from the path of virtue into depths of disobedience and dissipation to which at one time they would have thought it impossible for them to sink.<sup>225</sup>

Do not think that God wishes us to yield up everything which it is for our happiness here to retain. All He requires us to give up is that which would not be for our good and happiness to retain.<sup>226</sup>

### Entire Rest and Self-Amusement

Young men should remember that they are accountable for all the privileges they have enjoyed, for the improvement of their time, and for the right use of their abilities. They may inquire, Shall we have no amusement or recreation? Shall we work, work, work, without variation?<sup>227</sup>

A change from physical labor that has taxed the strength severely may be very necessary for a time, that they may again engage in labor, putting forth exertion with greater success. But entire rest

<sup>224</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:587, 588

<sup>225</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 224

<sup>226</sup>The Adventist Home, 502

<sup>227</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 337

may not be necessary, or even be attended with the best results so far as their physical strength is concerned. They need not, even when weary with one kind of labor, trifle away their precious moments. They may then seek to do something not so exhausting, but which will be a blessing to their mother and sisters. In lightening their cares by taking upon themselves the roughest burdens they have to bear, they can find that amusement which springs from principle and which will yield them true happiness, and their time will not be spent in trifling or in selfish indulgence. Their time may be ever employed to advantage, and they be constantly refreshed with variation, and yet be redeeming the time, so that every moment will tell with good account to someone.<sup>228</sup>

Many claim that it is necessary for the preservation of physical health to indulge in selfish amusement. It is true that change is required for the best development of the body, for mind and body are refreshed and invigorated by change; but this object is not gained by indulgence in foolish amusements, to the neglect of daily duties which the youth should be required to do.<sup>229</sup>

[164] Among the most dangerous resorts for pleasure is the theater. Instead of being a school for morality and virtue, as is so often claimed, it is the very hotbed of immorality. Vicious habits and sinful propensities are strengthened and confirmed by these entertainments. Low songs, lewd gestures, expressions, and attitudes, deprave the imagination and debase the morals. Every youth who habitually attends such exhibitions will be corrupted in principle. There is no influence in our land more powerful to poison the imagination, to destroy religious impressions, and to blunt the relish for the tranquil pleasures and sober realities of life than theatrical amusements. The love for these scenes increases with every indulgence, as the desire for intoxicating drink strengthens with its use. The only safe course is to shun the theater, the circus, and every other questionable place of amusement.<sup>230</sup>

David's dancing in reverent joy before God has been cited by pleasure lovers in justification of the fashionable modern dance, but there is no ground for such an argument. In our day dancing is

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<sup>228</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:223

<sup>229</sup>The Adventist Home, 508

<sup>230</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 334, 335

associated with folly and midnight reveling. Health and morals are sacrificed to pleasure. By the frequenters of the ballroom God is not an object of thought and reverence; prayer or the song of praise would be felt to be out of place in their assemblies. This test should be decisive. Amusements that have a tendency to weaken the love for sacred things and lessen our joy in the service of God are not to be sought by Christians. The music and dancing in joyful praise to God at the removal of the ark had not the faintest resemblance to the dissipation of modern dancing. The one tended to the remembrance of God and exalted His holy name. The other is a device of Satan to cause men to forget God and to dishonor Him.<sup>231</sup>

The young generally conduct themselves as though the precious hours of probation, while mercy lingers, were one grand holiday, and they were placed in this world merely for their own amusement, to be gratified with a continued round of excitement. Satan has been making special efforts to lead them to find happiness in worldly amusements and to justify themselves by endeavoring to show that these amusements are harmless, innocent, and even important for health.<sup>232</sup>

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. The sins that destroyed the antediluvians and the cities of the plain exist today—not merely in heathen lands, not only among popular professors of Christianity, but with some who profess to be looking for the coming of the Son of man. If God should present these sins before you as they appear in His sight, you would be filled with shame and terror.<sup>233</sup>

The desire for excitement and pleasing entertainment is a temptation and a snare to God's people, and especially to the young. Satan is constantly preparing inducements to attract minds from the solemn work of preparation for scenes just in the future. Through the agency of worldlings he keeps up a continual excitement to induce the unwary to join in worldly pleasures. There are shows, lectures, and an endless variety of entertainments that are calculated to lead

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<sup>231</sup>[Patriarchs and Prophets, 707](#)

<sup>232</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 1:501](#)

<sup>233</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:218](#)

to a love of the world; and through this union with the world, faith is weakened.

God does not own the pleasure seeker as His follower. Those only who are self-denying, and who live lives of sobriety, humility, and holiness, are true followers of Jesus. And such cannot enjoy the frivolous, empty conversation of the lover of the world.<sup>234</sup>

If you truly belong to Christ, you will have opportunities for witnessing for Him. You will be invited to attend places of amusement, and then it will be that you will have an opportunity to testify to your Lord. If you are true to Christ then, you will not try to form excuses for your nonattendance, but will plainly and modestly declare that you are a child of God, and your principles would not allow you to be in a place, even for one occasion, where you could not invite the presence of your Lord.<sup>235</sup>

Between the associations of the followers of Christ for Christian recreation and worldly gatherings for pleasure and amusement will exist a marked contrast. Instead of prayer and the mentioning of Christ and sacred things will be heard from the lips of worldlings the silly laugh and the trifling conversation. Their idea is to have a general high time. Their amusements commence in folly and end in vanity.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>234</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 325, 328

<sup>235</sup>The Adventist Home, 519

<sup>236</sup>The Adventist Home, 512

## **Chapter 30—The Avenues to the Mind Which Must Be Guarded** [166]

All should guard the senses, lest Satan gain victory over them; for these are the avenues of the soul.

You will have to become a faithful sentinel over your eyes, ears, and all your senses if you would control your mind and prevent vain and corrupt thoughts from staining your soul. The power of grace alone can accomplish this most desirable work.

Satan and his angels are busy creating a paralyzed condition of the senses so that cautions, warnings, and reproofs shall not be heard; or, if heard, that they shall not take effect upon the heart and reform the life.

### **Satan Cannot Enter the Mind Without Our Consent**

God has provided that we shall not be tempted above what we are able to bear, but that with every temptation He will make a way of escape. If we live wholly for God, we shall not allow the mind to indulge in selfish imaginings.

If there is any way by which Satan can gain access to the mind, he will sow his tares and cause them to grow until they will yield an abundant harvest. In no case can Satan obtain dominion over the thoughts, words, and actions, unless we voluntarily open the door and invite him to enter. He will then come in and, by catching away the good seed sown in the heart, make of none effect the truth.

It is not safe for us to linger to contemplate the advantages to be reaped through yielding to Satan's suggestions. Sin means dishonor and disaster to every soul that indulges in it; but it is blinding and deceiving in its nature, and it will entice us with flattering presentations. If we venture on Satan's ground, we have no assurance of protection from his power. So far as in us lies, we should close every avenue by which the tempter may find access to us.

Every Christian must stand on guard continually, watching every avenue of the soul where Satan might find access. He must pray for divine help and at the same time resolutely resist every inclination to sin. By courage, by faith, by persevering toil, he can conquer. But let him remember that to gain the victory Christ must abide in him and he in Christ.

[167] Everything that can be done should be done to place ourselves and our children where we shall not see the iniquity that is practiced in the world. We should carefully guard the sight of our eyes and the hearing of our ears so that these awful things shall not enter our minds.

Do not see how close you can walk upon the brink of a precipice and be safe. Avoid the first approach to danger. The soul's interests cannot be trifled with. Your capital is your character. Cherish it as you would a golden treasure. Moral purity, self-respect, a strong power of resistance, must be firmly and constantly cherished. There should not be one departure from reserve; one act of familiarity, one indiscretion, may jeopardize the soul in opening the door to temptation, and the power of resistance becomes weakened.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>237</sup>The Adventist Home, 410-404



## Chapter 31—Choice of Reading

[168]

Education is but a preparation of the physical, intellectual, and spiritual powers for the best performance of all the duties of life. The powers of endurance, and the strength and activity of the brain, are lessened or increased by the way in which they are employed. The mind should be so disciplined that all its powers will be symmetrically developed.

Many youth are eager for books. They desire to read everything that they can obtain. Let them take heed what they read as well as what they hear. I have been instructed that they are in the greatest danger of being corrupted by improper reading. Satan has a thousand ways of unsettling the minds of youth. They cannot safely be off guard for a moment. They must set a watch upon their minds, that they may not be allured by the enemy's temptations.<sup>238</sup>

### Influence of Unwholesome Reading

Satan knows that to a great degree the mind is affected by that upon which it feeds. He is seeking to lead both the youth and those of mature age to read story-books, tales, and other literature. The readers of such literature become unfitted for the duties lying before them. They live an unreal life, and have no desire to search the Scriptures, to feed upon the heavenly manna. The mind that needs strengthening is enfeebled, and loses its power to study the great truths that relate to the mission and work of Christ—truths that would fortify the mind, awaken the imagination, and kindle a strong, earnest desire to overcome as Christ overcame.

Could a large share of the books published be consumed, a plague would be stayed that is doing a fearful work upon mind and heart. Love stories, frivolous and exciting tales, and even that class of books called religious novels—books in which the author attaches to his story a moral lesson—are a curse to the readers. Religious

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<sup>238</sup>Messages to Young People, 271

sentiments may be woven all through a story-book, but, in most cases, Satan is but clothed in angel-ropes, the more effectively to deceive and allure. None are so confirmed in right principles, none so secure from temptation, that they are safe in reading these stories.

The readers of fiction are indulging an evil that destroys spirituality, eclipsing the beauty of the sacred page. It creates an unhealthy excitement, fevers the imagination, unfits the mind for usefulness, weans the soul from prayer, and disqualifies it for any spiritual exercise.

[169] God has endowed many of our youth with superior capabilities; but too often they have enervated their powers, confused and enfeebled their minds, so that for years they have made no growth in grace or in a knowledge of the reasons of our faith, because of their unwise choice of reading. Those who are looking for the Lord soon to come, looking for that wondrous change, when “this corruptible shall put on incorruption,” should in this probationary time be standing upon a higher plane of action.

My dear young friends, question your own experience as to the influence of exciting stories. Can you, after such reading, open the Bible and read with interest the words of life? Do you not find the Book of God uninteresting? The charm of that love story is upon the mind, destroying its healthy tone, and making it impossible for you to fix the attention upon the important, solemn truths that concern your eternal welfare.

Resolutely discard all trashy reading. It will not strengthen your spirituality, but will introduce into the mind sentiments that pervert the imagination, causing you to think less of Jesus and to dwell less upon His precious lessons. Keep the mind free from everything that would lead it in a wrong direction. Do not encumber it with trashy stories, which impart no strength to the mental powers. The thoughts are of the same character as the food provided for the mind.<sup>239</sup>

### **Reading That Destroys the Soul**

With the immense tide of printed matter constantly pouring from the press, old and young form the habit of reading hastily and superficially, and the mind loses its power of connected and vigorous

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<sup>239</sup>[Messages to Young People, 271-273](#)

thought. Furthermore, a large share of the periodicals and books that, like the frogs of Egypt, are overspreading the land, are not merely commonplace, idle, and enervating, but unclean and degrading. Their effect is not merely to intoxicate and ruin the mind, but to corrupt and destroy the soul<sup>240</sup>

In the education of children and youth, fairy tales, myths, and fictitious stories are now given a large place. Books of this character are used in schools, and they are to be found in many homes. How can Christian parents permit their children to use books so filled with falsehood? When the children ask the meaning of stories so contrary to the teaching of their parents, the answer is that the stories are not true; but this does not do away with the evil results of their use. The ideas presented in these books mislead the children. They impart false views of life and beget and foster a desire for the unreal.

The widespread use of such books at this time is one of the cunning devices of Satan. He is seeking to divert the minds of old and young from the great work of character building. He means that our children and youth shall be swept away by the soul-destroying deceptions with which he is filling the world. Therefore he seeks to divert their minds from the word of God and thus prevent them from obtaining a knowledge of those truths that would be their safeguard.

Never should books containing a perversion of truth be placed in the hands of children or youth. Let not our children, in the very process of obtaining an education, receive ideas that will prove to be seeds of sin.<sup>241</sup>

Another source of danger against which we should be constantly on guard is the reading of infidel authors. Such works are inspired by the enemy of truth, and no one can read them without imperiling the soul.

It is true that some who are affected by them may finally recover; but all who tamper with their evil influence place themselves on Satan's ground, and he makes the most of his advantage. As they invite his temptations they have not wisdom to discern or strength to resist them. With a fascinating, bewitching power, unbelief and infidelity fasten themselves upon the mind.<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>240</sup>Education, 189, 190

<sup>241</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 384, 385

<sup>242</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 135, 136

### **Dangers in Reading Exciting Stories**

What shall our children read? This is a serious question and one that demands a serious answer. It troubles me to see in Sabbath-keeping families periodicals and newspapers containing continued stories which leave no impressions for good on the minds of children and youth. I have watched those whose taste for fiction was thus cultivated. They have had the privilege of listening to the truth, of becoming acquainted with the reasons of our faith; but they have grown to mature years destitute of true piety and practical godliness.

Readers of frivolous, exciting tales become unfitted for the duties of practical life. They live in an unreal world. I have watched children who have been allowed to make a practice of reading such stories. Whether at home or abroad, they were restless, dreamy, unable to converse except upon the most commonplace subjects. Religious thought and conversation was entirely foreign to their minds. With the cultivation of an appetite for sensational stories, the mental taste is perverted, and the mind is not satisfied unless fed upon this unwholesome food. I can think of no more fitting name for those who indulge in such reading than mental inebriates. Intemperate habits of reading have an effect upon the brain similar to that which intemperate habits of eating and drinking have upon the body.<sup>243</sup>

Before accepting the present truth, some had formed the habit of novel reading. Upon uniting with the church, they made an effort to overcome this habit. To place before this class reading similar to that which they have discarded is like offering intoxicants to the inebriate. Yielding to the temptation continually before them, they soon lose their relish for solid reading. They have no interest in Bible study. Their moral power becomes enfeebled. Sin appears less and less repulsive. There is manifest an increasing unfaithfulness, a growing distaste for life's practical duties. As the mind becomes perverted, it is ready to grasp any reading of a stimulating character. Thus the way is open for Satan to bring the soul fully under his domination.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>243</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 132-135

<sup>244</sup>Testimonies for the Church 7:203

## The Book of Books

The nature of one's religious experience is revealed by the character of the books one chooses to read in one's leisure moments. In order to have a healthy tone of mind and sound religious principles, the youth must live in communion with God through His word. Pointing out the way of salvation through Christ, the Bible is our guide to a higher, better life. It contains the most interesting and the most instructive history and biography that were ever written. Those whose imagination has not become perverted by the reading of fiction will find the Bible the most interesting of books. [171]

The Bible is the Book of books. If you love the Word of God, searching it as you have opportunity, that you may come into possession of its rich treasures, and be thoroughly furnished unto all good works, then you may be assured that Jesus is drawing you to Himself. But to read the Scriptures in a casual way, without seeking to comprehend Christ's lesson that you may comply with His requirements, is not enough. There are treasures in the word of God that can be discovered only by sinking the shaft deep into the mine of truth.

The carnal mind rejects the truth; but the soul that is converted undergoes a marvelous change. The book that before was unattractive because it revealed truths which testified against the sinner, now becomes the food of the soul, the joy and consolation of the life. The Sun of righteousness illuminates the sacred pages, and the Holy Spirit speaks through them to the soul.

Let all who have cultivated a love for light reading, now turn their attention to the sure word of prophecy. Take your Bibles, and begin to study with fresh interest the sacred records of the Old and New Testaments. The oftener and more diligently you study the Bible, the more beautiful will it appear, and the less relish you will have for light reading. Bind this precious volume to your hearts. It will be to you a friend and guide.<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>245</sup>Messages to Young People, 273, 274

## Chapter 32—Music

The art of sacred melody was diligently cultivated [in the schools of the prophets]. No frivolous waltz was heard, nor flippant song that should extol man and divert the attention from God; but sacred, solemn psalms of praise to the Creator, exalting His name and recounting His wondrous works. Thus music was made to serve a holy purpose, to lift the thoughts to that which was pure and noble and elevating, and to awaken in the soul devotion and gratitude to God.<sup>246</sup>

Music forms a part of God's worship in the courts above, and we should endeavor, in our songs of praise, to approach as nearly as possible to the harmony of the heavenly choirs. The proper training of the voice is an important feature in education and should not be neglected. Singing, as a part of religious service, is as much an act of worship as is prayer. The heart must feel the spirit of the song to give it right expression.<sup>247</sup>

I have been shown the order, the perfect order, of heaven, and have been enraptured as I listened to the perfect music there. After coming out of vision, the singing here has sounded very harsh and discordant. I have seen companies of angels, who stood in a hollow square, everyone having a harp of gold. At the end of the harp was an instrument to turn to set the harp or change the tunes. Their fingers did not sweep over the strings carelessly, but they touched different strings to produce different sounds. There is one angel who always leads, who first touches the harp and strikes the note, then all join in the rich, perfect music of heaven. It cannot be described. It is melody, heavenly, divine, while from every countenance beams the image of Jesus, shining with glory unspeakable.<sup>248</sup>

I was shown that the youth must take a higher stand and make the word of God the man of their counsel and their guide. Solemn

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<sup>246</sup>Fundamentals of Christian Education, 97, 98

<sup>247</sup>Patriarchs and Prophets, 594

<sup>248</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:146

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responsibilities rest upon the young, which they lightly regard. The introduction of music into their homes, instead of inciting to holiness and spirituality, has been the means of diverting their minds from the truth. Frivolous songs and the popular sheet music of the day seem congenial to their taste. The instruments of music have taken time which should have been devoted to prayer. Music, when not abused, is a great blessing; but when put to a wrong use, it is a terrible curse. It excites, but does not impart that strength and courage which the Christian can find only at the throne of grace while humbly making known his wants and, with strong cries and tears pleading for heavenly strength to be fortified against the powerful temptations of the evil one. Satan is leading the young captive. Oh, what can I say to lead them to break his power of infatuation! He is a skillful charmer, luring them on to perdition.<sup>249</sup>

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<sup>249</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:496, 497

## Chapter 33—Criticism and Its Effects

Christians should be careful in regard to their words. They should never carry unfavorable reports from one of their friends to another, especially if they are aware that there is a lack of union between them. It is cruel to hint and insinuate, as though you knew a great deal in regard to this friend or that acquaintance of which others are ignorant. Such hints go further, and create more unfavorable impressions, than to frankly relate the facts in an unexaggerated manner. What harm has not the church of Christ suffered from these things! The inconsistent, unguarded course of her members has made her weak as water. Confidence has been betrayed by members of the same church, and yet the guilty did not design to do mischief. Lack of wisdom in the selection of subjects of conversation has done much harm.

The conversation should be upon spiritual and divine things; but it has been otherwise. If the association with Christian friends is chiefly devoted to the improvement of the mind and heart, there will be no after regrets, and they can look back on the interview with a pleasant satisfaction. But if the hours are spent in levity and vain talking, and the precious time is employed in dissecting the lives and character of others, the friendly intercourse will prove a source of evil, and your influence will be a savor of death unto death.<sup>250</sup>

### Think Well of All Men

When we listen to a reproach against our brother, we take up that reproach. To the question, “Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in Thy holy hill?” the psalmist answered, “He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor.” [Psalm 15:1-3](#).

<sup>250</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 2:186, 187](#)



What a world of gossip would be prevented if every man would remember that those who tell him the faults of others will as freely publish his faults at a favorable opportunity. We should endeavor to think well of all men, especially our brethren, until compelled to think otherwise. We should not hastily credit evil reports. These are often the result of envy or misunderstanding, or they may proceed from exaggeration or a partial disclosure of facts. Jealousy and suspicion, once allowed a place, will sow themselves broadcast, like thistledown. Should a brother go astray, then is the time to show your real interest in him. Go to him kindly, pray with and for him, remembering the infinite price which Christ has paid for his redemption. In this way you may save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins.

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A glance, a word, even an intonation of the voice, may be vital with falsehood, sinking like a barbed arrow into some heart, inflicting an incurable wound. Thus a doubt, a reproach, may be cast upon one by whom God would accomplish a good work, and his influence is blighted, his usefulness destroyed. Among some species of animals, if one of their number is wounded and falls, he is at once set upon and torn in pieces by his fellows. The same cruel spirit is indulged by men and women who bear the name of Christians. They manifest a pharisaical zeal to stone others less guilty than themselves. There are some who point to others' faults and failures to divert attention from their own, or to gain credit for great zeal for God and the church.<sup>251</sup>

The time spent in criticizing the motives and works of Christ's servants might better be spent in prayer. Often if those who find fault knew the truth in regard to those with whom they find fault, they would have an altogether different opinion of them. How much better it would be if, instead of criticizing and condemning others, everyone would say: "I must work out my own salvation. If I cooperate with Him who desires to save my soul, I must watch myself diligently. I must cut away every evil from my life. I must become a new creature in Christ. I must overcome every fault. Then, instead of weakening those who are striving against evil, I can strengthen them by encouraging words."<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>251</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:58, 59

<sup>252</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:83, 84

### **The Envious Man Sees No Good in Others**

We are not to allow our perplexities and disappointments to eat into our souls and make us fretful and impatient. Let there be no strife, no evil thinking or evil-speaking, lest we offend God. My brother, if you open your heart to envy and evil surmising, the Holy Spirit cannot abide with you. Seek for the fullness that is in Christ. Labor in His lines. Let every thought and word and deed reveal Him. You need a daily baptism of the love that in the days of the apostles made them all of one accord. This love will bring health to body, mind, and soul. Surround your soul with an atmosphere that will strengthen spiritual life. Cultivate faith, hope, courage, and love. Let the peace of God rule in your heart.<sup>253</sup>

Envy is not merely a perverseness of temper, but a distemper, which disorders all the faculties. It began with Satan. He desired to be first in heaven, and because he could not have all the power and glory he sought, he rebelled against the government of God. He envied our first parents and tempted them to sin and thus ruined them and all the human race.

[176] The envious man shuts his eyes to the good qualities and noble deeds of others. He is always ready to disparage and misrepresent that which is excellent. Men often confess and forsake other faults, but there is little to be hoped for from the envious man. Since to envy a person is to admit that he is a superior, pride will not permit any concession. If an attempt be made to convince the envious person of his sin, he becomes even more bitter against the object of his passion, and too often he remains incurable.

The envious man diffuses poison wherever he goes, alienating friends and stirring up hatred and rebellion against God and man. He seeks to be thought best and greatest, not by putting forth heroic, self-denying efforts to reach the goal of excellence himself, but by standing where he is and diminishing the merit due to the efforts of others.

The tongue that delights in mischief, the babbling tongue that says, Report, and I will report it, is declared by the apostle James to be set on fire of hell. It scatters firebrands on every side. What cares the vendor of gossip that he defames the innocent? He will not

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<sup>253</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 8:191](#)

stay his evil work, though he destroy hope and courage in those who are already sinking under their burdens. He cares only to indulge his scandal-loving propensity. Even professed Christians close their eyes to all that is pure, honest, noble, and lovely, and treasure up what ever is objectionable and disagreeable, and publish it to the world.<sup>254</sup>

### **Jealousy and Faultfinding**

It pains me to say that there are unruly tongues among church members. There are false tongues that feed on mischief. There are sly, whispering tongues. There is tattling, impertinent meddling, adroit quizzing. Among the lovers of gossip some are actuated by curiosity, others by jealousy, many by hatred against those through whom God has spoken to reprove them. All these discordant elements are at work. Some conceal their real sentiments, while others are eager to publish all they know, or even suspect, of evil against another.

I saw that the very spirit of perjury, that would turn truth into falsehood, good into evil, and innocence into crime, is now active. Satan exults over the condition of God's professed people. While many are neglecting their own souls, they eagerly watch for an opportunity to criticize and condemn others. All have defects of character, and it is not hard to find something that jealousy can interpret to their injury. "Now," say these self-constituted judges, "we have facts. We will fasten upon them an accusation from which they can not clear themselves." They wait for a fitting opportunity and then produce their bundle of gossip and bring forth their tidbits.

In their efforts to carry a point, persons who have naturally a strong imagination are in danger of deceiving themselves and deceiving others. They gather up unguarded expressions from another, not considering that words may be uttered hastily and hence may not reflect the real sentiments of the speaker. But those unpremeditated remarks, often so trifling as to be unworthy of notice, are viewed through Satan's magnifying glass, pondered, and repeated until molehills become mountains.

Is it Christian charity to gather up every floating report, to unearth

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<sup>254</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:56, 57

everything that will cast suspicion on the character of another, and then take delight in using it to injure him? Satan exults when he can defame or wound a follower of Christ. He is “the accuser of our brethren.” Shall Christians aid him in his work?

God’s all-seeing eye notes the defects of all and the ruling passion of each, yet He bears with our mistakes and pities our weakness. He bids His people cherish the same spirit of tenderness and forbearance. True Christians will not exult in exposing the faults and deficiencies of others. They will turn away from vileness and deformity, to fix the mind upon that which is attractive and lovely. To the Christian every act of faultfinding, every word of censure or condemnation, is painful.<sup>255</sup>

### **The Effects of Criticism of Church and Institutional Leaders**

The spirit of gossip and talebearing is one of Satan’s special agencies to sow discord and strife, to separate friends, and to undermine the faith of many in the truthfulness of our positions. Brethren and sisters are too ready to talk of the faults and errors that they think exist in others, and especially in those who have borne unflinchingly the messages of reproof and warning given them of God.

The children of these complainers listen with open ears and receive the poison of disaffection. Parents are thus blindly closing the avenues through which the hearts of the children might be reached. How many families season their daily meals with doubt and questionings. They dissect the characters of their friends, and serve them up as a dainty dessert. A precious bit of slander is passed around the board to be commented upon, not only by adults, but by children. In this God is dishonored. Jesus said: “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.” [Matthew 25:40](#). Therefore Christ is slighted and abused by those who slander His servants.

The names of God’s chosen servants have been handled with disrespect, and in some cases with absolute contempt, by certain persons whose duty it is to uphold them. The children have not failed to hear the disrespectful remarks of their parents in reference to the solemn reproofs and warnings of God’s servants. They have

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<sup>255</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:94-96](#)

understood the scornful jests and depreciatory speeches that from time to time have met their ears, and the tendency has been to bring sacred and eternal interests, in their minds, on a level with the common affairs of the world. What a work are these parents doing in making infidels of their children even in their childhood! This is the way that children are taught to be irreverent and to rebel against Heaven's reproof of sin.

Spiritual declension can but prevail where such evils exist. These very fathers and mothers, blinded by the enemy, marvel why their children are so inclined to unbelief and to doubt the truth of the Bible. They wonder that it is so difficult to reach them by moral and religious influences. Had they spiritual eyesight, they would at once discover that this deplorable condition of things is the result of their own home influence, the offspring of their jealousy and distrust. Thus many infidels are educated in the family circles of professed Christians. There are many who find special enjoyment in discoursing and dwelling upon the defects, whether real or imaginary, of those who bear heavy responsibilities in connection with the institutions of God's cause. They overlook the good that has been accomplished, the benefits that have resulted from arduous labor and unflinching devotion to the cause, and fasten their attention upon some apparent mistake, some matter that, after it has been done and the consequences have followed, they fancy could have been done in a better manner with fairer results, when the truth is, had they been left to do the work, they would either have refused to move at all under the attending discouragements of the case, or would have managed more indiscreetly than those who did do the work, following the opening of God's providence.

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But these unruly talkers will fasten upon the more disagreeable features of the work, even as the lichen clings to the roughness of the rock. These persons are spiritually dwarfed by continually dwelling upon the failings and faults of others. They are morally incapable of discerning good and noble actions, unselfish endeavors, true heroism, and self-sacrifice. They are not becoming nobler and loftier in their lives and hopes, more generous and broad in their ideas and plans. They are not cultivating that charity that should characterize the Christian's life. They are degenerating every day and are becoming narrower in their prejudices and views. Littleness is their element,

and the atmosphere that surrounds them is poisonous to peace and happiness.<sup>256</sup>

Every institution will have to battle with difficulty. Trials are permitted in order to test the hearts of God's people. When adversity befalls one of the Lord's instrumentalities, it will be shown how much real faith we have in God and in His work. At such a time let none view matters in the worst light and give expression to doubt and unbelief. Do not criticize those who carry the burdens of responsibility. Let not the conversation in your homes be poisoned with criticism of the Lord's workers. Parents who indulge this criticizing spirit are not bringing before their children that which will make them wise unto salvation. Their words tend to unsettle the faith and confidence not only of the children, but of those older in years.<sup>257</sup>

The managers of our institutions have a most difficult task to maintain order and to discipline wisely the youth under their care. The members of the church can do much to stay up their hands. When the youth are unwilling to submit to the discipline of the institution, or in any matter of difference with their superiors are determined to have their own way, let not parents blindly sustain and sympathize with their children.

Better, far better might your children suffer, better lie in their graves, than be taught to treat lightly the principles that lie at the very foundation of loyalty to truth, to their fellow beings, and to God.<sup>258</sup>

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### **Criticism of Self Alone is of Practical Value**

Would all professed Christians use their investigative powers to see what evils needed to be corrected in themselves, instead of talking of others' wrongs, there would be a more healthy condition in the church today. Some will be honest when it costs nothing; but when policy will pay best, honesty is forgotten. Honesty and policy will not work together in the same mind. In time, either policy will be expelled, and truth and honesty reign supreme, or, if policy is

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<sup>256</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:195, 196

<sup>257</sup>Testimonies for the Church 7:183

<sup>258</sup>Testimonies for the Church 7:185, 186

cherished, honesty will be forgotten. They are never in agreement; they have nothing in common. One is the prophet of Baal, the other is the true prophet of God. When the Lord makes up His jewels, the true, the frank, the honest, will be looked upon with pleasure. Angels are employed in making crowns for such ones, and upon these star-gemmed crowns will be reflected, with splendor, the light which radiates from the throne of God.

The Lord is testing and proving His people. You may be just as severe and critical with your own defective character as you please; but be kind, pitiful, and courteous toward others. Inquire every day: Am I sound to the core, or am I false-hearted? Entreat the Lord to save you from all deception on this point. Eternal interests are involved. While so many are panting after honor and greedy of gain, do you, my beloved brethren, be eagerly seeking the assurance of the love of God and crying: Who will show me how to make my calling and election sure?

Satan carefully studies the constitutional sins of men, and then he begins his work of alluring and ensnaring them. We are in the thickest of temptations, but there is victory for us if we fight manfully the battles of the Lord. All are in danger. But if you walk humbly and prayerfully you will come forth from the proving process more precious than fine gold, even than the golden wedge of Ophir. If careless and prayerless, you will be as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.<sup>259</sup>

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<sup>259</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:96-98

## Chapter 34—Counsel Concerning Dress

In dress, as in all things else, it is our privilege to honor our Creator. He desires our clothing to be not only neat and healthful, but appropriate and becoming.

We should seek to make the best of our appearance. In the tabernacle service God specified every detail concerning the garments of those who ministered before Him. Thus we are taught that He has a preference in regard to the dress of those who serve Him. Very specific were the directions given in regard to Aaron's robes, for his dress was symbolic. So the dress of Christ's followers should be symbolic. In all things we are to be representatives of Him. Our appearance in every respect should be characterized by neatness, modesty, and purity.

By the things of nature [the flowers, the lily] Christ illustrates the beauty that Heaven values, the modest grace, the simplicity, the purity, the appropriateness, that would make our attire pleasing to Him.<sup>260</sup>

### Guiding Principles in Dress

The dress and its arrangement upon the person is generally found to be the index of the man or the woman.

We judge of a person's character by the style of dress worn. A modest, godly woman will dress modestly. A refined taste, a cultivated mind, will be revealed in the choice of a simple, appropriate attire. The one who is simple and unpretending in her dress and in her manners shows that she understands that a true woman is characterized by moral worth. How charming, how interesting, is simplicity in dress, which in comeliness can be compared with the flowers of the field!

I beg of our people to walk carefully and circumspectly before God. Follow the customs in dress so far as they conform to health

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<sup>260</sup>Child Guidance, 413



principles. Let our sisters dress plainly, as many do, having the dress of good, durable material, appropriate for this age, and let not the dress question fill the mind. Our sisters should dress with simplicity. They should clothe themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety. Give to the world a living illustration of the inward adorning of the grace of God.

If the world introduce a modest, convenient, and healthful mode of dress, which is in accordance with the Bible, it will not change our relation to God or to the world to adopt such a style of dress. Christians should follow Christ and make their dress conform to God's Word.

They should shun extremes. They should humbly pursue a straightforward course, irrespective of applause or of censure, and should cling to the right because of its own merits. [181]

Do not occupy your time by endeavoring to follow all the foolish fashions in dress. Dress neatly and becomingly, but do not make yourself the subject of remarks either by being overdressed or by dressing in a lax, untidy manner. Act as though you knew that the eye of heaven is upon you, and that you are living under the approbation or disapprobation of God.<sup>261</sup>

### **Biblical Instruction**

Christ noticed the devotion to dress, and He cautioned, yea, He commanded, His followers not to bestow too much thought upon it. "Why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Pride and extravagance in dress are sins to which woman is especially prone; hence these injunctions relate directly to her. Of how little value are gold or pearls or costly array, when compared with the meekness and loveliness of Christ!

I was directed to the following scriptures. Said the angel, "They are to instruct God's people." **1 Timothy 2:9, 10**: "In like manner also that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but which becometh women professing godliness

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<sup>261</sup>Child Guidance, 413-415

with good works.” [1 Peter 3:3-5](#): “Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting of the hair and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, ... adorned themselves.”

Many look upon these injunctions as too old-fashioned to be worthy of notice; but He who gave them to His disciples understood the dangers from the love of dress in our time, and sent to us the note of warning. Will we heed the warning and be wise?

Those who are truly seeking to follow Christ will have conscientious scruples in regard to the dress they wear; they will strive to meet the requirements of this injunction [[1 Peter 3:3-5](#)] so plainly given by the Lord.<sup>262</sup>

Self-denial in dress is a part of our Christian duty. To dress plainly, abstaining from display of jewelry and ornaments of every kind, is in keeping with our faith.<sup>263</sup>

Many need instruction as to how they should appear in the assembly for worship on the Sabbath. They are not to enter the presence of God in the common clothing worn during the week. All should have a special Sabbath suit, to be worn when attending service in God’s house.

[182] While we should not conform to worldly fashions, we are not to be indifferent in regard to our outward appearance. We are to be neat and trim, though without adornment. The children of God should be pure within and without.<sup>264</sup>

Especially should the wives of our ministers be careful not to depart from the plain teachings of the Bible on the point of dress. Many look upon these injunctions as too old-fashioned to be worthy of notice; but He who gave them to His disciples understood the dangers from the love of dress in our time and sent to us the note of warning. Will we heed the warning and be wise? Extravagance in dress is continually increasing. The end is not yet. Fashion is constantly changing, and our sisters follow in its wake, regardless of

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<sup>262</sup>[Child Guidance, 415, 416](#)

<sup>263</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 3:366](#)

<sup>264</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:355](#)

time or expense. There is a great amount of means expended upon dress, when it should be returned to God the giver.<sup>265</sup>

### **The Influence of the Mode of Dress**

The love of dress endangers the morals and makes woman the opposite of the Christian lady characterized by modesty and sobriety. Showy, extravagant dress too often encourages lust in the heart of the wearer and awakens base passions in the heart of the beholder. God sees that the ruin of the character is frequently preceded by the indulgence of pride and vanity in dress. He sees that the costly apparel stifles the desire to do good.<sup>266</sup>

Simple, plain, unpretending dress will be a recommendation to my youthful sisters. In no better way can you let your light shine to others than in your simplicity of dress and deportment. You may show to all that, in comparison with eternal things, you place a proper estimate upon the things of this life.<sup>267</sup>

Many dress like the world in order to have an influence over unbelievers, but here they make a sad mistake. If they would have a true and saving influence, let them live out their profession, show their faith by their righteous works, and make the distinction plain between the Christian and the worldling. The words, the dress, the actions, should tell for God. Then a holy influence will be shed upon all around them, and even unbelievers will take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus. If any wish to have their influence tell in favor of truth, let them live out their profession and thus imitate the humble Pattern.<sup>268</sup>

My sisters, avoid even the appearance of evil. In this fast age, reeking with corruption, you are not safe unless you stand guarded. Virtue and modesty are rare. I appeal to you as followers of Christ, making an exalted profession, to cherish the precious, priceless gem of modesty. This will guard virtue.

Chaste simplicity in dress, when united with modesty of demeanor, will go far toward surrounding a young woman with that

<sup>265</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:630, 631

<sup>266</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:645

<sup>267</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:376

<sup>268</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:633, 634

atmosphere of sacred reserve which will be to her a shield from a thousand perils.<sup>269</sup>

[183] Simplicity of dress will make a sensible woman appear to the best advantage.

Dress as Christians should dress—simply, plainly adorn yourselves as becometh women professing godliness, with good works.

Many, in order to keep pace with absurd fashion, lose their taste for natural simplicity and are charmed with the artificial. They sacrifice time and money, the vigor of intellect, and true elevation of soul, and devote their entire being to the claims of fashionable life.

Dear youth, a disposition in you to dress according to the fashion, and to wear lace, and gold, and artificials for display, will not recommend to others your religion or the truth that you profess. People of discernment will look upon your attempts to beautify the external as proof of weak minds and proud hearts.<sup>270</sup>

There is a dress which every child and youth may innocently seek to obtain. It is the righteousness of the saints. If they will only be as willing and persevering in obtaining this as they are in fashioning their garments after the standard of worldly society, they will very soon be clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and their names will not be blotted out of the book of life. Mothers, as well as youth and children, need to pray, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” [Psalm 51:10](#). This purity of heart and loveliness of spirit are more precious than gold, both for time and for eternity. Only the pure in heart shall see God.<sup>271</sup>

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<sup>269</sup>Child Guidance, 417

<sup>270</sup>Child Guidance, 421

<sup>271</sup>Child Guidance, 417, 418

## Chapter 35—An Appeal to Youth

[184]

Dear young friends, that which you sow, you will also reap. Now is the sowing time for you. What will the harvest be? What are you sowing? Every word you utter, every act you perform, is a seed which will bear good or evil fruit and will result in joy or sorrow to the sower. As is the seed sown, so will be the crop. God has given you great light and many privileges. After this light has been given, after your dangers have been plainly presented before you, the responsibility becomes yours. The manner in which you treat the light that God gives you will turn the scale for happiness or woe. You are shaping your destinies for yourselves.

You all have an influence for good or for evil on the minds and characters of others. And just the influence which you exert is written in the book of records in heaven. An angel is attending you and taking record of your words and actions. When you rise in the morning, do you feel your helplessness and your need of strength from God? and do you humbly, heartily make known your wants to your heavenly Father? If so, angels mark your prayers, and if these prayers have not gone forth out of feigned lips, when you are in danger of unconsciously doing wrong and exerting an influence which will lead others to do wrong, your guardian angel will be by your side, prompting you to a better course, choosing your words for you, and influencing your actions.

If you feel in no danger, and if you offer no prayer for help and strength to resist temptations, you will be sure to go astray; your neglect of duty will be marked in the book of God in heaven, and you will be found wanting in the trying day.

There are some around you who have been religiously instructed, and some who have been indulged, petted, flattered, and praised until they have been literally spoiled for practical life. I am speaking in regard to persons that I know. Their characters are so warped by indulgence, flattery, and indolence that they are useless for this life. And if useless so far as this life is concerned, what may we

[185] hope for that life where all is purity and holiness, and where all have harmonious characters? I have prayed for these persons; I have addressed them personally. I could see the influence that they would exert over other minds in leading them to vanity, love of dress, and carelessness in regard to their eternal interests. The only hope for this class is for them to take heed to their ways, humble their proud, vain hearts before God, make confession of their sins, and be converted.<sup>272</sup>

### **Develop a Taste for Spiritual Things**

The only safety for the young is in unceasing watchfulness and humble prayer. They need not flatter themselves that they can be Christians without these. Satan conceals his temptations and his devices under a cover of light, as when he approached Christ in the wilderness. He was then in appearance as one of the heavenly angels. The adversary of our souls will approach us as a heavenly guest, and the apostle recommends sobriety and vigilance as our only safety. The young who indulge in carelessness and levity, and who neglect Christian duties, are continually falling under the temptations of the enemy, instead of overcoming as Christ overcame.<sup>273</sup>

Many profess to be on the Lord's side, but they are not; the weight of all their actions is on Satan's side. By what means shall we determine whose side we are on? Who has the heart? With whom are our thoughts? Upon whom do we love to converse? Who has our warmest affections and our best energies? If we are on the Lord's side, our thoughts are with Him, and our sweetest thoughts are of Him. We have no friendship with the world; we have consecrated all that we have and are to Him. We long to bear His image, breathe His Spirit, do His will, and please Him in all things.

True education is the power of using our faculties so as to achieve beneficial results. Why is it that religion occupies so little of our attention, while the world has the strength of brain, bone, and muscle? It is because the whole force of our being is bent in that direction. We have trained ourselves to engage with earnestness and power in worldly business, until it is easy for the mind to take that turn.

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<sup>272</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:363, 364

<sup>273</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:374

This is why Christians find a religious life so hard and a worldly life so easy. The faculties have been trained to exert their force in that direction. In religious life there has been an assent to the truths of God's word, but not a practical illustration of them in the life.

To cultivate religious thoughts and devotional feelings is not made a part of education. These should influence and control the entire being. The habit of doing right is wanting. There is spasmodic action under favorable influences, but to think naturally and readily upon divine things is not the ruling principle of the mind.

The mind must be educated and disciplined to love purity. A love for spiritual things should be encouraged; yea, must be encouraged, if you would grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. Desires for goodness and true holiness are right so far as they go; but if you stop here, they will avail nothing. Good purposes are right, but will prove of no avail unless resolutely carried out. Many will be lost while hoping and desiring to be Christians; but they made no earnest effort, therefore they will be weighed in the balances and found wanting. The will must be exercised in the right direction. I *will* be a wholehearted Christian. I *will* know the length and breadth, the height and depth, of perfect love. Listen to the words of Jesus: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." [Matthew 5:6](#). Ample provisions are made by Christ to satisfy the soul that hungers and thirsts for righteousness.<sup>274</sup>

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### Reach out for Higher Spiritual Attainments

The pure element of love will expand the soul for higher attainments, for increased knowledge of divine things, so that it will not be satisfied short of the fullness. Most professed Christians have no sense of the spiritual strength they might obtain were they as ambitious, zealous, and persevering to gain a knowledge of divine things as they are to obtain the paltry, perishable things of this life. The masses professing to be Christians have been satisfied to be spiritual dwarfs. They have no disposition to make it their object to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; hence godliness is a hidden mystery to them, they cannot understand it. They know not Christ by experimental knowledge.

<sup>274</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 2:262-266](#)

Let those men and women who are satisfied with their dwarfed, crippled condition in divine things be suddenly transported to heaven and for an instant witness the high, the holy state of perfection that ever abides there,—every soul filled with love; every countenance beaming with joy; enchanting music in melodious strains rising in honor of God and the Lamb; and ceaseless streams of light flowing upon the saints from the face of Him who sitteth upon the throne, and from the Lamb; and let them realize that there is higher and greater joy yet to experience, for the more they receive of the enjoyment of God, the more is their capacity increased to rise higher in eternal enjoyment, and thus continue to receive new and greater supplies from the ceaseless sources of glory and bliss inexpressible,—could such persons, I ask, mingle with the heavenly throng, participate in their songs, and endure the pure, exalted, transporting glory that emanates from God and the Lamb? Oh, no! their probation was lengthened for years that they might learn the language of heaven, that they might become “partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” [2 Peter 1:4](#). But they had a selfish business of their own to engage the powers of their minds and the energies of their beings. They could not afford to serve God unreservedly and make this a business. Worldly enterprises must come first and take the best of their powers, and a transient thought is devoted to God. Are such to be transformed after the final decision: “He that is holy, let him be holy still,” “he which is filthy, let him be filthy still”? Such a time is coming.

[187] Those who have trained the mind to delight in spiritual exercises are the ones who can be translated and not be overwhelmed with the purity and transcendent glory of heaven. You may have a good knowledge of the arts, you may have an acquaintance with the sciences, you may excel in music and in penmanship, your manners may please your associates, but what have these things to do with a preparation for heaven? What have they to do to prepare you to stand before the tribunal of God?<sup>275</sup>

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<sup>275</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 2:266, 267](#)



### **The Heavenly Character Must Be Acquired on Earth**

Be not deceived. God is not mocked. Nothing but holiness will prepare you for heaven. It is sincere, experimental piety alone that can give you a pure, elevated character and enable you to enter into the presence of God, who dwelleth in light unapproachable. The heavenly character must be acquired on earth, or it can never be acquired at all. Then begin at once. Flatter not yourself that a time will come when you can make an earnest effort easier than now. Every day increases your distance from God. Prepare for eternity with such zeal as you have not yet manifested. Educate your mind to love the Bible, to love the prayer meeting, to love the hour of meditation, and, above all, the hour when the soul communes with God. Become heavenly-minded if you would unite with the heavenly choir in the mansions above.<sup>276</sup>

### **Secure God's Love While You Can**

My mind goes back to faithful Abraham, who, in obedience to the divine command given him in a night vision at Beersheba, pursues his journey with Isaac by his side. He sees before him the mountain which God had told him He would signalize as the one upon which he was to sacrifice.

Isaac is bound by the trembling, loving hands of his pitying father because God has said it. The son submits to the sacrifice because he believes in the integrity of his father. But when everything is ready, when the faith of the father and the submission of the son are fully tested, the angel of God stays the uplifted hand of Abraham that is about to slay his son and tells him that it is enough. "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me." [Genesis 22:12](#).

This act of faith in Abraham is recorded for our benefit. It teaches us the great lesson of confidence in the requirements of God, however close and cutting they may be; and it teaches children perfect submission to their parents and to God. By Abraham's obedience we are taught that nothing is too precious for us to give to God.

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<sup>276</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 2:267, 268](#)

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God gave His Son to a life of humiliation, self-denial, poverty, toil, reproach, and to the agonizing death of crucifixion. But there was no angel to bear the joyful message: "It is enough; You need not die, My well-beloved Son." Legions of angels were sorrowfully waiting, hoping that, as in the case of Isaac, God would at the last moment prevent His shameful death. But angels were not permitted to bear any such message to God's dear Son. The humiliation in the judgment hall and on the way to Calvary went on. He was mocked, derided, and spit upon. He endured the jeers, taunts, and revilings of those who hated Him, until upon the cross He bowed His head and died.

Could God give us any greater proof of His love than in thus giving His Son to pass through this scene of suffering? And as the gift of God to man was a free gift, His love infinite, so His claims upon our confidence, our obedience, our whole heart, and the wealth of our affections are correspondingly infinite. He requires all that it is possible for man to give. The submission on our part must be proportionate to the gift of God; it must be complete and wanting in nothing. We are all debtors to God. He has claims upon us that we cannot meet without giving ourselves a full and willing sacrifice. He claims prompt and willing obedience, and nothing short of this will He accept. We have opportunity now to secure the love and favor of God. This year may be the last year in the lives of some who read this. Are there any among the youth who read this appeal who would choose the pleasures of the world before that peace which Christ gives the earnest seeker and the cheerful doer of His will?<sup>277</sup>

### **Weighed in the Balances**

God is weighing our characters, our conduct, and our motives in the balances of the sanctuary. It will be a fearful thing to be pronounced wanting in love and obedience by our Redeemer, who died upon the cross to draw our hearts unto Him. God has bestowed upon us great and precious gifts. He has given us light and a knowledge of His will, so that we need not err or walk in darkness. To be weighed in the balance and found wanting in the day of final settlement and rewards will be a fearful thing, a terrible mistake which can never

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<sup>277</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 3:368-370](#)

be corrected. Young friends, shall the book of God be searched in vain for your names?

God has appointed you a work to do for Him which will make you colaborers with Him. All around you there are souls to save. There are those whom you can encourage and bless by your earnest efforts. You may turn souls from sin to righteousness. When you have a sense of your accountability to God you will feel the need of faithfulness in prayer and faithfulness in watching against the temptations of Satan. You will, if you are indeed Christians, feel more like mourning over the moral darkness in the world than indulging in levity and pride of dress. You will be among those who are sighing and crying for the abominations that are done in the land. You will resist the temptations of Satan to indulge in vanity and in trimmings and ornaments for display. The mind is narrowed and the intellect dwarfed that can be gratified with these frivolous things to the neglect of high responsibilities.

The youth in our day may be workers with Christ if they will; and in working, their faith will strengthen and their knowledge of the divine will will increase. Every true purpose and every act of right doing will be recorded in the book of life. I wish I could arouse the youth to see and feel the sinfulness of living for their own gratification and dwarfing their intellects to the cheap, vain things of this life. If they would elevate their thoughts and words above the frivolous attractions of this world and make it their aim to glorify God, His peace, which passeth all understanding, would be theirs.<sup>278</sup>

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God wants the youth to become men of earnest mind, to be prepared for action in His noble work, and fitted to bear responsibilities. God calls for young men with hearts uncorrupted, strong and brave, and determined to fight manfully in the struggle before them, that they may glorify God, and bless humanity. If the youth would but make the Bible their study, would but calm their impetuous desires, and listen to the voice of their Creator and Redeemer, they would not only be at peace with God, but would find themselves ennobled and elevated.

Carry light wherever you go; show that you have strength of purpose, that you are not a person of indecision, easily swayed by

<sup>278</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 3:370, 371](#)

the persuasions of evil associates. Do not yield a ready assent to the suggestions of those who dishonor God, but rather seek to reform, reclaim, and rescue souls from evil.

Resort to prayer, persuade in meekness and lowliness of spirit those who oppose themselves. One soul saved from error, and brought under the banner of Christ, will cause joy in heaven, and place a star in your crown of rejoicing. A soul saved will, through his godly influence, bring other souls to a knowledge of salvation, and thus the work will multiply, and only the revealings of the day of judgment will make manifest the extent of the work.

Do not hesitate to work for the Lord because you think you can do but little. Do your little with fidelity; for God will work with your efforts. He will write your name in the book of life as one worthy to enter into the joy of the Lord.<sup>279</sup>

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<sup>279</sup>Messages to Young People, 21-23

## Chapter 36—The Proper Discipline and Education of our Children [190]

The prevailing influence in the world is to suffer the youth to follow the natural turn of their own minds. And if very wild in youth, parents say they will come right after a while, and when sixteen or eighteen years of age, will reason for themselves, and leave off their wrong habits, and become at last useful men and women. What a mistake! For years they permit an enemy to sow the garden of the heart; they suffer wrong principles to grow, and in many cases all the labor afterward bestowed on that soil will avail nothing.

Satan is an artful, persevering workman, a deadly foe. Whenever an incautious word is spoken to the injury of youth, whether in flattery or to cause them to look upon some sin with less abhorrence, Satan takes advantage of it and nourishes the evil seed that it may take root and yield a bountiful harvest. Some parents have suffered their children to form wrong habits, the marks of which may be seen all through life. Upon the parents lies this sin. These children may profess to be Christians, yet without a special work of grace upon the heart and a thorough reform in life their past habits will be seen in all their experience, and they will exhibit just the character which their parents allowed them to form.<sup>280</sup>

Parents must govern their children, correct their passions, and subdue them, or God will surely destroy the children in the day of His fierce anger, and the parents who have not controlled their children will not be blameless. Especially should the servants of God govern their own families and have them in good subjection. I saw that they are not prepared to judge or decide in matters of the church, unless they can rule well their own house. They must first have order at home, and then their judgment and influence will tell in the church.<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>280</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:403

<sup>281</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:119

Every son and daughter should be called to account if absent from home at night. Parents should know what company their children are in and at whose house they spend their evenings.<sup>282</sup>

Human philosophy has not discovered more than God knows or devised a wiser plan of dealing with children than that given by our Lord. Who can better understand all the needs of children than their Creator? Who can feel a deeper interest in their welfare than He who bought them with His own blood? If the word of God were carefully studied and faithfully obeyed, there would be less soul anguish over the perverse conduct of wicked children.

[191] Children have claims which their parents should acknowledge and respect. They have a right to such an education and training as will make them useful, respected, and beloved members of society here, and give them a moral fitness for the society of the pure and holy hereafter. The young should be taught that both their present and their future well-being depend to a great degree on the habits they form in childhood and youth.<sup>283</sup>

Men and women professing to revere the Bible and follow its teachings fail in many respects to perform its requirements. In the training of children they follow their own perverse natures rather than the revealed will of God. This neglect of duty involves the loss of thousands of souls. The Bible lays down rules for the correct discipline of children. Were these requirements of God heeded by parents, we should today see a different class of youth coming upon the stage of action. But parents who profess to be Bible readers and Bible followers are going directly contrary to its teachings. We hear the cry of sorrow and anguish from fathers and mothers who bewail the conduct of their children, little realizing that they are bringing this sorrow and anguish upon themselves, and ruining their children, by their mistaken affection. They do not realize their God-given responsibilities to train their children to right habits from their babyhood.<sup>284</sup>

Children who are Christians will prefer the love and approbation of their God-fearing parents above every earthly blessing. They will love and honor their parents. It should be one of the principal studies

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<sup>282</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:651

<sup>283</sup>The Adventist Home, 306

<sup>284</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:313

of their lives, how to make their parents happy. In this rebellious age, children who have not received right instruction and discipline have but little sense of their obligations to their parents. It is often the case that the more their parents do for them, the more ungrateful they are, and the less they respect them.

To a great extent, parents hold in their own hands the future happiness of their children. 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 sow the seed which will spring up and bear fruit either for good or evil. They can fit their sons and daughters for happiness or for misery.<sup>285</sup>

### **Parents Must Agree**

Children have sensitive, loving natures. They are easily pleased and easily made unhappy. By gentle discipline in loving words and acts, mothers may bind their children to their hearts. To manifest severity and to be exacting with children are great mistakes. Uniform firmness and unimpassioned control are necessary to the discipline of every family. Say what you mean calmly, move with consideration, and carry out what you say without deviation.<sup>286</sup>

Parents should not forget their childhood years, how much they yearned for sympathy and love, and how unhappy they felt when censured and fretfully chided. They should be young again in their feelings and bring their minds down to understand the wants of their children. Yet with firmness, mixed with love, they should require obedience from their children. The parents' word should be implicitly obeyed.<sup>287</sup>

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Unsteadiness in family government is productive of great harm, in fact 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.

If parents do not agree, let them absent themselves from the presence of their children until an understanding can be arrived at.

<sup>285</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:392, 393

<sup>286</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:532

<sup>287</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:388

If parents are united in this work of discipline, the child will understand what is required of him. But if the father, by word or look, shows that he does not approve of the discipline the mother gives; if he feels that she is too strict and thinks that he must make up for the harshness by petting and indulgence, the child will be ruined. He will soon learn that he can do as he pleases. Parents who commit this sin against their children are accountable for the ruin of their souls.<sup>288</sup>

Parents should first learn to control themselves, then they can more successfully control their children. Every time they lose self-control, and speak and act impatiently, they sin against God. They should first reason with their children, clearly point out their wrongs, show them their sin, and impress upon them that they have not only sinned against their parents, but against God. With your own heart subdued and full of pity and sorrow for your erring children, pray with them before correcting them. Then your correction will not cause your children to hate you. They will love you. 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, that they may not be left to grow up in sin.<sup>289</sup>

### **The Danger of Too Severe Training**

There are many families of children who appear to be well trained while under the training discipline; but when the system which has held them to set rules is broken up, they seem to be incapable of thinking, acting, or deciding for themselves.

The severe training of youth, without properly directing them to think and act for themselves as their own capacity and turn of mind will allow, that by this means they may have growth of thought, feelings of self-respect, and confidence in their own ability to perform, will ever produce a class who are weak in mental and moral power. And when they stand in the world to act for themselves they will reveal the fact that they were trained like the animals, and not

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<sup>288</sup>The Adventist Home, 310-315

<sup>289</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:398



educated. Their wills, instead of being guided, were forced into subjection by the harsh discipline of parents and teachers.

Those parents and teachers who boast of having complete control of the minds and wills of the children under their care would cease their boastings could they trace out the future lives of the children who are thus brought into subjection by force or through fear. These are almost wholly unprepared to share in the stern responsibilities of life. When these youth are no longer under their parents and teachers, and are compelled to think and act for themselves, they are almost sure to take a wrong course and yield to the power of temptation. They do not make this life a success, and the same deficiencies are seen in their religious life. Could the instructors of children and youth have the future result of their mistaken discipline mapped out before them, they would change their plan of education. That class of teachers who are gratified that they have almost complete control of the wills of their scholars are not the most successful teachers, although the appearance for the time being may be flattering.

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They often hold themselves too much reserved, and exercise their authority in a cold, unsympathizing manner which cannot win the hearts of their children and pupils. If they would gather the children close to them, and show that they love them, and would manifest an interest in all their efforts and even in their sports, sometimes even being a child among children, they would make the children very happy and would gain their love and win their confidence. And the children would sooner respect and love the authority of their parents and teachers.

On the other hand, the young should not be left to think and act independently of the judgment of their parents and teachers. Children should be taught to respect experienced judgment and to be guided by their parents and teachers. They should be so educated that their minds will be united with the minds of their parents and teachers, and so instructed that they can see the propriety of heeding their counsel. Then when they go forth from the guiding hand of their parents and teachers, their characters will not be like the reed trembling in the wind.<sup>290</sup>

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<sup>290</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:132-135

### To Allow Children to Grow Up in Ignorance Is a Sin

Some parents have failed to give their children a religious education and have also neglected their school education. Neither should have been neglected. Children's minds will be active, and if 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 work, to have hours for physical labor, and hours to devote to study and reading. Parents should seek 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.<sup>291</sup>

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. As the child grows older, relax not the hand. Every mother should take time to reason with her children, to correct their errors, and patiently teach them the right way. Christian parents should know that they are instructing and fitting their children to become children of God. The entire religious experience of the children is influenced by the instructions given, 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. What a severe struggle, what a conflict, to yield that will which never was subdued, to the requirements of God! Parents who neglect this important work commit a great error, and sin against their poor children and against God.<sup>292</sup>

Parents, if you fail to give your children the education which God has made it your duty to give them, you must answer to Him for the results. These results will not be confined merely to your children. As the one thistle permitted to grow in the field produces a harvest of its kind, so the sins resulting from your neglect will work to ruin all who come within the sphere of their influence.<sup>293</sup>

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<sup>291</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:398, 399

<sup>292</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:390, 391

<sup>293</sup>Child Guidance, 115

The curse of God will surely rest upon unfaithful parents. Not only are they planting thorns which will wound them here, but they must meet their own unfaithfulness when the judgment shall sit. Many children will rise up in judgment and condemn their parents for not restraining them, and charge upon them their destruction. The false sympathy and blind love of parents causes them to excuse the faults of their children and pass them by without correction, and their children are lost in consequence, and the blood of their souls will rest upon the unfaithful parents.<sup>294</sup>

### **The Evil of Idleness**

I have been shown that much sin has resulted 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. The mind, when not properly occupied, dwells upon improper things. Parents should teach their children that idleness is sin.<sup>295</sup>

There is nothing which more surely leads to evil than to lift all burdens from children, leaving them to an idle, aimless life, to do nothing, or to occupy themselves as they please. The minds of children are active, and if not occupied with that which is good and useful, they will inevitably turn to what is bad. While it is right and necessary for them to have recreation, they should be taught to work, to have regular hours for physical labor and also for reading and study. See that they have employment suited to their years and are supplied with useful and interesting books.<sup>296</sup>

Children frequently begin a piece of work with enthusiasm, but, becoming perplexed or wearied with it, they wish to change and take hold of something new. Thus they may take hold of several things, meet with a little discouragement, and give them up; and so they pass from one thing to another, perfecting nothing. Parents should not allow the love of change to control their children. They should not be so much engaged with other things that they will have no time to patiently discipline the developing minds. A few words of

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<sup>294</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:219

<sup>295</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:395

<sup>296</sup>The Adventist Home, 284

encouragement, or a little help at the right time, may carry them over their trouble and discouragement, and the satisfaction they will derive from seeing the task completed that they undertook will stimulate them to greater exertion.<sup>297</sup>

[195] Children who have been petted and waited upon, always expect it; and if their expectations are not met, they are disappointed and discouraged. 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.<sup>298</sup>

A woman does herself and her family a serious wrong when she does her work and theirs too—when she brings the wood and water, and even takes the ax to prepare the wood, while her husband and sons sit about the fire having a social, easy time. God never designed that wives and mothers should be slaves to their families. Many a mother is overburdened with care while her children are not educated to share the domestic burdens. As the result, she grows old and dies prematurely, leaving her children just when a mother is most needed to guide their inexperienced feet. Who is to blame?

Husbands should do all they can to save the wife care and keep her spirit cheerful. Never should idleness be fostered or permitted in children, for it soon becomes a habit.<sup>299</sup>

### **Parents, Lead Your Children to Christ**

Children may wish to do right, they may purpose in their hearts to be obedient and kind to their parents or guardians; but they need help and encouragement from them. They may make good resolutions; but unless their principles are strengthened by religion and their lives influenced by the renewing grace of God, they will fail to come up to the mark.

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<sup>297</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:147, 148

<sup>298</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:392, 393

<sup>299</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:180, 181

Parents should redouble their efforts for the salvation of their children. They should faithfully instruct them, not leaving them to gather up their education as best they can. The young 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.

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 profess Christ.

Parents should explain and simplify the plan of salvation to their children that their young minds may comprehend it. Children of eight, ten, or twelve years are old enough to be addressed on the subject of personal religion. Do not teach your children with reference to some future period when they shall be old enough to repent and believe the truth. If properly instructed, very young children may have correct views of their state as sinners and of the way of salvation through Christ. Ministers are generally too indifferent to the salvation of children and are not as personal as they should be. Golden opportunities to impress the minds of children frequently pass unimproved.<sup>300</sup>

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Fathers and mothers, do you realize the importance of the responsibility resting upon you? Do you realize the necessity of guarding your children from careless, demoralizing habits? Allow your children to form only such associations as will have a right influence upon their characters. Do not allow them to be out in the evening unless you know where they are and what they are doing. Instruct them in the principles of moral purity. If you have neglected to teach them line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, begin at once to do your duty. Take up your responsibilities and work for time and for eternity. Let not another day pass without confessing your neglect to your children. Tell them that you mean

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<sup>300</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 1:396-400](#)

now to do your God-appointed work. Ask them to take hold with you in the reform. Make diligent efforts to redeem the past. No longer remain in the condition of the Laodicean church. In the name of the Lord I call upon every family to show its true colors. Reform the church in your own home.<sup>301</sup>

### **Do Not Neglect the Wants of the Mind**

I have been shown that while parents who have the fear of God before them restrain their children, they should study their dispositions and temperaments, and seek to meet their wants. Some parents attend carefully to the temporal wants of their children; they kindly and faithfully nurse them in sickness, and then think their duty done. Here they mistake. Their work has but just begun. The wants of the mind should be cared for. It requires skill to apply the proper remedies to cure a wounded mind.

Children have trials just as hard to bear, just as grievous in character, as those of older persons. Parents themselves do not feel the same at all times. Their minds are often perplexed. They labor under mistaken views and feelings. Satan buffets them, and they yield to his temptations. They speak irritably, and in a manner to excite wrath in their children, and are sometimes exacting and fretful. The poor children partake of the same spirit, and the parents are not prepared to help them, for they were the cause of the trouble. Sometimes everything seems to go wrong. There is fretfulness all around, and all have a very miserable, unhappy time. 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.

Some parents raise many a storm by their lack of self-control. Instead of kindly asking the children to do this or that, they order them in a scolding tone, and at the same time a ensure or reproof is on their lips which the children have not merited. Parents, this course pursued toward your children destroys their cheerfulness and ambition. They do your bidding, not from love, but because they dare not do otherwise. Their heart is not in the matter. It is a drudgery, instead of a pleasure, and this often leads them to forget

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<sup>301</sup> *Testimonies for the Church* 7:66, 67

to follow out all your directions, which increases your irritation, and makes it still worse for the children. The faultfinding is repeated, their bad conduct arrayed before them.

Do not let your children see you with a clouded brow. If they yield to temptation, and afterward see and repent of their error, forgive them just as freely as you hope to be forgiven by your Father in heaven. Kindly instruct them, and bind them to your hearts. It is a critical time for children. Influences will be thrown around them to wean them from you, which you must counteract. Teach them to make you their confidant. Let them whisper in your ear their trials and joys. By encouraging this, you will save them from many a snare that Satan has prepared for their inexperienced feet. Do not treat your children only with sternness, forgetting your own childhood, and forgetting that they are but children. Do not expect them to be perfect or try to make them men and women in their acts at once. By so doing, you will close the door of access which you might otherwise have to them, and will drive them to open a door for injurious influences, for others to poison their young minds before you awake to their danger.<sup>302</sup>

### **Never Correct a Child When Angry**

If your children are disobedient, they should be corrected. Before correcting them, go by yourself, and ask the Lord to soften and subdue the hearts of your children and to give you wisdom in dealing with them. Never in a single instance have I known this method to fail. You cannot make a child understand spiritual things when the heart [the parent's heart] is stirred with passion.

You should correct your children in love. Do not let them have their own way until you get angry, and then punish them. Such correction only helps on the evil, instead of remedying it.

To manifest passion toward an erring child is to increase the evil. It arouses the worst passions of the child and leads him to feel that you do not care for him. He reasons with himself that you could not treat him so if you cared.

And think you that God takes no cognizance of the way in which these children are corrected? He knows, and He knows also what

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<sup>302</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 1:384-387](#)

might be the blessed results if the work of correction were done in a way to win rather than to repel.<sup>303</sup>

### **The Importance of Strict Honesty With Children**

Parents should be models of truthfulness, for this is the daily lesson to be impressed upon the heart of the child. Undeviating principle should govern parents in all the affairs of life, especially in the education and training of their children. “Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.”

[198] A mother who lacks discernment, and who does not follow the guidance of the Lord, may educate her children to be deceivers and hypocrites. The traits of character thus cherished may become so persistent that to lie will be as natural as to breathe. Pretense will be taken for sincerity and reality.

Parents, never prevaricate; never tell an untruth in precept or in example. If you want your child to be truthful, be truthful yourself. Be straight and undeviating. Even a slight prevarication should not be allowed. Because mothers are accustomed to prevaricate and be untruthful, the child follows her example.

It is essential that honesty be practiced in all the details of the mother’s life, and it is important in the training of children to teach the youthful girls as well as boys never to prevaricate or to deceive in the least.<sup>304</sup>

### **The Importance of Character Development**

God has given parents their work, to form the characters of their children after the divine Pattern. By His grace they can accomplish the task; but it will require patient, painstaking effort, no less than firmness and decision, to guide the will and restrain the passions. A field left to itself produces only thorns and briars. He who would secure a harvest for usefulness or beauty must first prepare the soil and sow the seed, then dig about the young shoots, removing the weeds and softening the earth, and the precious plants will flourish and richly repay his care and labor.

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<sup>303</sup>Child Guidance, 244, 245

<sup>304</sup>Child Guidance, 151, 152



Character building is the most important work ever entrusted to human beings, and never before was its diligent study so important as now. Never was any previous generation called to meet issues so momentous; never before were young men and young women confronted by perils so great as confront them today.<sup>305</sup>

Strength of character consists of two things—power of will and power of self-control. Many youth mistake strong, uncontrolled passion for strength of character; but the truth is that he who is mastered by his passions is a weak man. The real greatness and nobility of the man is measured by the power of the feelings that he subdues, not by the power of the feelings that subdue him. The strongest man is he, who, while sensitive to abuse, will yet restrain passion and forgive his enemies. Such men are true heroes.

Many have such meager ideas of what they may become that they will ever remain dwarfed and narrow, when, if they would improve the powers which God has given them, they might develop a noble character and exert an influence that would win souls to Christ. Knowledge is power; but intellectual ability, without goodness of heart, is a power for evil.

God has given us our intellectual and moral powers, but to a great extent every person is the architect of his own character. Every day the structure is going up. The word of God warns us to take heed how we build, to see that our building is founded upon the eternal Rock. The time is coming when our work will stand revealed just as it is. Now is the time for all to cultivate the powers which God has given them, that they may form characters for usefulness here and for a higher life hereafter.

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Every act of life, however unimportant, has its influence in forming the character. A good character is more precious than worldly possessions, and the work of forming it is the noblest in which men can engage.

Characters formed by circumstance are changeable and discordant—a mass of contraries. Their possessors have no high aim or purpose in life. They have no ennobling influence upon the characters of others. They are purposeless and powerless.

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<sup>305</sup>Child Guidance, 169

The little span of life allotted us here should be wisely improved. God would have His church a living, devoted, working church. But our people, as a body, are far from this now. God calls for strong, brave souls, for active, living Christians, who are following the true Pattern, and who will exert a decided influence for God and the right. The Lord has committed to us, as a sacred trust, most important and solemn truths, and we should show their influence upon our lives and characters.<sup>306</sup>

### **A Personal Experience in Counseling Children**

Some mothers are not uniform in the treatment of their children. At times they indulge them to their injury, and again they refuse some innocent gratification that would make the childish heart very happy. In this they do not imitate Christ; He loved the children; He comprehended their feelings and sympathized with them in their pleasures and their trials.<sup>307</sup>

When the children will beg that they may go to this company or join that party of amusement, say to them: "I cannot let you go, children; sit right down here, and I will tell you why. I am doing up work for eternity and for God. God has given you to me and entrusted you to my care. I am standing in the place of God to you, my children; therefore I must watch you as one who must give an account in the day of God. Do you want your mother's name written in the books of heaven as one who failed to do her duty to her children, as one who let the enemy come in and preoccupy the ground that I ought to have occupied? Children, I am going to tell you which is the right way, and then if you choose to turn away from your mother and go into the paths of wickedness, your mother will stand clear, but you will have to suffer for your own sins."

This is the way I did with my children, and before I would get through, they would be weeping, and they would say, "Won't you pray for us?" Well, I never refused to pray for them. I knelt by their side and prayed with them. Then I have gone away and have pleaded with God until the sun was up in the heavens, the whole night long, that the spell of the enemy might be broken, and I have had the

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<sup>306</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:656, 657

<sup>307</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 389, 390

victory. Although it cost me a night's labor, yet I felt richly paid when my children would hang about my neck and say, "Oh, Mother, we are so glad that you did not let us go when we wanted to. Now we see that it would have been wrong." [200]

Parents, this is the way you must work, as though you meant it. You must make a business of this work if you expect to save your children in the kingdom of God.<sup>308</sup>

Never can the proper education be given to the youth in this country, or any other country, unless they are separated a wide distance from the cities. The customs and practices in the cities unfit the minds of the youth for the entrance of truth.<sup>309</sup>

### **Parents' Need of More Divine Guidance**

You cannot with impunity neglect the proper training of your children. Their defective characters will publish your unfaithfulness. The evils that you permit to pass uncorrected, the coarse, rough manners, the disrespect and disobedience, the habits of indolence and inattention, will bring dishonor to your names and bitterness into your lives. The destiny of your children rests to a great extent in your hands. If you fail in duty you may place them in the ranks of the enemy and make them his agents in ruining others; on the other hand, if you faithfully instruct them, if in your own lives you set before them a godly example, you may lead them to Christ, and they in turn will influence others, and thus many may be saved through your instrumentality.<sup>310</sup>

God desires us to deal with our children in simplicity. We are liable to forget that children have not had the advantage of the long years of training that older people have had. If the little ones do not act in accordance with our ideas in every respect, we sometimes think that they deserve a scolding. But this will not mend matters. Take them to the Saviour, and tell Him all about it; then believe that His blessing will rest upon them.<sup>311</sup>

<sup>308</sup>The Adventist Home, 528, 529

<sup>309</sup>Fundamentals of Christian Education, 312

<sup>310</sup>Testimonies for the Church 7:66

<sup>311</sup>Child Guidance, 287

Children should be taught to respect and reverence the hour of prayer. Before leaving the house for labor, all the family should be called together, and the father, or the mother in the father's absence, should plead fervently with God to keep them through the day. Come in humility with a heart full of tenderness and with a sense of the temptations and dangers before yourselves and your children; by faith bind them upon the altar, entreating for them the care of the Lord. Ministering angels will guard children who are thus dedicated to God. It is the duty of Christian parents, morning and evening, by earnest prayer and persevering faith, to make a hedge about their children. They should patiently instruct them, kindly and untiringly teach them how to live in order to please God.<sup>312</sup>

[201] Teach your children that it is their privilege to receive every day the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Let Christ find you His helping hand to carry out His purposes. By prayer you may gain an experience that will make your ministry for your children a perfect success.<sup>313</sup>

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.<sup>314</sup>

After you have done your duty faithfully to your children, then carry them to God and ask Him to help you. Tell Him that you have done your part, and then in faith ask God to do His part, that which you cannot do. Ask Him to temper their dispositions, to make them mild and gentle by His Holy Spirit. He will hear you pray. He will love to answer your prayers. Through His Word He has enjoined it upon you to correct your children, to "spare not for their crying," and His Word is to be heeded in these things.<sup>315</sup>

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<sup>312</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:397, 398

<sup>313</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 131.

<sup>314</sup>The Adventist Home, 266

<sup>315</sup>Child Guidance, 256, 257

## Teach Respect and Courtesy

God has especially enjoined tender respect toward the aged. He says, “The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.” [Proverbs 16:31](#). It tells of battles fought, and victories gained; of burdens borne, and temptations resisted. It tells of weary feet nearing their rest, of places soon to be vacant. Help the children to think of this, and they will smooth the path of the aged by their courtesy and respect, and will bring grace and beauty into their young lives as they heed the command to “rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man.” [Leviticus 19:32](#).<sup>316</sup>

Courtesy, also, is one of the graces of the Spirit and should be cultivated by all. It has power to soften natures which without it would grow hard and rough. Those who profess to be followers of Christ, and are at the same time rough, unkind, and uncourteous, have not learned of Jesus. Their sincerity may not be doubted, their uprightness may not be questioned; but sincerity and uprightness will not atone for a lack of kindness and courtesy.<sup>317</sup>

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<sup>316</sup>Education, 244

<sup>317</sup>Prophets and Kings, 237

## Chapter 37—Christian Education

We are rapidly nearing the final crisis in this world's history, and it is important that we understand that the educational advantages offered by our schools are to be different from those offered by the schools of the world.<sup>318</sup>

Our ideas of education take too narrow and too low a range. There is need of a broader scope, a higher aim. True education means more than the perusal of a certain course of study. It means more than a preparation for the life that now is. It has to do with the whole being, and with the whole period of existence possible to man. It is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers. It prepares the student for the joy of service in this world and for the higher joy of wider service in the world to come.<sup>319</sup>

In the highest sense the work of education and the work of redemption are one, for in education, as in redemption, "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." [1 Corinthians 3:11](#).<sup>320</sup>

To bring man back into harmony with God, so to elevate and ennoble his moral nature that he may again reflect the image of the Creator, is the great purpose of all the education and discipline of life. So important was this work that the Saviour left the courts of heaven and came in person to this earth, that He might teach men how to obtain a fitness for the higher life.<sup>321</sup>

It is so easy to drift into worldly plans, methods, and customs and have no more thought of the time in which we live, or of the great work to be accomplished, than had the people in Noah's day. There is constant danger that our educators will travel over the same ground as did the Jews, conforming to customs, practices, and traditions

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<sup>318</sup>[Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 56](#)

<sup>319</sup>[Education, 13](#)

<sup>320</sup>[Education, 30](#)

<sup>321</sup>[Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 49](#)

which God has not given. With tenacity and firmness some cling to old habits and a love of various studies which are not essential, as if their salvation depended upon these things. In doing this they turn away from the special work of God and give to the students a deficient, a wrong education.<sup>322</sup>

There should be men and women who are qualified to work in the churches and to train our young people for special lines of work, that souls may be brought to see Jesus. The schools established by us should have in view this object, and not be after the order of the denominational schools established by other churches, or after the order of worldly seminaries and colleges. They are to be of an altogether higher order, where no phase of infidelity shall be originated, or countenanced. The students are to be educated in practical Christianity, and the Bible must be regarded as the highest, the most important textbook.<sup>323</sup>

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### The Church's Responsibility

In the night season I was in a large company where the subject of education was agitating the minds of all present. Many were bringing up objections to changing the character of the education which has long been in vogue. One who has long been our instructor was speaking to the people. He said: "The subject of education should interest the whole Seventh-day Adventist body."<sup>324</sup>

The church has a special work to do in educating and training its children that they may not, in attending school or in any other association, be influenced by those of corrupt habits. The world is full of iniquity and disregard of the requirements of God. The cities have become as Sodom, and our children are daily exposed to many evils. Those who attend the public schools often associate with others more neglected than they, those who, aside from the time spent in the schoolroom, are left to obtain a street education. The hearts of the young are easily impressed; and unless their surroundings are of the right character, Satan will use these neglected children to influence those who are more carefully trained. Thus, before

<sup>322</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:150, 151

<sup>323</sup>Fundamentals of Christian Education, 231

<sup>324</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:162

Sabbathkeeping parents know what is being done, the lessons of depravity are learned, and the souls of their little ones are corrupted.

Many families, who, for the purpose of educating their children, move to places where our large schools are established, would do better service for the Master by remaining where they are. They should encourage the church of which they are members to establish a church school where the children within their borders could receive an all-round, practical Christian education. It would be vastly better for their children, for themselves, and for the cause of God, if they would remain in the smaller churches, where their help is needed, instead of going to the larger churches, where, because they are not needed, there is a constant temptation to fall into spiritual inactivity.

Wherever there are a few Sabbathkeepers, the parents should unite in providing a place for a day school where their children and youth can be instructed. They should employ a Christian teacher, who, as a consecrated missionary, shall educate the children in such a way as to lead them to become missionaries.<sup>325</sup>

We are under solemn, sacred covenant to God to bring up our children for Him and not for the world; to teach them not to put their hands into the hand of the world, but to love and fear God, and to keep His commandments. They should be impressed with the thought that they are formed in the image of their Creator and that Christ is the pattern after which they are to be fashioned. Most earnest attention must be given to the education which will impart a knowledge of salvation, and will conform the life and character to the divine similitude.<sup>326</sup>

[204] To supply the need of laborers, God desires that educational centers be established in different countries where students of promise may be educated in the practical branches of knowledge and in Bible truth. As these persons engage in labor, they will give character to the work of present truth in the new fields.

Besides the education of those who are to be sent out from our older conferences as missionaries, persons in various parts of the world should be trained to work for their own countrymen and their own neighbors; and as far as possible it is better and safer for them

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<sup>325</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 173, 174.

<sup>326</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:127



to receive their education in the field where they are to labor. It is seldom best, either for the worker or for the advancement of the work, that he should go to distant lands for his education.<sup>327</sup>

As a church, as individuals, if we would stand clear in the judgment, we must make more liberal efforts for the training of our young people, that they may be better fitted for the various branches of the great work committed to our hands. We should lay wise plans, in order that the ingenious minds of those who have talent may be strengthened and disciplined, and polished after the highest order, that the work of Christ may not be hindered for lack of skillful laborers, who will do their work with earnestness and fidelity.<sup>328</sup>

### **Moral Support of Our Institutions**

Fathers and mothers should co-operate with the teacher, laboring earnestly for the conversion of their children. Let them strive to keep the spiritual interest fresh and wholesome in the home and to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Let them devote a portion of each day to study and become learners with their children. Thus they may make the educational hour one of pleasure and profit, and their confidence will increase in this method of seeking for the salvation of their children.<sup>329</sup>

Some of the students return home with murmuring and complaints, and parents and members of the church give an attentive ear to their exaggerated, one-sided statements. They would do well to consider that there are two sides to the story; but instead, they allow these garbled reports to build up a barrier between them and the college. They then begin to express fears, questionings, and suspicions in regard to the way the college is conducted. Such an influence does great harm. The words of dissatisfaction spread like a contagious disease, and the impression made upon minds is hard to efface. The story enlarges with every repetition, until it becomes of gigantic proportions, when investigation would reveal the fact that there was no fault with teachers or professors. They were simply

<sup>327</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:137

<sup>328</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 43.

<sup>329</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:199

doing their duty in enforcing the rules of the school, which must be carried out or the school will become demoralized.

[205] If parents would place themselves in the position of the teachers and see how difficult it must necessarily be to manage and discipline a school of hundreds of students of every grade and class of minds, they might upon reflection see things differently. They should consider that some children have never been disciplined at home. Having always been indulged and never trained to obedience, it would be greatly for their advantage to be removed from their injudicious parents and placed under as severe regulations and drilling as soldiers in an army. Unless something shall be done for these children who have been so sadly neglected by unfaithful parents, they will never be accepted of Jesus; unless some power of control shall be brought to bear upon them, they will be worthless in this life and will have no part in the future life.<sup>330</sup>

Many fathers and mothers err in failing to second [agree with] the efforts of the faithful teacher. Youth and children, with their imperfect comprehension and undeveloped judgment, are not always able to understand all the teacher's plans and methods. Yet when they bring home reports of what is said and done at school, these are discussed by the parents in the family circle, and the course of the teacher is criticized without restraint. Here the children learn lessons that are not easily unlearned. Whenever they are subjected to unaccustomed restraint, or required to apply themselves to hard study, they appeal to their injudicious parents for sympathy and indulgence. Thus a spirit of unrest and discontent is encouraged, the school as a whole suffers from the demoralizing influence, and the teacher's burden is rendered much heavier. But the greatest loss is sustained by the victims of parental mismanagement. Defects of character which a right training would have corrected, are left to strengthen with years, to mar and perhaps destroy the usefulness of their possessor.<sup>331</sup>

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<sup>330</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:428, 429

<sup>331</sup>Fundamentals of Christian Education, 64, 65

## Teachers Under God

The Lord works with every consecrated teacher; and it is for the teacher's own interest for him to realize this. Instructors who are under the discipline of God receive grace and truth and light through the Holy Spirit to communicate to the children. They are under the greatest Teacher the world has ever known, and how unbecoming it would be for them to have an unkind spirit, a sharp voice, full of irritation! In this they would perpetuate their own defects in the children.

God will communicate by His own Spirit with the soul. Pray as you study, "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law," [Psalm 119:18](#). When the teacher will rely upon God in prayer, the Spirit of Christ will come upon him, and God will work through him by the Holy Spirit upon the mind of the student. The Holy Spirit fills mind and heart with hope and courage and Bible imagery, which will be communicated to the student. The words of truth will grow in importance, and will assume a breadth and fullness of meaning of which he has never dreamed. The beauty and virtue of the word of God have a transforming influence upon mind and character; the sparks of heavenly love will fall upon the hearts of the children as an inspiration. We may bring hundreds and thousands of children to Christ if we will work for them.<sup>332</sup>

Before men can be truly wise, they must realize their dependence upon God, and be filled with His wisdom. God is the source of intellectual as well as spiritual power. The greatest men who have reached what the world regards as wonderful heights in science are not to be compared with the beloved John or the apostle Paul. It is when intellectual and spiritual power are combined that the highest standard of manhood is attained. Those who do this, God will accept as workers together with Him in the training of minds.<sup>333</sup>

The most important work of our educational institutions at this time is to set before the world an example that will honor God. Holy angels are to supervise the work through human agencies, and every department is to bear the mark of divine excellence.<sup>334</sup>

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<sup>332</sup>[Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 171, 172](#)

<sup>333</sup>[Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 66](#)

<sup>334</sup>[Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 57](#)

### Qualifications of a School Teacher

Secure a strong man to stand as principal of your school, a man whose physical strength will support him in doing thorough work as a disciplinarian; a man who is qualified to train the students in habits of order, neatness, and industry. Do thorough work in whatever you undertake. If you are faithful in teaching the common branches, many of your students could go directly into the work as canvassers, colporteurs, and evangelists. We need not feel that all workers must have an advanced education.<sup>335</sup>

In selecting teachers, we should use every precaution, knowing that this is as solemn a matter as the selecting of persons for the ministry. Wise men who can discern character should make the selection; for the very best talent that can be secured is needed to educate and mold the minds of the young, and to carry on successfully the many lines of work that will need to be done by the teachers in our church schools. No person of an inferior or narrow cast of mind should be placed in charge of one of these schools. Do not place over the children young, inexperienced teachers who have no managing ability; for their efforts will tend to disorganization.<sup>336</sup>

There should not be a teacher employed, unless you have evidence by test and trial, that he loves, and fears to offend God. If teachers are taught of God, if their lessons are daily learned in the school of Christ, they will work in Christ's lines. They will win and draw with Christ; for every child and youth is precious.<sup>337</sup>

The habits and principles of a teacher should be considered of even greater importance than his literary qualifications. If he is a sincere Christian, he will feel the necessity of having an equal interest in the physical, mental, moral, and spiritual education of his scholars. In order to exert the right influence, he should have perfect control over himself, and his own heart should be richly imbued with love for his pupils, which will be seen in his looks, words, and acts.<sup>338</sup>

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<sup>335</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 213, 214

<sup>336</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 174, 175

<sup>337</sup>Fundamentals of Christian Education, 260

<sup>338</sup>Fundamentals of Christian Education, 19.

The teacher should ever conduct himself as a Christian gentleman. He should stand in the attitude of a friend and counselor to his pupils. If all our people—teachers, ministers, and lay members—would cultivate the spirit of Christian courtesy, they would far more readily find access to the hearts of the people; many more would be led to examine and receive the truth. When every teacher shall forget self, and feel a deep interest in the success and prosperity of his pupils, realizing that they are God’s property, and that he must render an account for his influence upon their minds and characters, then we shall have a school in which angels will love to linger.<sup>339</sup>

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Our church schools need teachers who have high moral qualities; those who can be trusted; those who are sound in the faith and who have tact and patience; those who walk with God and abstain from the very appearance of evil.

To place over young children, teachers who are proud and unloving is wicked. A teacher of this stamp will do great harm to those who are rapidly developing character. If teachers are not submissive to God, if they have no love for the children over whom they preside, or if they show partiality for those who please their fancy, and manifest indifference to those who are less attractive, or to those who are restless and nervous, they should not be employed; for the result of their work will be a loss of souls for Christ.

Teachers are needed, especially for the children, who are calm and kind, manifesting forbearance and love for the very ones who most need it.<sup>340</sup>

Unless the teacher realizes the need of prayer and humbles his heart before God, he will lose the very essence of education.<sup>341</sup>

The importance of the teacher’s physical qualifications can hardly be overestimated; for the more perfect his health, the more perfect will be his labor. The mind cannot be clear to think and strong to act when the physical powers are suffering the results of feebleness or disease. The heart is impressed through the mind; but if, because of physical inability, the mind loses its vigor, the channel to the higher feelings and motives is to that extent obstructed, and the teacher is less able to discriminate between right and wrong.

<sup>339</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 93, 94

<sup>340</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 175, 176.

<sup>341</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 231.

When suffering the results of ill health, it is not an easy matter to be patient and cheerful, or to act with integrity and justice.<sup>342</sup>

### **The Bible in Christian Education**

As a means of intellectual training, the Bible is more effective than any other book, or all other books combined. The greatness of its themes, the dignified simplicity of its utterances, the beauty of its imagery, quicken and uplift the thoughts as nothing else can. No other study can impart such mental power as does the effort to grasp the stupendous truths of revelation. The mind thus brought in contact with the thoughts of the Infinite cannot but expand and strengthen.

And even greater is the power of the Bible in the development of the spiritual nature. Man, created for fellowship with God, can only in such fellowship find his real life and development. Created to find in God his highest joy, he can find in nothing else that which can quiet the cravings of the heart, can satisfy the hunger and thirst of the soul. He who with sincere and teachable spirit studies God's word, seeking to comprehend its truths, will be brought in touch with its Author; and, except by his own choice, there is no limit to the possibilities of his development.<sup>343</sup>

[208] 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 be defective, it will gain strength by exercise, so that after a time you will delight thus to treasure up the words of truth. And the habit will prove a most valuable aid to spiritual growth.<sup>344</sup>

### **Dangers in Sending Children to School Too Young**

As the dwellers in Eden learned from nature's pages, as Moses discerned God's handwriting on the Arabian plains and mountains, and the child Jesus on the hillsides of Nazareth, so the children of today may learn of Him. The unseen is illustrated by the seen.

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<sup>342</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 177.

<sup>343</sup>Education, 124, 125

<sup>344</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 137, 138.

So far as possible, let the child from his earliest years be placed where this wonderful lesson book shall be open before him.<sup>345</sup>

Do not send your little ones away to school too early. The mother should be careful how she trusts the molding of the infant mind to other hands. Parents ought to be the best teachers of their children until they have reached eight or ten years of age. Their schoolroom should be the open air, amid the flowers and birds, and their textbook the treasure of nature. As fast as their minds can comprehend it, the parents should open before them God's great book of nature. These lessons, given amid such surroundings, will not soon be forgotten.<sup>346</sup>

Not only has the physical and mental health of children been endangered by being sent to school at too early a period, but they have been the losers in a moral point of view. They have had opportunities to become acquainted with children who were uncultivated in their manners. They were thrown into the society of the coarse and rough, who lie, swear, steal and deceive, and who delight to impart their knowledge of vice to those younger than themselves. Young children, if left to themselves, learn the bad more readily than the good. Bad habits agree best with the natural heart, and the things which they see and hear in infancy and childhood are deeply imprinted upon their minds; and the bad seed sown in their young hearts will take root and will become sharp thorns to wound the hearts of their parents.<sup>347</sup>

### **Importance of Training in Duties of Practical Life**

Now, as in the days of Israel, every youth should be instructed in the duties of practical life. Each should acquire a knowledge of some branch of manual labor by which, if need be, he may obtain a livelihood. This is essential, not only as a safeguard against the vicissitudes of life, but from its bearing upon physical, mental, and moral development.

Various industries should be carried on in our schools. The industrial instruction given should include the keeping of accounts, carpentry, and all that is comprehended in farming. Preparation

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<sup>345</sup>Education, 100, 101

<sup>346</sup>Fundamentals of Christian Education, 156, 157

<sup>347</sup>Child Guidance, 302

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should be made for the teaching of blacksmithing, painting, shoe-making, and for cooking, baking, washing, mending, typewriting, and printing. Every power at our command is to be brought into this training work, that students may go forth well equipped for the duties of practical life.

For the lady students there are many employments which should be provided, that they may have a comprehensive and practical education. They should be taught dressmaking and gardening. Flowers should be cultivated and strawberries planted. Thus, while being educated in useful labor, they will have healthful outdoor exercise.<sup>348</sup>

The influence of the mind on the body, as well as of the body on the mind, should be emphasized. The electric power of the brain, promoted by mental activity, vitalizes the whole system, and is thus an invaluable aid in resisting disease.

There is a physiological truth—truth that we need to consider—in the scripture, “A merry [rejoicing] heart doeth good like a medicine.” [Proverbs 17:22](#).<sup>349</sup>

In order for children and youth to have health, cheerfulness, vivacity, and well-developed muscles and brains, they should be much in the open air, and have well-regulated employment and amusement. Children and youth who are kept at school and confined to books cannot have sound physical constitutions. The exercise of the brain in study, without corresponding physical exercise, has a tendency to attract the blood to the brain, and the circulation of the blood through the system becomes unbalanced. The brain has too much blood, and the extremities too little. There should be rules regulating the studies of children and youth to certain hours, and then a portion of their time should be spent in physical labor. And if their habits of eating, dressing, and sleeping are in accordance with physical law, they can obtain an education without sacrificing physical and mental health.<sup>350</sup>

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<sup>348</sup>[Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 307-312.](#)

<sup>349</sup>[Education, 197](#)

<sup>350</sup>[Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 83.](#)



## The Dignity of Labor

The youth should be led to see the true dignity of labor. Show them that God is a constant worker. All things in nature do their allotted work. Action pervades the whole creation, and in order to fulfill our mission we, too, must be active.<sup>351</sup>

Physical labor that is combined with mental taxation for usefulness, is a discipline in practical life, sweetened always by the reflection that it is qualifying and educating the mind and body better to perform the work God designs men shall do in various lines.<sup>352</sup>

None of us should be ashamed of work, however small and servile it may appear. Labor is ennobling. All who toil with head or hands are workmen or workwomen. And all are doing their duty and honoring their religion as much while working at the washtub or washing the dishes as they are in going to meeting. While the hands are engaged in the most common labor, the mind may be elevated and ennobled by pure and holy thoughts.<sup>353</sup>

One great reason why physical toil is looked down on is the slipshod, unthinking way in which it is so often performed. It is done from necessity, not from choice. The worker puts no heart into it, and he neither preserves self-respect nor wins the respect of others. Manual training should correct this error. It should develop habits of accuracy and thoroughness. Pupils should learn tact and system; they should learn to economize time and to make every move count. They should not only be taught the best methods, but be inspired with ambition constantly to improve. Let it be their aim to make their work as nearly perfect as human brains and hands can make it.<sup>354</sup>

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It is a sin to let children grow up in idleness. Let them exercise their limbs and muscles, even if it wearies them. If they are not overworked, how can weariness harm them more than it harms you? There is quite a difference between weariness and exhaustion. Children need more frequent change of employment and intervals of rest than grown persons do; but even when quite young, they may

<sup>351</sup>Education, 214

<sup>352</sup>Fundamentals of Christian Education, 229

<sup>353</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:590

<sup>354</sup>Education, 222

begin learning to work, and they will be happy in the thought that they are making themselves useful. Their sleep will be sweet after healthful labor, and they will be refreshed for the next day's work.<sup>355</sup>

### **One's Mother Tongue Should Not Be Ignored**

And in every branch of education there are objects to be gained more important than those secured by mere technical knowledge. Take language, for example. More important than the acquirement of foreign languages, living or dead, is the ability to write and speak one's mother tongue with ease and accuracy; but no training gained through a knowledge of grammatical rules can compare in importance with the study of language from a higher point of view. With this study, to a great degree, is bound up life's weal or woe.<sup>356</sup>

### **The Works of Skeptics Forbidden by God**

Is it the Lord's purpose that false principles, false reasoning, and the sophistries of Satan should be kept before the minds of our youth and children? Shall pagan and infidel sentiments be presented to our students as valuable additions to their store of knowledge? The works of the most intellectual skeptic are the works of a mind prostituted to the service of the enemy; and shall those who claim to be reformers, who seek to lead the children and youth in the right way, in the path cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, imagine that God would have them present to the youth for their study that which will misrepresent His character and place Him in a false light? Shall the sentiments of unbelievers, the expressions of dissolute men, be advocated as worthy of the student's attention, because they are the productions of men whom the world admires as great thinkers? Shall men professing to believe in God gather from these unsanctified authors their expressions and sentiments, and treasure them up as precious jewels to be stored away among the riches of the mind? God forbid!<sup>357</sup>

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<sup>355</sup>The Adventist Home, 289

<sup>356</sup>Education, 234

<sup>357</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 25, 26

## The Results of Christian Education

As the children sang in the temple courts, “Hosanna; Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord,” [Mark 11:9](#), so in these last days children’s voices will be raised to give the last message of warning to a perishing world. When heavenly intelligences see that men are no longer permitted to present the truth, the Spirit of God will come upon the children, and they will do a work in the proclamation of the truth which the older workers cannot do, because their way will be hedged up. [211]

Our church schools are ordained by God to prepare the children for this great work. Here children are to be instructed in the special truths for this time and in practical missionary work. They are to enlist in the army of workers to help the sick and the suffering. Children can take part in the medical missionary work and by their jots and tittles can help to carry it forward. Their investments may be small, but every little helps, and by their efforts many souls will be won to the truth. By them God’s message will be made known and His saving health to all nations. Then let the church carry a burden for the lambs of the flock. Let the children be educated and trained to do service for God, for they are the Lord’s heritage.

When properly conducted, church schools will be the means of lifting the standard of truth in the places where they are established; for children who are receiving a Christian education will be witnesses for Christ. As Jesus in the temple solved the mysteries which priests and rulers had not discerned, so in the closing work of this earth children who have been rightly educated will in their simplicity speak words which will be an astonishment to men who now talk of “higher education.”<sup>358</sup>

I was shown that our college was designed of God to accomplish the great work of saving souls. It is only when brought under full control of the Spirit of God that the talents of an individual are rendered useful to the fullest extent. The precepts and principles of religion are the first steps in the acquisition of knowledge, and lie at the very foundation of true education. Knowledge and science must be vitalized by the Spirit of God in order to serve the noblest purposes. The Christian alone can make the right use of knowledge.

<sup>358</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:202, 203](#)

Science, in order to be fully appreciated, must be viewed from a religious standpoint. The heart which is ennobled by the grace of God can best comprehend the real value of education. The attributes of God, as seen in His created works, can be appreciated only as we have a knowledge of the Creator. In order to lead the youth to the fountain of truth, to the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world, the teachers must not only be acquainted with the theory of the truth, but must have an experimental knowledge of the way of holiness. Knowledge is power when united with true piety.<sup>359</sup>

### **Student's Responsibility to Uphold His School**

[212] Those students who profess to love God and obey the truth should possess that degree of self-control and strength of religious principle that will enable them to remain unmoved amid temptations and to stand up for Jesus in the college, at their boardinghouses, or wherever they may be. Religion is not to be worn merely as a cloak in the house of God, but religious principle must characterize the entire life.

Those who are drinking at the fountain of life will not, like the worldling, manifest a longing desire for change and pleasure. In their deportment and character will be seen the rest and peace and happiness that they have found in Jesus by daily laying their perplexities and burdens at His feet. They will show that there is contentment and even joy in the path of obedience and duty. Such will exert an influence over their fellow students which will tell upon the entire school.

Those who compose this faithful army will refresh and strengthen the teachers and professors in their efforts by discouraging every species of unfaithfulness, of discord, and of neglect to comply with the rules and regulations. Their influence will be saving, and their works will not perish in the great day of God, but will follow them into the future world; and the influence of their life here will tell throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity.

One earnest, conscientious, faithful young man in school is an inestimable treasure. Angels of heaven look lovingly upon him. His precious Saviour loves him, and in the Ledger of Heaven will be

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<sup>359</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 4:427](#)

recorded every work of righteousness, every temptation resisted, every evil overcome. He will thus be laying up a good foundation against the time to come, that he may lay hold on eternal life.

Upon Christian youth depend in a great measure the preservation and perpetuity of the institutions which God has devised as means by which to advance His work. This grave responsibility rests upon the youth of today who are coming upon the stage of action. Never was there a period when results so important depended upon a generation of men; then how important that the young should be qualified for the great work, that God may use them as His instruments. Their Maker has claims upon them which are paramount to all others.

It is God that has given life and every physical and mental endowment they possess. He has bestowed upon them capabilities for wise improvement, that they may be entrusted with a work which will be as enduring as eternity. In return for His great gifts He claims a due cultivation and exercise of their intellectual and moral faculties. He did not give them these faculties merely for their amusement, or to be abused in working against His will and His providence, but that they might use them to advance the knowledge of truth and holiness in the world. He claims their gratitude, their veneration and love, for His continued kindness and infinite mercies. He justly requires obedience to His laws and to all wise regulations which will restrain and guard the youth from Satan's devices and lead them in paths of peace.

If youth could see that in complying with the laws and regulations of our institutions they are only doing that which will improve their standing in society, elevate the character, ennoble the mind, and increase their happiness, they would not rebel against just rules and wholesome requirements, nor engage in creating suspicion and prejudice against these institutions. Our youth should have a spirit of energy and fidelity to meet the demands upon them, and this will be a guaranty of success. The wild, reckless character of many of the youth in this age of the world is heartsickening. Much of the blame lies upon their parents at home. Without the fear of God no one can be truly happy.<sup>360</sup>

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<sup>360</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:432-435

## Chapter 38—The Call to Temperate Living

Health is an inestimable blessing and one more closely related to conscience and religion than many realize. It has a great deal to do with one's capability for service and should be as sacredly guarded as the character, for the more perfect the health the more perfect will be our efforts for the advancement of God's cause and for the blessing of humanity.<sup>361</sup>

December 10, 1871, I was again shown that the health reform is one branch of the great work which is to fit a people for the coming of the Lord. It is as closely connected with the third angel's message as the hand is with the body. The law of Ten Commandments has been lightly regarded by man, but the Lord would not come to punish the transgressors of that law without first sending them a message of warning. The third angel proclaims that message. Had men ever been obedient to the law of Ten Commandments, carrying out in their lives the principles of those precepts, the curse of disease now flooding the world would not be.

Men and women cannot violate natural law by indulging depraved appetite and lustful passions, and not violate the law of God. Therefore He has permitted the light of health reform to shine upon us, that we may see our sin in violating the laws which He has established in our being. All our enjoyment or suffering may be traced to obedience or transgression of natural law. Our gracious heavenly Father sees the deplorable condition of men who, some knowingly but many ignorantly, are living in violation of the laws that He has established. And in love and pity to the race, He causes the light to shine upon health reform. He publishes His law and the penalty that will follow the transgression of it, that all may learn and be careful to live in harmony with natural law. He proclaims His law so distinctly and makes it so prominent that it is like a city set on a hill. All accountable beings can understand it if they will. Idiots will not be responsible. To make plain natural law, and urge the obedience of

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<sup>361</sup>Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 294

it, is the work that accompanies the third angel's message to prepare a people for the coming of the Lord.<sup>362</sup>

### **“Ye Are Not Your Own”**

We believe without a doubt that Christ is soon coming. This is not a fable to us; it is a reality. When He comes He is not to cleanse us of our sins, to remove from us the defects in our characters, or to cure us of the infirmities of our tempers and dispositions. If wrought for us at all, this work will all be accomplished before that time. [215]

When the Lord comes, those who are holy will be holy still. Those who have preserved their bodies and spirits in holiness, in sanctification and honor, will then receive the finishing touch of immortality. But those who are unjust, unsanctified, and filthy will remain so forever. No work will then be done for them to remove their defects and give them holy characters. The Refiner does not then sit to pursue His refining process and remove their sins and their corruption. This is all to be done in these hours of probation. It is now that this work is to be accomplished for us.

We are in a world that is opposed to righteousness and purity of character, and to a growth in grace. Wherever we look we see corruption and defilement, deformity and sin. And what is the work that we are to undertake here just previous to receiving immortality? It is to preserve our bodies holy, our spirits pure, that we may stand forth unstained amid the corruptions teeming around us in these last days.

“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.” [1 Corinthians 6:19, 20](#).

We are not our own. We have been purchased with a dear price, even the sufferings and death of the Son of God. If we could understand this, and fully realize it, we would feel a great responsibility resting upon us to keep ourselves in the very best condition of health, that we might render to God perfect service. But when we take any course which expends our vitality, decreases our strength, or beclouds the intellect we sin against God. In pursuing this course we

<sup>362</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 3:161](#)

are not glorifying Him in our bodies and spirits which are His, but are committing a great wrong in His sight.<sup>363</sup>

### **Obedience a Matter of Personal Duty**

The Creator of man has arranged the living machinery of our bodies. Every function is wonderfully and wisely made. And God pledged Himself to keep this human machinery in healthful action if the human agent will obey His laws and cooperate with God. Every law governing the human machinery is to be considered just as truly divine in origin, in character, and in importance as the word of God. Every careless, inattentive action, any abuse put upon the Lord's wonderful mechanism, by disregarding His specified laws in the human habitation, is a violation of God's law. We may behold and admire the work of God in the natural world, but the human habitation is the most wonderful.<sup>364</sup>

Since the laws of nature are the laws of God, it is plainly our duty to give these laws careful study. We should study their requirements in regard to our own bodies and conform to them. Ignorance in these things is sin.

[216] When men and women are truly converted, they will conscientiously regard the laws of life that God has established in their being, thus seeking to avoid physical, mental, and moral feebleness. Obedience to these laws must be made a matter of personal duty. We ourselves must suffer the ills of violated law. We must answer to God for our habits and practices. Therefore the question for us is not, "What will the world say?" but, "How shall I, claiming to be a Christian, treat the habitation God has given me? Shall I work for my highest temporal and spiritual good by keeping my body as a temple for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, or shall I sacrifice myself to the world's ideas and practices?"<sup>365</sup>

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<sup>363</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:354-356

<sup>364</sup>Counsels on Diet and Foods, 17

<sup>365</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:369, 370



## **The Life of God in the Soul Is Man's Only Hope**

The religion of the Bible is not detrimental to the health of either body or mind. The influence of the Spirit of God is the very best medicine for disease. Heaven is all health; and the more deeply heavenly influences are realized, the more sure will be the recovery of the believing invalid. The true principles of Christianity open before all a source of inestimable happiness. Religion is a continual wellspring, from which the Christian can drink at will and never exhaust the fountain.

The condition of the mind affects the health of the physical system. If the mind is free and happy, from a consciousness of rightdoing and a sense of satisfaction in causing happiness to others, it creates a cheerfulness that will react upon the whole system, causing a freer circulation of the blood and a toning up of the entire body. The blessing of God is a healing power, and those who are abundant in benefiting others will realize that wondrous blessing in both heart and life.

When men who have indulged in wrong habits and sinful practices yield to the power of divine truth, the application of that truth to the heart revives the moral powers, which had seemed to be paralyzed. The receiver possesses stronger, clearer understanding than before he riveted his soul to the eternal Rock. Even his physical health improves by the realization of his security in Christ.<sup>366</sup>

Men need to learn that the blessings of obedience, in their fullness, can be theirs only as they receive the grace of Christ. It is His grace that gives man power to obey the laws of God. It is this that enables him to break the bondage of evil habit. This is the only power that can make him and keep him steadfast in the right path.

When the gospel is received in its purity and power, it is a cure for the maladies that originated in sin. The Sun of Righteousness arises, "with healing in His wings." [Malachi 4:2](#). Not all this world bestows can heal a broken heart, or impart peace of mind, or remove care, or banish disease. Fame, genius, talent—all are powerless to gladden the sorrowful heart or to restore the wasted life. The life of God in the soul is man's only hope.

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<sup>366</sup>[Counsels on Health, 28](#)

[217] The love which Christ diffuses through the whole being is a vitalizing power. Every vital part—the brain, the heart, the nerves—it touches with healing. By it the highest energies of the being are roused to activity. It frees the soul from the guilt and sorrow, the anxiety and care, that crush the life forces. With it come serenity and composure. It implants in the soul, joy that nothing earthly can destroy—joy in the Holy Spirit—health-giving, life-giving joy.

Our Saviour's words, "Come unto Me, ... and I will give you rest," [Matthew 11:28](#), are a prescription for the healing of physical, mental, and spiritual ills. Though men have brought suffering upon themselves by their own wrongdoing, He regards them with pity. In Him they may find help. He will do great things for those who trust in Him.<sup>367</sup>

### **Present Health Reform**

In our work more attention should be given to the temperance reform. Every duty that calls for reform involves repentance, faith, and obedience. It means the uplifting of the soul to a new and nobler life. Thus every true reform has its place in the work of the third angel's message. Especially does the temperance reform demand our attention and support. At our camp meetings [annual meetings] we should call attention to this work and make it a living issue. We should present to the people the principles of true temperance and call for signers to the temperance pledge. Careful attention should be given to those who are enslaved by evil habits. We must lead them to the cross of Christ.

As we near the close of time we must rise higher and still higher upon the question of health reform and Christian temperance, presenting it in a more positive and decided manner. We must strive continually to educate the people, not only by our words, but by our practice. Precept and practice combined have a telling influence.<sup>368</sup>

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<sup>367</sup>[The Ministry of Healing, 115](#)

<sup>368</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:110, 112](#)

## Chapter 39—The Importance of Cleanliness

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In order to have good health, we must have good blood; for the blood is the current of life. It repairs waste and nourishes the body. When supplied with the proper food elements and when cleansed and vitalized by contact with pure air, it carries life and vigor to every part of the system. The more perfect the circulation, the better will this work be accomplished.<sup>369</sup>

The external application of water is one of the easiest and most satisfactory ways of regulating the circulation of the blood. A cold or cool bath is an excellent tonic. Warm baths open the pores and thus aid in the elimination of impurities. Both warm and neutral baths soothe the nerves and equalize the circulation.

Exercise quickens and equalizes the circulation of the blood, but in idleness the blood does not circulate freely, and the changes in it, so necessary to life and health, do not take place. The skin, too, becomes inactive. Impurities are not expelled as they would be if the circulation had been quickened by vigorous exercise, the skin kept in a healthy condition, and the lungs fed with plenty of pure, fresh air.<sup>370</sup>

The lungs should be allowed the greatest freedom possible. Their capacity is developed by free action; it diminishes if they are cramped and compressed. Hence the ill effects of the practice so common, especially in sedentary pursuits, of stooping at one's work. In this position it is impossible to breathe deeply. Superficial breathing soon becomes a habit, and the lungs lose their power to expand.

Thus an insufficient supply of oxygen is received. The blood moves sluggishly. The waste, poisonous matter, which should be thrown off in the exhalations from the lungs, is retained, and the blood becomes impure. Not only the lungs, but the stomach, liver, and brain are affected. The skin becomes sallow, digestion is re-

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<sup>369</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 271

<sup>370</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 237, 238

tarded; the heart is depressed; the brain is clouded; the thoughts are confused; gloom settles upon the spirits; the whole system becomes depressed and inactive, and peculiarly susceptible to disease.

[219] The lungs are constantly throwing off impurities, and they need to be constantly supplied with fresh air. Impure air does not afford the necessary supply of oxygen, and the blood passes to the brain and other organs without being vitalized. Hence the necessity of thorough ventilation. To live in close, ill-ventilated rooms, where the air is dead and vitiated, weakens the entire system. It becomes peculiarly sensitive to the influence of cold, and a slight exposure induces disease. It is close confinement indoors that makes many women pale and feeble. They breathe the same air over and over until it becomes laden with poisonous matter thrown off through the lungs and pores, and impurities are thus conveyed back to the blood.<sup>371</sup>

Many are suffering from disease because they refuse to receive into their rooms at night the pure night air. The free, pure air of heaven is one of the richest blessings we can enjoy.<sup>372</sup>

Scrupulous cleanliness is essential to both physical and mental health. Impurities are constantly thrown off from the body through the skin. Its millions of pores are quickly clogged unless kept clean by frequent bathing, and the impurities which should pass off through the skin become an additional burden to the other eliminating organs.

Most persons would receive benefit from a cool or tepid bath every day, morning or evening. Instead of increasing the liability to take cold, a bath, properly taken, fortifies against cold, because it improves the circulation; the blood is brought to the surface, and a more easy and regular flow is obtained. The mind and the body are alike invigorated. The muscles become more flexible, the intellect is made brighter. The bath is a soother of the nerves. Bathing helps the bowels, the stomach, and the liver, giving health and energy to each, and it promotes digestion.

It is important also that the clothing be kept clean. The garments worn absorb the waste matter that passes off through the pores; if

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<sup>371</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 272-274

<sup>372</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:528

they are not frequently changed and washed, the impurities will be reabsorbed.

Every form of uncleanness tends to disease. Death-producing germs abound in dark, neglected corners, in decaying refuse, in dampness and mold and must. No waste vegetables or heaps of fallen leaves should be allowed to remain near the house to decay and poison the air. Nothing unclean or decaying should be tolerated within the home. In towns or cities regarded perfectly healthful, many an epidemic of fever has been traced to decaying matter about the dwelling of some careless householder.

Perfect cleanliness, plenty of sunlight, careful attention to sanitation in every detail of the home life, are essential to freedom from disease and to the cheerfulness and vigor of the inmates of the home.<sup>373</sup>

Teach the little ones that God is not pleased to see them with unclean bodies and untidy, torn garments. Having the clothing neat and clean will be one means of keeping the thoughts pure and sweet. Especially should every article which comes in contact with the skin be kept clean.

Truth never places her delicate feet in a path of uncleanness or impurity. He who was so particular that the children of Israel should cherish habits of cleanliness will not sanction any impurity in the homes of His people today. God looks with disfavor on uncleanness of any kind.

Unclean, neglected corners in the house will tend to make impure, neglected corners in the soul.

Heaven is pure and holy, and those who pass through the gates of the city of God must here be clothed with inward and outward purity.<sup>374</sup> [220]

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<sup>373</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 276

<sup>374</sup>My Life Today, 129

## Chapter 40—The Food We Eat

Our bodies are built up from the food we eat. There is a constant breaking down of the tissues of the body; every movement of every organ involves waste, and this waste is repaired from our food. Each organ of the body requires its share of nutrition. The brain must be supplied with its portion; the bones, muscles, and nerves demand theirs. It is a wonderful process that transforms the food into blood and uses this blood to build up the varied parts of the body; but this process is going on continually, supplying with life and strength each nerve, muscle, and tissue.

Those foods should be chosen that best supply the elements needed for building up the body. In this choice, appetite is not a safe guide. Through wrong habits of eating, the appetite has become perverted. Often it demands food that impairs health and causes weakness instead of strength. We cannot safely be guided by the customs of society. The disease and suffering that everywhere prevail are largely due to popular errors in regard to diet.

But not all foods wholesome in themselves are equally suited to our needs under all circumstances. Care should be taken in the selection of food. Our diet should be suited to the season, to the climate in which we live, and to the occupation we follow. Some foods that are adapted for use at one season or in one climate are not suited to another. So there are different foods best suited for persons in different occupations. Often food that can be used with benefit by those engaged in hard physical labor is unsuitable for persons of sedentary pursuits or intense mental application. God has given us an ample variety of healthful foods, and each person should choose from it the things that experience and sound judgment prove to be best suited to his own necessities.<sup>375</sup>

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<sup>375</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 295-297

## God's Original Plan for Man's Diet

In order to know what are the best foods, we must study God's original plan for man's diet. He who created man and who understands his needs appointed Adam his food. "Behold," He said, "I have given you every herb yielding seed, ... and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for food." [Genesis 1:29](#), A.R.V. Upon leaving Eden to gain his livelihood by tilling the earth under the curse of sin, man received permission to eat also "the herb of the field." [Genesis 3:18](#).

[222]

Grains, fruits, nuts, and vegetables constitute the diet chosen for us by our Creator. These foods, prepared in as simple and natural a manner as possible, are the most healthful and nourishing. They impart a strength, a power of endurance, and a vigor of intellect that are not afforded by a more complex and stimulating diet.<sup>376</sup>

In order to maintain health, a sufficient supply of good, nourishing food is needed.

If we plan wisely, that which is most conducive to health can be secured in almost every land. The various preparations of rice, wheat, corn, and oats are sent abroad everywhere, also beans, peas, and lentils. These, with native or imported fruits, and the variety of vegetables that grow in each locality, give an opportunity to select a dietary that is complete without the use of flesh meats.

Wherever dried fruits, such as raisins, prunes, apples, pears, peaches, and apricots are obtainable at moderate prices, it will be found that they can be used as staple articles of diet much more freely than is customary, with the best results to the health and vigor of all classes of workers.<sup>377</sup>

## The Science of Cooking

Cooking is no mean science, and it is one of the most essential in practical life. It is a science that all women should learn, and it should be taught in a way to benefit the poorer classes. To make food appetizing and at the same time simple and nourishing, requires skill; but it can be done. Cooks should know how to prepare simple food

<sup>376</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 295, 296

<sup>377</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 299

in a simple and healthful manner, and so that it will be found more palatable, as well as more wholesome, because of its simplicity.<sup>378</sup>

Let us make intelligent advancement in simplifying our diet. In the providence of God, every country produces articles of food containing the nourishment necessary for the upbuilding of the system. These may be made into healthful, appetizing dishes.<sup>379</sup>

Many do not feel that this is a matter of duty, hence they do not try to prepare food properly. This can be done in a simple, healthful, and easy manner, without the use of lard, butter, or flesh meats. Skill must be united with simplicity. To do this, women must read, and then patiently reduce what they read to practice.<sup>380</sup>

Fruits, grains, and vegetables, prepared in a simple way, free from spice and grease<sup>381</sup> of all kinds, make, with milk or cream, the most healthful diet.<sup>382</sup>

[223] Grains and fruits prepared free from grease, and in as natural a condition as possible, should be the food for the tables of all who claim to be preparing for translation to heaven.<sup>383</sup>

Far too much sugar is ordinarily used in food. Cakes, sweet puddings, pastries, jellies, jams, are active causes of indigestion. Especially harmful are the custards and puddings in which milk, eggs, and sugar are the chief ingredients. The free use of milk and sugar taken together should be avoided.<sup>384</sup>

The less sugar introduced into the food in its preparation, the less difficulty will be experienced because of the heat of the climate.<sup>385</sup>

If milk is used, it should be thoroughly sterilized; with this precaution, there is less danger of contracting disease from its use.<sup>386</sup>

<sup>378</sup>[The Ministry of Healing, 302, 303](#)

<sup>379</sup>[Counsels on Diet and Foods, 94](#)

<sup>380</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 1:681](#)

<sup>381</sup>\* [Grease is defined as “animal fat, especially when soft; any fatty, oily, or unctuous substance.” Ellen White stated that olives, properly prepared, may be eaten with benefit at every meal, the oil in them providing a substitute for animal oil and butter. See [The Ministry of Healing, 298](#); [Testimonies for the Church Volume Seven, 134](#). This seems to indicate that a limited amount of fat, particularly from vegetable sources, is a part of a healthy diet.]

<sup>382</sup>[Counsels on Health, 115](#)

<sup>383</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 2:352](#)

<sup>384</sup>[The Ministry of Healing, 302](#)

<sup>385</sup>[Counsels on Diet and Foods, 95](#)

<sup>386</sup>[The Ministry of Healing, 302](#)



The time may come when it will not be safe to use milk. But if the cows are healthy and the milk thoroughly cooked, there is no necessity of creating a time of trouble beforehand.<sup>387</sup>

### Highly Seasoned Foods

Condiments, so frequently used by those of the world, are ruinous to the digestion.<sup>388</sup>

In this fast age, the less exciting the food, the better. Condiments are injurious in their nature. Mustard, pepper, spices, pickles, and other things of a like character, irritate the stomach and make the blood feverish and impure. The inflamed condition of the drunkard's stomach is often pictured as illustrating the effect of alcoholic liquors. A similarly inflamed condition is produced by the use of irritating condiments. Soon ordinary food does not satisfy the appetite. The system feels a want, a craving, for something more stimulating.<sup>389</sup>

Some have so indulged their taste, that unless they have the very article of food it calls for, they find no pleasure in eating. If condiments and spiced foods are placed before them, they make the stomach work by applying this fiery whip; for it has been so treated that it will not acknowledge unstimulating food.<sup>390</sup>

Spices at first irritate the tender coating of the stomach, but finally destroy the natural sensitiveness of this delicate membrane. The blood becomes fevered, the animal propensities are aroused, while the moral and intellectual powers are weakened and become servants to the baser passions. The mother should study to set a simple yet nutritious diet before her family.<sup>391</sup>

### Regularity in Eating

After the regular meal is eaten, the stomach should be allowed to rest for five hours. Not a particle of food should be introduced into the stomach till the next meal. In this interval the stomach will

<sup>387</sup>Counsels on Diet and Foods, 357

<sup>388</sup>Counsels on Diet and Foods, 339

<sup>389</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 325

<sup>390</sup>Counsels on Diet and Foods, 340

<sup>391</sup>Counsels on Health, 114

perform its work, and will then be in a condition to receive more food.<sup>392</sup>

[224] Regularity in eating should be carefully observed. Nothing should be eaten between meals, no confectionery, nuts, fruits, or food of any kind. Irregularities in eating destroy the healthful tone of the digestive organs, to the detriment of health and cheerfulness. And when the children come to the table, they do not relish wholesome food; their appetites crave that which is hurtful for them.<sup>393</sup>

When we lie down to rest, the stomach should have its work all done, that it, as well as the other organs of the body, may enjoy rest. For persons of sedentary habits, late suppers are particularly harmful.

In many cases the faintness that leads to a desire for food is felt because the digestive organs have been too severely taxed during the day. After disposing of one meal, the digestive organs need rest. At least five or six hours should intervene between the meals, and most persons who give the plan a trial will find that two meals a day are better than three.<sup>394</sup>

The practice of eating but two meals a day is generally found a benefit to health; yet under some circumstances persons may require a third meal. This should, however, if taken at all, be very light, and of food most easily digested.<sup>395</sup>

When students combine physical and mental taxation the objection to the third meal is to a great extent removed. Let the students have the third meal, prepared without vegetables, but with simple, wholesome food, such as fruit and bread.<sup>396</sup>

Food should not be eaten very hot or very cold. If food is cold, the vital force of the stomach is drawn upon in order to warm it before digestion can take place. Cold drinks are injurious for the same reason; while the free use of hot drinks is debilitating. In fact, the more liquid there is taken with the meals, the more difficult it is for the food to digest; for the liquid must be absorbed before digestion can begin. Do not eat largely of salt, avoid the use of

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<sup>392</sup>Counsels on Diet and Foods, 179

<sup>393</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 384

<sup>394</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 304

<sup>395</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 321

<sup>396</sup>Counsels on Diet and Foods, 178

pickles and spiced foods, eat an abundance of fruit, and the irritation that calls for so much drink at mealtime will largely disappear. Food should be eaten slowly and should be thoroughly masticated. This is necessary in order that the saliva may be properly mixed with the food and the digestive fluids be called into action.<sup>397</sup>

### Application of Health Reform Principles

There is real common sense in dietetic reform. The subject should be studied broadly and deeply, and no one should criticize others because their practice is not, in all things, in harmony with his own. It is impossible to make an unvarying rule to regulate everyone's habits, and no one should think himself a criterion for all. Not all can eat the same things. Foods that are palatable and wholesome to one person may be distasteful, and even harmful, to another. Some cannot use milk, while others thrive on it. Some persons cannot digest peas and beans; others find them wholesome. For some the coarser grain preparations are good food, while others cannot use them.<sup>398</sup>

Where wrong habits of diet have been indulged, there should be no delay in reform. When dyspepsia has resulted from abuse of the stomach, efforts should be made carefully to preserve the remaining strength of the vital forces by removing every overtaxing burden. The stomach may never entirely recover health after long abuse; but a proper course of diet will save further debility, and many will recover more or less fully.

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Strong men who are engaged in active physical labor are not compelled to be as careful as to the quantity or quality of their food as are persons of sedentary habits; but even these would have better health if they would practice self-control in eating and drinking.

Some wish that an exact rule could be prescribed for their diet. They overeat, and then regret it, and so they keep thinking about what they eat and drink. This is not as it should be. One person cannot lay down an exact rule for another. Everyone should exercise reason and self-control, and should act from principle.<sup>399</sup>

<sup>397</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 305, 306

<sup>398</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 319, 320

<sup>399</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 308, 310

The diet reform should be progressive. As disease in animals increases, the use of milk and eggs will become more and more unsafe. An effort should be made to supply their place with other things that are healthful and inexpensive. The people everywhere should be taught how to cook without milk and eggs, so far as possible, and yet have their food wholesome and palatable.

God is not honored when the body is neglected or abused and is thus unfitted for His service. To care for the body by providing for it food that is relishable and strengthening is one of the first duties of the householder. It is far better to have less expensive clothing and furniture than to stint the supply of food.

Some householders stint the family table in order to provide expensive entertainment for visitors. This is unwise. In the entertainment of guests there should be greater simplicity. Let the needs of the family have first attention.

Unwise economy and artificial customs often prevent the exercise of hospitality where it is needed and would be a blessing. The regular supply of food for our tables should be such that the unexpected guest can be made welcome without burdening the housewife to make extra preparation.

Carefully consider your diet. Study from cause to effect. Cultivate self-control. Keep appetite under the control of reason. Never abuse the stomach by overeating, but do not deprive yourself of the wholesome, palatable food that health demands.

Those who understand the laws of health and who are governed by principle, will shun the extremes, both of indulgence and of restriction. Their diet is chosen, not for the mere gratification of appetite, but for the upbuilding of the body. They seek to preserve every power in the best condition for highest service to God and man. The appetite is under the control of reason and conscience, and they are rewarded with health of body and mind. While they do not urge their views offensively upon others, their example is a testimony in favor of right principles. These persons have a wide influence for good.<sup>400</sup>

[226]

We should not provide for the Sabbath a more liberal supply or a greater variety of food than for other days. Instead of this the food

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<sup>400</sup>[The Ministry of Healing, 310-323](#)

should be more simple, and less should be eaten in order that the mind may be clear and vigorous to comprehend spiritual things.

Cooking on the Sabbath should be avoided; but it is not therefore necessary to eat cold food. In cold weather the food prepared the day before should be heated. And let the meals, however simple, be palatable and attractive. Especially in families where there are children, it is well, on the Sabbath, to provide something that will be regarded as a treat, something the family do not have every day.<sup>401</sup>

### Control of Appetite and Passions

One of the strongest temptations that man has to meet is upon the point of appetite. Between the mind and the body there is a mysterious and wonderful relation. They react upon each other. To keep the body in a healthy condition to develop its strength, that every part of the living machinery may act harmoniously, should be the first study of our life. To neglect the body is to neglect the mind. It cannot be to the glory of God for His children to have sickly bodies or dwarfed minds. To indulge the taste at the expense of health is a wicked abuse of the senses. Those who engage in any species of intemperance, either in eating or drinking, waste their physical energies and weaken moral power. They will feel the retribution which follows the transgression of physical law.<sup>402</sup>

Many are incapacitated for labor both mentally and physically by overeating and the gratification of the lustful passions. The animal propensities are strengthened, while the moral and spiritual nature is enfeebled. When we shall stand around the great white throne, what a record will the lives of many then present. Then will they see what they might have done had they not debased their God-given powers. Then will they realize what height of intellectual greatness they might have attained had they given to God all the physical and mental strength He had entrusted to them. In their agony of remorse they will long to have their lives to live over again.<sup>403</sup>

Every true Christian will have control of his appetite and passions. Unless he is free from the bondage and slavery of appetite he

<sup>401</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 307

<sup>402</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:485, 486

<sup>403</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:135

cannot be a true, obedient servant of Christ. It is the indulgence of appetite and passion which makes the truth of none effect upon the heart. It is impossible for the spirit and power of the truth to sanctify a man, soul, body, and spirit, when he is controlled by appetite and passion.<sup>404</sup>

[227] The great end for which Christ endured that long fast in the wilderness was to teach us the necessity of self-denial and temperance. This work should commence at our tables and should be strictly carried out in all the concerns of life. The Redeemer of the world came from heaven to help man in his weakness, that, in the power which Jesus came to bring him, he might become strong to overcome appetite and passion, and might be victor on every point.<sup>405</sup>

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<sup>404</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:569, 570

<sup>405</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:488

God gave our first parents the food He designed that the race should eat. It was contrary to His plan to have the life of any creature taken. There was to be no death in Eden. The fruit of the trees in the garden, was the food man's wants required. God gave man no permission to eat animal food until after the flood. Everything had been destroyed upon which man could subsist, and therefore the Lord in their necessity gave Noah permission to eat of the clean animals which he had taken with him into the ark. But animal food was not the most healthful article of food for man.

After the Flood the people ate largely of animal food. God saw that the ways of man were corrupt, and that he was disposed to exalt himself proudly against his Creator and to follow the inclinations of his own heart. And He permitted that long-lived race to eat animal food to shorten their sinful lives. Soon after the Flood the race began to rapidly decrease in size, and in length of years.<sup>406</sup>

In choosing man's food in Eden, the Lord showed what was the best diet; in the choice made for Israel He taught the same lesson. He brought the Israelites out of Egypt and undertook their training, that they might be a people for His own possession. Through them He desired to bless and teach the world. He provided them with the food best adapted for this purpose, not flesh, but manna, "the bread of heaven." It was only because of their discontent and their murmuring for the fleshpots of Egypt that animal food was granted them, and this only for a short time. Its use brought disease and death to thousands. Yet the restriction to a non-flesh diet was never heartily accepted. It continued to be the cause of discontent and murmuring, open or secret, and it was not made permanent.

Upon their settlement in Canaan, the Israelites were permitted the use of animal food, but under careful restrictions which tended to lessen the evil results. The use of swine's flesh was prohibited, as also of other animals and of birds and fish whose flesh was pro-

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<sup>406</sup>Counsels on Diet and Foods, 373

nounced unclean. Of the meats permitted, the eating of the fat and the blood was strictly forbidden.

Only such animals could be used for food as were in good condition. No creature that was torn, that had died of itself, or from which the blood had not been carefully drained, could be used as food.

[229] By departing from the plan divinely appointed for their diet, the Israelites suffered great loss. They desired a flesh diet, and they reaped its results. They did not reach God's ideal of character or fulfill His purpose. The Lord "gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul." [Psalm 106:15](#). They valued the earthly above the spiritual, and the sacred pre-eminence which was His purpose for them they did not attain.

Those who eat flesh are but eating grains and vegetables at second hand; for the animal receives from these things the nutrition that produces growth. The life that was in the grains and vegetables passes into the eater. We receive it by eating the flesh of the animal. How much better to get it direct, by eating the food that God provided for our use!<sup>407</sup>

### The Cause of Much Disease and Sickness

Flesh was never the best food; but its use is now doubly objectionable, since disease in animals is so rapidly increasing. Those who use flesh foods little know what they are eating. Often if they could see the animals when living and know the quality of the meat they eat, they would turn from it with loathing. People are continually eating flesh that is filled with tuberculous and cancerous germs. Tuberculosis, cancer, and other fatal diseases are thus communicated.<sup>408</sup>

The liability to take disease is increased tenfold by meat eating.<sup>409</sup>

The animals are diseased, and by partaking of their flesh, we plant the seeds of disease in our own tissue and blood. Then when exposed to the changes in a malarious atmosphere, these are more sensibly felt; also when we are exposed to prevailing epidemics and

<sup>407</sup>[The Ministry of Healing, 311-313](#)

<sup>408</sup>[The Ministry of Healing, 313](#)

<sup>409</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 2:64](#)



contagious diseases, the system is not in a condition to resist the disease.

From the light God has given me, the prevalence of cancer and tumors is largely due to gross living on dead flesh.<sup>410</sup>

In many places fish become so contaminated by the filth on which they feed as to be a cause of disease. This is especially the case where the fish come in contact with the sewage of large cities. The fish that are fed on the contents of the drains may pass into distant waters and may be caught where the water is pure and fresh. Thus when used as food they bring disease and death on those who do not suspect the danger.

The effects of a flesh diet may not be immediately realized; but this is no evidence that it is not harmful. Few can be made to believe that it is the meat they have eaten which has poisoned their blood and caused their suffering. Many die of diseases wholly due to meat eating, while the real cause is not suspected by themselves or by others.<sup>411</sup>

### The Swine is Unclean Unto You

The tissues of the swine swarm with parasites. Of the swine God said, "It is unclean unto you: ye shall not eat of their flesh, nor touch their dead carcass." [Deuteronomy 14:8](#). This command was given because swine's flesh is unfit for food. Swine are scavengers, and this is the only use they were intended to serve. Never, under any circumstances, was their flesh to be eaten by human beings. It is impossible for the flesh of any living creature to be wholesome when filth is its natural element and when it feeds upon every detestable thing.<sup>412</sup>

[230]

Pork, although one of the most common articles of diet, is one of the most injurious. God did not prohibit the Hebrews from eating swine's flesh merely to show His authority, but because it was not a proper article of food for man. It would fill the system with scrofula, and especially in that warm climate produced leprosy, and disease of various kinds. Its influence upon the system in that climate was far

<sup>410</sup>[Counsels on Diet and Foods, 386-388](#)

<sup>411</sup>[The Ministry of Healing, 314, 315](#)

<sup>412</sup>[The Ministry of Healing, 313, 314](#)

more injurious than in a colder climate.... Swine's flesh would not be palatable to the taste in its natural state. It is made agreeable to the appetite by high seasoning, which makes a very bad thing worse. Swine's flesh above all other flesh meats, produces a bad state of the blood. Those who eat freely of pork can but be diseased.<sup>413</sup>

Especially would the fine, sensitive nerves of the brain become enfeebled and so beclouded that sacred things would not be discerned, but be placed upon the low level with common things.<sup>414</sup>

Those who have much outdoor exercise do not realize the bad effects of pork eating, as those do whose life is mostly indoors, and whose habits are sedentary, and whose labor is mental.<sup>415</sup>

### **The Effects of a Flesh Diet on the Mind and Soul**

The moral evils of a flesh diet are not less marked than are the physical ills. Flesh food is injurious to health, and whatever affects the body has a corresponding effect on the mind and the soul.<sup>416</sup>

A meat diet changes the disposition and strengthens animalism. We are composed of what we eat, and eating much flesh will diminish intellectual activity. Students would accomplish much more in their studies if they never tasted meat. When the animal part of the human agent is strengthened by meat eating, the intellectual powers diminish proportionately.<sup>417</sup>

If ever there was a time when the diet should be of the most simple kind, it is now. Meat should not be placed before our children. Its influence is to excite and strengthen the lower passions, and has a tendency to deaden the moral powers.<sup>418</sup>

Greater reforms should be seen among the people who claim to be looking for the soon appearing of Christ. Health reform is to do among our people a work which it has not yet done. There are those who ought to be awake to the danger of meat eating, who are still eating the flesh of animals, thus endangering the physical, mental, and spiritual health. Many who are now only half converted on the

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<sup>413</sup>Counsels on Diet and Foods, 392, 393

<sup>414</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:96

<sup>415</sup>Counsels on Diet and Foods, 393

<sup>416</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 315

<sup>417</sup>Counsels on Diet and Foods, 389

<sup>418</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:352

question of meat eating will go from God's people, to walk no more with them.<sup>419</sup>

Those who claim to believe the truth are to guard carefully the powers of body and mind, so that God and His cause will not be in any way dishonored by their words or actions. The habits and practices are to be brought into subjection to the will of God. We are to give careful attention to our diet. It has been clearly presented to me that God's people are to take a firm stand against meat eating. Would God for thirty years give His people the message that if they desire to have pure blood and clear minds, they must give up the use of flesh meat, if He did not want them to heed this message? By the use of flesh meats the animal nature is strengthened and the spiritual nature weakened.<sup>420</sup>

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### **Instruction Concerning a Change in Diet**

It is a mistake to suppose that muscular strength depends on the use of animal food. The needs of the system can be better supplied, and more vigorous health can be enjoyed, without its use. The grains, with fruits, nuts, and vegetables, contain all the nutritive properties necessary to make good blood. These elements are not so well or so fully supplied by a flesh diet. Had the use of flesh been essential to health and strength, animal food would have been included in the diet appointed man in the beginning.

When the use of flesh food is discontinued, there is often a sense of weakness, a lack of vigor. Many urge this as evidence that flesh food is essential; but it is because foods of this class are stimulating, because they fever the blood and excite the nerves, that they are so missed. Some will find it as difficult to leave off flesh eating as it is for the drunkard to give up his dram; but they will be the better for the change.

When flesh food is discarded, its place should be supplied with a variety of grains, nuts, vegetables, and fruits that will be both nourishing and appetizing. This is especially necessary in the case of those who are weak or who are taxed with continuous labor.<sup>421</sup>

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<sup>419</sup>Counsels on Health, 575

<sup>420</sup>Counsels on Diet and Foods, 383

<sup>421</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 316

Especially where meat is not made a principal article of food is good cooking an essential requirement. Something must be prepared to take the place of meat, and these substitutes for meat must be well prepared, so that meat will not be desired.<sup>422</sup>

I am acquainted with families who have changed from a meat diet to one that is impoverished. Their food is so poorly prepared that the stomach loathes it; and such have told me that the health reform did not agree with them, that they were decreasing in physical strength. Food should be prepared with simplicity, yet with a nicety which will invite the appetite.<sup>423</sup>

It is for their own good that the Lord counsels the remnant church to discard the use of flesh meats, tea, and coffee, and other harmful foods. There are plenty of other things on which we can subsist that are wholesome and good.

Among those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord, meat eating will eventually be done away; flesh will cease to form a part of their diet. We should ever keep this end in view, and endeavor to work steadily toward it.<sup>424</sup>

[232] The intellectual, the moral, and the physical powers are depreciated by the habitual use of flesh meats. Meat eating deranges the system, beclouds the intellect, and blunts the moral sensibilities. We say to you, dear brother and sister, your safest course is to let meat alone.<sup>425</sup>

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<sup>422</sup>Child Guidance, 384

<sup>423</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:63

<sup>424</sup>Counsels on Diet and Foods, 380, 381

<sup>425</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:64

## Chapter 42—Faithfulness in Health Reform

[233]

[Note: This message reviewing the essential points in health reform was given by Mrs. White at the General conference of 1909, the last such session she attended.—Compilers.]

I am instructed to bear a message to all our people on the subject of health reform, for many have backslidden from their former loyalty to health reform principles.

God's purpose for His children is that they shall grow up to the full stature of men and women in Christ. In order to do this, they must use aright every power of mind, soul, and body. They cannot afford to waste any mental or physical strength.

The question of how to preserve the health is one of primary importance. When we study this question in the fear of God we shall learn that it is best, for both our physical and our spiritual advancement, to observe simplicity in diet. Let us patiently study this question. We need knowledge and judgment in order to move wisely in this matter. Nature's laws are not to be resisted, but obeyed.

Those who have received instruction regarding the evils of the use of flesh foods, tea and coffee, and rich and unhealthful food preparations, and who are determined to make a covenant with God by sacrifice, will not continue to indulge their appetite for food that they know to be unhealthful. God demands that the appetites be cleansed, and that self-denial be practiced in regard to those things which are not good. This is a work that will have to be done before His people can stand before Him a perfected people.

The remnant people of God must be a converted people. The presentation of this message is to result in the conversion and sanctification of souls. We are to feel the power of the Spirit of God in this movement. This is a wonderful, definite message; it means everything to the receiver, and it is to be proclaimed with a loud cry. We must have a true, abiding faith that this message will go forth with increasing importance till the close of time.

There are some professed believers who accept certain portions of the *Testimonies* as the message of God, while they reject those portions that condemn their favorite indulgences. Such persons are working contrary to their own welfare and the welfare of the church. It is essential that we walk in the light while we have the light. [234] Those who claim to believe in health reform, and yet work counter to its principles in the daily life practice, are hurting their own souls and are leaving wrong impressions upon the minds of believers and unbelievers.

### Strength Through Obedience

A solemn responsibility rests upon those who know the truth, that all their works shall correspond with their faith, and that their lives shall be refined and sanctified, and they be prepared for the work that must rapidly be done in these closing days of the message. They have no time or strength to spend in the indulgence of appetite. The words should come to us now with impelling earnestness: “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.” [Acts 3:19](#). There are many among us who are deficient in spirituality and who, unless they are wholly converted, will certainly be lost. Can you afford to run the risk?

God requires of His people continual advancement. We need to learn that indulged appetite is the greatest hindrance to mental improvement and soul sanctification. With all our profession of health reform, many of us eat improperly. Indulgence of appetite is the greatest cause of physical and mental debility, and lies largely at the foundation of feebleness and premature death. Let the individual who is seeking to possess purity of spirit bear in mind that in Christ there is power to control the appetite.

If we could be benefited by indulging the desire for flesh foods, I would not make this appeal to you; but I know we cannot. Flesh foods are injurious to the physical well-being, and we should learn to do without them. Those who are in a position where it is possible to secure a vegetarian diet, but who choose to follow their own preferences in this matter, eating and drinking as they please, will gradually grow careless of the instruction the Lord has given regard-

ing other phases of the present truth and will lose their perception of what is truth; they will surely reap as they have sown.

I have been instructed that the students in our schools are not to be served with flesh foods or with food preparations that are known to be unhealthful. Nothing that will serve to encourage a desire for stimulants should be placed on the tables. I appeal to old and young and to middle-aged. Deny your appetite of those things that are doing you injury. Serve the Lord by sacrifice.

There are many who feel that they cannot get along without flesh food; but if these would place themselves on the Lord's side, resolutely resolved to walk in the way of His guidance, they would receive strength and wisdom as did Daniel and his fellows. They would find that the Lord would give them sound judgment. Many would be surprised to see how much could be saved for the cause of God by acts of self-denial. The small sums saved by deeds of sacrifice will do more for the upbuilding of the cause of God than larger gifts will accomplish that have not called for denial of self.

[235]

### **An Appeal for a Firm Stand**

Seventh-day Adventists are handling momentous truths. More than forty years ago [in 1863] the Lord gave us special light on health reform, but how are we walking in that light? How many have refused to live in harmony with the counsels of God! As a people, we should make advancement proportionate to the light received. It is our duty to understand and respect the principles of health reform. On the subject of temperance we should be in advance of all other people; and yet there are among us well-instructed members of the church, and even ministers of the gospel, who have little respect for the light that God has given upon this subject. They eat as they please and work as they please.

Let those who are teachers and leaders in our cause take their stand firmly on Bible ground in regard to health reform, and give a straight testimony to those who believe we are living in the last days of this earth's history. A line of distinction must be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve themselves.

I have been shown that the principles that were given us in the early days of the message are as important and should be regarded

just as conscientiously today as they were then. There are some who have never followed the light given on the question of diet. It is now time to take the light from under the bushel and let it shine forth in clear, bright rays.

The principles of healthful living mean a great deal to us individually and as a people. When the message of health reform first came to me, I was weak and feeble, subject to frequent fainting spells. I was pleading with God for help, and He opened before me the great subject of health reform. He instructed me that those who are keeping His commandments must be brought into sacred relation to Himself, and that by temperance in eating and drinking they must keep mind and body in the most favorable condition for service. This light has been a great blessing to me. I took my stand as a health reformer, knowing that the Lord would strengthen me. I have better health today, notwithstanding my age, than I had in my younger days.

It is reported by some that I have not followed the principles of health reform as I have advocated them with my pen; but I can say that I have been a faithful health reformer. Those who have been members of my family know that this is true.

### **“Do All To the Glory of God”**

[236] We do not mark out any precise line to be followed in diet; but we do say that in countries where there are fruits, grains, and nuts in abundance, flesh food is not the right food for God’s people. I have been instructed that flesh food has a tendency to animalize the nature, to rob men and women of that love and sympathy which they should feel for everyone, and to give the lower passions control over the higher powers of the being. If meat eating was ever healthful, it is not safe now. Cancers, tumors, and pulmonary diseases are largely caused by meat eating.

We are not to make the use of flesh food a test of fellowship, but we should consider the influence that professed believers who use flesh foods have over others. As God’s messengers, shall we not say to the people: “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God”? [1 Corinthians 10:31](#). Shall we not bear a decided testimony against the indulgence of perverted



appetite? Will any who are ministers of the gospel, proclaiming the most solemn truth ever given to mortals, set an example in returning to the fleshpots of Egypt? Will those who are supported by the tithe from God's storehouse permit themselves by self-indulgence to poison the life-giving current flowing through their veins? Will they disregard the light and warnings that God has given them? The health of the body is to be regarded as essential for growth in grace and the acquirement of an even temper. If the stomach is not properly cared for, the formation of an upright, moral character will be hindered. The brain and nerves are in sympathy with the stomach. Erroneous eating and drinking result in erroneous thinking and acting.

All are now being tested and proved. We have been baptized into Christ, and if we will act our part by separating from everything that would drag us down and make us what we ought not to be, there will be given us strength to grow up into Christ, who is our living head, and we shall see the salvation of God.

Only when we are intelligent in regard to the principles of healthful living can we be fully aroused to see the evils resulting from improper diet. Those who, after seeing their mistakes, have courage to change their habits, will find that the reformatory process requires a struggle and much perseverance; but when correct tastes are once formed, they will realize that the use of the food which they formerly regarded as harmless was slowly but surely laying the foundation for dyspepsia and other diseases.

Fathers and mothers, watch unto prayer. Guard strictly against intemperance in every form. Teach your children the principles of true health reform. Teach them what things to avoid in order to preserve health. Already the wrath of God has begun to be visited upon the children of disobedience. What crimes, what sins, what iniquitous practices, are being revealed on every hand! As a people we are to exercise great care in guarding our children against depraved associates.

### **Educate the People**

Greater efforts should be put forth to educate the people in the principles of health reform. Cooking schools should be established,

[237] and house-to-house instruction should be given in the art of cooking wholesome food. Old and young should learn how to cook more simply. Wherever the truth is presented, the people are to be taught how to prepare food in a simple, yet appetizing way. They are to be shown that a nourishing diet can be provided without the use of flesh foods.

Teach the people that it is better to know how to keep well than how to cure disease. Our physicians should be wise educators, warning all against self-indulgence and showing that abstinence from the things that God has prohibited is the only way to prevent ruin of body and mind.

Much tact and discretion should be employed in preparing nourishing food to take the place of that which has formerly constituted the diet of those who are learning to be health reformers. Faith in God, earnestness of purpose, and a willingness to help one another will be required. A diet lacking in the proper elements of nutrition brings reproach upon the cause of health reform. We are mortal and must supply ourselves with food that will give proper nourishment to the body.

### **Extremes Injure Health Reform**

Some of our people, while conscientiously abstaining from eating improper foods, neglect to supply themselves with the elements necessary for the sustenance of the body. Those who take an extreme view of health reform are in danger of preparing tasteless dishes, making them so insipid that they are not satisfying. Food should be prepared in such a way that it will be appetizing as well as nourishing. It should not be robbed of that which the system needs. I use some salt, and always have, because salt, instead of being deleterious, is actually essential for the blood. Vegetables should be made palatable with a little milk or cream, or something equivalent.

While warnings have been given regarding the dangers of disease through butter, and the evil of the free use of eggs by small children, yet we should not consider it a violation of principle to use eggs from hens that are well cared for and suitably fed. Eggs contain properties that are remedial agencies in counteracting certain poisons.

Some, in abstaining from milk, eggs, and butter, have failed to supply the system with proper nourishment, and as a consequence have become weak and unable to work. Thus health reform is brought into disrepute. The work that we have tried to build up solidly is confused with strange things that God has not required, and the energies of the church are crippled. But God will interfere to prevent the results of these too strenuous ideas. The gospel is to harmonize the sinful race. It is to bring the rich and poor together at the feet of Jesus.

The time will come when we may have to discard some of the articles of diet we now use, such as milk and cream and eggs; but it is not necessary to bring upon ourselves perplexity by premature and extreme restrictions. Wait until the circumstances demand it and the Lord prepares the way for it.

Those who would be successful in proclaiming the principles of health reform must make the Word of God their guide and counselor. Only as the teachers of health reform principles do this can they stand on vantage ground. Let us never bear a testimony against health reform by failing to use wholesome, palatable food in place of the harmful articles of diet that we have discarded. Do not in any way encourage an appetite for stimulants. Eat only plain, simple, wholesome food, and thank God constantly for the principles of health reform. In all things be true and upright, and you will gain precious victories. [238]

### **Local Conditions to Be Considered**

While working against gluttony and intemperance, we must recognize the condition to which the human family is subjected. God has made provision for those who live in the different countries of the world. Those who desire to be co-workers with God must consider carefully before they specify just what foods should and should not be eaten. We are to be brought into connection with the masses. Should health reform in its most extreme form be taught to those whose circumstances forbid its adoption, more harm than good would be done. As I preach the gospel to the poor, I am instructed to tell them to eat that food which is most nourishing. I cannot say to them: "You must not eat eggs, or milk, or cream. You must use no

butter in the preparation of food.” The gospel must be preached to the poor, but the time has not yet come to prescribe the strictest diet.

### **Then God Can Bless**

Those ministers who feel at liberty to indulge the appetite are falling far short of the mark. God wants them to be health reformers. He wants them to live up to the light that has been given on this subject. I feel sad when I see those who ought to be zealous for our health principles, not yet converted to the right way of living. I pray that the Lord may impress their minds that they are meeting with great loss. If things were as they should be in the households that make up our churches, we might do double work for the Lord.

In order to be purified and to remain pure, Seventh-day Adventists must have the Holy Spirit in their hearts and in their homes. The Lord has given me light that when the Israel of today humble themselves before Him, and cleanse the soul-temple from all defilement, He will hear their prayers in behalf of the sick and will bless in the use of His remedies for disease. When in faith the human agent does all he can to combat disease, using the simple methods of treatment that God has provided, his efforts will be blessed of God.

[239] If, after so much light has been given, God’s people will cherish wrong habits, indulging self and refusing to reform, they will suffer the sure consequences of transgression. If they are determined to gratify perverted appetite at any cost, God will not miraculously save them from the consequences of their indulgence. They “shall lie down in sorrow.” [Isaiah 50:11](#).

Oh, how many lose the richest blessings that God has in store for them in health and spiritual endowments! There are many souls who wrestle for special victories and special blessings that they may do some great thing. To this end they are always feeling that they must make an agonizing struggle in prayer and tears. When these persons search the Scriptures with prayer to know the expressed will of God, and then do His will from the heart without one reservation or self-indulgence, they will find rest. All the agonizing, all the tears and struggles, will not bring them the blessing they long for. Self must be entirely surrendered. They must do the work that presents

itself, appropriating the abundance of the grace of God which is promised to all who ask in faith.

“If any man will come after Me,” said Jesus, “let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.” [Luke 9:23](#). Let us follow the Saviour in His simplicity and self-denial. Let us lift up the Man of Calvary by word and by holy living. The Saviour comes very near to those who consecrate themselves to God. If ever there was a time when we needed the working of the Spirit of God upon our hearts and lives, it is now. Let us lay hold of this divine power for strength to live a life of holiness and self-surrender.<sup>426</sup>

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<sup>426</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 9:153-166](#)

## Chapter 43—The Church on Earth

God has a church upon the earth who are His chosen people, who keep His commandments. He is leading, not stray offshoots, not one here and one there, but a people. The truth is a sanctifying power; but the church militant is not the church triumphant. There are tares among the wheat. “Wilt thou then that we ... gather them up?” was the question of the servant; but the master answered, “Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.” The gospel net draws not only good fish, but bad ones as well, and the Lord only knows who are His.

It is our individual duty to walk humbly with God. We are not to seek any strange, new message. We are not to think that the chosen ones of God who are trying to walk in the light compose Babylon.<sup>427</sup>

Although there are evils existing in the church, and will be until the end of the world, the church in these last days is to be the light of the world that is polluted and demoralized by sin. The church, enfeebled and defective, needing to be reprov'd, warn'd, and counseled, is the only object upon earth upon which Christ bestows His supreme regard. The world is a workshop in which, through the cooperation of human and divine agencies, Jesus is making experiments by His grace and divine mercy upon human hearts.<sup>428</sup>

God has a distinct people, a church on earth, second to none, but superior to all in their facilities to teach the truth, to vindicate the law of God. God has divinely appointed agencies—men whom He is leading, who have borne the heat and burden of the day, who are cooperating with heavenly instrumentalities to advance the kingdom of Christ in our world. Let all unite with these chosen agents, and be found at last among those who have the patience of the saints, who keep the commandments of God, and have the faith of Jesus.<sup>429</sup>

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<sup>427</sup>Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 61

<sup>428</sup>Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 49, 50

<sup>429</sup>Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 58

### United With the church Above

The church of God below is one with the church of God above. Believers on the earth and the beings in heaven who have never fallen constitute one church. Every heavenly intelligence is interested in the assemblies of the saints who on earth meet to worship God. In the inner court of heaven they listen to the testimony of the witnesses for Christ in the outer court on earth, and the praise and thanksgiving from the worshipers below is taken up in the heavenly anthem, and praise and rejoicing sound through the heavenly courts because [241] Christ has not died in vain for the fallen sons of Adam. While angels drink from the fountainhead, the saints on earth drink of the pure streams flowing from the throne, the streams that make glad the city of our God.

Oh, that we could all realize the nearness of heaven to earth! When the earthborn children know it not, they have angels of light as their companions. A silent witness guards every soul that lives, seeking to draw that soul to Christ. As long as there is hope, until men resist the Holy Spirit to their eternal ruin, they are guarded by heavenly intelligences. Let us all bear in mind that in every assembly of the saints below are angels of God, listening to the testimonies, songs, and prayers. Let us remember that our praises are supplemented by the choirs of the angelic host above.

Then as you meet from Sabbath to Sabbath, sing praises to Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood" let the heart's adoration be given. Let the love of Christ be the burden of the speaker's utterance. Let it be expressed in simple language in every song of praise. Let the inspiration of the Spirit of God dictate your prayers. As the word of life is spoken, let your heartfelt response testify that you receive the message as from heaven.

God teaches that we should assemble in His house to cultivate the attributes of perfect love. This will fit the dwellers of earth for the mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for all who love Him. There they will assemble in the sanctuary from Sabbath to Sabbath, from one new moon to another, to unite in loftiest strains of song, in

praise and thanksgiving to Him who sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.<sup>430</sup>

### **The Authority Invested in the Church**

Christ gives power to the voice of the church. “Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” No such thing is countenanced as one man’s starting out upon his own individual responsibility and advocating what views he chooses, irrespective of the judgment of the church. God has bestowed the highest power under heaven upon His church. It is the voice of God in His united people in church capacity which is to be respected.<sup>431</sup>

[242] The Word of God does not give license for one man to set up his judgment in opposition to the judgment of the church, neither is he allowed to urge his opinions against the opinions of the church. If there were no church discipline and government, the church would go to fragments; it could not hold together as a body. There have ever been individuals of independent minds who have claimed that they were right, that God had especially taught, impressed, and led them. Each has a theory of his own, views peculiar to himself, and each claims that his views are in accordance with the word of God. Each one has a different theory and faith, yet each claims special light from God. These draw away from the body, and each one is a separate church of himself. All these cannot be right, yet they all claim to be led of the Lord.

Our Saviour follows His lessons of instruction with a promise that if two or three should be united in asking anything of God it should be given them. Christ here shows that there must be union with others, even in our desires for a given object. Great importance is attached to the united prayer, the union of purpose. God hears the prayers of individuals, but on this occasion Jesus was giving especial and important lessons that were to have a special bearing upon His newly organized church on the earth. There must be an agreement in the things which they desire and for which they pray. It was not merely the thoughts and exercises of one mind, liable to

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<sup>430</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:366-368

<sup>431</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:450, 451



deception; but the petition was to be the earnest desire of several minds centered on the same point.<sup>432</sup>

The church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God's plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory. The church is the repository of the riches of the grace of Christ; and through the church will eventually be made manifest, even to "the principalities and powers in heavenly places," the final and full display of the love of God.<sup>433</sup>

### **Paul Directed to the Church for Instruction**

Many have the idea that they are responsible to Christ alone for their light and experience, independent of His acknowledged followers in the world. But this is condemned by Jesus in His teachings and in the examples, the facts, which He has given for our instruction. Here was Paul, one whom Christ was to fit for a most important work, one who was to be a chosen vessel unto Him, brought directly into the presence of Christ; yet He does not teach him the lessons of truth. He arrests his course and convicts him; and when he asks, "What wilt Thou have me to do?" the Saviour does not tell him directly, but places him in connection with His church. They will tell thee what thou must do. Jesus is the sinner's friend, His heart is ever open, ever touched with human woe; He has all power, both in heaven and upon earth; but He respects the means which He has ordained for the enlightenment and salvation of men. He directs Saul to the church, thus acknowledging the power that He has invested in it as a channel of light to the world. It is Christ's organized body upon the earth, and respect is required to be paid to His ordinances. In the case of Saul, Ananias represents Christ, and he also represents Christ's ministers upon the earth who are appointed to act in Christ's stead.

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<sup>432</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:428, 429

<sup>433</sup>The Acts of the Apostles, 9

[243] In the conversion of Paul are given us important principles which we should ever bear in mind. The Redeemer of the world does not sanction experience and exercise in religious matters independent of His organized and acknowledged church, where He has a church.

The Son of God identified Himself with the office and authority of His organized church. His blessings were to come through the agencies that He has ordained, thus connecting man with the channel through which His blessings come. Paul's being strictly conscientious in his work of persecuting the saints does not make him guiltless when the knowledge of his cruel work is impressed upon him by the Spirit of God. He is to become a learner of the disciples.<sup>434</sup>

All the members of the church, if they are sons and daughters of God, will have to undergo a process of discipline before they can be lights in the world. God will not make men and women channels of light while they are in darkness and are content to remain so, making no special efforts to connect with the Source of light. Those who feel their own need, and arouse themselves to the deepest thought and the most earnest, persevering prayer and action, will receive divine aid. There is much for each to unlearn with respect to himself, as well as much to learn. Old habits and customs must be shaken off, and it is only by earnest struggles to correct these errors, and a full reception of the truth in carrying out its principles, by the grace of God, that the victory can be gained.<sup>435</sup>

### **Counsel to One Dissemination Error**

Those who start up to proclaim a message on their own individual responsibility, who, while claiming to be taught and led of God, still make it their special work to tear down that which God has been for years building up, are not doing the will of God. Be it known that these men are on the side of the great deceiver. Believe them not.

As those who have been made stewards of means and ability, you have been misapplying your Lord's goods in disseminating error. The whole world is filled with hatred of those who proclaim the binding claims of the law of God, and the church who are loyal

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<sup>434</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:432, 433

<sup>435</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:485, 486

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to Jehovah must engage in no ordinary conflict. “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.” [Ephesians 6:12](#). Those who have any realization of what this warfare means will not turn their weapons against the church militant, but with all their powers will wrestle with the people of God against the confederacy of evil.<sup>436</sup>

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<sup>436</sup>Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 51

## Chapter 44—Church Organization

Someone must fulfill the commission of Christ; someone must carry on the work which He began to do on earth; and the church has been given this privilege. For this purpose it has been organized.<sup>437</sup>

Ministers should love order and should discipline themselves, and then they can successfully discipline the church of God and teach them to work harmoniously like a well-drilled company of soldiers. If discipline and order are necessary for successful action on the battlefield, the same are as much more needful in the warfare in which we are engaged as the object to be gained is of greater value and more elevated in character than those for which opposing forces contend upon the field of battle. In the conflict in which we are engaged, eternal interests are at stake.

Angels work harmoniously. Perfect order characterizes all their movements. The more closely we imitate the harmony and order of the angelic host, the more successful will be the efforts of these heavenly agents in our behalf. If we see no necessity for harmonious action, and are disorderly, undisciplined, and disorganized in our course of action, angels, who are thoroughly organized and move in perfect order, cannot work for us successfully. They turn away in grief, for they are not authorized to bless confusion, distraction, and disorganization. All who desire the co-operation of the heavenly messengers must work in unison with them. Those who have the unction from on high will in all their efforts encourage order, discipline, and union of action, and then the angels of God can co-operate with them. But never, never will these heavenly messengers place their endorsement upon irregularity, disorganization, and disorder. All these evils are the result of Satan's efforts to weaken our forces, to destroy courage, and prevent successful action.

Satan well knows that success can only attend order and harmonious action. He well knows that everything connected with heaven is in perfect order, that subjection and thorough discipline mark

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<sup>437</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:295](#)

the movements of the angelic host. It is his studied effort to lead professed Christians just as far from heaven's arrangement as he can; therefore he deceives even the professed people of God and makes them believe that order and discipline are enemies to spirituality, that the only safety for them is to let each pursue his own course, and to remain especially distinct from bodies of Christians who are united and are laboring to establish discipline and harmony of action. All the efforts made to establish order are considered dangerous, a restriction of rightful liberty, and hence are feared as popery. These deceived souls consider it a virtue to boast of their freedom to think and act independently. They will not take any man's say-so. They are amenable to no man. I was shown that it is Satan's special work to lead men to feel that it is in God's order for them to strike out for themselves and choose their own course, independent of their brethren.<sup>438</sup>

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God has made His church on the earth a channel of light, and through it He communicates His purposes and His will. He does not give to one of His servants an experience independent of and contrary to the experience of the church itself. Neither does He give one man a knowledge of His will for the entire church while the church—Christ's body—is left in darkness. In His providence He places His servants in close connection with His church in order that they may have less confidence in themselves and greater confidence in others whom He is leading out to advance His work.<sup>439</sup>

### Churches Organized by the Prophets

The organization of the church at Jerusalem was to serve as a model for the organization of churches in every other place where messengers of truth should win converts to the gospel. Those to whom was given the responsibility of the general oversight of the church were not to lord it over God's heritage, but, as wise shepherds, were to "feed the flock of God, ... being ensamples to the flock," [1 Peter 5:2, 3](#); and the deacons were to be "men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." These men were to take their position unitedly on the side of right and to maintain it with firmness

<sup>438</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:649, 650

<sup>439</sup>The Acts of the Apostles, 163

and decision. Thus they would have a uniting influence upon the entire flock.<sup>440</sup>

As an important factor in the spiritual growth of the new converts the apostles were careful to surround them with the safeguards of gospel order. Churches were duly organized in all places in Lycaonia and Pisidia where there were believers. Officers were appointed in each church, and proper order and system were established for the conduct of all the affairs pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the believers.

This was in harmony with the gospel plan of uniting in one body all believers in Christ, and this plan Paul was careful to follow throughout his ministry. Those who in any place were by his labor led to accept Christ as the Saviour were at the proper time organized into a church. Even when the believers were but few in number, this was done. The Christians were thus taught to help one another, remembering the promise, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." [Matthew 18:20](#).<sup>441</sup>

### Meeting Dissension in the Church

[246] At Jerusalem the delegates from Antioch met the brethren of the various churches, who had gathered for a general meeting, and to them they related the success that had attended their ministry among the Gentiles. They then gave a clear outline of the confusion that had resulted because certain converted Pharisees had gone to Antioch declaring that, in order to be saved, the Gentile converts must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses. This question was warmly discussed in the assembly. The Holy Spirit saw good not to impose the ceremonial law on the Gentile converts, and the mind of the apostles regarding this matter was as the mind of the Spirit of God. James presided at the council, and his final decision was, "Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God." This ended the discussion.

In this instance James seems to have been chosen as the one to announce the decision arrived at by the council. The Gentile converts, however, were to give up the customs that were inconsistent

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<sup>440</sup>The Acts of the Apostles, 91

<sup>441</sup>The Acts of the Apostles, 185, 186

with the principles of Christianity. The apostles and elders therefore agreed to instruct the Gentiles by letter to abstain from meats offered to idols, from fornication, from things strangled, and from blood. They were to be urged to keep the commandments and to lead holy lives. They were also to be assured that the men who had declared circumcision to be binding were not authorized to do so by the apostles.<sup>442</sup>

The council which decided this case was composed of apostles and teachers who had been prominent in raising up the Jewish and Gentile Christian churches, with chosen delegates from various places. Elders from Jerusalem and deputies from Antioch were present, and the most influential churches were represented. The council moved in accordance with the dictates of enlightened judgment, and with the dignity of a church established by the divine will. As a result of their deliberations they all saw that God Himself had answered the question at issue by bestowing upon the Gentiles the Holy Ghost; and they realized that it was their part to follow the guidance of the Spirit.

The entire body of Christians was not called to vote upon the question. The “apostles and elders,” men of influence and judgment, framed and issued the decree, which was thereupon generally accepted by the Christian churches. Not all, however, were pleased with the decision; there was a faction of ambitious and self-confident brethren who disagreed with it. These men assumed to engage in the work on their own responsibility. They indulged in much murmuring and faultfinding, proposing new plans and seeking to pull down the work of the men whom God had ordained to teach the gospel message. From the first the church has had such obstacles to meet and ever will have till the close of time.<sup>443</sup>

### **Danger of Regarding Individual Judgment as Supreme**

Those who are inclined to regard their individual judgment as supreme are in grave peril. It is Satan’s studied effort to separate such ones from those who are channels of light, through whom God has wrought to build up and extend His work in the earth. To neglect

<sup>442</sup>The Acts of the Apostles, 190-195

<sup>443</sup>The Acts of the Apostles, 196, 197

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or despise those whom God has appointed to bear the responsibilities of leadership in connection with the advancement of the truth, is to reject the means that He has ordained for the help, encouragement, and strength of His people. For any worker in the Lord's cause to pass these by, and to think that his light must come through no other channel than directly from God, is to place himself in a position where he is liable to be deceived by the enemy and overthrown.

The Lord in His wisdom has arranged that by means of the close relationship that should be maintained by all believers, Christian shall be united to Christian and church to church. Thus the human instrumentality will be enabled to co-operate with the divine. Every agency will be subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all the believers will be united in an organized and well-directed effort to give to the world the glad tidings of the grace of God.<sup>444</sup>

As all the different members of the human system unite to form the entire body, and each performs its office in obedience to the intelligence that governs the whole, so the members of the church of Christ should be united in one symmetrical body, subject to the sanctified intelligence of the whole.<sup>445</sup>

### Election and Ordination of Local Church Officers

The Apostle Paul writes to Titus: "Set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God." [Titus 1:5-7](#). Lay hands suddenly on no man." [1 Timothy 5:22](#).

In some of our churches the work of organizing and of ordaining elders has been premature; the Bible rule has been disregarded, and consequently grievous trouble has been brought upon the church. There should not be so great haste in electing leaders as to ordain men who are in no way fitted for the responsible work—men who need to be converted, elevated, ennobled, and refined before they can serve the cause of God in any capacity.<sup>446</sup>

<sup>444</sup>The Acts of the Apostles, 164

<sup>445</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:16

<sup>446</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:617, 618



## Church Property

When an interest is aroused in any town or city, that interest should be followed up. The place should be thoroughly worked until a humble house of worship stands as a sign, a memorial of God's Sabbath, a light amid the moral darkness. These memorials are to stand in many places as witnesses to the truth.<sup>447</sup>

Matters pertaining to the church should not be left in an unsettled condition. Steps should be taken to secure church property for the cause of God, that the work may not be retarded in its progress, and that the means which persons wish to dedicate to God's cause may not slip into the enemy's ranks.

I saw that God's people should act wisely, and leave nothing undone on their part to place the business of the church in a secure state. Then after all is done that they can do, they should trust the Lord to overrule these things for them, that Satan take no advantage of God's remnant people. It is Satan's time to work. A stormy future is before us; and the church should be awake to make an advance move that they may stand securely against his plans. It is time that something was done. God is not pleased to have His people leave the matters of the church at loose ends, and suffer the enemy to have the whole advantage and control affairs as best pleases him.<sup>448</sup>

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## Regional Meetings

Put forth extra exertion to attend the gathering of God's people.

Brethren and sisters, it would be far better for you to let your business suffer than to neglect the opportunity of hearing the message God has for you. Make no excuse that will keep you from gaining every spiritual advantage possible. You need every ray of light. You need to become qualified to give a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. You cannot afford to lose one such privilege.

None of us should go to the camp meeting [regional meetings] depending on the ministers or the Bible workers to make the meeting a blessing to us. God does not want His people to hang their weight

<sup>447</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:100

<sup>448</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:210, 211

on the minister. He does not want them to be weakened by depending on human beings for help. They are not to lean, like helpless children, upon someone else as a prop. As a steward of the grace of God, every church member should feel personal responsibility to have life and root in himself.

The success of the meeting depends on the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. For the outpouring of the Spirit every lover of the cause of truth should pray. And as far as lies in our power, we are to remove every hindrance to His working. The Spirit can never be poured out while variance and bitterness toward one another are cherished by the members of the church. Envy, jealousy, evil surmising, and evilspeaking are of Satan, and they effectually bar the way against the Holy Spirit's working.

Nothing else in this world is so dear to God as His church. Nothing is guarded by Him with such jealous care. Nothing so offends God as an act that injures the influence of those who are doing His service. He will call to account all who aid Satan in his work of criticizing and discouraging.<sup>449</sup>

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<sup>449</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:39-42

## **Chapter 45—The House of God**

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To the humble, believing soul, the house of God on earth is the gate of heaven. The song of praise, the prayer, the words spoken by Christ's representatives, are God's appointed agencies to prepare a people for the church above, for that loftier worship into which there can enter nothing that defileth.

The house is the sanctuary for the family, and the closet or the grove the most retired place for individual worship; but the church is the sanctuary for the congregation. There should be rules in regard to the time, the place, and the manner of worshiping. Nothing that is sacred, nothing that pertains to the worship of God, should be treated with carelessness or indifference. In order that men may do their best work in showing forth the praises of God, their associations must be such as will keep the sacred distinct from the common, in their minds. Those who have broad ideas, noble thoughts and aspirations, are those who have associations that strengthen all thoughts of divine things. Happy are those who have a sanctuary, be it high or low, in the city or among the rugged mountain caves, in the lowly cabin or in the wilderness. If it is the best they can secure for the Master, He will hallow the place with His presence, and it will be holy unto the Lord of hosts.

### **Attitude of Prayer in the House of God**

When the worshipers enter the place of meeting, they should do so with decorum, passing quietly to their seats. If there is a stove in the room, it is not proper to crowd about it in an indolent, careless attitude. Common talking, whispering, and laughing should not be permitted in the house of worship, either before or after the service. Ardent, active piety should characterize the worshipers.

If some have to wait a few minutes before the meeting begins, let them maintain a true spirit of devotion by silent meditation, keeping the heart uplifted to God in prayer that the service may be of special

benefit to their own hearts and lead to the conviction and conversion of other souls. They should remember that heavenly messengers are in the house. We all lose much sweet communion with God by our restlessness, by not encouraging moments of reflection and prayer. The spiritual condition needs to be often reviewed and the mind and heart drawn toward the Sun of Righteousness.

[250] If when the people come into the house of worship, they have genuine reverence for the Lord and bear in mind that they are in His presence, there will be a sweet eloquence in silence. The whispering and laughing and talking which might be without sin in a common business place should find no sanction in the house where God is worshiped. The mind should be prepared to hear the word of God, that it may have due weight and suitably impress the heart.

When the minister enters, it should be with dignified, solemn mien. He should bow down in silent prayer as soon as he steps into the pulpit, and earnestly ask help of God. What an impression this will make! There will be solemnity and awe upon the people. Their minister is communing with God; he is committing himself to God before he dares to stand before the people. Solemnity rests upon all, and angels of God are brought very near. Every one of the congregation, also, who fears God should with bowed head unite in silent prayer with him that God may grace the meeting with His presence and give power to His truth proclaimed from human lips.<sup>450</sup>

Meetings for conference and prayer should not be made tedious. If possible, all should be prompt to the hour appointed; and if there are dilatory ones, who are half an hour or even fifteen minutes behind the time, there should be no waiting. If there are but two present, they can claim the promise. The meeting should open at the appointed hour if possible, be there few or many present.<sup>451</sup>

### **Act as if in the Visible Presence of God**

True reverence for God is inspired by a sense of His infinite greatness and a realization of His presence. With this sense of the Unseen, every heart should be deeply impressed. The hour and place of prayer are sacred, because God is there; and as reverence

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<sup>450</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:491-493

<sup>451</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:577, 578

is manifested in attitude and demeanor, the feeling that inspires it will be deepened. “Holy and reverend is His name,” the psalmist declares. [Psalm 111:9](#).<sup>452</sup>

When the meeting is opened by prayer, every knee should bow in the presence of the Holy One, and every heart should ascend to God in silent devotion. The prayers of faithful worshipers will be heard, and the ministry of the word will prove effectual. The lifeless attitude of the worshipers in the house of God is one great reason why the ministry is not more productive of good. The melody of song, poured forth from many hearts in clear, distinct utterance, is one of God’s instrumentalities in the work of saving souls. All the service should be conducted with solemnity and awe, as if in the visible presence of the Master of assemblies.

When the word is spoken, you should remember, brethren, that you are listening to the voice of God through His delegated servant. Listen attentively. Sleep not for one instant, because by this slumber you may lose the very words that you need most—the very words which, if heeded, would save your feet from straying into wrong paths. Satan and his angels are busy creating a paralyzed condition of the senses so that cautions, warnings, and reproofs shall not be heard; or if heard, that they shall not take effect upon the heart and reform the life. Sometimes a little child may so attract the attention of the hearers that the precious seed does not fall into good ground and bring forth fruit. Sometimes young men and women have so little reverence for the house and worship of God that they keep up a continual communication with each other during the sermon. Could these see the angels of God looking upon them and marking their doings, they would be filled with shame, with abhorrence of themselves. God wants attentive hearers. It was while men slept that Satan sowed his tares. [251]

When the benediction is pronounced, all should still be quiet, as if fearful of losing the peace of Christ. Let all pass out without jostling or loud talking, feeling that they are in the presence of God, that His eye is resting upon them, and that they must act as in His visible presence. Let there be no stopping in the aisles to visit or gossip, thus blocking them up so that others cannot pass out. The

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<sup>452</sup>[Gospel Workers, 176-178](#)

precincts of the church should be invested with a sacred reverence. It should not be made a place to meet old friends and visit and introduce common thoughts and worldly business transactions. These should be left outside the church. God and angels have been dishonored by the careless, noisy laughing and shuffling of feet heard in some places.

### **Children to Be Reverent**

Parents, elevate the standard of Christianity in the minds of your children; help them to weave Jesus into their experience; teach them to have the highest reverence for the house of God and to understand that when they enter the Lord's house it should be with hearts that are softened and subdued by such thoughts as these: "God is here; this is His house. I must have pure thoughts and the holiest motives. I must have no pride, envy, jealousy, evil surmising, hatred, or deception in my heart, for I am coming into the presence of the holy God. This is the place where God meets with and blesses His people. The high and holy One who inhabiteth eternity looks upon me, searches my heart, and reads the most secret thoughts and acts of my life."

The delicate and susceptible minds of the youth obtain their estimate of the labors of God's servants by the way their parents treat the matter. Many heads of families make the service a subject of criticism at home, approving a few things and condemning others. Thus the message of God to men is criticized and questioned, and made a subject of levity. What impressions are thus made upon the young by these careless, irreverent remarks the books of heaven alone will reveal. The children see and understand these things very much quicker than parents are apt to think. Their moral senses receive a wrong bias that time will never fully change. The parents mourn over the hardness of heart in their children and the difficulty in arousing their moral sensibility to answer to the claims of God.<sup>453</sup>

[252] Reverence should be shown also for the name of God. Never should that name be spoken lightly or thoughtlessly. Even in prayer its frequent or needless repetition should be avoided. "Holy and reverend is His name." [Psalm 111:9](#). Angels, as they speak it, veil

<sup>453</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:493-497](#)

their faces. With what reverence should we, who are fallen and sinful, take it upon your lips!<sup>454</sup>

I saw that God's holy name should be used with reverence and awe. The words God Almighty are coupled together and used by some in prayer in a careless, thoughtless manner, which is displeasing to Him. Such have no realizing sense of God or the truth, or they would not speak so irreverently of the great and dreadful God, who is soon to judge them in the last day. Said the angel, "Couple them not together; for fearful is His name." Those who realize the greatness and majesty of God, will take His name on their lips with holy awe. He dwelleth in light unapproachable; no man can see Him and live. I saw that these things will have to be understood and corrected before the church can prosper.<sup>455</sup>

We should reverence God's word. For the printed volume we should show respect, never putting it to common uses, or handling it carelessly. And never should Scripture be quoted in a jest, or paraphrased to point a witty saying. "Every word of God is pure;" "as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times." [Proverbs 30:5](#); [Psalm 12:6](#).

Above all, let children be taught that true reverence is shown by obedience. God has commanded nothing that is unessential, and there is no other way of manifesting reverence so pleasing to Him as obedience to that which He has spoken.

Reverence should be shown for God's representatives—for ministers, teachers, and parents who are called to speak and act in His stead. In the respect shown to them He is honored.<sup>456</sup>

Well would it be for old and young to ponder those words of Scripture that show how the place marked by God's special presence should be regarded. "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet," He commanded Moses at the burning bush, "for the place whereon thou staidest is holy ground." [Exodus 3:5](#). Jacob, after beholding the vision of the angels, exclaimed, "The Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.... This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." [Genesis 28:16, 17](#).<sup>457</sup>

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<sup>454</sup>Education, 243

<sup>455</sup>Early Writings, 122

<sup>456</sup>Education, 244

<sup>457</sup>Gospel Workers, 178, 179

By example as well as precept, you must show that you reverence your faith, speaking reverently of sacred things. Never allow one expression of lightness and trifling to escape your lips when quoting Scripture. As you take the Bible in your hands, remember that you are on holy ground. Angels are around you, and could your eyes be opened, you would behold them. Let your conduct be such that you will leave the impression upon every soul with whom you associate that a pure and holy atmosphere surrounds you. One vain word, one trifling laugh, may balance a soul in the wrong direction. Terrible are the consequences of not having a constant connection with God.<sup>458</sup>

### **Dress So That God Is the Subject of Thought**

All should be taught to be neat, clean, and orderly in their dress, but not to indulge in that external adorning which is wholly inappropriate for the sanctuary. There should be no display of the apparel; for this encourages irreverence. The attention of the people is often called to this or that fine article of dress, and thus thoughts are intruded that should have no place in the hearts of the worshipers. God is to be the subject of thought, the object of worship; and anything that attracts the mind from the solemn, sacred service is an offense to Him.

All matters of dress should be strictly guarded, following closely the Bible rule. Fashion has been the goddess who has ruled the outside world, and she often insinuates herself into the church. The church should make the word of God her standard, and parents should think intelligently upon this subject. When they see their children inclined to follow worldly fashions, they should, like Abraham, resolutely command their households after them. Instead of uniting them with the world, connect them with God. Let none dishonor God's sanctuary by their showy apparel. God and angels are there. The Holy One of Israel has spoken through His apostle: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even

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<sup>458</sup>[Fundamentals of Christian Education, 194, 195](#)



the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” [1 Peter 3:3, 4](#).<sup>459</sup>

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<sup>459</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:499, 500](#)

## Chapter 46—Treatment of the Erring

Christ came to bring salvation within the reach of all. Upon the cross of Calvary He paid the infinite redemption price for a lost world. His self-denial and self-sacrifice, His unselfish labor, His humiliation, above all, the offering up of His life, testifies to the depth of His love for fallen man. It was to seek and to save the lost that He came to earth. His mission was to sinners, sinners of every grade, of every tongue and nation. He paid the price for all, to ransom them and bring them into union and sympathy with Himself. The most erring, the most sinful, were not passed by; His labors were especially for those who most needed the salvation He came to bring. The greater their need of reform, the deeper was His interest, the greater His sympathy, and the more earnest His labors. His great heart of love was stirred to its depths for the ones whose condition was most hopeless and who most needed His transforming grace.

But there has been among us as a people a lack of deep, earnest, soul-touching sympathy and love for the tempted and the erring. Many have manifested great coldness and sinful neglect, represented by Christ as passing by on the other side, keeping as far as possible from those who most need help. The newly converted soul often has fierce conflicts with established habits or with some special form of temptation, and, being overcome by some master passion or tendency, he is guilty of indiscretion or actual wrong. It is then that energy, tact, and wisdom are required of his brethren, that he may be restored to spiritual health. In such cases the instructions of God's word apply: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in a spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves." [Romans 15:1](#).<sup>460</sup>

Mild measures, soft answers, and pleasant words are much better fitted to reform and save, than severity and harshness. A little too

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<sup>460</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:603-605](#)

much unkindness may place persons beyond your reach, while a conciliatory spirit would be the means of binding them to you, and you might then establish them in the right way. You should be actuated by a forgiving spirit also, and give due credit to every good purpose and action of those around you.<sup>461</sup>

### “Love One Another as I Have Loved You”

God has done His part of the work for the salvation of men, and now He calls for the co-operation of the church. There are the blood of Christ, the word of truth, the Holy Spirit, on one hand, and there are the perishing souls on the other. Every follower of Christ has a part to act to bring men to accept the blessings heaven has provided. Let us closely examine ourselves and see if we have done this work. Let us question our motives and every action of our lives.

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Are there not many unpleasant pictures hanging in memory's halls? Often have you needed the forgiveness of Jesus. You have been constantly dependent upon His compassion and love. Yet have you not failed to manifest toward others the spirit which Christ has exercised toward you? Have you felt a burden for the one whom you saw venturing into forbidden paths? Have you kindly admonished him? Have you wept for him and prayed with him and for him? Have you shown by words of tenderness and kindly acts that you love him and desire to save him?

As you have associated with those who were faltering and staggering under the load of their own infirmities of disposition and faulty habits, have you left them to fight the battles alone when you might have given them help? Have you not passed these sorely tempted ones by on the other side while the world has stood ready to give them sympathy and to allure them into Satan's nets? Have you not, like Cain, been ready to say: “Am I my brother's keeper?” [Genesis 4:9](#).

How must the great Head of the church regard the work of your life? How does He to whom every soul is precious, as the purchase of His blood, look upon your indifference to those who stray from the right path? Are you not afraid that He will leave you just as you

<sup>461</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 4:65](#)

leave them? Be sure that He who is the true Watchman of the Lord's house has marked every neglect.

It is not yet too late to redeem the neglects of the past. Let there be a revival of the first love, the first ardor. Search out the ones you have driven away, bind up by confession the wounds you have made. Come close to the great Heart of pitying love, and let the current of that divine compassion flow into your heart and from you to the hearts of others. Let the tenderness and mercy that Jesus has revealed in His own precious life be an example to us of the manner in which we should treat our fellow beings, especially those who are our brethren in Christ.

Many have fainted and become discouraged in the great struggle of life, whom one word of kindly cheer and courage would have strengthened to overcome. Never, never become heartless, cold, unsympathetic, and censorious. Never lose an opportunity to say a word to encourage and inspire hope. We cannot tell how far-reaching may be our tender words of kindness, our Christlike efforts to lighten some burden. The erring can be restored in no other way than in the spirit of meekness, gentleness, and tender love.<sup>462</sup>

### **Christ's Methods in Church Discipline**

[256] In dealing with erring church members, God's people are carefully to follow the instruction given by the Saviour in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew.

Human beings are Christ's property, purchased by Him at an infinite price, bound to Him by the love that He and His Father have manifested for them. How careful, then, we should be in our dealing with one another! Men have no right to surmise evil in regard to their fellow men. Church members have no right to follow their own impulses and inclinations in dealing with fellow members who have erred. They should not even express their prejudices regarding the erring, for thus they place in other minds the leaven of evil. Reports unfavorable to a brother or sister in the church are communicated from one to another of the church members. Mistakes are made and injustice is done because of an unwillingness on the part of someone to follow the directions given by the Lord Jesus.

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<sup>462</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:610-613](#)

“If thy brother shall trespass against thee,” Christ declared, “go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone.” [Matthew 18:15](#). Do not tell others of the wrong. One person is told, then another, and still another; and continually the report grows, and the evil increases, till the whole church is made to suffer. Settle the matter “between thee and him alone.” This is God’s plan. “Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbor hath put thee to shame. Debate thy cause with thy neighbor himself; and discover not a secret to another.” [Proverbs 25:8, 9](#). Do not suffer sin upon your brother; but do not expose him, and thus increase the difficulty, making the reproof seem like a revenge. Correct him in the way outlined in the Word of God.

Do not suffer resentment to ripen into malice. Do not allow the wound to fester and break out in poisoned words, which taint the minds of those who hear. Do not allow bitter thoughts to continue to fill your mind and his. Go to your brother, and in humility and sincerity talk with him about the matter.

Whatever the character of the offense, this does not change the plan that God has made for the settlement of misunderstandings and personal injuries. Speaking alone and in the spirit of Christ to the one who is in fault will often remove the difficulty. Go to the erring one, with a heart filled with Christ’s love and sympathy, and seek to adjust the matter. Reason with him calmly and quietly. Let no angry words escape your lips. Speak in a way that will appeal to his better judgment. Remember the words: “He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.” [James 5:20](#).

Take to your brother the remedy that will cure the disease of disaffection. Do your part to help him. For the sake of the peace and unity of the church, feel it a privilege as well as a duty to do this. If he will hear you, you have gained him as a friend.

All heaven is interested in the interview between the one who has been injured and the one who is in error. As the erring one accepts the reproof offered in the love of Christ, and acknowledges his wrong, asking forgiveness from God and from his brother, the sunshine of heaven fills his heart. The controversy is ended; friendship and confidence are restored. The oil of love removes the soreness caused

by the wrong. The Spirit of God binds heart to heart, and there is music in heaven over the union brought about.

As those thus united in Christian fellowship offer prayer to God and pledge themselves to deal justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God, great blessing comes to them. If they have wronged others they continue the work of repentance, confession, and restitution, fully set to do good to one another. This is the fulfilling of the law of Christ.

“But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.” [Matthew 18:16](#). Take with you those who are spiritually minded, and talk with the one in error in regard to the wrong. He may yield to the united appeals of his brethren. As he sees their agreement in the matter, his mind may be enlightened.

“And if he shall neglect to hear them,” what then shall be done? Shall a few persons in a board meeting take upon themselves the responsibility of disfellowshipping the erring one? “If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church.” [Verse 17](#). Let the church take action in regard to its members.

“But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” [Verse 17](#). If he will not heed the voice of the church, if he refuses all the efforts made to reclaim him, upon the church rests the responsibility of separating him from fellowship. His name should then be stricken from the books.<sup>463</sup>

### **Church’s Duty to Those Who Refuse Its Counsel**

No church officer should advise, no committee should recommend, nor should any church vote, that the name of a wrongdoer shall be removed from the church books, until the instruction given by Christ has been faithfully followed. When this instruction has been followed, the church has cleared herself before God. The evil must then be made to appear as it is, and must be removed, that it may not become more and more widespread. The health and purity of the church must be preserved, that she may stand before God unsullied, clad in the robes of Christ’s righteousness.

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<sup>463</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 7:260-262](#)

If the erring one repents and submits to Christ's discipline, he is to be given another trial. And even if he does not repent, even if he stands outside the church, God's servants still have a work to do for him. They are to seek earnestly to win him to repentance. And, however aggravated may have been his offense, if he yields to the striving of the Holy Spirit and, by confessing and forsaking his sin, gives evidence of repentance, he is to be forgiven and welcomed to the fold again. His brethren are to encourage him in the right way, treating him as they would wish to be treated were they in his place, considering themselves lest they also be tempted.

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“Verily I say unto you,” Christ continued, “whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” [Verse 18](#).

This statement holds its force in all ages. On the church has been conferred the power to act in Christ's stead. It is God's instrumentality for the preservation of order and discipline among His people. To it the Lord has delegated the power to settle all questions respecting its prosperity, purity, and order. Upon it rests the responsibility of excluding from its fellowship those who are unworthy, who by their un-Christlike conduct would bring dishonor on the truth. Whatever the church does that is in accordance with the directions given in God's word will be ratified in heaven.

Matters of grave import come up for settlement by the church. God's ministers, ordained by Him as guides of His people, after doing their part are to submit the whole matter to the church, that there may be unity in the decision made.

The Lord desires His followers to exercise great care in dealing with one another. They are to lift up, to restore, to heal. But there is to be in the church no neglect of proper discipline. The members are to regard themselves as pupils in a school, learning how to form characters worthy of their high calling. In the church here below, God's children are to be prepared for the great reunion in the church above. Those who here live in harmony with Christ may look forward to an endless life in the family of the redeemed.<sup>464</sup>

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<sup>464</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 7:262-264](#)

### To Whom Should Confession Be Made?

All who endeavor to excuse or conceal their sins, and permit them to remain upon the books of heaven, unconfessed and unforgiven, will be overcome by Satan. The more exalted their profession and the more honorable the position which they hold, the more grievous is their course in the sight of God and the more sure the triumph of their great adversary. Those who delay a preparation for the day of God cannot obtain it in the time of trouble or at any subsequent time. The case of all such is hopeless.<sup>465</sup>

[259] It is not required of you to confess to those who know not your sin and errors. It is not your duty to publish a confession which will lead unbelievers to triumph; but to those to whom it is proper, who will take no advantage of your wrong, confess according to the word of God, and let them pray for you, and God will accept your work, and will heal you. For your soul's sake, be entreated to make thorough work for eternity. Lay aside your pride, your vanity, and make straight work. Come back again to the fold. The Shepherd is waiting to receive you. Repent, and do your first works, and again come into favor with God.<sup>466</sup>

Christ is your Redeemer; He will take no advantage of your humiliating confessions. If you have sin of a private character, confess it to Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and man. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." [1 John 2:1](#). If you have sinned by withholding from God His own in tithes and offerings, confess your guilt to God and to the church, and heed the injunction that He has given you: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse." [Malachi 3:10](#).<sup>467</sup>

The people of God must move understandingly. They should not be satisfied until every known sin is confessed; then it is their privilege and duty to believe that Jesus accepts them. They must not wait for others to press through the darkness and obtain the victory for them to enjoy. Such enjoyment will last only till the meeting closes. But God must be served from principle instead of from feeling. Morning and night obtain the victory for yourselves

<sup>465</sup>The Great Controversy, 620

<sup>466</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:296

<sup>467</sup>Counsels on Health, 374



in your own family. Let not your daily labor keep you from this. Take time to pray, and as you pray, believe that God hears you. Have faith mixed with your prayers. You may not at all times feel the immediate answer; but then it is that faith is tried.<sup>468</sup>

### Christ Only Can Judge Man

Christ humbled Himself to stand at the head of humanity, to meet the temptations and endure the trials that humanity must meet and endure. He must know what humanity has to meet from the fallen foe, that He might know how to succor those who are tempted.

And Christ has been made our Judge. The Father is not the Judge. The angels are not. He who took humanity upon Himself, and in this world lived a perfect life, is to judge us. He only can be our Judge. Will you remember this, brethren? Will you remember it, ministers? Will you remember it, fathers and mothers? Christ took humanity that He might be our Judge. No one of you has been appointed to be a judge of others. It is all that you can do to discipline yourselves. In the name of Christ I entreat you to heed the injunction that He gives you never to place yourselves on the judgment seat. From day to day this message has been sounded in my ears: "Come down from the judgment seat. Come down in humility."<sup>469</sup>

God does not regard all sins as of equal magnitude; there are degrees of guilt in His estimation as well as in that of finite man. But however trifling this or that wrong in their course may seem in the eyes of men, no sin is small in the sight of God. The sins which man is disposed to look upon as small may be the very ones which God accounts as great crimes. The drunkard is despised and is told that his sin will exclude him from heaven, while pride, selfishness, and covetousness go unrebuked. But these are sins that are especially offensive to God. He "resisteth the proud," and Paul [260] tells us that covetousness is idolatry. Those who are familiar with the denunciations against idolatry in the word of God will at once see how grave an offense this sin is.<sup>470</sup>

<sup>468</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:167

<sup>469</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:185, 186

<sup>470</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:337

## Chapter 47—The Observance of God’s Holy Sabbath

Great blessings are enfolded in the observance of the Sabbath, and God desires that the Sabbath day shall be to us a day of joy. There was joy at the institution of the Sabbath. God looked with satisfaction upon the work of His hands. All things that He had made He pronounced “very good.” [Genesis 1:31](#). Heaven and earth were filled with rejoicing. “The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” [Job 38:7](#). Though sin has entered the world to mar His perfect work, God still gives to us the Sabbath as a witness that One omnipotent, infinite in goodness and mercy, created all things. Our heavenly Father desires through the observance of the Sabbath to preserve among men a knowledge of Himself. He desires that the Sabbath shall direct our minds to Him as the true and living God, and that through knowing Him we may have life and peace.

When the Lord delivered His people Israel from Egypt and committed to them His law, He taught them that by the observance of the Sabbath they were to be distinguished from idolaters. It was this that made the distinction between those who acknowledge the sovereignty of God and those who refuse to accept Him as their Creator and King. “It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever,” the Lord said. “Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.” [Exodus 31:17, 16](#).

As the Sabbath was the sign that distinguished Israel when they came out of Egypt to enter the earthly Canaan, so it is the sign that now distinguishes God’s people as they come out from the world to enter the heavenly rest. The Sabbath is a sign of the relationship existing between God and His people, a sign that they honor His law. It distinguishes between His loyal subjects and transgressors.

From the pillar of cloud Christ declared concerning the Sabbath: “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.” [Exodus 31:13](#). The Sabbath given to the world as the sign of God as the Creator is also the sign of Him as the Sanctifier. The power that created all things is the power that re-creates the soul in His own likeness. To those who keep holy the Sabbath day it is the sign of sanctification. True sanctification is harmony with God, oneness with Him in character. It is received through obedience to those principles that are the transcript of His character. And the Sabbath is the sign of obedience. He who from the heart obeys the fourth commandment will obey the whole law. He is sanctified through obedience. [262]

To us as to Israel the Sabbath is given “for a perpetual covenant.” To those who reverence His holy day the Sabbath is a sign that God recognizes them as His chosen people. It is a pledge that He will fulfill to them His covenant. Every soul who accepts the sign of God’s government places himself under the divine, everlasting covenant. He fastens himself to the golden chain of obedience, every link of which is a promise.<sup>471</sup>

### **Remember the Sabbath Day**

At the very beginning of the fourth commandment the Lord said: “Remember.” He knew that amid the multitude of cares and perplexities man would be tempted to excuse himself from meeting the full requirement of the law, or would forget its sacred importance. Therefore He said: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.” [Exodus 20:8](#).

All through the week we are to have the Sabbath in mind and be making preparation to keep it according to the commandment. We are not merely to observe the Sabbath as a legal matter. We are to understand its spiritual bearing upon all the transactions of life. All who regard the Sabbath as a sign between them and God, showing that He is the God who sanctifies them, will represent the principles of His government. They will bring into daily practice the laws of His kingdom. Daily it will be their prayer that the sanctification of the Sabbath may rest upon them. Every day they will have the companionship of Christ and will exemplify the perfection of His

<sup>471</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:349, 350](#)

character. Every day their light will shine forth to others in good works.

In all that pertains to the success of God's work, the very first victories are to be won in the home life. Here the preparation for the Sabbath must begin. Throughout the week let parents remember that their home is to be a school in which their children shall be prepared for the courts above. Let their words be right words. No words which their children should not hear are to escape their lips. Let the spirit be kept free from irritation. Parents, during the week live as in the sight of a holy God, who has given you children to train for Him. Train for Him the little church in your home, that on the Sabbath all may be prepared to worship in the Lord's sanctuary. Each morning and evening present your children to God as His blood-bought heritage. Teach them that it is their highest duty and privilege to love and serve God.

[263] When the Sabbath is thus remembered, the temporal will not be allowed to encroach upon the spiritual. No duty pertaining to the six working days will be left for the Sabbath. During the week our energies will not be so exhausted in temporal labor that on the day when the Lord rested and was refreshed we shall be too weary to engage in His service. While preparation for the Sabbath is to be made all through the week, Friday is to be the special preparation day. Through Moses the Lord said to the children of Israel: "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." "And the people went about, and gathered it [the manna], and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar, and baked it in pans, and made cakes of it." [Exodus 16:23](#); [Numbers 11:8](#). There was something to be done in preparing the heaven-sent bread for the children of Israel. The Lord told them that this work must be done on Friday, the preparation day.

On Friday let the preparation for the Sabbath be completed. See that all the clothing is in readiness and that all the cooking is done. Let the boots be blacked and the baths be taken. It is possible to do this. If you make it a rule you can do it. The Sabbath is not to be given to the repairing of garments, to the cooking of food, to pleasure seeking, or to any other worldly employment. Before the

setting of the sun let all secular work be laid aside and all secular papers be put out of sight. Parents, explain your work and its purpose to your children, and let them share in your preparation to keep the Sabbath according to the commandment.

We should jealously guard the edges of the Sabbath. Remember that every moment is consecrated, holy time. Whenever it is possible, employers should give their workers the hours from Friday noon until the beginning of the Sabbath. Give them time for preparation, that they may welcome the Lord's day with quietness of mind. By such a course you will suffer no loss even in temporal things.

There is another work that should receive attention on the preparation day. On this day all differences between brethren, whether in the family or in the church, should be put away. Let all bitterness and wrath and malice be expelled from the soul. In a humble spirit, "confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." [James 5:16](#).<sup>472</sup>

Nothing which will in the sight of Heaven be regarded as a violation of the holy Sabbath should be left unsaid or undone, to be said or done upon the Sabbath. God requires not only that we refrain from physical labor upon the Sabbath, but that the mind be disciplined to dwell upon sacred themes. The fourth commandment is virtually transgressed by conversing upon worldly things or by engaging in light and trifling conversation. Talking upon anything or everything which may come into the mind is speaking our own words. Every deviation from right brings us into bondage and condemnation.<sup>473</sup>

### Sundown Worship

Far more sacredness is attached to the Sabbath than is given it by many professed Sabbathkeepers. The Lord has been greatly dishonored by those who have not kept the Sabbath according to the commandment, either in the letter or in the spirit. He calls for a reform in the observance of the Sabbath.

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Before the setting of the sun let the members of the family assemble to read God's word, to sing and pray. There is need of reform here, for many have been remiss. We need to confess to

<sup>472</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:353-356](#)

<sup>473</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 2:703](#)

God and to one another. We should begin anew to make special arrangements that every member of the family may be prepared to honor the day which God has blessed and sanctified.

At family worship let the children take a part. Let all bring their Bibles and each read a verse or two. Then let some familiar hymn be sung, followed by prayer. For this, Christ has given a model. The Lord's Prayer was not intended to be repeated merely as a form, but it is an illustration of what our prayers should be—simple, earnest, and comprehensive. In a simple petition tell the Lord your needs and express gratitude for His mercies. Thus you invite Jesus as a welcome guest into your home and heart. In the family long prayers concerning remote objects are not in place. They make the hour of prayer a weariness, when it should be regarded as a privilege and blessing. Make the season one of interest and joy.

As the sun goes down [at the close of the Sabbath], let the voice of prayer and the hymn of praise mark the close of the sacred hours and invite God's presence through the cares of the week of labor.

It means eternal salvation to keep the Sabbath holy unto the Lord. God says: "Them that honor Me I will honor." [1 Samuel 2:30](#).<sup>474</sup>

### **The Family's Most Sacred Hours**

The Sabbath school and the meeting for worship occupy only a part of the Sabbath. The portion remaining to the family may be made the most sacred and precious season of all the Sabbath hours. Much of this time parents should spend with their children. In many families the younger children are left to themselves to find entertainment as best they can. Left alone, the children soon become restless and begin to play or engage in some kind of mischief. Thus the Sabbath has to them no sacred significance.

In pleasant weather let parents walk with their children in the fields and groves. Amid the beautiful things of nature tell them the reason for the institution of the Sabbath. Describe to them God's great work of creation. Tell them that when the earth came from His hand, it was holy and beautiful. Every flower, every shrub, every tree, answered the purpose of its Creator. Everything upon which the eye rested was lovely and filled the mind with thoughts of the

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<sup>474</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:353-359](#)

love of God. Every sound was music in harmony with the voice of God. Show that it was sin which marred God's perfect work; that thorns and thistles, sorrow and pain and death, are all the result of disobedience to God. Bid them see how the earth, though marred with the curse of sin, still reveals God's goodness. The green fields, the lofty trees, the glad sunshine, the clouds, the dew, the solemn stillness of the night, the glory of the starry heavens, and the moon in its beauty all bear witness of the Creator. Not a drop of rain falls, not a ray of light is shed on our unthankful world, but it testifies to the forbearance and love of God.

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Tell them of the way of salvation; how "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." [John 3:16](#). Let the sweet story of Bethlehem be repeated. Present before the children Jesus, as a child obedient to His parents, as a youth faithful and industrious, helping to support the family. Thus you can teach them that the Saviour knows the trials, perplexities, and temptations, the hopes and joys, of the young, and that He can give them sympathy and help. From time to time read with them the interesting stories in Bible history. Question as to what they have learned in the Sabbath school, and study with them the next Sabbath's lesson.<sup>475</sup>

Upon the Sabbath there should be a solemn dedication of the family to God. The commandment includes all within our gates; all the inmates of the house are to lay aside their worldly business, and employ the sacred hours in devotion. Let all unite to honor God by cheerful service upon his holy day.<sup>476</sup>

### **“O Come Let Us Worship the Lord”**

Christ has said: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." [Matthew 18:20](#). Wherever there are as many as two or three believers, let them meet together on the Sabbath to claim the Lord's promise.

The little companies assembled to worship God on His holy day have a right to claim the rich blessing of Jehovah. They should believe that the Lord Jesus is an honored guest in their assemblies.

<sup>475</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:358, 359](#)

<sup>476</sup>[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 218](#)

Every true worshiper who keeps holy the Sabbath should claim the promise: “That ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you.” [Exodus 31:13](#).<sup>477</sup>

The Sabbath was made for man, to be a blessing to him by calling his mind from secular labor to contemplate the goodness and glory of God. It is necessary that the people of God assemble to talk of Him, to interchange thoughts and ideas in regard to the truths contained in His word, and to devote a portion of time to appropriate prayer. But these seasons, even upon the Sabbath, should not be made tedious by their length and lack of interest.<sup>478</sup>

When the church is without a minister, someone should be appointed as leader of the meeting. But it is not necessary for him to preach a sermon or to occupy a large part of the time of service. A short, interesting Bible reading will often be of greater benefit than a sermon. And this can be followed by a meeting for prayer and testimony.

[266] Everyone should feel that he has a part to act in making the Sabbath meetings interesting. You are not to come together simply as a matter of form, but for the interchange of thought, for the relation of your daily experiences, for the expression of thanksgiving, for the utterance of your sincere desire for divine enlightenment, that you may know God, and Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. Communing together in regard to Christ will strengthen the soul for life’s trials and conflicts. Never think that you can be Christians and yet withdraw yourselves within yourselves. Each one is a part of the great web of humanity, and the experience of each will be largely determined by the experience of his associates.<sup>479</sup>

### The Sabbath School

The object of Sabbath school work should be the ingathering of souls. The order of working may be faultless, the facilities all that could be desired; but if the children and youth are not brought to Christ, the school is a failure; for unless souls are drawn to Christ, they become more and more unimpressionable under the influence

<sup>477</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:360, 361](#)

<sup>478</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 2:583](#)

<sup>479</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:361, 362](#)



of a formal religion. The teacher should cooperate, as he knocks at the door of the heart of those who need help. If pupils respond to the pleading of the Spirit, and open the door of the heart, that Jesus may come in, He will open their understanding, that they may comprehend the things of God. The teacher's work is simple work, but if it is done in the Spirit of Jesus, depth and efficiency will be added to it by the operation of the Spirit of God.

Parents, set apart a little time each day for the study of the Sabbath school lesson with your children. Give up the social visit if need be, rather than sacrifice the hour devoted to the precious lessons of sacred history. Parents, as well as children, will receive benefit from this study. Let the more important passages of Scripture connected with the lesson be committed to memory, not as a task, but as a privilege. Though at first the memory may be defective, it will gain strength by exercise, so that after a time you will delight thus to treasure up the precious words of truth. And the habit will prove a most valuable aid to religious growth....

Observe system in the study of the Scriptures in your families. Neglect anything of a temporal nature; dispense with all unnecessary sewing and with needless provision for the table, but be sure that the soul is fed with the bread of life. It is impossible to estimate the good results of one hour or even half an hour each day devoted in a cheerful, social manner to the word of God. Make the Bible its own expositor, bringing together all that is said concerning a given subject at different times and under varied circumstances. Do not break up your home class for callers or visitors. If they come in during the exercise, invite them to take part in it. Let it be seen that you consider it more important to obtain a knowledge of God's word than to secure the gains or pleasures of the world. In some [Sabbath] schools, I am sorry to say, the custom prevails of reading the lesson from the lesson sheet. This should not be. It need not be, if the time that is often needlessly and even sinfully employed, were given to the study of the Scriptures. There is no reason why Sabbath school lessons should be less perfectly learned by teachers or pupils than are the lessons of the day school. They should be better learned, as they treat of subjects infinitely more important. A neglect here is displeasing to God.

Those who teach in Sabbath school must have their hearts warmed and invigorated by the truth of God, being not hearers only, but also doers of the Word. They should be nourished in Christ as the branches are nourished in the vine. The dews of heavenly grace should fall upon them, that their hearts may be like precious plants, whose buds open and expand and give forth a grateful fragrance, as flowers in the garden of God. Teachers should be diligent students of the word of God, and ever reveal the fact that they are learning daily lessons in the school of Christ, and are able to communicate to others the light they have received from Him who is the Great Teacher, the Light of the world. In selecting officers from time to time, be sure that personal preferences do not rule, but place in positions of trust those whom you are convinced love and fear God, and who will make God their counselor.<sup>480</sup>

### **“It Is Lawful to Do Good on the Sabbath”**

Both in the home and in the church a spirit of service is to be manifested. He who gave us six days for our temporal work has blessed and sanctified the seventh day and set it apart for Himself. On this day He will in a special manner bless all who consecrate themselves to His service.

All heaven is keeping the Sabbath, but not in a listless, do-nothing way. On this day every energy of the soul should be awake, for are we not to meet with God and with Christ our Saviour? We may behold Him by faith. He is longing to refresh and bless every soul.<sup>481</sup>

Divine mercy has directed that the sick and suffering should 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 till 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

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<sup>480</sup>Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 61, 41-43

<sup>481</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:361, 362

the commencement of holy time should remain undone until the Sabbath is past.<sup>482</sup>

While cooking upon the Sabbath should be avoided, it is not necessary to eat cold food. In cold weather let the food prepared the day before be heated. And let the meals, though simple, be palatable and attractive. Provide something that will be regarded as a treat, something the family do not have every day.

If we desire the blessing promised to the obedient, we must observe the Sabbath more strictly. I fear that we often travel on this day when it might be avoided. In harmony with the light which the Lord has given in regard to the observance of the Sabbath, we should be more careful about traveling on the boats or cars on this day. In these matters we should set a right example before our children and youth. In order to reach the churches that need our help, and to give them the message that God desires them to hear, it may be necessary for us to travel on the Sabbath; but so far as possible we should secure our tickets and make all necessary arrangements on some other day. When starting on a journey we should make every possible effort to plan so as to avoid reaching our destination on the Sabbath.

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When compelled to travel on the Sabbath we should try to avoid the company of those who would draw our attention to worldly things. We should keep our minds stayed upon God and commune with Him. Whenever there is opportunity we should speak to others in regard to the truth. We should always be ready to relieve suffering and to help those in need. In such cases God desires that the knowledge and wisdom He has given us should be put to use. But we should not talk about matters of business or engage in any common, worldly conversation. At all times and in all places God requires us to prove our loyalty to Him by honoring the Sabbath.<sup>483</sup>

### **Attending School on Sabbath**

Whoever obeys the fourth commandment will find that a separating line is drawn between him and the world. The Sabbath is

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<sup>482</sup>Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 217, 218

<sup>483</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:357-360

a test, not a human requirement, but God's test. It is that which will distinguish between those who serve God and those who serve him not; and upon this point will come the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error.

Some of our people have sent their children to school on the Sabbath. They were not compelled to do this, but the school authorities objected to receiving the children unless they should attend six days. In some of these schools, pupils are not only instructed in the usual branches of study, but are taught to do various kinds of work; and here the children of professed commandment-keepers have been sent upon the Sabbath. Some parents have tried to justify their course by quoting the words of Christ, that it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath day. But the same reasoning would prove that men may labor on the Sabbath because they must earn bread for their children; and there is no limit, no boundary line, to show what should and what should not be done.

Our brethren cannot expect the approval of God while they place their children where it is impossible for them to obey the fourth commandment. They should endeavor to make some arrangement with the authorities whereby the children shall be excused from attendance at school upon the seventh day. If this fails, then their duty is plain, to obey God's requirements at whatever cost.

[269] Some will urge that the Lord is not so particular in his requirements; that it is not their duty to keep the Sabbath strictly at so great loss, or to place themselves where they will be brought in conflict with the laws of the land. But here is just where the test is coming, whether we will honor the law of God above the requirements of men. This is what will distinguish between those who honor God and those who dishonor him. Here is where we are to prove our loyalty. The history of God's dealings with his people in all ages shows that he demands exact obedience.

If parents allow their children to receive an education with the world, and make the Sabbath a common day, then the seal of God cannot be placed upon them. They will be destroyed with the world; and will not their blood rest upon the parents? But if we faithfully teach our children God's commandments, bring them into subjection to parental authority, and then by faith and prayer commit them to God, he will work with our efforts; for he has promised it. And

when the overflowing scourge shall pass through the land, they with us may be hidden in the secret of the Lord's pavilion.<sup>484</sup>

### **A Day of Rest From Worldly Pursuits**

It is the grossest presumption for mortal man to venture upon a compromise with the Almighty in order to secure his own petty, temporal interests. It is as ruthless a violation of the law to occasionally use the Sabbath for secular business as to entirely reject it; for it is making the Lord's commandments a matter of convenience. "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God," is thundered from Sinai. 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. It is not a small matter to rob a neighbor, and great is the stigma attached to one who is found guilty of such an act; yet he who would scorn to defraud his fellow man will without shame rob his heavenly Father of the time that He has blessed and set apart for a special purpose.<sup>485</sup>

The words and thoughts should be guarded. Those who discuss business matters and lay plans on the Sabbath, are regarded of God as though they engaged in the actual transaction of business. To keep the Sabbath holy, we should not even allow our minds to dwell upon things of a worldly character.<sup>486</sup>

God has spoken, and He means that man shall obey. He does not inquire if it is convenient for him to do so. The Lord of life and 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. Man is to leave the error of his ways, to follow the example of Christ, to take up his cross and follow Him, denying self, and obeying God at any cost.

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<sup>484</sup>Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 215-217

<sup>485</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:249, 250

<sup>486</sup>Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 218

Circumstances will not justify anyone in working upon the Sabbath for the sake of worldly profit. If God excuses one man, He may excuse all. Why may not Brother L, who is a poor man, work upon the Sabbath to earn means for a livelihood when he might by so doing be better able to support his family? Why may not other brethren, or all of us, keep the Sabbath only when it is convenient to do so? The voice from Sinai makes answer: "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." [Exodus 20:9, 10](#).

Your age does not excuse you from obeying the divine commands. Abraham was sorely tested in his old age. The words of the Lord seemed terrible and uncalled-for to the stricken old man, yet he never questioned their justice or hesitated in his obedience. He might have pleaded that he was old and feeble, and could not sacrifice the son who was the joy of his life. He might have reminded the Lord that this command conflicted with the promises that had been given in regard to this son. But the obedience of Abraham was without a murmur or a reproach. His trust in God was implicit.<sup>487</sup>

Ministers of Jesus should stand as reprovers to those who fail to remember the Sabbath to keep it holy. They should kindly and solemnly reprove those who engage in worldly conversation upon the Sabbath and at the same time claim to be Sabbathkeepers. They should encourage devotion to God upon His holy day.

None should feel at liberty to spend sanctified time in an unprofitable manner. It is displeasing to God for Sabbathkeepers to sleep during much of the Sabbath. They dishonor their Creator in so doing, and, by their example, say that the six days are too precious for them to spend in resting. They must make money, although it be by robbing themselves of needed sleep, which they make up by sleeping away holy time. They then excuse themselves by saying: "The Sabbath was given for a day of rest. I will not deprive myself of rest to attend meeting, for I need rest." Such make a wrong use of the sanctified day. They should, upon that day especially, interest their families in its observance and assemble at the house of prayer with the few or with the many, as the case may be. They should devote their time and energies to spiritual exercises, that the divine influence

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<sup>487</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 4:250-253](#)

resting upon the Sabbath may attend them through the week. Of all the days in the week, none are so favorable for devotional thoughts and feelings as the Sabbath.<sup>488</sup>

Had the Sabbath always been sacredly observed, there could never have been an atheist or an idolater. The Sabbath institution, which originated in Eden, is as old as the world itself. It was observed by all the patriarchs, from creation down. During the bondage in Egypt, the Israelites were forced by their taskmasters to violate the Sabbath, and to a great extent they lost the knowledge of its sacredness. When the law was proclaimed at Sinai the very first words of the fourth commandment were, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy”—showing that the Sabbath was not then instituted; we are pointed back for its origin to creation. In order to obliterate God from the minds of men, Satan aimed to tear down this great memorial. If men could be led to forget their Creator, they would make no effort to resist the power of evil, and Satan would be sure of his prey.<sup>489</sup>

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### The Blessings of Sabbath Observance

All heaven was represented to me as beholding and watching upon the Sabbath those who acknowledge the claims of the fourth commandment and are observing the Sabbath. Angels were marking their interest in, and high regard for, this divine institution. Those who sanctified the Lord God in their hearts by a strictly devotional frame of mind, and who sought to improve the sacred hours in keeping the Sabbath to the best of their ability, and to honor God by calling the Sabbath a delight—these the angels were specially blessing with light and health, and special strength was given them.<sup>490</sup>

Strict compliance with the requirements of Heaven brings temporal as well as spiritual blessings.<sup>491</sup>

“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.” “The sons of the stranger,

<sup>488</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:704

<sup>489</sup>Patriarchs and Prophets, 336

<sup>490</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:704, 705

<sup>491</sup>Prophets and Kings, 546

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.” [Isaiah 56:1, 2, 6, 7](#).<sup>492</sup>

So long as the heavens and the earth endure, the Sabbath will continue as a sign of the Creator’s power. And when Eden shall bloom on earth again, God’s holy rest day will be honored by all beneath the sun. “From one Sabbath to another” the inhabitants of the glorified new earth shall go up “to worship before Me, saith the Lord.” [Matthew 5:18](#); [Isaiah 66:23](#).<sup>493</sup>

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<sup>492</sup>The Great Controversy, 451

<sup>493</sup>The Desire of Ages, 283



## Chapter 48—Counsels on Stewardship

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The spirit of liberality is the spirit of heaven. Christ's self-sacrificing love is revealed upon the cross. That man might be saved, He gave all that He had and then gave Himself. The cross of Christ appeals to the benevolence of every follower of the blessed Saviour. The principle there illustrated is to give, give. This, carried out in actual benevolence and good works, is the true fruit of the Christian life. The principle of worldlings is to get, get, and thus they expect to secure happiness; but carried out in all its bearings, the fruit is misery and death.

The light of the gospel shining from the cross of Christ rebukes selfishness and encourages liberality and benevolence. It should not be a lamented fact that there are increasing calls to give. God in His providence is calling His people out from their limited sphere of action, to enter upon greater enterprises. Unlimited effort is demanded at this time when moral darkness is covering the world. Many of God's people are in danger of being ensnared by worldliness and covetousness. They should understand that it is His mercy that multiplies the demands for their means. Objects that call benevolence into action must be placed before them, or they cannot pattern after the character of the great Exemplar.

In commissioning His disciples to go "into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," Christ assigned to men the work of extending the knowledge of His grace. But while some go forth to preach, He calls upon others to answer His claims upon them for offerings with which to support His cause in the earth. He has placed means in the hands of men, that His divine gifts may flow through human channels in doing the work appointed us in saving our fellow men. This is one of God's ways of exalting man. It is just the work that man needs, for it will stir the deepest sympathies of his heart and call into exercise the highest capabilities of the mind.<sup>494</sup>

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<sup>494</sup>9T 254, 255

Rightly directed benevolence draws upon the mental and moral energies of men, and excites them to most healthful action in blessing the needy and in advancing the cause of God.<sup>495</sup>

Every opportunity to help a brother in need, or to aid the cause of God in the spread of the truth, is a pearl that you can send beforehand and deposit in the bank of heaven for safekeeping.<sup>496</sup>

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### “Of Every Man That Giveth It Willingly”

The only means which God has ordained to advance His cause is to bless men with property. He gives them the sunshine and the rain; He causes vegetation to flourish; He gives health and ability to acquire means. All our blessings come from His bountiful hand. In turn He would have men and women show their gratitude by returning Him a portion in tithes and offerings—in thank offerings, in freewill offerings, in trespass offerings.<sup>497</sup>

The liberality of the Jews in the construction of the tabernacle and the erection of the temple illustrates a spirit of benevolence which has not been equaled by Christians of any later date. They had just been freed from their long bondage in Egypt and were wanderers in the wilderness; yet scarcely were they delivered from the armies of the Egyptians who pursued them in their hasty journey, when the word of the Lord came to Moses, saying: “Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take My offering.” [Exodus 25:2](#).

His people had small possessions and no flattering prospect of adding to them; but an object was before them—to build a tabernacle for God. The Lord had spoken, and they must obey His voice. They withheld nothing. All gave with a willing hand, not a certain amount of their increase, but a large portion of their actual possessions. They devoted it gladly and heartily to the Lord, and pleased Him by so doing. Was it not all His? Had He not given them all they possessed? If He called for it, was it not their duty to give back to the Lender His own?

<sup>495</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 3:401](#)

<sup>496</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 3:249](#)

<sup>497</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:150](#)

No urging was needed. The people brought even more than was required, and were told to desist, for there was already more than could be appropriated. Again, in building the temple, the call for means met with a hearty response. The people did not give reluctantly. They rejoiced in the prospect of a building being erected for the worship of God, and donated more than enough for the purpose.

Can Christians, who boast of a broader light than had the Hebrews, give less than they? Can Christians living near the close of time be satisfied with their offerings when not half so large as were those of the Jews?<sup>498</sup>

The Lord has made the diffusion of light and truth in the earth dependent on the voluntary efforts and offerings of those who have been partakers of the heavenly gifts. Comparatively few are called to travel as ministers or missionaries, but multitudes are to co-operate in spreading the truth with their means

Well, says one, the calls keep coming to give to the cause; I am weary of giving. Are you? Then let me ask: Are you weary of receiving from God's beneficent hand? Not until He ceases to bless you will you cease to be under bonds to return to Him the portion He claims. He blesses you that it may be in your power to bless others. When you are weary of receiving, then you may say: I am weary of so many calls to give. God reserves to Himself a portion of all that we receive. When this is returned to Him, the remaining portion is blessed, but when it is withheld, the whole is sooner or later cursed. God's claim is first; every other is secondary.<sup>499</sup>

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### **Tithing Is Ordained by God**

Voluntary offerings and the tithe constitute the revenue of the gospel. Of the means which is entrusted to man, God claims a certain portion—a tithe.<sup>500</sup>

All should remember that God's claims upon us underlie every other claim. He gives to us bountifully, and the contract which He has made with man is that a tenth of his possessions shall be returned

<sup>498</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:77-79

<sup>499</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:148, 150

<sup>500</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:149

to God. The Lord graciously entrusts to His stewards His treasures, but of the tenth He says: This is Mine. Just in proportion as God has given His property to man, so man is to return to God a faithful tithe of all his substance. This distinct arrangement was made by Jesus Christ Himself.<sup>501</sup>

The truth for this time must be carried into the dark corners of the earth, and this work may begin at home. The followers of Christ should not live selfish lives; but, imbued with the Spirit of Christ, they should work in harmony with Him.<sup>502</sup>

The great work which Jesus announced that He came to do was entrusted to His followers upon the earth. He has given His people a plan for raising sums sufficient to make the enterprise self-sustaining. God's plan in the tithing system is beautiful in its simplicity and equality. All may take hold of it in faith and courage, for it is divine in its origin. In it are combined simplicity and utility, and it does not require depth of learning to understand and execute it. All may feel that they can act a part in carrying forward the precious work of salvation. Every man, woman, and youth may become a treasurer for the Lord and may be an agent to meet the demands upon the treasury. Says the apostle: "Let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." [1 Corinthians 16:2](#).

Great objects are accomplished by this system. If one and all would accept it, each would be made a vigilant and faithful treasurer for God, and there would be no want of means with which to carry forward the great work of sounding the last message of warning to the world. The treasury will be full if all adopt this system, and the contributors will not be left the poorer. Through every investment made they will become more wedded to the cause of present truth. They will be "laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." [1 Timothy 6:19](#).

As the persevering, systematic workers see that the tendency of their benevolent efforts is to nourish love to God and their fellow men, and that their personal efforts are extending their sphere of usefulness, they will realize that it is a great blessing to be co-workers

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<sup>501</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:384](#)

<sup>502</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 3:381](#)

with Christ. The Christian church, as a general thing, are disowning the claims of God upon them to give alms of the things which they possess to support the warfare against the moral darkness which is flooding the world. Never can the work of God advance as it should until the followers of Christ become active, zealous workers.<sup>503</sup>

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### The Privilege of Being a Co-laborer With God

God is not dependent upon man for the support of His cause. He could have sent means direct from heaven to supply His treasury, if His providence had seen that this was best for man. He might have devised means whereby angels would have been sent to publish the truth to the world without the agency of men. He might have written the truth upon the heavens, and let that declare to the world His requirements in living characters. God is not dependent upon any man's gold or silver. He says: "Every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills." "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is Mine, and the fullness thereof." [Psalm 50:10, 12](#). Whatever necessity there is for our agency in the advancement of the cause of God, He has purposely arranged for our good. He has honored us by making us co-workers with Him. He has ordained that there should be a necessity for the co-operation of men, that they may keep in exercise their benevolence.

The moral law enjoined the observance of the Sabbath, which was not a burden except when that law was transgressed and they were bound by the penalties involved in breaking it. The tithing system was no burden to those who did not depart from the plan. The system enjoined upon the Hebrews has not been repealed or relaxed by the One who originated it. Instead of being of no force now, it was to be more fully carried out and more extended, as salvation through Christ alone should be more fully brought to light in the Christian age.

The gospel, extending and widening, required greater provisions to sustain the warfare after the death of Christ, and this made the law of almsgiving a more urgent necessity than under the Hebrew government. Now God requires, not less, but greater gifts than at any other period of the world. The principle laid down by Christ

<sup>503</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 3:388, 389](#)

is that the gifts and offerings should be in proportion to the light and blessings enjoyed. He has said: “For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.” [Luke 12:48](#).<sup>504</sup>

[276] A flood of light is shining from the word of God, and there must be an awakening to neglected opportunities. When all are faithful in giving back to God His own in tithes and offerings, the way will be opened for the world to hear the message for this time. If the hearts of God’s people were filled with love for Christ, if every church member were thoroughly imbued with the spirit of self-sacrifice, if all manifested thorough earnestness, there would be no lack of funds for home or foreign missions. Our resources would be multiplied; a thousand doors of usefulness would be opened, and we should be invited to enter. Had the purpose of God been carried out by His people in giving to the world the message of mercy, Christ would, ere this, have come to the earth, and the saints would have received their welcome into the city of God.<sup>505</sup>

### **God Asks for One-tenth of the Increase He Gives**

The tithing system reaches back beyond the days of Moses. Men were required to offer to God gifts for religious purposes before the definite system was given to Moses, even as far back as the days of Adam. In complying with God’s requirements, they were to manifest in offerings their appreciation of His mercies and blessings to them. This was continued through successive generations, and was carried out by Abraham, who gave tithes to Melchizedek, the priest of the most high God. The same principle existed in the days of Job. Jacob, when at Bethel, an exile and penniless wanderer, lay down at night, solitary and alone, with a rock for his pillow, and there promised the Lord: “Of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee.” God does not compel men to give. All that they give must be voluntary. He will not have His treasury replenished with unwilling offerings.

As to the amount required, God has specified one tenth of the increase. This is left to the conscience and benevolence of men, whose judgment in this tithing system should have free play. And

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<sup>504</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 3:390-392](#)

<sup>505</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:449, 450](#)

while it is left free to the conscience, a plan has been laid out definite enough for all. No compulsion is required.

God called for men in the Mosaic dispensation to give the tenth of all their increase. He committed to their trust the things of this life, talents to be improved and returned to Him. He has required a tenth, and this He claims as the very least that man should return to Him. He says: I give you nine tenths, while I require one tenth; that is Mine. When men withhold the one tenth, they rob God. Sin offerings, peace offerings, and thank offerings were also required in addition to the tenth of the increase.

All that is withheld of that which God claims, the tenth of the increase, is recorded in the books of heaven against the withholders, as robbery. Such defraud their Creator; and when this sin of neglect is brought before them, it is not enough for them to change their course and begin to work from that time upon the right principle. This will not correct the figures made in the heavenly record for embezzling the property committed to them in trust to be returned to the Lender. Repentance for unfaithful dealing with God, and for base ingratitude, is required.

Whenever God's people, in any period of the world, have cheerfully and willingly carried out His plan in systematic benevolence and in gifts and offerings, they have realized the standing promise that prosperity should attend all their labors just in proportion as they obeyed His requirements. When they acknowledged the claims of God and complied with His requirements, honoring Him with their substance, their barns were filled with plenty. But when they robbed God in tithes and in offerings they were made to realize that they were not only robbing Him but themselves, for He limited His blessings to them just in proportion as they limited their offerings to Him.<sup>506</sup>

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The man who has been unfortunate, and finds himself in debt, should not take the Lord's portion to cancel his debts to his fellow men. He should consider that in these transactions he is being tested, and that in reserving the Lord's portion for his own use he is robbing the Giver. He is debtor to God for all that he has, but he becomes a double debtor when he uses the Lord's reserved fund in paying

<sup>506</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:393-395

debts to human beings. “Unfaithfulness to God” is written against his name in the books of heaven. He has an account to settle with God for appropriating the Lord’s means for his own convenience. And the want of principle shown in his misappropriation of God’s means will be revealed in his management of other matters. It will be seen in all matters connected with his own business. The man who will rob God is cultivating traits of character that will cut him off from admittance into the family of God above.<sup>507</sup>

### **God Evaluates Gifts by the Love Which Prompts the Sacrifice**

In the balances of the sanctuary the gifts of the poor, made from love to Christ, are not estimated according to the amount given, but according to the love which prompts the sacrifice. The promises of Jesus will as surely be realized by the liberal poor man, who has but little to offer, but who gives that little freely, as by the wealthy man who gives of his abundance. The poor man makes a sacrifice of his little, which he really feels. He really denies himself of some things that he needs for his own comfort, while the wealthy man gives of his abundance, and feels no want, denies himself nothing that he really needs. Therefore there is a sacredness in the poor man’s offering that is not found in the rich man’s gift, for the rich give of their abundance. God’s providence has arranged the entire plan of systematic benevolence for the benefit of man. His providence never stands still. If God’s servants follow His opening providence, all will be active workers.<sup>508</sup>

The offerings of little children may be acceptable and pleasing to God. In accordance with the spirit that prompts the gifts will be the value of the offering. The poor, by following the rule of the apostle and laying by a small sum every week, help to swell the treasury, and their gifts are wholly acceptable to God; for they make just as great, and even greater, sacrifices than their more wealthy brethren. The plan of systematic benevolence will prove a safeguard to every family against temptations to spend means for needless things, and

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<sup>507</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:391

<sup>508</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:398, 399



especially will it prove a blessing to the rich by guarding them from indulging in extravagances.<sup>509</sup>

The reward of whole-souled liberality is the leading of mind and heart to a closer fellowship with the Spirit.<sup>510</sup>

Paul lays down a rule for giving to God's cause, and tells us what the result will be both in regard to ourselves and to God. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." "This I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." "God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, *always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work*: ... Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness; being enriched in everything to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God." [2 Corinthians 9:6-11](#).<sup>511</sup>

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### The Proper Disposition of Property

While they have sound minds and good judgment, parents should, with prayerful consideration, and with the help of proper counselors who have experience in the truth and a knowledge of the divine will, make disposition of their property.

If they have children who are afflicted or are struggling in poverty, and who will make a judicious use of means, they should be considered. But if they have unbelieving children who have abundance of this world, and who are serving the world, they commit a sin against the Master, who has made them His stewards, by placing means in their hands merely because they are their children. God's claims are not to be lightly regarded.

And it should be distinctly understood that because parents have made their will, this will not prevent them from giving means to the cause of God while they live. This they should do. They should have the satisfaction here, and the reward hereafter, of disposing of

<sup>509</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 3:412](#)

<sup>510</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:390](#)

<sup>511</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:735](#)

their surplus means while they live. They should do their part to advance the cause of God. They should use the means lent them by the Master to carry on the work which needs to be done in His vineyard.<sup>512</sup>

Those who withhold from the treasury of God and hoard their means for their children, endanger the spiritual interest of their children. They place their property, which is a stumbling block to themselves, in the pathway of their children, that they may stumble over it to perdition. Many are making a great mistake in regard to the things of this life. They economize, withholding from themselves and others the good they might receive from a right use of the means which God has lent them, and become selfish and avaricious. They neglect their spiritual interests and become dwarfs in religious growth, all for the sake of accumulating wealth which they cannot use. They leave their property to their children, and nine times out of ten it is even a greater curse to their heirs than it has been to themselves. Children, relying upon the property of their parents, often fail to make a success of this life, and generally utterly fail to secure the life to come.

[279] The very best legacy which parents can leave their children is a knowledge of useful labor and the example of a life characterized by disinterested benevolence. By such a life they show the true value of money, that it is only to be appreciated for the good that it will accomplish in relieving their own wants and the necessities of others, and in advancing the cause of God.<sup>513</sup>

### **“If Riches Increase, Set Not Your Heart Upon Them”**

The special system of tithing was founded upon a principle which is as enduring as the law of God. This system of tithing was a blessing to the Jews, else God would not have given it them. So also will it be a blessing to those who carry it out to the end of time.

Those churches who are the most systematic and liberal in sustaining the cause of God are the most prosperous spiritually. True liberality in the follower of Christ identifies his interest with that of his Master. If those who have means should realize that they are

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<sup>512</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:121

<sup>513</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:399

accountable to God for every dollar that they expend, their supposed wants would be much less. If conscience were alive, she would testify of needless appropriations to the gratification of appetite, of pride, vanity, and love of amusements, and would report the squandering of the Lord's money, which should have been devoted to His cause. Those who waste their Lord's goods will by and by have to give an account of their course to the Master.

If professed Christians would use less of their wealth in adorning the body and in beautifying their own houses, and would consume less in extravagant, health-destroying luxuries upon their tables, they could place much larger sums in the treasury of God. They would thus imitate their Redeemer, who left heaven, His riches, and His glory, and for our sakes became poor, that we might have eternal riches.

But many, when they begin to gather earthly riches, commence to calculate how long it will be before they can be in possession of a certain sum. In their anxiety to amass wealth for themselves they fail to become rich toward God. Their benevolence does not keep pace with their accumulation. As their passion for riches increases, their affections are bound up with their treasure. The increase of their property strengthens the eager desire for more, until some consider that their giving to the Lord a tenth is a severe and unjust tax.

Inspiration has said: "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." [Psalm 62:10](#). Many have said: "If I were as rich as such a one, I would multiply my gifts to the treasury of God. I would do nothing else with my wealth but use it for the advancement of the cause of God." God has tested some of these by giving them riches, but with the riches came the fiercer temptation, and their benevolence was far less than in the days of their poverty. A grasping desire for greater riches absorbed their minds and hearts, and they committed idolatry.<sup>514</sup>

### **A Pledge Made to God Is Binding and Sacred**

Everyone is to be his own assessor and is left to give as he purposes in his heart. But there are those who are guilty of the same sin as Ananias and Sapphira, thinking that if they withhold a portion

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<sup>514</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 3:401-405](#)

of what God claims in the tithing system the brethren will never know it. Thus thought the guilty couple whose example is given us as a warning. God in this case proves that He searches the heart. The motives and purposes of man cannot be hidden from Him. He has left a perpetual warning to Christians of all ages to beware of the sin to which the hearts of men are continually inclined.

When a verbal or written pledge has been made in the presence of our brethren to give a certain amount, they are the visible witnesses of a contract made between ourselves and God. The pledge is not made to man, but to God, and is as a written note given to a neighbor. No legal bond is more binding upon the Christian for the payment of money than a pledge made to God.

Persons who thus pledge to their fellow men do not generally think of asking to be released from their pledges. A vow made to God, the Giver of all favors, is of still greater importance; then why should we seek to be released from our vows to God? Will man consider his promise less binding because made to God? Because his vow will not be put to trial in courts of justice, is it less valid? Will a man who professes to be saved by the blood of the infinite sacrifice of Jesus Christ, “rob God”? Are not his vows and his actions weighed in the balances of justice in the heavenly courts?

A church is responsible for the pledges of its individual members. If they see that there is a brother who is neglecting to fulfill his vows, they should labor with him kindly but plainly. If he is not in circumstances which render it possible for him to pay his vow, and he is a worthy member and has a willing heart, then let the church compassionately help him. Thus they can bridge over the difficulty and receive a blessing themselves.<sup>515</sup>

### **Offerings of Thanksgiving to Be Set Aside for the Poor**

In every church there should be established a treasury for the poor. Then let each member present a thank offering to God once a week or once a month, as is most convenient. This offering will express our gratitude for the gifts of health, of food, and of comfortable clothing. And according as God has blessed us with these comforts will we lay by for the poor, the suffering, and the distressed. I would

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<sup>515</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 4:469-476](#)

call the attention of our brethren especially to this point. Remember the poor. Forego some of your luxuries, yea, even comforts, and help those who can obtain only the most meager food and clothing. In doing for them you are doing for Jesus in the person of His saints. He identifies Himself with suffering humanity. Do not wait until your imaginary wants are all satisfied. Do not trust to your feelings and give when you feel like it and withhold when you do not feel like it. Give regularly, ... as you would like to see upon the heavenly record in the day of God.<sup>516</sup>

### **Our Property and the Support of God's Work**

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To those who love God sincerely and have means, I am bidden to say: Now is the time for you to invest your means in sustaining the work of the Lord. Now is the time to uphold the hands of the ministers in their self-denying efforts to save perishing souls. When you meet in the heavenly courts the souls you have helped to save, will you not have a glorious reward?

Let none withhold their mites, and let those who have much rejoice that they can lay up in heaven a treasure that faileth not. The money that we refuse to invest in the work of the Lord, will perish. On it no interest will accumulate in the bank of heaven.

The Lord now calls upon Seventh-day Adventists in every locality to consecrate themselves to Him and to do their very best, according to their circumstances, to assist in His work. By their liberality in making gifts and offerings, He desires them to reveal their appreciation of His blessings and their gratitude for His mercy.<sup>517</sup>

The Lord has shown me repeatedly that it is contrary to the Bible to make any provision for our temporal wants in the time of trouble. I saw that if the saints had food laid up by them or in the field in the time of trouble, when sword, famine, and pestilence are in the land, it would be taken from them by violent hands and strangers would reap their fields. Then will be the time for us to trust wholly in God, and He will sustain us. I saw that our bread and water will be sure at that time, and that we shall not lack or suffer hunger; for God is able to spread a table for us in the wilderness. If necessary

<sup>516</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:150, 151

<sup>517</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:131, 132

He would send ravens to feed us, as He did to feed Elijah, or rain manna from heaven, as He did for the Israelites.

Houses and lands will be of no use to the saints in the time of trouble, for they will then have to flee before infuriated mobs, and at that time their possessions cannot be disposed of to advance the cause of present truth. I was shown that it is the will of God that the saints should cut loose from every encumbrance before the time of trouble comes, and make a covenant with God through sacrifice. If they have their property on the altar and earnestly inquire of God for duty, He will teach them when to dispose of these things. Then they will be free in the time of trouble and have no clogs to weigh them down.<sup>518</sup>

### **The Spirit of Self-denial and Sacrifice**

The plan of salvation was laid by the infinite sacrifice of the Son of God. The light of the gospel shining from the cross of Christ rebukes selfishness and encourages liberality and benevolence. It is not to be a lamented fact that there are increasing calls to give. God in His providence is calling His people out from their limited sphere of action to enter upon greater enterprises. Unlimited effort is demanded at this time when moral darkness is covering the world.

[282] Worldliness and covetousness are eating out the vitals of God's people. They should understand that it is His mercy which multiplies the demands for their means. The angel of God places benevolent acts close beside prayer. He said to Cornelius: "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God." [Acts 10:4](#).<sup>519</sup>

Practice economy in your homes. By many, idols are cherished and worshiped. Put away your idols. Give up your selfish pleasures. Do not, I entreat you, absorb means in embellishing your houses, for it is God's money, and it will be required of you again. Parents, for Christ's sake do not use the Lord's money in pleasing the fancies of your children. Do not teach them to seek after style and ostentation in order to gain influence in the world. Will this incline them to save the souls for whom Christ died? No; it will create envy, jealousy, and evil surmising. Your children will be led to compete with the

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<sup>518</sup>Early Writings, 56, 57

<sup>519</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:405

show and extravagance of the world, and to spend the Lord's money for that which is not essential to health or happiness.

Do not educate your children to think that your love for them must be expressed by indulgence of their pride, extravagance, and love of display. There is no time now to invent ways for using up money. Use your inventive faculties in seeking to economize. Instead of gratifying selfish inclination, spending money for those things that destroy the reasoning faculties, study how to deny self, that you may have something to invest in lifting the standard of truth in new fields. The intellect is a talent; use it in studying how best to employ your means for the salvation of souls.<sup>520</sup>

Those who deny self to do others good, and who devote themselves and all they have to Christ's service, will realize the happiness which the selfish man seeks for in vain. Said our Saviour: "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple." [Luke 14:33](#). Charity "seeketh not her own." This is the fruit of that disinterested love and benevolence which characterized the life of Christ. The law of God in our hearts will bring our own interests in subordination to high and eternal considerations.<sup>521</sup>

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<sup>520</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:450, 451](#)

<sup>521</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 3:397](#)

[283] **Chapter 49—The Christian Attitude Toward Want and Suffering**

Today God gives men opportunity to show whether they love their neighbor. He who truly loves God and his fellow man is he who shows mercy to the destitute, the suffering, the wounded, those who are ready to die. God calls upon every man to take up his neglected work, to seek to restore the moral image of the Creator in humanity.<sup>522</sup>

Work for others will require effort, self-denial, and self-sacrifice. But what is the little sacrifice that we can make in comparison with the sacrifice which God has made for us in the gift of His only-begotten Son?<sup>523</sup>

The conditions of inheriting eternal life are plainly stated by our Saviour in the most simple manner. The man who was wounded and robbed, [Luke 10:30-37](#) represents those who are subjects of our interest, sympathy, and charity. If we neglect the cases of the needy and the unfortunate that are brought under our notice, no matter who they may be, we have no assurance of eternal life; for we do not answer the claims that God has upon us. We are not compassionate and pitiful to humanity, because they may not be kith or kin to us. You have been found transgressors of the second great commandment, upon which the last six commandments depend. Whosoever offendeth in one point, is guilty of all. Those who do not open their hearts to the wants and sufferings of humanity will not open their hearts to the claims of God as stated in the first four precepts of the Decalogue. Idols claim the heart and affections, and God is not honored and does not reign supreme.<sup>524</sup>

It should be written upon the conscience as with a pen of iron upon a rock, that he who disregards mercy, compassion, and righteousness, he who neglects the poor, who ignores the needs of

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<sup>522</sup>Welfare Ministry, 49

<sup>523</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:283

<sup>524</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:524



suffering humanity, who is not kind and courteous, is so conducting himself that God cannot co-operate with him in the development of character. The culture of the mind and heart is more easily accomplished when we feel such tender sympathy for others that we bestow our benefits and privileges to relieve their necessities. Getting and holding all that we can for ourselves tends to poverty of soul. But all the attributes of Christ await the reception of those who will do the very work that God has appointed them to do, working in Christ's lines.<sup>525</sup>

The Saviour ignores both rank and caste, worldly honor and riches. It is character and devotedness of purpose that are of high value with Him. He does not take sides with the strong and worldly favored. He, the Son of the living God, stoops to uplift the fallen. By pledges and words of assurance He seeks to win to Himself the lost, perishing soul. Angels of God are watching to see who of His followers will exercise tender pity and sympathy. They are watching to see who of God's people will manifest the love of Jesus.<sup>526</sup>

[284]

God calls not only for your benevolence, but for your cheerful countenance, your hopeful words, the grasp of your hand. As you visit the Lord's afflicted ones, you will find some from whom hope has departed; bring back the sunshine to them. There are those who need the bread of life; read to them from the word of God. Upon others there is a soul sickness that no earthly balm can reach or physician heal; pray for these, and bring them to Jesus.<sup>527</sup>

### **Our Duty to the Poor in the Church**

There are two classes of poor whom we have always within our borders—those who ruin themselves by their own independent course of action and continue in their transgression, and those who for the truth's sake have been brought into straitened circumstances. We are to love our neighbor as ourselves, and then toward both these classes we shall do the right thing under the guidance and counsel of sound wisdom.

<sup>525</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:262

<sup>526</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:268

<sup>527</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:277

There is no question in regard to the Lord's poor. They are to be helped in every case where it will be for their benefit.

God wants His people to reveal to a sinful world that He has not left them to perish. Special pains should be taken to help those who for the truth's sake are cast out from their homes and are obliged to suffer. More and more there will be need of large, open, generous hearts, those who will deny self and will take hold of the cases of these very ones whom the Lord loves. The poor among God's people must not be left without provision for their wants. Some way must be found whereby they may obtain a livelihood. Some will need to be taught to work. Others who work hard and are taxed to the utmost of their ability to support their families will need special assistance. We should take an interest in these cases and help them to secure employment. There should be a fund to aid such worthy poor families who love God and keep His commandments.

Through circumstances some who love and obey God become poor. Some are not careful; they do not know how to manage. Others are poor through sickness and misfortune. Whatever the cause, they are in need, and to help them is an important line of missionary work.

Wherever a church is established, its members are to do a faithful work for the needy believers. But they are not to stop here. They are also to aid others, irrespective of their faith. As the result of such effort, some of these will receive the special truths for this time.<sup>528</sup>

[285]

### **How to Help the Needy**

Methods of helping the needy should be carefully and prayerfully considered. We are to seek God for wisdom, for He knows better than shortsighted mortals how to care for the creatures He has made. There are some who give indiscriminately to everyone who solicits their aid. In this they err. In trying to help the needy, we should be careful to give them the right kind of help. There are those who when helped will continue to make themselves special objects of need. They will be dependent as long as they see anything on which to depend. By giving undue time and attention to these, we may encourage idleness, helplessness, extravagance, and intemperance.

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<sup>528</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:269-271](#)

When we give to the poor we should consider: “Am I encouraging prodigality? Am I helping or injuring them?” No man who can earn his own livelihood has a right to depend on others.

Men and women of God, persons of discernment and wisdom, should be appointed to look after the poor and needy, the household of faith first. These should report to the church and counsel as to what should be done.<sup>529</sup>

God does not require our brethren to take charge of every poor family that shall embrace this message. If they should do this, the ministers must cease to enter new fields, for the funds would be exhausted. Many are poor from their own lack of diligence and economy; they know not how to use means aright. If they should be helped, it would hurt them. Some will always be poor. If they should have the very best advantages, their cases would not be helped. They have not good calculation and would use all the means they could obtain, were it much or little.

When such embrace the message, they feel that they are entitled to assistance from their more wealthy brethren; and if their expectations are not met, they complain of the church and accuse them of not living out their faith. Who must be the sufferers in this case? Must the cause of God be sapped, and the treasury in different places exhausted, to take care of these large families of poor? No. The parents must be the sufferers. They will not, as a general thing, suffer any greater lack after they embrace the Sabbath than they did before.<sup>530</sup>

God suffers His poor to be in the borders of every church. They are always to be among us, and the Lord places upon the members of every church a personal responsibility to care for them. We are not to lay our responsibility upon others. Toward those within our own borders we are to manifest the same love and sympathy that Christ would manifest were He in our place. Thus we are to be disciplined, that we may be prepared to work in Christ’s lines.<sup>531</sup>

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<sup>529</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:277, 278

<sup>530</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:272, 273

<sup>531</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:272

## Care of Orphans

[286] Among all whose needs demand our interest, the widow and the fatherless have the strongest claims upon our tender sympathy. They are the objects of the Lord's special care. They are lent to Christians in trust for God. "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." [James 1:27](#).

Many a father who has died in the faith, resting upon the eternal promise of God, has left his loved ones in full trust that the Lord would care for them. And how does the Lord provide for these bereaved ones? He does not work a miracle in sending manna from heaven; He does not send ravens to bring them food; but He works a miracle upon human hearts, expelling selfishness from the soul and unsealing the fountains of benevolence. He tests the love of His professed followers by committing to their tender mercies the afflicted and bereaved ones.

Let those who have the love of God open their hearts and homes to take in these children. It is not the best plan to care for the orphans in large institutions. If they have no relatives able to provide for them, the members of our churches should either adopt these little ones into their families or find suitable homes for them in other households.

These children are in a special sense the ones whom Christ looks upon, whom it is an offense to Him to neglect. Every kind act done to them in the name of Jesus is accepted by Him as done to Himself.<sup>532</sup>

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<sup>532</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:281

## Chapter 50—Christians in All the World Become One in Christ

[287]

[Much of the counsel of this chapter was given by Mrs. White in a meeting where workers had gathered from several countries representing divergent languages and customs. Some of these workers had mistakenly reasoned that the counsel which the Lord had given His people thought Mrs. E. G. White was appropriate only for the nationality to which Mrs. White belonged.—*White Trustees*.]

If we would come to Christ with the simplicity of a child coming to its earthly parents, and ask for the things that He has promised, believing that we receive them, we should have them. If all of us had exercised the faith we should we would have been blessed with far more of the Spirit of God in our meetings than we have yet received. I am glad that a few days of the meeting still remain. Now the question is: Will we come to the fountain and drink? Will the teachers of truth set the example? God will do great things for us if we by faith take Him at His word. Oh, that we might see here a general humbling of the heart before God!

Since these meetings began, I have felt urged to dwell much upon love and faith. This is because you need this testimony. Some who have entered these missionary fields have said: “You do not understand the French people; you do not understand the Germans. They have to be met in just such a way.”

But I inquire: Does not God understand them? Is it not He who gives His servants a message for the people? He knows just what they need; and if the message comes directly from Him through His servants to the people, it will accomplish the work whereunto it is sent; it will make all one in Christ. Though some are decidedly French, others decidedly German, and others decidedly American, they will be just as decidedly Christlike.

The Jewish temple was built of hewn stones quarried out of the mountains; and every stone was fitted for its place in the temple, hewed, polished, and tested before it was brought to Jerusalem. And

[288] when all were brought to the ground, the building went together without the sound of ax or hammer. This building represents God's spiritual temple, which is composed of material gathered out of every nation, and tongue, and people, of all grades, high and low, rich and poor, learned and unlearned. These are not dead substances to be fitted by hammer and chisel. They are living stones, quarried out from the world by the truth; and the great Master Builder, the Lord of the temple, is now hewing and polishing them, and fitting them for their respective places in the spiritual temple. When completed, this temple will be perfect in all its parts, the admiration of angels and of men; for its Builder and Maker is God. Let no one think that there need not be a stroke placed upon him.

There is no person, no nation, that is perfect in every habit and thought. One must learn of another. Therefore God wants the different nationalities to mingle together, to be one in judgment, one in purpose. Then the union that there is in Christ will be exemplified.

I was almost afraid to come to this country because I heard so many say that the different nationalities of Europe were peculiar and had to be reached in a certain way. But the wisdom of God is promised to those who feel their need and who ask for it. God can bring the people where they will receive the truth. Let the Lord take possession of the mind and mold it as the clay is molded in the hands of the potter, and these differences will not exist. Look to Jesus, brethren; copy His manners and spirit, and you will have no trouble in reaching these different classes.

We have not six patterns to follow, nor five; we have only one, and that is Christ Jesus. If the Italian brethren, the French brethren, and the German brethren try to be like Him, they will plant their feet upon the same foundation of truth; the same spirit that dwells in one will dwell in the other—Christ in them, the hope of glory. I warn you, brethren and sisters, not to build up a wall of partition between different nationalities. On the contrary, seek to break it down wherever it exists. We should endeavor to bring all into the harmony that there is in Jesus, laboring for the one object, the salvation of our fellow men.

Will you, my ministering brethren, grasp the rich promises of God? Will you put self out of sight and let Jesus appear? Self must die before God can work through you. I feel alarmed as I see self

cropping out in one and another here and there. I tell you, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, your wills must die; they must become as God's will. He wants to melt you over and to cleanse you from every defilement. There is a great work to be done for you before you can be filled with the power of God. I beseech you to draw nigh to Him, that you may realize His rich blessing before this meeting closes.<sup>533</sup>

### **Christ's Relation to Nationality**

Christ recognized no distinction of nationality or rank or creed. The scribes and Pharisees desired to make a local and a national benefit of all the gifts of heaven and to exclude the rest of God's family in the world. But Christ came to break down every wall of partition. He came to show that His gift of mercy and love is as unconfined as the air, the light, or the showers of rain that refresh the earth.

The life of Christ established a religion in which there is no caste, a religion by which Jew and Gentile, free and bond, are linked in a common brotherhood, equal before God. No question of policy influenced His movements. He made no difference between neighbors and strangers, friends and enemies. That which appealed to His heart was a soul thirsting for the waters of life.

[289]

He passed no human being by as worthless, but sought to apply the healing remedy to every soul. In whatever company He found Himself, He presented a lesson appropriate to the time and the circumstances. Every neglect or insult shown by men to their fellow men only made Him more conscious of their need of His divine-human sympathy. He sought to inspire with hope the roughest and most unpromising, setting before them the assurance that they might become blameless and harmless, attaining such a character as would make them the children of God.<sup>534</sup>

As the children of God are one in Christ, how does Jesus look upon caste, upon society distinctions, upon the division of man from his fellow-man, because of color, race, position, wealth, birth, or

<sup>533</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:179-182

<sup>534</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:190, 191

attainments? The secret of unity is found in the equality of believers in Christ.<sup>535</sup>

### **An Illustration of Bringing About Unity**

Years ago, when the company of believers in the soon coming of Christ was very small, the Sabbathkeepers at Topsham, Maine, met for worship in the large kitchen in the home of Brother Stockbridge Howland. One Sabbath morning Brother Howland was absent. We were surprised at this, because he was always so punctual. Soon he came in, his face aglow, shining with the glory of God. "Brethren," he said, "I have found it. I have found that we can pursue a course of action regarding which the guarantee of God's word is: 'Ye shall never fall.' I am going to tell you about it."

He then told us that he had noticed that one brother, a poor fisherman, had been feeling that he was not as highly respected as he ought to be and that Brother Howland and others thought themselves above him. This was not true, but it seemed true to him; and for several weeks he had not attended the meetings. So Brother Howland went to his house and knelt before him, saying: "My brother, forgive me. What is it that I have done?" The man took him by the arm and tried to raise him to his feet. "No," said Brother Howland, "what have you against me?" "I have nothing against you." "But you must have," said Brother Howland, "because once we could speak to one another, but now you do not speak to me at all, and I want to know what is the matter."

[290] "Get up, Brother Howland," he said. "No," said Brother Howland, "I will not." "Then I must get down," he said, and he fell on his knees, and confessed how childish he had been and how many evil surmisings he had cherished. "And now," he said, "I will put them all away."

As Brother Howland told this story, his face shone with the glory of the Lord. Just as he had finished, the fisherman and his family came in, and we had an excellent meeting. Suppose that some of us should follow the course pursued by Brother Howland. If when our brethren surmise evil, we would go to them, saying, "Forgive me if I have done anything to harm you," we might break the spell of Satan

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<sup>535</sup>[The Review and Herald, December 22, 1891](#)



and set our brethren free from their temptations. Do not let anything interpose between you and your brethren. If there is anything that you can do by sacrifice to clear away the rubbish of suspicion, do it. God wants us to love one another as brethren. He wants us to be pitiful and courteous. He wants us to educate ourselves to believe that our brethren love us, and to believe that Christ loves us. Love begets love.

Do we expect to meet our brethren in heaven? If we can live with them here in peace and harmony we could live with them there. But how could we live with them in heaven if we cannot live with them here without continued contention and strife? Those who are following a course of action that separates them from their brethren and brings in discord and dissension, need a thorough conversion. Our hearts must be melted and subdued by the love of Christ. We must cherish the love that He showed in dying for us on the cross of Calvary. We need to draw closer and closer to the Saviour. We should be much in prayer, and we must learn to exercise faith. We must be more tenderhearted, more pitiful and courteous. We shall pass through this world but once. Shall we not strive to leave on those with whom we associate the impress of the character of Christ?

Our hard hearts need to be broken. We need to come together in perfect unity, and we need to realize that we are the purchase of the blood of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Let each one say: "He gave His life for me, and He wants me, as I go through this world, to reveal the love that He revealed in giving Himself for me." Christ bore our sins in His own body on the cross, that God might be just and yet the justifier of those who believe in Him. There is life, eternal life, for all who will surrender to Christ.<sup>536</sup>

### **In Unity There Is Strength**

Strive earnestly for unity. Pray for it, work for it. It will bring spiritual health, elevation of thought, nobility of character, heavenly-mindedness, enabling you to overcome selfishness and evil surmisings, and to be more than conquerors through Him that loved you and gave Himself for you. Crucify self; esteem others better than yourselves. Thus you will be brought into oneness with Christ.

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<sup>536</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 9:191-193](#)

Before the heavenly universe, and before the church and the world, you will bear unmistakable evidence that you are God's sons and daughters. God will be glorified in the example that you set.

[291] The world needs to see worked out before it the miracle that binds the hearts of God's people together in Christian love. It needs to see the Lord's people sitting together in heavenly places in Christ. Will you not give in your lives an evidence of what the truth of God can do for those who love and serve Him? God knows what you can be. He knows what divine grace can do for you if you will be partakers of the divine nature.<sup>537</sup>

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

Union is strength; division is weakness. When those who believe present truth are united, they exert a telling influence. Satan well understands this. Never was he more determined than now to make of none effect the truth of God by causing bitterness and dissension among the Lord's people.<sup>538</sup>

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<sup>537</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 9:188](#)

<sup>538</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:236](#)

## Chapter 51—The Prayer Meeting

[292]

The prayer meetings should be the most interesting gatherings that are held, but these are frequently poorly managed. Many attend preaching, but neglect the prayer meeting. Here, again, thought is required. Wisdom should be sought of God, and plans should be laid to conduct the meetings so that they will be interesting and attractive. The people hunger for the bread of life. If they find it at the prayer meeting they will go there to receive it.

Long, prosy talks and prayers are out of place anywhere, and especially in the social meeting. Those who are forward and ever ready to speak are allowed to crowd out the testimony of the timid and retiring. Those who are most superficial generally have the most to say. Their prayers are long and mechanical. They weary the angels and the people who listen to them. Our prayers should be short and right to the point. Let the long, tiresome petitions be left for the closet, if any have such to offer. Let the Spirit of God into your hearts, and it will sweep away all dry formality.<sup>539</sup>

### Public Prayers Should Not Be Long

Christ impressed upon His disciples the idea that their prayers should be short, expressing just what they wanted, and no more. He gives the length and substance of their prayers, expressing their desires for temporal and spiritual blessings, and their gratitude for the same. How comprehensive this sample prayer! It covers the actual need of all. One or two minutes is long enough for any ordinary prayer. There may be instances where prayer is in a special manner indited by the Spirit of God, where supplication is made in the Spirit. The yearning soul becomes agonized and groans after God. The spirit wrestles as did Jacob and will not be at rest without special manifestations of the power of God. This is as God would have it.

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<sup>539</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 4:70, 71](#)

[293]

But many offer prayer in a dry, sermonizing manner. These pray to men, not to God. If they were praying to God, and really understood what they were doing, they would be alarmed at their audacity; for they deliver a discourse to the Lord in the mode of prayer, as though the Creator of the universe needed special information upon general questions in relation to things transpiring in the world. All such prayers are as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. They are made no account of in heaven. Angels of God are wearied with them, as well as mortals who are compelled to listen to them.

Jesus was often found in prayer. He resorted to the lonely groves or to the mountains to make His requests known to His Father. When the business and cares of the day were ended, and the weary were seeking rest, Jesus devoted the time to prayer. We would not discourage prayer, for there is far too little praying and watching thereunto. And there is still less praying with the Spirit and the understanding also. Fervent and effectual prayer is always in place, and will never weary. Such prayer interests and refreshes all who have a love for devotion.

Secret prayer is neglected, and this is why many offer such long, tedious, backslidden prayers when they assemble to worship God. They go over in their prayers a week of neglected duties, and pray round and round, hoping to make up for their neglect and pacify their condemned consciences, which are scourging them. They hope to pray themselves into the favor of God. But frequently these prayers result in bringing other minds down to their own low level in spiritual darkness. If Christians would take home the teachings of Christ in regard to watching and praying, they would become more intelligent in their worship of God.<sup>540</sup>

### **More Praise in Prayer**

“Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.” Have any of us duly considered how much we have to be thankful for? Do we remember that the mercies of the Lord are new every morning and that His faithfulness faileth not? Do we acknowledge our dependence upon Him and express gratitude for all His favors? On the contrary,

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<sup>540</sup>Testimonies for the Church 2:581, 582

we too often forget that “every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.”

How often those who are in health forget the wonderful mercies that are continued to them day by day, year after year. They render no tribute of praise to God for all His benefits. But when sickness comes, God is remembered. The strong desire for recovery leads to earnest prayer, and this is right. God is our refuge in sickness as in health. But many do not leave their cases with Him; they encourage weakness and disease by worrying about themselves. If they would cease repining and rise above depression and gloom, their recovery would be more sure. They should remember with gratitude how long they enjoyed the blessing of health; and should this precious boon be restored to them, they should not forget that they are under renewed obligations to their Creator. When the ten lepers were healed, only one returned to find Jesus and give Him glory. Let us not be like the unthinking nine, whose hearts were untouched by the mercy of God.<sup>541</sup>

The habit of brooding over anticipated evils is unwise and unchristian. In thus doing we fail to enjoy the blessings and to improve the opportunities of the present. The Lord requires us to perform the duties of today and to endure its trials. We are today to watch that we offend not in word or deed. We must today praise and honor God. By the exercise of living faith today we are to conquer the enemy. We must today seek God and be determined that we will not rest satisfied without His presence. We should watch and work and pray as though this were the last day that would be granted us. How intensely earnest, then, would be our life. How closely would we follow Jesus in all our words and deeds!

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### God's Interest in Little Things

There are few who rightly appreciate or improve the precious privilege of prayer. We should go to Jesus and tell Him all our needs. We may bring Him our little cares and perplexities as well as our greater troubles. Whatever arises to disturb or distress us, we should take it to the Lord in prayer. When we feel that we need the presence of Christ at every step, Satan will have little opportunity to intrude

<sup>541</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:315](#)

his temptations. It is his studied effort to keep us away from our best and most sympathizing friend. We should make no one our confidant but Jesus. We can safely commune with Him of all that is in our hearts. Brethren and sisters, when you assemble for social worship, believe that Jesus meets with you; believe that He is willing to bless you. Turn the eye away from self; look unto Jesus, talk of His matchless love. By beholding Him you will become changed into His likeness. When you pray, be brief, come right to the point. Do not preach the Lord a sermon in your long prayers. Ask for the bread of life as a hungry child asks bread of his earthly father. God will bestow upon us every needed blessing if we ask Him in simplicity and faith.

Prayer is the most holy exercise of the soul. It should be sincere, humble, earnest—the desires of a renewed heart breathed in the presence of a holy God. When the suppliant feels that he is in the divine presence, self will be forgotten. He will have no desire to display human talent; he will not seek to please the ear of men, but to obtain the blessing which the soul craves.<sup>542</sup>

Both in public and in private worship, it is our privilege to bow on our knees before the Lord when we offer our petitions to Him. Jesus, our example, “kneeled down, and prayed.” [Luke 22:41](#). Of His disciples it is recorded that they, too, “kneeled down, and prayed.” [Acts 9:40](#); [20:36](#); [21:5](#). Paul declared, “I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” [Ephesians 3:14](#). In confessing before God the sins of Israel, Ezra knelt. [Ezra 9:5](#). Daniel “kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God.” [Daniel 6:10](#).<sup>543</sup>

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<sup>542</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:200, 201

<sup>543</sup>Gospel Workers, 178

## Chapter 52—Baptism

[295]

The ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper are two monumental pillars, one without and one within the church. Upon these ordinances Christ has inscribed the name of the true God.

Christ has made baptism the sign of entrance to His spiritual kingdom. He has made this a positive condition with which all must comply who wish to be acknowledged as under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Before man can find a home in the church, before passing the threshold of God's spiritual kingdom, he is to receive the impress of the divine name, "*The Lord Our Righteousness.*" [Jeremiah 23:6](#).

Baptism is a most solemn renunciation of the world. Those who are baptized in the threefold name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, at the very entrance of their Christian life declare publicly that they have forsaken the service of Satan and have become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. They have obeyed the command: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, ... and touch not the unclean thing." And to them is fulfilled 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." [2 Corinthians 6:17, 18](#).

The vows which we take upon ourselves in baptism embrace much. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit we are buried in the likeness of Christ's death and raised in the likeness of His resurrection, and we are to live a new life. Our life is to be bound up with the life of Christ. Henceforth the believer is to bear in mind that he is dedicated to God, to Christ, and to the Holy Spirit. He is to make all worldly considerations secondary to this new relation. Publicly he has declared that he will no longer live in pride and self-indulgence. He is no longer to live a careless, indifferent life. He has made a covenant with God. He has died to the world. He is to live to the Lord, to use for Him all his entrusted capabilities, never losing the realization that he bears God's signature, that he is

a subject of Christ's kingdom, a partaker of the divine nature. He is to surrender to God all that he is and all that he has, employing all his gifts to His name's glory.

### **Candidates to Be Thoroughly Prepared**

[296] There is need of a more thorough preparation on the part of candidates for baptism. They are in need of more faithful instruction than has usually been given them. The principles of the Christian life should be made plain to those who have newly come to the truth. None can depend upon their profession of faith as proof that they have a saving connection with Christ. We are not only to say, "I believe," but to practice the truth. It is by conformity to the will of God in our words, our deportment, our character, that we prove our connection with Him. Whenever one renounces sin, which is the transgression of the law, his life will be brought into conformity to the law, into perfect obedience. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. The light of the word carefully studied, the voice of conscience, the strivings of the Spirit, produce in the heart genuine love for Christ, who gave Himself a whole sacrifice to redeem the whole person, body, soul, and spirit. And love is manifested in obedience. The line of demarcation will be plain and distinct between those who love God and keep His commandments, and those who love Him not and disregard His precepts.

Satan does not want anyone to see the necessity of an entire surrender to God. When the soul fails to make this surrender, sin is not forsaken; the appetites and passions are striving for the mastery; temptations confuse the conscience, so that true conversion does not take place. If all had a sense of the conflict which each soul must wage with satanic agencies that are seeking to ensnare, entice, and deceive, there would be much more diligent labor for those who are young in the faith.

### **The Preparation of Children for Baptism**

Parents whose children desire to be baptized have a work to do, both in self-examination and in giving faithful instruction to their children. Baptism is a most sacred and important ordinance,



and there should be a thorough understanding as to its meaning. It means repentance for sin, and the entrance upon a new life in Christ Jesus. There should be no undue haste to receive the ordinance. Let both parents and children count the cost. In consenting to the baptism of their children, parents sacredly pledge themselves to be faithful stewards over these children, to guide them in their character building. They pledge themselves to guard with special interest these lambs of the flock, that they may not dishonor the faith they profess.

Religious instruction should be given to children from their earliest years. It should be given, not in a condemnatory spirit, but in a cheerful, happy spirit. Mothers need to be on the watch constantly, lest temptation shall come to the children in such a form as not to be recognized by them. The parents are to guard their children with wise, pleasant instruction. As the very best friends of these inexperienced ones, they should help them in the work of overcoming, for it means everything to them to be victorious. They should consider that their own dear children who are seeking to do right are younger members of the Lord's family, and they should feel an intense interest in helping them to make straight paths in the King's highway of obedience. With loving interest they should teach them day by day what it means to be children of God and to yield the will in obedience to Him. Teach them that obedience to God involves obedience to their parents. This must be a daily, hourly work. Parents, watch, watch and pray, and make your children your companions.

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When the happiest period of their life has come, and they in their hearts love Jesus and wish to be baptized, then deal faithfully with them. Before they receive the ordinance, ask them if it is to be their first purpose in life to work for God. Then tell them how to begin. It is the first lessons that mean so much. In simplicity teach them how to do their first service for God. Make the work as easy to be understood as possible. Explain what it means to give up self to the Lord, to do just as His word directs, under the counsel of Christian parents.

After faithful labor, if you are satisfied that your children understand the meaning of conversion and baptism, and are truly converted, let them be baptized. But, I repeat, first of all prepare yourselves to act as faithful shepherds in guiding their inexperienced feet

in the narrow way of obedience. God must work in the parents that they may give to their children a right example, in love, courtesy, and Christian humility, and in an entire giving up of self to Christ. If you consent to the baptism of your children and then leave them to do as they choose, feeling no special duty to keep their feet in the straight path, you yourselves are responsible if they lose faith and courage and interest in the truth.

Candidates who have grown to manhood and womanhood should understand their duty better than do the younger ones; but the pastor of the church has a duty to do for these souls. Have they wrong habits and practices? It is the duty of the pastor to have special meetings with them. Give them Bible readings, converse and pray with them, and plainly show the claims of the Lord upon them. Read to them the teaching of the Bible in regard to conversion. Show what is the fruit of conversion, the evidence that they love God. Show that true conversion is a change of heart, of thoughts and purposes. Evil habits are to be given up. The sins of evil-speaking, of jealousy, of disobedience, are to be put away. A warfare must be waged against every evil trait of character. Then the believing one can understandingly take to himself the promise: "Ask, and it shall be given you." [Matthew 7:7](#).<sup>544</sup>

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<sup>544</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:91-99

## Chapter 53—The Lord’s Supper

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The symbols of the Lord’s house are simple and plainly understood, and the truths represented by them are of the deepest significance to us.<sup>545</sup>

Christ was standing at the point of transition between two economies and their two great festivals. He, the spotless Lamb of God, was about to present Himself as a sin offering, that He would thus bring to an end the system of types and ceremonies that for four thousand years had pointed to His death. As He ate the Passover with His disciples, He instituted in its place the service that was to be the memorial of His great sacrifice. The national festival of the Jews was to pass away forever. The service which Christ established was to be observed by His followers in all lands and through all ages.

The Passover was ordained as a commemoration of the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage. God had directed that, year by year, as the children should ask the meaning of this ordinance, the history should be repeated. Thus the wonderful deliverance was to be kept fresh in the minds of all. The ordinance of the Lord’s Supper was given to commemorate the great deliverance wrought out as the result of the death of Christ. Till He shall come the second time in power and glory, this ordinance is to be celebrated. It is the means by which His great work for us is to be kept fresh in our minds.

Christ’s example forbids exclusiveness at the Lord’s Supper. It is true that open sin excludes the guilty. This the Holy Spirit plainly teaches. [1 Corinthians 5:11](#). But beyond this none are to pass judgment. God has not left it with men to say who shall present themselves on these occasions. For who can read the heart? Who can distinguish the tares from the wheat? “Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.” For “whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.” “He

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<sup>545</sup>[Evangelism, 273](#)

that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." [1 Corinthians 11:28, 27, 29](#).

None should exclude themselves from the Communion because some who are unworthy may be present. Every disciple is called upon to participate publicly, and thus bear witness that he accepts Christ as a personal Saviour.

[299] In partaking with His disciples of the bread and wine, Christ pledged Himself to them as their Redeemer. He committed to them the new covenant, by which all who receive Him become children of God, and joint heirs with Christ. By this covenant every blessing that heaven could bestow for this life and the life to come was theirs. This covenant deed was to be ratified with the blood of Christ. And the administration of the Sacrament was to keep before the disciples the infinite sacrifice made for each of them individually as a part of the great whole of fallen humanity.

### **The Servant of Servants**

When the disciples entered the supper room, their hearts were full of resentful feelings. Judas pressed next to Christ on the left side; John was on the right. If there was a highest place, Judas was determined to have it, and that place was thought to be next to Christ. And Judas was a traitor.

Another cause of dissension had arisen. At a feast it was customary for a servant to wash the feet of the guests, and on this occasion preparation had been made for the service. The pitcher, the basin, and the towel were there, in readiness for the feet washing; but no servant was present, and it was the disciples' part to perform it. But each of the disciples, yielding to wounded pride, determined not to act the part of a servant. All manifested a stoical unconcern, seeming unconscious that there was anything for them to do. By their silence they refused to humble themselves.

The disciples made no move toward serving one another. Jesus waited for a time to see what they would do. Then He, the divine Teacher, rose from the table. Laying aside the outer garment that would have impeded His movements, He took a towel, and girded Himself. With surprised interest the disciples looked on, and in

silence waited to see what was to follow. "After that He poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded." This action opened the eyes of the disciples. Bitter shame and humiliation filled their hearts. They understood the unspoken rebuke, and saw themselves in altogether a new light.

So Christ expressed His love for His disciples. Their selfish spirit filled Him with sorrow, but He entered into no controversy with them regarding their difficulty. Instead He gave them an example they would never forget. His love for them was not easily disturbed or quenched. He knew that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He came from God, and went to God. He had a full consciousness of His divinity; but He had laid aside His royal crown and kingly robes, and had taken the form of a servant. One of the last acts of His life on earth was to gird Himself as a servant, and perform a servant's part.

Christ would have His disciples understand that although He had washed their feet, this did not in the least detract from His dignity. "Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am." And being so infinitely superior, He imparted grace and significance to the service. No one was so exalted as Christ, and yet He stooped to the humblest duty. That His people might not be misled by the selfishness which dwells in the natural heart, and which strengthens by self-serving, Christ Himself set the example of humility. He would not leave this great subject in man's charge. Of so much consequence did He regard it, that He Himself, One equal with God, acted as servant to His disciples. While they were contending for the highest place, He to whom every knee shall bow, He whom the angels of glory count it honor to serve, bowed down to wash the feet of those who called Him Lord. He washed the feet of His betrayer. [300]

Now, having washed the disciples' feet, He said, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." In these words Christ was not merely enjoining the practice of hospitality. More was meant than the washing of the feet of guests to remove the dust of travel. Christ was here instituting a religious service. By the act of our Lord this humiliating ceremony was made a consecrated ordinance. It was to be observed by the disciples, that they might ever keep in mind His lessons of humility and service.

## The Ordinance of Preparation

This ordinance is Christ's appointed preparation for the sacramental service. While pride, variance, and strife for supremacy are cherished, the heart cannot enter into fellowship with Christ. We are not prepared to receive the communion of His body and His blood. Therefore it was that Jesus appointed the memorial of His humiliation to be first observed.

As they come to this ordinance, the children of God should bring to remembrance the words of the Lord of life and glory: "Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." [John 13:12-17](#).

There is in man a disposition to esteem himself more highly than his brother, to work for self, to seek the highest place; and often this results in evil surmisings and bitterness of spirit. The ordinance preceding the Lord's Supper is to clear away these misunderstandings, to bring man out of his selfishness, down from his stilts of self-exaltation, to the humility of heart that will lead him to serve his brother.

[301] The holy Watcher from heaven is present at this season to make it one of soul searching, of conviction of sin, and of the blessed assurance of sins forgiven. Christ in the fullness of His grace is there to change the current of the thoughts that have been running in selfish channels. The Holy Spirit quickens the sensibilities of those who follow the example of their Lord. As the Saviour's humiliation for us is remembered, thought links with thought; a chain of memories is called up, memories of God's great goodness and of the favor and tenderness of earthly friends.

Whenever this ordinance is rightly celebrated, the children of God are brought into a holy relationship, to help and bless each other. They covenant that the life shall be given to unselfish ministry. And this, not only for one another. Their field of labor is as wide as their Master's was. The world is full of those who need our ministry.

The poor, the helpless, the ignorant, are on every hand. Those who have communed with Christ in the upper chamber will go forth to minister as He did.

Jesus, the served of all, came to be the servant of all. And because He ministered to all, He will again be served and honored by all. And those who would partake of His divine attributes, and share with Him the joy of seeing souls redeemed, must follow His example of unselfish ministry.

### **A Reminder of Christ's Second Coming**

As they were gathered about the table, He said in tones of touching sadness, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come." [Luke 22:15-18](#).

But the Communion service was not to be a season of sorrowing. This was not its purpose. As the Lord's disciples gather about His table, they are not to remember and lament their shortcomings. They are not to dwell upon their past religious experience, whether that experience has been elevating or depressing. They are not to recall the differences between them and their brethren. The preparatory service has embraced all this. The self-examination, the confession of sin, the reconciling of differences, has all been done.

Now they come to meet with Christ. They are not to stand in the shadow of the cross, but in its saving light. They are to open the soul to the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. With hearts cleansed by Christ's most precious blood, in full consciousness of His presence, although unseen, they are to hear His words, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." [John 14:27](#).

As we receive the bread and wine symbolizing Christ's broken body and spilled blood, we in imagination join in the scene of Communion in the upper chamber. We seem to be passing through the garden consecrated by the agony of Him who bore the sins of

[302] the world. We witness the struggle by which our reconciliation with God was obtained. Christ is set forth crucified among us.

Looking upon the crucified Redeemer, we more fully comprehend the magnitude and meaning of the sacrifice made by the Majesty of heaven. The plan of salvation is glorified before us, and the thought of Calvary awakens living and sacred emotions in our hearts. Praise to God and the Lamb will be in our hearts and on our lips; for pride and self-worship cannot flourish in the soul that keeps fresh in memory the scenes of Calvary.

As faith contemplates our Lord's great sacrifice, the soul assimilates the spiritual life of Christ. That soul will receive spiritual strength from every Communion. The service forms a living connection by which the believer is bound up with Christ, and thus bound up with the Father. In a special sense it forms a connection between dependent human beings and God.

The Communion service points to Christ's second coming. It was designed to keep this hope vivid in the minds of the disciples. Whenever they met together to commemorate His death, they recounted how "He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." In their tribulation they found comfort in the hope of their Lord's return. Unspeakably precious to them was the thought, "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come." [1 Corinthians 11:26](#).

These are the things we are never to forget. The love of Jesus, with its constraining power, is to be kept fresh in our memory. Christ has instituted this service that it may speak to our senses of the love of God that has been expressed in our behalf. There can be no union between our souls and God except through Christ. The union and love between brother and brother must be cemented and rendered eternal by the love of Jesus. And nothing less than the death of Christ could make His love efficacious for us. It is only because



of His death that we can look with joy to His second coming. His sacrifice is the center of our hope. Upon this we must fix our faith.<sup>546</sup>

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<sup>546</sup>The Desire of Ages, 643-661

## Chapter 54—Prayer for the Sick

The Scripture says that “men ought always to pray, and not to faint;” [Luke 18:1](#); and if ever there is a time when they feel their need of prayer, it is when strength fails and life itself seems slipping from their grasp. Often those who are in health forget the wonderful mercies continued to them day by day, year after year, and they render no tribute of praise to God for His benefits. But when sickness comes, God is remembered. When human strength fails, men feel their need of divine help. And never does our merciful God turn from the soul that in sincerity seeks Him for help. He is our refuge in sickness as in health.

Christ is the same compassionate physician now that He was during His earthly ministry. In Him there is healing balm for every disease, restoring power for every infirmity. His disciples in this time are to pray for the sick as verily as the disciples of old prayed. And recoveries will follow; for “the prayer of faith shall save the sick.” We have the Holy Spirit’s power, the calm assurance of faith, that can claim God’s promises. The Lord’s promise, “They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover,” [Mark 16:18](#), is just as trustworthy now as in the days of the apostles. It presents the privilege of God’s children, and our faith should lay hold of all that it embraces. Christ’s servants are the channel of His working, and through them He desires to exercise His healing power. It is our work to present the sick and suffering to God in the arms of our faith. We should teach them to believe in the Great Healer. The Saviour would have us encourage the sick, the hopeless, the afflicted, to take hold upon His strength.

### Conditions of Answered Prayer

But only as we live in obedience to His word can we claim the fulfillment of His promises. The psalmist says, “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” [Psalm 66:18](#). If we render

to Him only a partial, halfhearted obedience, His promises will not be fulfilled to us.

In the word of God we have instruction relative to special prayer for the recovery of the sick. But the offering of such prayer is a most solemn act, and should not be entered upon without careful consideration. In many cases of prayer for the healing of the sick, that which is called faith is nothing less than presumption.

Many persons bring disease upon themselves by their self-indulgence. They have not lived in accordance with natural law or the principles of strict purity. Others have disregarded the laws of health in their habits of eating and drinking, dressing, or working. Often some form of vice is the cause of feebleness of mind or body. Should these persons gain the blessing of health, many of them would continue to pursue the same course of heedless transgression of God's natural and spiritual laws, reasoning that if God heals them in answer to prayer, they are at liberty to continue their unhealthful practices and to indulge perverted appetite without restraint. If God were to work a miracle in restoring these persons to health, He would be encouraging sin. [304]

It is labor lost to teach people to look to God as a healer of their infirmities, unless they are taught also to lay aside unhealthful practices. In order to receive His blessing in answer to prayer, they must cease to do evil and learn to do well. Their surroundings must be sanitary, their habits of life correct. They must live in harmony with the law of God, both natural and spiritual.

To those who desire prayer for their restoration to health, it should be made plain that the violation of God's law, either natural or spiritual, is sin, and that in order for them to receive His blessing, sin must be confessed and forsaken.

The Scripture bids us, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." [James 5:16](#). To the one asking for prayer, let thoughts like these be presented: "We cannot read the heart, or know the secrets of your life. These are known only to yourself and to God. If you repent of your sins, it is your duty to make confession of them." Sin of a private character is to be confessed to Christ, the only mediator between God and man. For "if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." [1 John 2:1](#). Every sin is an offense against God and

is to be confessed to Him through Christ. Every open sin should be as openly confessed. Wrong done to a fellow being should be made right with the one who has been offended. If any who are seeking health have been guilty of evilspeaking, if they have sowed discord in the home, the neighborhood, or the church, and have stirred up alienation and dissension, if by any wrong practice they have led others into sin, these things should be confessed before God and before those who have been offended. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." [1 John 1:9](#).

[305] When wrongs have been righted, we may present the needs of the sick to the Lord in calm faith, as His Spirit may indicate. He knows each individual by name, and cares for each as if there were not another upon the earth for whom He gave His beloved Son. Because God's love is so great and so unfailing, the sick should be encouraged to trust in Him and be cheerful. To be anxious about themselves tends to cause weakness and disease. If they will rise above depression and gloom, their prospect of recovery will be better; for "the eye of the Lord is upon them" "that hope in His mercy." [Psalm 33:18](#).

In prayer for the sick it should be remembered that "we know not what we should pray for as we ought." [Romans 8:26](#). We do not know whether the blessing we desire will be best or not. Therefore our prayers should include this thought: "Lord, thou knowest every secret of the soul. Thou art acquainted with these persons. Jesus, their Advocate, gave His life for them. His love for them is greater than ours can possibly be. If, therefore, it is for Thy glory and the good of the afflicted ones, we ask, in the name of Jesus, that they may be restored to health. If it be not Thy will that they may be restored, we ask that Thy grace may comfort and Thy presence sustain them in their sufferings."

God knows the end from the beginning. He is acquainted with the hearts of all men. He reads every secret of the soul. He knows whether those for whom prayer is offered would or would not be able to endure the trials that would come upon them should they live. He knows whether their lives would be a blessing or a curse to themselves and to the world. This is one reason why, while presenting our petitions with earnestness, we should say, "Nevertheless not

my will, but Thine, be done.” [Luke 22:42](#). Jesus added these words of submission to the wisdom and will of God when in the Garden of Gethsemane He pleaded, “O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me.” [Matthew 26:39](#). And if they were appropriate for Him, the Son of God, how much more are they becoming on the lips of finite, erring mortals!

The consistent course is to commit our desires to our all-wise heavenly Father, and then, in perfect confidence, trust all to Him. We know that God hears us if we ask according to His will. But to press our petitions without a submissive spirit is not right; our prayers must take the form, not of command, but of intercession.

There are cases where God works decidedly by His divine power in the restoration of health. But not all the sick are healed. Many are laid away to sleep in Jesus. John on the Isle of Patmos was bidden to write: “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.” [Revelation 14:13](#). From this we see that if persons are not raised to health, they should not on this account be judged as wanting in faith.

We all desire immediate and direct answers to our prayers, and are tempted to become discouraged when the answer is delayed or comes in an unlooked-for form. But God is too wise and good to answer our prayers always at just the time and in just the manner we desire. He will do more and better for us than to accomplish all our wishes. And because we can trust His wisdom and love, we should not ask Him to concede to our will, but should seek to enter into and accomplish His purpose. Our desires and interests should be lost in His will. These experiences that test faith are for our benefit. By them it is made manifest whether our faith is true and sincere, resting on the word of God alone, or whether depending on circumstances, it is uncertain and changeable. Faith is strengthened by exercise. We must let patience have its perfect work, remembering that there are precious promises in the Scriptures for those who wait upon the Lord.

Not all understand these principles. Many who seek the Lord’s healing mercy think that they must have a direct and immediate answer to their prayers or their faith is defective. For this reason, those who are weakened by disease need to be counseled wisely, that

they may act with discretion. They should not disregard their duty to the friends who may survive them, or neglect to employ nature's agencies for the restoration of health.

Often there is danger of error here. Believing that they will be healed in answer to prayer, some fear to do anything that might seem to indicate a lack of faith. But they should not neglect to set their affairs in order as they would desire to do if they expected to be removed by death. Nor should they fear to utter words of encouragement or counsel which at the parting hour they wish to speak to their loved ones.

Those who seek healing by prayer should not neglect to make use of the remedial agencies within their reach. It is not a denial of faith to use such remedies as God has provided to alleviate pain and to aid nature in her work of restoration. It is no denial of faith to co-operate with God, and to place themselves in the condition most favorable to recovery. God has put it in our power to obtain a knowledge of the laws of life. This knowledge has been placed within our reach for use. We should employ every facility for the restoration of health, taking every advantage possible, working in harmony with natural laws. When we have prayed for the recovery of the sick, we can work with all the more energy, thanking God that we have the privilege of co-operating with Him, and asking His blessing on the means which He Himself has provided.

We have the sanction of the word of God for the use of remedial agencies. Hezekiah, king of Israel, was sick, and a prophet of God brought him the message that he should die. He cried unto the Lord, and the Lord heard His servant and sent him a message that fifteen years should be added to his life. Now, one word from God would have healed Hezekiah instantly; but special directions were given, "Let them take a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaster upon the boil, and he shall recover." [Isaiah 38:21](#).

When we have prayed for the recovery of the sick, whatever the outcome of the case, let us not lose faith in God. If we are called upon to meet bereavement, let us accept the bitter cup, remembering that a Father's hand holds it to our lips. But should health be restored, it should not be forgotten that the recipient of healing mercy is placed under renewed obligation to the Creator. When the ten lepers were cleansed, only one returned to find Jesus and give Him glory. Let

none of us be like the unthinking nine, whose hearts were untouched by the mercy of God. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” [James 1:17](#).<sup>547</sup>

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<sup>547</sup>The Ministry of Healing, 225-233

## Chapter 55—The Medical Work

Medical missionary work is the pioneer work of the gospel, the door through which the truth for this time is to find entrance to many homes. God's people are to be genuine medical missionaries, for they are to learn to minister to the needs of both soul and body. The purest unselfishness is to be shown by our workers as, with the knowledge and experience gained by practical work, they go out to give treatments to the sick. As they go from house to house they will find access to many hearts. Many will be reached who otherwise never would have heard the gospel message. A demonstration of the principles of health reform will do much toward removing prejudice against our evangelical work. The Great Physician, the originator of medical missionary work, will bless all who thus seek to impart the truth for this time.

Physical healing is bound up with the gospel commission. When Christ sent His disciples out on their first missionary journey, He bade them, "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." [Matthew 10:7, 8](#).

The divine commission needs no reform. Christ's way of presenting truth cannot be improved upon. The Saviour gave the disciples practical lessons, teaching them how to work in such a way as to make souls glad in the truth. He sympathized with the weary, the heavy-laden, the oppressed. He fed the hungry and healed the sick. Constantly He went about doing good. By the good He accomplished, by His loving words and kindly deeds, He interpreted the gospel to men.

Christ's work in behalf of man is not finished. It continues today. In like manner His ambassadors are to preach the gospel and to reveal His pitying love for lost and perishing souls. By an unselfish interest in those who need help they are to give a practical demonstration of the truth of the gospel. Much more than mere sermonizing is included in this work. The evangelization of the world is the work



God has given to those who go forth in His name. They are to be colaborers with Christ, revealing to those ready to perish His tender, pitying love. God calls for thousands to work for Him, not by preaching to those who know the truth for this time, but by warning those who have never heard the last message of mercy. Work with a heart filled with an earnest longing for souls. Do medical missionary work. Thus you will gain access to the hearts of people, and the way will be prepared for a more decided proclamation of the truth.<sup>548</sup>

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### **Institutions to Be Established**

There are many places that need gospel medical missionary work, and there small plants should be established. God designs that our sanitariums shall be a means of reaching high and low, rich and poor. They are to be so conducted that by their work attention may be called to the message God has sent to the world.<sup>549</sup>

The ministry to the physical and the spiritual are to blend, leading the afflicted ones to trust in the power of the heavenly Physician. Those who, while giving the proper treatments, will also pray for the healing grace of Christ, will inspire faith in the minds of the patients. Their own course will be an inspiration to those who supposed their cases to be hopeless.

This is why our sanitariums were established—to give courage to the hopeless by uniting the prayer of faith with proper treatment, and instruction in physical and spiritual right living. Through such ministrations many are to be converted. The physicians in our sanitariums are to give the clear gospel message of soul healing.<sup>550</sup>

### **The Pioneer Work of the Gospel**

If we would elevate the moral standard in any country where we may be called to go, we must begin by correcting their physical habits.<sup>551</sup>

Medical missionary work brings to humanity the gospel of release from suffering. It is the pioneer work of the gospel. It is the

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<sup>548</sup>Counsels on Health, 497-499

<sup>549</sup>Counsels on Health, 501

<sup>550</sup>Medical Ministry, 248

<sup>551</sup>Counsels on Health, 505

gospel practiced, the compassion of Christ revealed. Of this work there is great need, and the world is open for it. God grant that the importance of medical missionary work shall be understood, and that new fields may be immediately entered. Then will the work of the ministry be after the Lord's order; the sick will be healed, and poor, suffering humanity will be blessed.<sup>552</sup>

You will meet with much prejudice, a great deal of false zeal and miscalled piety; but in both the home and the foreign field you will find more hearts that God has been preparing for the seed of truth than you imagine, and they will hail with joy the divine message when it is presented to them.<sup>553</sup>

The medical missionary work has never been presented to me in any other way than as bearing the same relation to the work as a whole as the arm does to the body. The gospel ministry is an organization for the proclamation of the truth and the carrying forward of the work for sick and well. This is the body, the medical missionary work is the arm, and Christ is the head over all. Thus the matter has been presented to me.

[310]

Begin to do medical missionary work with the conveniences which you have at hand. You will find that thus the way will open for you to hold Bible readings. The heavenly Father will place you in connection with those who need to know how to treat their sick ones. Put into practice what you know regarding the treatment of disease. Thus suffering will be relieved, and you will have opportunity to break the bread of life to starving souls.<sup>554</sup>

### **A Work in Which All Are to Unite**

Ministers of the gospel are to unite with the medical missionary work, which has ever been presented to me as the work which is to break down the prejudice which exists in our world against the truth.

A gospel minister will be twice as successful in his work if he understands how to treat disease.

To take people right where they are, whatever their position, whatever their condition, and help them in every way possible—this

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<sup>552</sup>Medical Ministry, 239

<sup>553</sup>Counsels on Health, 502

<sup>554</sup>Medical Ministry, 237, 239

is gospel ministry. It may be necessary for ministers to go into the homes of the sick and say, "I am ready to help you, and I will do the best I can. I am not a physician, but I am a minister, and I like to minister to the sick and afflicted." Those who are sick in body are nearly always sick in soul, and when the soul is sick, the body is made sick.

There is to be no division between the ministry and the medical work. The physician should labor equally with the minister, and with as much earnestness and thoroughness for the salvation of the soul as well as for the restoration of the body. Some, who do not see the advantage of educating the youth to be physicians both of the mind and of the body, say that the tithe should not be used to support medical missionaries, who devote their time to treating the sick. In response to such statements as these, I am instructed to say that the mind must not become so narrowed down that it cannot take in the truth of the situation. A minister of the gospel who is also a medical missionary, who can cure physical ailments, is a much more efficient worker than one who cannot do this. His work as a minister of the gospel is much more complete.

The Lord has declared that the educated physician will find entrance in our cities where other men cannot. Teach the message of health reform. This will have an influence with the people.

The presenting of Bible principles by an intelligent physician will have great weight with many people. There is efficiency and power with one who can combine in his influence the work of a physician and of a gospel minister. His work commends itself to the good judgment of the people.

And thus should our physicians labor. They are doing the Lord's work when they labor as evangelists, giving instruction as to how the soul may be healed by the Lord Jesus. Every physician should know how to pray in faith for the sick, as well as to administer the proper treatment. At the same time he should labor as one of God's ministers, to teach repentance and conversion, and the salvation of soul and body. Such a combination of labor will broaden his experience, and greatly enlarge his influence.<sup>555</sup>

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<sup>555</sup>Medical Ministry, 237-247

[311]

**The Medical Work Will Open Doors to the Truth**

There are many lines of work to be carried forward by the missionary nurse. There are openings for well-trained nurses to go among families and seek to awaken an interest in the truth. In almost every community there are large numbers who do not attend any religious service. If they are reached by the gospel, it must be carried to their homes. Often the relief of their physical needs is the only avenue by which they can be approached. As missionary nurses care for the sick and relieve the distress of the poor, they will find many opportunities to pray with them, to read to them from God's word, to speak of the Saviour. They can pray with and for the helpless ones who have not strength of will to control the appetites that passion has degraded. They can bring a ray of hope into the lives of the defeated and disheartened. Their unselfish love, manifested in acts of disinterested kindness, will make it easier for these suffering ones to believe in the love of Christ.

I have been shown that the medical missionary work will discover, in the very depths of degradation, men who once possessed fine minds, richest qualifications, who will be rescued by proper labor from their fallen condition. It is the truth as it is in Jesus that is to be brought before human minds after they have been sympathetically cared for and their physical necessities met. The Holy Spirit is working and cooperating with the human agencies that are laboring for such souls, and some will appreciate the foundation upon a rock for their religious faith.

The right hand is used to open doors through which the body may find entrance. This is the part the medical missionary work is to act. It is to largely prepare the way for the reception of the truth for this time. A body without hands is useless. In giving honor to the body, honor must also be given to the helping hands, which are agencies of such importance that without them the body can do nothing. Therefore the body which treats indifferently the right hand, refusing its aid, is able to accomplish nothing.

Living the gospel, maintaining its principles—this is a savor of life unto life. Doors that have been closed to him who merely preaches the gospel, will be opened to the intelligent medical missionary. God reaches hearts through the relief of physical suffering.

A seed of truth is dropped into the mind, and is watered by God. Much patience may be required before this seed shows signs of life, but at last it springs up, and bears fruit unto eternal life.<sup>556</sup>

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<sup>556</sup>Medical Ministry, 238-247

## Chapter 56—Relations With Those Not of Our Persuasion

The question may be asked, Are we to have no union whatever with the world? The word of the Lord is to be our guide. Any connection with infidels and unbelievers that would identify us with them, is forbidden by the Word. We are to come out from among them, and be separate. In no case are we to link ourselves with them in their plans of work. But we are not to live reclusive lives. We are to do worldlings all the good we possibly can.

Christ has given us an example of this. When invited to eat with publicans and sinners, He did not refuse; for in no other way than by mingling with them could He reach this class. But on every occasion He opened up themes of conversation which brought things of eternal interest to their minds. And He enjoins us, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” [Matthew 5:16.](#)<sup>557</sup>

The society of unbelievers will do us no harm if we mingle with them for the purpose of connecting them with God and are strong enough spiritually to withstand their influence.

Christ came into the world to save it, to connect fallen man with the infinite God. Christ’s followers are to be channels of light. Maintaining communion with God, they are to transmit to those in darkness and error the choice blessings which they receive of heaven. Enoch did not become polluted with the iniquities existing in his day; why need we in our day? But we may, like our Master, have compassion for suffering humanity, pity for the unfortunate, and a generous consideration for the feelings and necessities of the needy, the troubled, and the despairing.<sup>558</sup>

I pray that my brethren may realize that the third angel’s message means much to us and that the observance of the true Sabbath is to be the sign that distinguishes those who serve God from those who

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<sup>557</sup>[Gospel Workers, 394](#)

<sup>558</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:113](#)

serve Him not. Let those who have become sleepy and indifferent awake.

We are called to be holy, and we should carefully avoid giving the impression that it is of little consequence whether or not we retain the peculiar features of our faith. Upon us rests the solemn obligation of taking a more decided stand for truth and righteousness than we have taken in the past. The line of demarcation between those who keep the commandments of God and those who do not is to be revealed with unmistakable clearness. We are conscientiously to honor God, diligently using every means of keeping in covenant relation with Him, that we may receive His blessings, the blessings so essential for the people who are to be so severely tried. [313]

To give the impression that our faith, our religion, is not a dominating power in our lives is greatly to dishonor God. Thus we turn from His commandments, which are our life, denying that He is our God and that we are His people.<sup>559</sup>

### **Speaking to Ministers and Groups of Other Denominations**

You may have opportunity to speak in other churches. In improving these opportunities, remember the words of the Saviour, "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." Do not arouse the malignity of the enemy by making denunciatory speeches. Thus you will close doors against the entrance of truth. Clear-cut messages are to be borne. But guard against arousing antagonism. There are many souls to be saved. Restrain all harsh expressions. In word and deed be wise unto salvation, representing Christ to all with whom you come in contact. Let all see that your feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace and good will to men. Wonderful are the results we shall see if we enter into the work imbued with the Spirit of Christ. Help will come in our necessity if we carry the work forward in righteousness, mercy, and love. Truth will triumph, and bear away the victory.<sup>560</sup>

We have a work to do for the ministers of other churches. God wants them to be saved. They, like ourselves, can have immortality only through faith and obedience. We must labor for them earnestly

<sup>559</sup>Testimonies for the Church 7:108

<sup>560</sup>Evangelism, 563, 564

that they may obtain it. God wants them to have a part in His special work for this time. He wants them to be among the number who are giving to His household meat in due season. Why should they not be engaged in this work? Our ministers should seek to come near to the ministers of other denominations. Pray for and with these men, for whom Christ is interceding. A solemn responsibility is theirs. As Christ's messengers we should manifest a deep, earnest interest in these shepherds of the flock.<sup>561</sup>

Our ministers are to make it their special work to labor for ministers. They are not to get into controversy with them, but, with their Bible in their hand, urge them to study the Word. If this is done, there are many ministers now preaching error, who will preach the truth for this time.<sup>562</sup>

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<sup>561</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:77, 78

<sup>562</sup>Evangelism, 562



## Chapter 57—Our Relations to Civil Rulers and Laws

[314]

The apostle plainly outlined the attitude that believers should sustain toward the civil authorities: “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.” [1 Peter 2:13-17](#).<sup>563</sup>

We have men placed over us for rulers, and laws to govern the people. Were it not for these laws, the condition of the world would be worse than it is now. Some of these laws are good, others are bad. The bad have been increasing, and we are yet to be brought into strait places. But God will sustain His people in being firm and living up to the principles of His Word.<sup>564</sup>

I saw that it is our duty in every case to obey the laws of our land, unless they conflict with the higher law which God spoke with an audible voice from Sinai, and afterward engraved on stone with His own finger. “I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people.” He who has God’s law written in the heart will obey God rather than men, and will sooner disobey all men than deviate in the least from the commandment of God. God’s people, taught by the inspiration of truth, and led by a good conscience to live by every word of God, will take His law, written in their hearts, as the only authority which they can acknowledge or consent to obey. The wisdom and authority of the divine law are supreme.<sup>565</sup>

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<sup>563</sup>[The Acts of the Apostles, 522](#)

<sup>564</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 1:201](#)

<sup>565</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 1:361](#)

The government under which Jesus lived was corrupt and oppressive; on every hand were crying abuses—extortion, intolerance, and grinding cruelty. Yet the Saviour attempted no civil reforms. He attacked no national abuses, nor condemned the national enemies. He did not interfere with the authority or administration of those in power. He who was our example kept aloof from earthly governments. Not because He was indifferent to the woes of men, but because the remedy did not lie in merely human and external measures. To be efficient, the cure must reach men individually, and must regenerate the heart.<sup>566</sup>

[315] Again and again Christ had been asked to decide legal and political questions. But He refused to interfere in temporal matters. Christ stood in our world as the Head of the great spiritual kingdom that He came to our world to establish—the kingdom of righteousness. His teaching made plain the ennobling, sanctifying principles that govern this kingdom. He showed that justice and mercy and love are the controlling powers in Jehovah’s kingdom.<sup>567</sup>

The spies came to Him, and with apparent sincerity, as though desiring to know their duty, said, “Master, we know that Thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest Thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly: is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no?”

Christ’s reply was no evasion, but a candid answer to the question. Holding in His hand the Roman coin, upon which were stamped the name and image of Caesar, He declared that since they were living under the protection of the Roman power, they should render to that power the support it claimed, so long as this did not conflict with a higher duty.

When the Pharisees heard Christ’s answer, “they marveled, and left Him, and went their way.” He had rebuked their hypocrisy and presumption, and in doing this He had stated a great principle, a principle that clearly defines the limits of man’s duty to the civil government and his duty to God.<sup>568</sup>

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<sup>566</sup>The Desire of Ages, 509

<sup>567</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:218

<sup>568</sup>The Desire of Ages, 601-603

## Oath Taking

I saw that some of God's children have made a mistake in regard to oath taking, and Satan has taken advantage of this to oppress them, and take from them their Lord's money. I saw that the words of our Lord, "Swear not at all," do not touch the judicial oath. "Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." This refers to common conversation. Some exaggerate in their language. Some swear by their own life; others swear by their head—as sure as they live; as sure as they have a head. Some take heaven and earth to witness that such things are so. Some hope that God will strike them out of existence if what they are saying is not true. It is this kind of common swearing against which Jesus warns His disciples.

I saw that the Lord still has something to do with the laws of the land. While Jesus is in the sanctuary, God's restraining Spirit is felt by rulers and people. But Satan controls to a great extent the mass of the world, and were it not for the laws of the land, we should experience much suffering. I was shown that when it is actually necessary, and they are called upon to testify in a lawful manner, it is no violation of God's word for His children to solemnly take God to witness that what they say is the truth, and nothing but the truth.

I saw that if there is anyone on earth who can consistently testify under oath, it is the Christian. He lives in the light of God's countenance. He grows strong in His strength. And when matters of importance must be decided by law, there is no one who can so well appeal to God as the Christian. I was bidden by the angel to notice that God swears by Himself.<sup>569</sup>

[316]

## Excitement Concerning Politics

Those who teach the Bible in our churches and our schools are not at liberty to unite in making apparent their prejudices for or against political men or measures, because by so doing they stir up the minds of others, leading each to advocate his favorite theory. There are among those professing to believe present truth, some

<sup>569</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 1:201-203](#)

who will thus be stirred up to express their sentiments and political preferences, so that division will be brought into the church.

The Lord would have His people bury political questions. On these themes silence is eloquence. Christ calls upon His followers to come into unity on the pure gospel principles which are plainly revealed in the word of God. We cannot with safety vote for political parties; for we do not know whom we are voting for. We cannot with safety take part in any political scheme.

Those who are Christians indeed will be branches of the true vine, and will bear the same fruit as the vine. They will act in harmony, in Christian fellowship. They will not wear political badges, but the badge of Christ.

What are we to do, then?—Let political questions alone.

There is a large vineyard to be cultivated; but while Christians are to work among unbelievers, they are not to appear like worldlings. They are not to spend their time talking politics or acting politics; for by so doing they give the enemy opportunity to come in and cause variance and discord.

God's children are to separate themselves from politics, from any alliance with unbelievers. Do not take part in political strife. Separate from the world, and refrain from bringing into the church or school ideas that will lead to contention and disorder. Dissension is the moral poison taken into the system by human beings who are selfish.<sup>570</sup>

### **Danger in Making Unguarded Statements**

Teach the people to conform in all things to the laws of their state when they can do so without conflicting with the law of God.<sup>571</sup>

By some of our brethren many things have been spoken and written that are interpreted as expressing antagonism to government and law. It is a mistake thus to lay ourselves open to misunderstanding. It is not wise to find fault continually with what is done by the rulers of government. It is not our work to attack individuals or institutions. We should exercise great care lest we be understood as putting ourselves in opposition to the civil authorities. It is true that

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<sup>570</sup>Gospel Workers, 391-395

<sup>571</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:238

our warfare is aggressive, but our weapons are to be those found in a plain “Thus saith the Lord.” Our work is to prepare a people to stand in the great day of God. We should not be turned aside to lines that will encourage controversy or arouse antagonism in those not of our faith. [317]

The time will come when unguarded expressions of a denunciatory character, that have been carelessly spoken or written by our brethren, will be used by our enemies to condemn us. These will not be used merely to condemn those who made the statements, but will be charged upon the whole body of Adventists. Our accusers will say that on such and such a day one of our responsible men said thus and so against the administration of the laws of this government. Many will be astonished to see how many things have been cherished and remembered that will give point to the arguments of our adversaries. Many will be surprised to hear their own words strained into a meaning that they did not intend them to have. Then let our workers be careful to speak guardedly at all times and under all circumstances. Let all beware lest by reckless expressions they bring on a time of trouble before the great crisis which is to try men’s souls.

We should remember that the world will judge us by what we appear to be. Let those who are seeking to represent Christ be careful not to exhibit inconsistent features of character. Before we come fully to the front, let us see to it that the Holy Spirit is poured upon us from on high. When this is the case, we shall give a decided message, but it will be of a far less condemnatory character than that which some have been giving; and all who believe will be far more earnest for the salvation of our opponents. Let God have the matter of condemning authorities and governments wholly in His own keeping. In meekness and love let us as faithful sentinels defend the principles of truth as it is in Jesus.<sup>572</sup>

### **Sunday Laws**

Religious powers, allied to heaven by profession, and claiming to have the characteristics of a lamb, will show by their acts that they have the heart of a dragon and that they are instigated and

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<sup>572</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:394-397](#)

controlled by Satan. The time is coming when God's people will feel the hand of persecution because they keep holy the seventh day. Satan has caused the change of the Sabbath in the hope of carrying out his purpose for the defeat of God's plans. He seeks to make the commands of God of less force in the world than human laws. The man of sin, who thought to change times and laws, and who has always oppressed the people of God, will cause laws to be made enforcing the observance of the first day of the week. But God's people are to stand firm for Him. And the Lord will work in their behalf, showing plainly that He is the God of gods.

[318] The law for the observance of the first day of the week is the production of an apostate Christendom. Sunday is a child of the papacy, exalted by the Christian world above the sacred day of God's rest. In no case are God's people to pay it homage. But I wish them to understand that they are not doing God's will by braving opposition when He wishes them to avoid it. Thus they create prejudice so bitter that it is impossible for the truth to be proclaimed. Make no demonstration on Sunday in defiance of law. If this is done in one place, and you are humiliated, the same thing will be done in another place. We can use Sunday as a day on which to carry forward work that will tell on the side of Christ. We are to do our best, working with all meekness and lowliness.

When we devote Sunday to missionary work, the whip will be taken out of the hands of the arbitrary zealots who would be well pleased to humiliate Seventh-day Adventists. When they see that we employ ourselves on Sunday in visiting the people and opening the Scriptures to them, they will know that it is useless for them to try to hinder our work by making Sunday laws.

Sunday can be used for carrying forward various lines of work that will accomplish much for the Lord. On this day open-air meetings and cottage meetings can be held. House-to-house work can be done. Those who write can devote this day to writing their articles. Whenever it is possible, let religious services be held on Sunday. Make these meetings intensely interesting. Sing genuine revival hymns, and speak with power and assurance of the Saviour's love. Speak on temperance and on true religious experience. You will thus learn much about how to work, and will reach many souls.

Let the teachers in our schools devote Sunday to missionary effort. I was instructed that they would thus be able to defeat the purposes of the enemy. Let the teachers take the students with them to hold meetings for those who know not the truth. Thus they will accomplish much more than they could in any other way.

The people must be given the truth, straightforward, positive truth. But this truth is to be presented in the spirit of Christ. We are to be as sheep in the midst of wolves. Those who will not, for Christ's sake, observe the cautions He has given, who will not exercise patience and self-control, will lose precious opportunities of working for the Master. The Lord has not given His people the work of making a tirade against those who are transgressing His law. In no case are we to make a raid on the other churches.

We are to do all we can to remove the prejudice that exists in the minds of many against our work and against the Bible Sabbath.<sup>573</sup>

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<sup>573</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:229-238

## Chapter 58—Satan's Deceptive Work

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

If Satan sees that he is in danger of losing one soul, he will exert himself to the utmost to keep that one. And when the individual is aroused to his danger, and, with distress and fervor, looks to Jesus for strength, Satan fears that he will lose a captive, and he calls a reinforcement of his angels to hedge in the poor soul, and form a wall of darkness around him, that heaven's light may not reach him. But if the one in danger perseveres, and in his helplessness casts himself upon the merits of the blood of Christ, our Saviour listens to the earnest prayer of faith, and sends a reinforcement of those angels that excel in strength to deliver him.

Satan cannot endure to have his powerful rival appealed to, for he fears and trembles before His strength and majesty. At the sound of fervent prayer, Satan's whole host trembles. He continues to call legions of evil angels to accomplish his object. And when angels, all-powerful, clothed with the armory of heaven, come to the help of the fainting, pursued soul, Satan and his host fall back, well knowing that their battle is lost. The willing subjects of Satan are faithful, active, and united in one object. And although they hate and war with one another, yet they improve every opportunity to advance



their common interest. But the great Commander in heaven and earth has limited Satan's power.<sup>574</sup>

### Danger in Venturing From the Protection of Heaven

Angels of God will preserve His people while they walk in the path of duty, but there is no assurance of such protection for those who deliberately venture upon Satan's ground. An agent of the great deceiver will say and do anything to gain his object. It matters little whether he calls himself a spiritualist, an "electric physician," or a "magnetic healer." By specious pretenses he wins the confidence of the unwary. He pretends to read the life history and to understand all the difficulties and afflictions of those who resort to him. Disguising himself as an angel of light, while the blackness of the pit is in his heart, he manifests great interest in women who seek his counsel. He tells them that all their troubles are due to an unhappy marriage. This may be too true, but such a counselor does not better their condition. He tells them that they need love and sympathy. Pretending great interest in their welfare, he casts a spell over his unsuspecting victims, charming them as the serpent charms the trembling bird. Soon they are completely in his power; sin, disgrace, and ruin are the terrible sequel. [320]

These workers of iniquity are not few. Their path is marked by desolated homes, blasted reputations, and broken hearts. But of all this the world knows little; still they go on making fresh victims, and Satan exults in the ruin he has wrought.<sup>575</sup>

"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](#).

<sup>574</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:345, 346

<sup>575</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:198

The history of King Ahaziah's sin and punishment has a lesson of warning which none can disregard with impunity. Though we do not pay homage to heathen gods, yet thousands are worshipping at Satan's shrine as verily as did the king of Israel. The very spirit of heathen idolatry is rife today, though under the influence of science and education it has assumed a more refined and attractive form. Every day adds sorrowful evidence that faith in the sure word of prophecy is fast decreasing, and that in its stead superstition and satanic witchery are captivating the minds of men. All who do not earnestly search the Scriptures and submit every desire and purpose of life to that unerring test, all who do not seek God in prayer for a knowledge of His will, will surely wander from the right path and fall under the deception of Satan.

[321] The Hebrews were the only nation favored with a knowledge of the true God. When the king of Israel sent to inquire of a pagan oracle, he proclaimed to the heathen that he had more confidence in their idols than in the God of his people, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. In the same manner do those who profess to have a knowledge of God's word dishonor Him when they turn from the Source of strength and wisdom to ask help or counsel from the powers of darkness. If God's wrath was kindled by such a course on the part of a wicked, idolatrous king, how can He regard a similar course pursued by those who profess to be His servants?<sup>576</sup>

### **No Man Can Serve Two Masters**

Christ has brought before us two masters, God and the world, and has plainly presented the fact that it is simply impossible for us to serve both. If our interest in, and love for, this world predominate, we shall not appreciate the things, which, above all others, are worthy of our attention. The love of the world will exclude the love of God and make our highest interests subordinate to worldly considerations. Thus God will not hold so exalted a place in our affections and devotions as do the things of the world.

Satan deals with men more guardedly than he dealt with Christ in the wilderness of temptation, for he is admonished that he there lost his case. He is a conquered foe. He does not come to man

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<sup>576</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:191, 192, 196

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directly and demand homage by outward worship. He simply asks men to place their affections upon the good things of this world. If he succeeds in engaging the mind and affections, the heavenly attractions are eclipsed. All he wants of man is for him to fall under the deceitful power of his temptations, to love the world, to love rank and position, to love money, and to place his affections upon earthly treasures. If he secures this, he gains all that he asked of Christ.<sup>577</sup>

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<sup>577</sup>Testimonies for the Church 3:478, 480

[322] **Chapter 59—False Science—Satan’s Modern Robe of Light**

False science is one of the agencies that Satan used in the heavenly courts, and it is used by him today. The false assertions that he made to the angels, his subtle scientific theories, seduced many of them from their loyalty.

Having lost his place in heaven, Satan presented his temptations to our first parents. Adam and Eve yielded to the enemy, and by their disobedience humanity was estranged from God, and the earth was separated from heaven.

If Adam and Eve had never touched the forbidden tree, the Lord would have imparted to them knowledge, knowledge upon which rested no curse of sin, knowledge that would have brought them everlasting joy. All that they gained by their disobedience was an acquaintance with sin and its results.

The field into which Satan led our first parents is the same to which he is leading men today. He is flooding the world with pleasing fables. By every device at his command he seeks to prevent men from obtaining that knowledge of God which is salvation.<sup>578</sup>

### **When Error Appears as Light**

We are living in an age of great light; but much that is called light is opening the way for the wisdom and arts of Satan. Many things will be presented that appear to be true, and yet they need to be carefully considered with much prayer; for they may be specious devices of the enemy. The path of error often appears to lie close to the path of truth. It is hardly distinguishable from the path that leads to holiness and heaven. But the mind enlightened by the Holy Spirit may discern that it is diverging from the right way. After a while the two are seen to be widely separated.

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<sup>578</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 8:290](#)

The theory that God is an essence pervading all nature is one of Satan's most subtle devices. It misrepresents God and is a dishonor to His greatness and majesty.

Pantheistic theories are not sustained by the Word of God. The light of His truth shows that these theories are soul-destroying agencies. Darkness is their element, sensuality their sphere. They gratify the natural heart and give license to inclination. Separation from God is the result of accepting them.

Our condition through sin has become preternatural, and the power that restores us must be supernatural, else it has no value. There is but one power that can break the hold of evil from the hearts of men, and that is the power of God in Jesus Christ. Only through the blood of the Crucified One is there cleansing from sin. His grace alone can enable us to resist and subdue the tendencies of our fallen nature. This power the spiritualistic theories concerning God<sup>579</sup> make of no effect. If God is an essence pervading all nature, then He dwells in all men; and in order to attain holiness, man has only to develop the power that is within him.

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These theories, followed to their logical conclusion, sweep away the whole Christian economy. They do away with the necessity for the atonement and make man his own savior. These theories regarding God make His word of no effect, and those who accept them are in great danger of being led finally to look upon the whole Bible as a fiction. They may regard virtue as better than vice; but God being removed from His position of sovereignty, they place their dependence upon human power, which, without God, is worthless. The unaided human will has no real power to resist and overcome evil. The defenses of the soul are broken down. Man has no barrier against sin. When once the restraints of God's word and His Spirit are rejected, we know not to what depths one may sink.

Those who continue to hold these spiritualistic theories will surely spoil their Christian experience, sever their connection with God, and lose eternal life.<sup>580</sup>

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<sup>579</sup>\* A teaching that has as its foundation the principle that God is the good that is everywhere and in everything.—The Compilers.

<sup>580</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 8:290-292](#)

### **An Attempt to Deceive the Very Elect**

The sophistries regarding God and nature that are flooding the world with skepticism are the inspiration of the fallen foe, who is himself a Bible student, who knows the truth that it is essential for the people to receive, and whose study it is to divert minds from the great truths given to prepare them for what is coming upon the world.

After the passing of the time in 1844, we had fanaticism of every kind to meet. Testimonies of reproof were given me to bear to some holding spiritualistic theories.

Ungodly teaching is followed by sinful practice. It is the seducing bait of the father of lies, and results in the impenitence of self-satisfied impurity.

The experience of the past will be repeated. In the future, Satan's superstitions will assume new forms. Errors will be presented in a pleasing and flattering manner. False theories, clothed with garments of light, will be presented to God's people. Thus Satan will try to deceive, if possible, the very elect. Most seducing influences will be exerted; minds will be hypnotized.

[324] Corruptions of every type, similar to those existing among the antediluvians, will be brought in to take minds captive. The exaltation of nature as God, the unrestrained license of the human will, the counsel of the ungodly—these Satan uses as agencies to bring about certain ends. He will employ the power of mind over mind to carry out his designs. The most sorrowful thought of all is that under his deceptive influence men will have a form of godliness, without having a real connection with God. Like Adam and Eve, who ate the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, many are even now feeding upon the deceptive morsels of error.

Satanic agencies are clothing false theories in an attractive garb, even as Satan in the Garden of Eden concealed his identity from our first parents by speaking through the serpent. These agencies are instilling into human minds that which in reality is deadly error. The hypnotic influence of Satan will rest upon those who turn from the plain word of God to pleasing fables.

It is those who have had the most light that Satan most assiduously seeks to ensnare. He knows that if he can deceive them, they

will, under his control, clothe sin with garments of righteousness, and lead many astray.

I say to all: Be on your guard; for as an angel of light Satan is walking in every assembly of Christian workers, and in every church, trying to win the members to his side. I am bidden to give to the people of God the warning: “Be not deceived; God is not mocked.” [Galatians 6:7](#).<sup>581</sup>

### **Satan’s Plan to Make a God of Nature**

In dwelling upon the laws of matter and the laws of nature, many lose sight of, if they do not deny, the continual and direct agency of God. They convey the idea that nature acts independently of God, having in and of itself its own limits and its own powers wherewith to work. In their minds there is a marked distinction between the natural and the supernatural. The natural is ascribed to ordinary causes, unconnected with the power of God. Vital power is attributed to matter, and nature is made a deity. It is supposed that matter is placed in certain relations and left to act from fixed laws with which God Himself cannot interfere; that nature is endowed with certain properties and placed subject to laws, and is then left to itself to obey these laws and perform the work originally commanded.

This is false science; there is nothing in the word of God to sustain it. God does not annul His laws, but He is continually working through them, using them as His instruments. They are not self-working. God is perpetually at work in nature. She is His servant, directed as He pleases. Nature in her work testifies of the intelligent presence and active agency of a being who moves in all His works according to His will. It is not by an original power inherent in nature that year by year the earth yields its bounties and continues its march around the sun. The hand of infinite power is perpetually at work guiding this planet. It is God’s power momentarily exercised that keeps it in position in its rotation. [325]

The mechanism of the human body cannot be fully understood; it presents mysteries that baffle the most intelligent. It is not as the result of a mechanism, which, once set in motion, continues its work, that the pulse beats and breath follows breath. In God we live and

<sup>581</sup> [Testimonies for the Church 8:292-294](#)

move and have our being. Every breath, every throb of the heart, is a continual evidence of the power of an ever-present God.

Men of the greatest intellect cannot understand the mysteries of Jehovah as revealed in nature. Divine inspiration asks many questions which the most profound scholar cannot answer. These questions were not asked that we might answer them, but to call our attention to the deep mysteries of God and to teach us that our wisdom is limited; that in the surroundings of our daily life there are many things beyond the comprehension of finite minds; that the judgment and purposes of God are past finding out. His wisdom is unsearchable.<sup>582</sup>

The education begun here will not be completed in this life; it will be going forward throughout eternity, ever progressing, 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. 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.<sup>583</sup>

### **Warning Against Sensational Religion**

At this time we need in the cause of God spiritually minded men, men who are firm in principle and who have a clear understanding of the truth.

I have been instructed that it is not new and fanciful doctrines which the people need. They do not need human suppositions. They need the testimony of men who know and practice the truth, men who understand and obey the charge given to Timothy: "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." [2 Timothy 4:2-5](#).

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<sup>582</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 8:259-261](#)

<sup>583</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 8:328](#)



Walk firmly, decidedly, your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. You may be sure that pure and undefiled religion is not a sensational religion. God has not laid upon anyone the burden of encouraging an appetite for speculative doctrines and theories. My brethren, keep these things out of your teaching. Do not allow them to enter into your experience. Let not your lifework be marred by them.<sup>584</sup>

### **The Need of a Revival of a Spiritual Life**

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I am instructed to say to our people: Let us follow Christ. Do not forget that He is to be our pattern in all things. We may safely discard those ideas that are not found in His teaching. I appeal to our ministers to be sure that their feet are placed on the platform of eternal truth. Beware how you follow impulse, calling it the Holy Spirit. Some are in danger in this respect. I call upon them to be sound in the faith, able to give to everyone who asks a reason of the hope that is in them.

The enemy is seeking to divert the minds of our brethren and sisters from the work of preparing a people to stand in these last days. His sophistries are designed to lead minds away from the perils and duties of the hour. They estimate as nothing the light that Christ came from heaven to give to John for His people. They teach that the scenes just before us are not of sufficient importance to receive special attention. They make of no effect the truth of heavenly origin and rob the people of God of their past experience, giving them instead a false science.

“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein.” [Jeremiah 6:16](#).

The Lord calls for a renewal of the straight testimony borne in years past. He calls for a renewal of spiritual life. The spiritual energies of His people have long been torpid, but there is to be a resurrection from apparent death.

By prayer and confession of sin we must clear the King’s highway. As we do this, the power of the Spirit will come to us. We need

<sup>584</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 8:294, 295](#)

the Pentecostal energy. This will come, for the Lord has promised to send His Spirit as the all-conquering power.

Perilous times are before us. Everyone who has a knowledge of the truth should awake and place himself, body, soul, and spirit, under the discipline of God. The enemy is on our track. We must be wide awake, on our guard against him. We must put on the whole armor of God. We must follow the directions given through the spirit of prophecy. We must love and obey the truth for this time. This will save us from accepting strong delusions. God has spoken to us through His word. He has spoken to us through the testimonies to the church and through the books that have helped to make plain our present duty and the position that we should now occupy. The warnings that have been given, line upon line, precept upon precept, should be heeded. If we disregard them, what excuse can we offer?

I beseech those who are laboring for God not to accept the spurious for the genuine. Let not human reason be placed where divine, sanctifying truth should be. Christ is waiting to kindle faith and love in the hearts of His people. Let not erroneous theories receive countenance from the people who ought to be standing firm on the platform of eternal truth. God calls upon us to hold firmly to the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority.<sup>585</sup>

[327]      **The Love of and Knowledge of the Word—Our Surety**

Into the hearts of many who have been long in the truth there has entered a hard, judicial spirit. They are sharp, critical, faultfinding. They have climbed upon the judgment seat to pronounce sentence upon those who do not conform to their ideas. God calls upon them to come down and bow before Him in repentance, confessing their sins. He says to them: "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." [Revelation 2:4, 5](#). They are striving for the first place, and by their words and acts they make many hearts sore.

<sup>585</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:296-298

Christ calls upon His people to believe and practice His word. Those who receive and assimilate this word, making it a part of every action, of every attribute of character, will grow strong in the strength of God. It will be seen that their faith is of heavenly origin. They will not wander into strange paths. Their minds will not turn to a religion of sentimentalism and excitement. Before angels and before men, they will stand as those who have strong, consistent Christian characters.

In the golden censer of truth, as presented in Christ’s teachings, we have that which will convict and convert souls. Present, in the simplicity of Christ, the truths that He came to this world to proclaim, and the power of your message will make itself felt. Do not present theories or tests that Christ has never mentioned and that have no foundation in the Bible. We have grand, solemn truths to present.” It is written” is the test that must be brought home to every soul.

Let us go to the word of God for guidance. Let us seek for a “Thus saith the Lord.” We have had enough of human methods. A mind trained only in worldly science fails to understand the things of God; but the same mind, converted and sanctified, will see the divine power in the word. Only the mind and heart cleansed by the sanctification of the Spirit can discern heavenly things.<sup>586</sup>

### **Need of a Full Surrender**

Brethren, in the name of the Lord I call upon you to awake to your duty. Let your hearts be yielded to the power of the Holy Spirit, and they will be made susceptible to the teaching of the word. Then you will be able to discern the deep things of God.

The testimony of Christ, a testimony of the most solemn character, is to be borne to the world. All through the book of Revelation there are the most precious, elevating promises, and there are also warnings of the most fearfully solemn import. Will not those who profess to have a knowledge of the truth read the testimony given to John by Christ? Here is no guesswork, no scientific deception. Here are the truths that concern our present and future welfare. What is the chaff to the wheat? The Lord is soon coming. The watchmen on the walls of Zion are called upon to awake to their God-given

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<sup>586</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 8:298-301](#)

responsibilities. God calls for watchmen who, in the power of the Spirit, will give to the world the last warning message; who will proclaim the time of night. He calls for watchmen who will arouse men and women from their lethargy, lest they sleep the sleep of death.<sup>587</sup>

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<sup>587</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:301, 302, 304

I was directed to this scripture as especially applying to modern spiritualism: [Colossians 2:8](#): “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” Thousands, I was shown, have been spoiled through the philosophy of phrenology and animal magnetism, and have been driven into infidelity. If the mind commences to run in this channel, it is almost sure to lose its balance and be controlled by a demon. “Vain deceit” fills the minds of poor mortals. They think there is such power in themselves to accomplish great works that they realize no necessity of a higher power. Their principles and faith are “after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”

Jesus has not taught them this philosophy. Nothing of the kind can be found in His teachings. He did not direct the minds of poor mortals to themselves, to a power which they possessed. He was ever directing their minds to God, the Creator of the universe, as the source of their strength and wisdom. Special warning is given in verse 18: “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.”

The teachers of spiritualism come in a pleasing, bewitching manner to deceive you, and if you listen to their fables you are beguiled by the enemy of righteousness and will surely lose your reward. When once the fascinating influence of the archdeceiver overcomes you, you are poisoned, and its deadly influence adulterates and destroys your faith in Christ’s being the Son of God, and you cease to rely on the merits of His blood. Those deceived by this philosophy are beguiled of their reward through the deceptions of Satan. They rely upon their own merits, exercise voluntary humility, are even willing to make sacrifices, and debase themselves, and yield their minds to the belief of supreme nonsense, receiving the most absurd ideas through those whom they believe to be their dead friends. Sa-

tan has so blinded their eyes and perverted their judgment that they perceive not the evil; and they follow out the instructions purporting to be from their dead friends now angels in a higher sphere.<sup>588</sup>

[330] I have been shown that we must be guarded on every side and perseveringly resist the insinuations and devices of Satan. He has transformed himself into an angel of light and is deceiving thousands and leading them captive. The advantage he takes of the science of the human mind, is tremendous. The sciences of phrenology, psychology, and mesmerism are the channel through which he comes more directly to this generation and works with that power which is to characterize his efforts near the close of probation.<sup>589</sup>

### **Yielding One's Mind to Another's Control**

No individual should be permitted to take control of another person's mind, thinking that in so doing he is causing him to receive great benefit. The mind cure is one of the most dangerous deceptions which can be practiced upon any individual. Temporary relief may be felt, but the mind of the one thus controlled is never again so strong and reliable. We may be as weak as was the woman who touched the hem of Christ's garment; but if we use our God-given opportunity to come to Him in faith, He will respond as quickly as He did to that touch of faith.

It is not God's design for any human being to yield his mind to another human being. The risen Christ, who is now set down on the throne at the right hand of the Father, is the Mighty Healer. Look to Him for healing power. Through Him alone can sinners come to God just as they are. Never can they come through any man's mind. The human agent must never interpose between the heavenly agencies and those who are suffering.

Everyone should be in a position to cooperate with God in directing the minds of others to Him. Tell them of the grace and power of Him who is the greatest Physician the world ever knew.

We do not ask you to place yourself under the control of any man's mind. The mind cure is the most awful science which has ever been advocated. Every wicked being can use it in carrying through

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<sup>588</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:297, 298

<sup>589</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:290

his own evil designs. We have no business with any such science. We should be afraid of it. Never should the first principles of it be brought into any institution.<sup>590</sup>

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. Through these sciences, virtue is destroyed, and the foundations of Spiritualism are laid.<sup>591</sup>

### **Magic and Superstition**

By burning their books on magic, the Ephesian converts showed that the things in which they had once delighted they now abhorred. It was by and through magic that they had especially offended God and imperiled their souls; and it was against magic that they showed such indignation. Thus they gave evidence of true conversion.

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It is fondly supposed that heathen superstitions have disappeared before the civilization of the twentieth century. But the word of God and the stern testimony of facts declare that sorcery is practiced in this age as verily as in the days of the old-time magicians. The ancient system of magic is, in reality, the same as what is now known as modern spiritualism. Satan is finding access to thousands of minds by presenting himself under the guise of departed friends. The Scriptures declare that “the dead know not anything.” [Ecclesiastes 9:5](#). Their thoughts, their love, their hatred, have perished. The dead do not hold communion with the living. But true to his early cunning, Satan employs this device in order to gain control of minds.

Through spiritualism many of the sick, the bereaved, the curious, are communicating with evil spirits. All who venture to do this are on dangerous ground. The word of truth declares how God regards them. In ancient times He pronounced a stern judgment on a king who had sent for counsel to a heathen oracle: “Is it not because

<sup>590</sup>Medical Ministry, 115, 116

<sup>591</sup>The Signs of the Times, November 6, 1884

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 1:3, 4](#). The magicians of heathen times have their counterpart in the spiritualistic mediums, the clairvoyants, and the fortune-tellers of today. The mystic voices that spoke at Endor and at Ephesus are still by their lying words misleading the children of men. Could the veil be lifted from before our eyes, we should see evil angels employing all their arts to deceive and to destroy. Wherever an influence is exerted to cause men to forget God, there Satan is exercising his bewitching power. When men yield to his influence, ere they are aware the mind is bewildered and the soul polluted. The apostle’s admonition to the Ephesian church should be heeded by the people of God today: “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.” [Ephesians 5:11](#).<sup>592</sup>

### **The Prayer of Faith**

If our eyes could be opened to discern the fallen angels at work with those who feel at ease and consider themselves safe, we would not feel so secure. Evil angels are upon our track every moment. We expect a readiness on the part of bad men to act as Satan suggests; but while our minds are unguarded against his invisible agents, they assume new ground and work marvels and miracles in our sight. Are we prepared to resist them by the word of God, the only weapon we can use successfully?

[332] Some will be tempted to receive these wonders as from God. The sick will be healed before us. Miracles will be performed in our sight. Are we prepared for the trial which awaits us when the lying wonders of Satan shall be more fully exhibited? Will not many souls be ensnared and taken? By departing from the plain precepts and commandments of God, and giving heed to fables, the minds of many are preparing to receive these lying wonders. We must all now seek to arm ourselves for the contest in which we must soon engage. Faith in God’s word, prayerfully studied and practically

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<sup>592</sup>The Acts of the Apostles, 288-290



applied, will be our shield from Satan's power and will bring us off conquerors through the blood of Christ.<sup>593</sup>

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<sup>593</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:301

## Chapter 61—The Coming Crisis

As the disrespect for God's law becomes more manifest, the line of demarcation between its observers and the world becomes more distinct. Love for the divine precepts increases with one class according as contempt for them increases with another class.

The crisis is fast approaching. The rapidly swelling figures show that the time for God's visitation has about come. Although loath to punish, nevertheless He will punish, and that speedily.

The day of God's vengeance is just upon us. The seal of God will be placed upon the foreheads of those only who sigh and cry for the abominations done in the land. Those who link in sympathy with the world are eating and drinking with the drunken and will surely be destroyed with the workers of iniquity. "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." [1 Peter 3:12](#).

Our own course of action will determine whether we shall receive the seal of the living God or be cut down by the destroying weapons. Already a few drops of God's wrath have fallen upon the earth; but when the seven last plagues shall be poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation, then it will be forever too late to repent and find shelter. No atoning blood will then wash away the stains of sin.

Not all who profess to keep the Sabbath will be sealed. There are many even among those who teach the truth to others who will not receive the seal of God in their foreheads. They had the light of truth, they knew their Master's will, they understood every point of our faith, but they had not corresponding works. These who were so familiar with prophecy and the treasures of divine wisdom should have acted their faith. They should have commanded their households after them, that by a well-ordered family they might present to the world the influence of the truth upon the human heart.

By their lack of devotion and piety, and their failure to reach a high religious standard, they make other souls contented with their

position. Men of finite judgment cannot see that in patterning after these men who have so often opened to them the treasures of God's word, they will surely endanger their souls. Jesus is the only true pattern. Everyone must now search the Bible for himself upon his knees before God, with the humble, teachable heart of a child, if he would know what the Lord requires of him. However high any minister may have stood in the favor of God, if he neglects to follow out the light given him of God, if he refuses to be taught as a little child, he will go into darkness and satanic delusions and will lead others in the same path.

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

No one need say that his case is hopeless, that he cannot live the life of a Christian. Ample provision is made by the death of Christ for every soul. Jesus is our ever-present help in time of need. Only call upon Him in faith, and He has promised to hear and answer your petitions.

Oh, for a living, active faith! We need it; we must have it, or we shall faint and fail in the day of trial. The darkness that will then rest upon our path must not discourage us or drive us to despair. It is the veil with which God covers His glory when He comes to impart rich blessings. We should know this by our past experience. In that day when God has a controversy with His people this experience will be a source of comfort and hope.

It is now that we must keep ourselves and our children unspotted from the world. It is now that we must wash our robes of character and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. It is now that we must overcome pride, passion, and spiritual slothfulness. It is now that we must awake and make determined effort for symmetry of character. "Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." [Hebrews 3:7, 8, 15.](#)

Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the forehead of an impure man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the forehead of men or women

of false tongues or deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot before God—candidates for heaven. Go forward, my brethren and sisters. I can only write briefly upon these points at this time, merely calling your attention to the necessity of preparation. Search the Scriptures for yourselves, that you may understand the fearful solemnity of the present hour.<sup>594</sup>

### **The Sabbath the Point of Issue**

[335] The Sabbath question is to be the issue in the great final conflict in which all the world will act a part. Men have honored Satan's principles above the principles that rule in the heavens. They have accepted the spurious sabbath, which Satan has exalted as the sign of his authority. But God has set His seal upon His royal requirement. Each sabbath institution bears the name of its author, an ineffaceable mark that shows the authority of each. It is our work to lead the people to understand this. We are to show them that it is of vital consequence whether they bear the mark of God's kingdom or the mark of the kingdom of rebellion, for they acknowledge themselves subjects of the kingdom whose mark they bear. God has called us to uplift the standard of His downtrodden Sabbath.<sup>595</sup>

The same masterful mind that plotted against the faithful in ages past is still seeking to rid the earth of those who fear God and obey His law. Satan will excite indignation against the humble minority who conscientiously refuse to accept popular customs and traditions. Men of position and reputation will join with the lawless and the vile to take counsel against the people of God. Wealth, genius, education, will combine to cover them with contempt. Persecuting rulers, ministers, and church members will conspire against them. With voice and pen, by boasts, threats, and ridicule, they will seek to overthrow their faith. By false representations and angry appeals they will stir up the passions of the people. Not having a "Thus saith the Scriptures" to bring against the advocates of the Bible Sabbath, they will resort to oppressive enactments to supply the lack. To secure popularity and patronage, legislators will yield to the demand for a Sunday law. Those who fear God cannot accept an institution

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<sup>594</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:209, 212-216

<sup>595</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:352

that violates a precept of the Decalogue. On this battlefield comes the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error. And we are not left in doubt as to the issue. Now, as in the days of Mordecai, the Lord will vindicate His truth and His people.<sup>596</sup>

### Prepare for the Tempest

God has revealed what is to take place in the last days, that His people may be prepared to stand against the tempest of opposition and wrath. Those who have been warned of the events before them are not to sit in calm expectation of the coming storm, comforting themselves that the Lord will shelter His faithful ones in the day of trouble. We are to be as men waiting for their Lord, not in idle expectancy, but in earnest work, with unwavering faith. It is no time now to allow our minds to be engrossed with things of minor importance. While men are sleeping, Satan is actively arranging matters so that the Lord's people may not have mercy or justice. The Sunday movement is now making its way in darkness. The leaders are concealing the true issue, and many who unite in the movement do not themselves see whither the undercurrent is tending. Its professions are mild and apparently Christian, but when it shall speak it will reveal the spirit of the dragon.

“The wrath of man shall praise Thee,” says the psalmist; “the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain.” God means that testing truth shall be brought to the front and become a subject of examination and discussion, even if it is through the contempt placed upon it. The minds of the people must be agitated. Every controversy, every reproach, every slander, will be God's means of provoking inquiry and awakening minds that otherwise would slumber.<sup>597</sup>

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We as a people have not accomplished the work which God has committed to us. We are not ready for the issue to which the enforcement of the Sunday law will bring us. It is our duty, as we see the signs of approaching peril, to arouse to action. Let none sit in calm expectation of the evil, comforting themselves with the belief that this work must go on because prophecy has foretold it, and that the Lord will shelter His people. We are not doing the will

<sup>596</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:450, 451

<sup>597</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:452, 453

of God if we sit in quietude, doing nothing to preserve liberty of conscience. Fervent, effectual prayer should be ascending to heaven that this calamity may be deferred until we can accomplish the work which has so long been neglected. Let there be most earnest prayer, and then let us work in harmony with our prayers. It may appear that Satan is triumphant and that truth is overborne with falsehood and error; the people over whom God has spread His shield, and the country which has been an asylum for the conscience-oppressed servants of God and defenders of His truth, may be placed in jeopardy. But God would have us recall His dealings with His people in the past to save them from their enemies. He has always chosen extremities, when there seemed no possible chance for deliverance from Satan's workings, for the manifestation of His power. Man's necessity is God's opportunity.

My brethren, do you realize that your own salvation, as well as the destiny of other souls, depends upon the preparation you now make for the trial before us? Have you that intensity of zeal, that piety and devotion, which will enable you to stand when opposition shall be brought against you? If God has ever spoken by me, the time will come when you will be brought before councils, and every position of truth which you hold will be severely criticized. The time that so many are now allowing to go to waste should be devoted to the charge that God has given us of preparing for the approaching crisis.<sup>598</sup>

### **God's Judgments**

We are near the close of time. I have been shown that the retributive judgments of God are already in the land. The Lord has given us warning of the events about to take place. Light is shining from His word; yet darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people. "When they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them; ... and they shall not escape."<sup>599</sup>

The Lord is removing His restrictions from the earth, and soon there will be death and destruction, increasing crime, and cruel, evil working against the rich who have exalted themselves against the

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<sup>598</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:713-717

<sup>599</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:99

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poor. Those who are without God's protection will find no safety in any place or position. Human agents are being trained and are using their inventive power to put in operation the most powerful machinery to wound and to kill.<sup>600</sup>

The judgments of God are in the land. The wars and rumors of wars, the destruction by fire and flood, say clearly that the time of trouble, which is to increase until the end, is very near at hand.

Soon grievous troubles will arise among the nations,—trouble that will not cease until Jesus comes. As never before we need to press together, serving Him who has prepared His throne in the heavens and whose kingdom ruleth over all. God has not forsaken His people, and our strength lies in not forsaking Him.<sup>601</sup>

[337]

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<sup>600</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:50

<sup>601</sup>Welfare Ministry, 136

## Chapter 62—The Sifting Time

The apostle exhorts the brethren, saying, “Finally, my 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 ... in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” Oh, what a day is before us! What sifting will there be among those who claim to be the children of God! The unjust will be found among the just. Those who have great light and who have not walked in it will have darkness corresponding to the light they have despised. We have need to heed the lesson contained in the words of Paul, “But I keep under my body, and bring it in subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” The enemy is diligently working to see whom he can add to the ranks of apostasy; but the Lord is soon coming, and ere long every case will be decided for eternity. Those whose works correspond with the light graciously given them will be numbered on the Lord’s side.<sup>602</sup>

But the days of purification of the church are hastening on apace. God will have a people pure and true. In the mighty sifting soon to take place we shall be better able to measure the strength of Israel. The signs reveal that the time is near when the Lord will manifest that His fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor.<sup>603</sup>

### Victory for Those Who Seek Deliverance

I was shown the people of God, and saw them mightily shaken. Some, with strong faith and agonizing cries, were pleading with God.

Some, I saw, did not participate in this work of agonizing and pleading. They seemed indifferent and careless. They were not resisting the darkness around them, and it shut them in like a thick cloud. The angels of God left these, and I saw them hastening to

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<sup>602</sup>Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 163

<sup>603</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:80



the assistance of those who were struggling with all their energies to resist the evil angels, and trying to help themselves by calling upon God with perseverance. But the angels left those who made no effort to help themselves, and I lost sight of them. As the praying ones continued their earnest cries, a ray of light from Jesus would at times come to them, to encourage their hearts, and light up their countenances.

I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen, and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this will cause a shaking among God's people. The testimony of the True Witness has not been half heeded. The solemn testimony upon which the destiny of the church hangs has been lightly esteemed, if not entirely disregarded. This testimony must work deep repentance, and all that truly receive it will obey it and be purified.

[339]

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

The numbers of this company had lessened. Some had been shaken out, and left by the way. [See [Revelation 3:15-17](#).] The careless and indifferent, who did not join with those who prized victory and salvation enough to perseveringly plead and agonize for

it, did not obtain it, and they were left behind in darkness, but their numbers were immediately made up by others taking hold of the truth and coming into the ranks. Still the evil angels pressed around them, but they could have no power over them. [See [Ephesians 6:12-18](#).]

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

Great power was with these chosen ones. Said the angel: "Look ye!" My attention was turned to the wicked, or unbelievers. They were all astir. The zeal and power with the people of God had aroused and enraged them. Confusion, confusion was on every side. I saw measures taken against this company, who had the power and light of God.

[340] Darkness thickened around them, yet there they stood, approved of God, and trusting in Him. I saw them perplexed. Next I heard them crying unto God earnestly. Through the day and night their cry ceased not. [See [Luke 18:7, 8](#); [Revelation 14:14, 15](#).]

I heard these words: "Thy will, O God, be done! If it can glorify Thy name, make a way of escape for Thy people! Deliver us from the heathen round about us! They have appointed us unto death; but Thine arm can bring salvation." These are all the words that I can bring to mind. All seemed to have a deep sense of their unworthiness, and manifested entire submission to the will of God. Yet like Jacob, every one, without an exception, was earnestly pleading and wrestling for deliverance.

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

Soon I heard the voice of God which shook the heavens and the earth. [See [Joel 3:16](#); [Hebrews 12:26](#); and [Revelation 16:17](#).] There was a mighty earthquake. Buildings were shaken down, and fell on every side. I then heard a triumphant shout of victory, loud, musical, and clear. I looked upon this company, who, a short time before, were in such distress and bondage. Their captivity was turned. A glorious light shone upon them. How beautiful they then looked! All weariness and marks of care were gone; health and beauty were seen in every countenance. Their enemies, the heathen around them, fell like dead men. They could not endure the light that shone upon the delivered, holy ones. This light and glory remained upon them until Jesus was seen in the clouds of heaven, and the faithful, tried company were changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, from glory to glory. The graves were opened and the saints came forth, clothed with immortality, crying: “Victory over death and the grave!” and together with the living saints they were caught up to meet their Lord in the air, while rich, musical shouts of glory and victory proceeded from every immortal tongue.<sup>604</sup>

### The Two Armies

In vision I saw two armies in terrible conflict. One army was led by banners bearing the world’s insignia; the other was led by the bloodstained banner of Prince Immanuel. Standard after standard was left to trail in the dust as company after company from the Lord’s army joined the foe and tribe after tribe from the ranks of the enemy united with the commandment-keeping people of God. An angel flying in the midst of heaven put the standard of Immanuel into many hands, while a mighty general cried out with a loud voice: “Come into line. Let those who are loyal to the commandments of God and the testimony of Christ now take their position. Come out from among them, and be ye separate, 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. Let all who will come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.”

[341]

Now the church is militant. Now we are confronted with a world in midnight darkness, almost wholly given over to idolatry. But the

<sup>604</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 1:179-184](#)

day is coming in which the battle will have been fought, the victory won. The will of God is to be done on earth, as it is done in heaven. Then the nations will own no other law than the law of heaven. All will be a happy, united family, clothed with the garments of praise and thanksgiving—the robe of Christ’s righteousness. All nature, in its surpassing loveliness, will offer to God a constant tribute of praise and adoration. The world will be bathed in the light of heaven. The years will move on in gladness. The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be sevenfold greater than it is now. Over the scene the morning stars will sing together, and the sons of God will shout for joy, while God and Christ will unite in proclaiming: “There shall be no more sin, neither shall there be any more death.”

This is the scene that is presented to me. But the church must and will fight against seen and unseen foes. Satan’s agencies in human form are on the ground. Men have confederated to oppose the Lord of hosts. These confederacies will continue until Christ shall leave His place of intercession before the mercy seat and shall put on the garments of vengeance. Satanic agencies are in every city, busily organizing into parties those opposed to the law of God. Professed saints and avowed unbelievers take their stand with these parties. This is no time for the people of God to be weaklings. We cannot afford to be off our guard for one moment.<sup>605</sup>

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<sup>605</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:41, 42

## Chapter 63—Some Things to Remember

[342]

The Saviour's instructions to His disciples were given for the benefit of His followers in every age. He had those in view who were living near the close of time, when He said: "Take heed to yourselves." It is our work, each for himself, to cherish in the heart the precious graces of the Holy Spirit.<sup>606</sup>

The great crisis is just before us. To meet its trials and temptations, and to perform its duties, will require persevering faith. But we may triumph gloriously; not one watching, praying, believing soul will be ensnared by the enemy.

Brethren, to whom the truths of God's word have been opened, what part will you act in the closing scenes of this world's history? Are you awake to these solemn realities? Do you realize the grand work of preparation that is going on in heaven and on earth? Let all who have received the light, who have had the opportunity of reading and hearing the prophecy, take heed to those things that are written therein; "for the time is at hand." Let none now tamper with sin, the source of every misery in our world. No longer remain in lethargy and stupid indifference. Let not the destiny of your soul hang upon an uncertainty. Know that you are fully on the Lord's side. Let the inquiry go forth from sincere hearts and trembling lips, "Who shall be able to stand?" Have you, in these last precious hours of probation, been putting the very best material into your character building? Have you been purifying your souls from every stain? Have you followed the light? Have you works corresponding to your profession of faith?

It is possible to be a partial, formal believer, and yet be found wanting and lose eternal life. It is possible to practice some of the Bible injunctions and be regarded as a Christian, and yet perish because you lack qualifications essential to Christian character. If you neglect or treat with indifference the warnings that God has given, if you cherish or excuse sin, you are sealing your soul's

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<sup>606</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 5:102](#)

destiny. You will be weighed in the balance and found wanting. Grace, peace, and pardon will be forever withdrawn; Jesus will have passed by, never again to come within reach of your prayers and entreaties. While mercy lingers, while the Saviour is making intercession, let us make thorough work for eternity.<sup>607</sup>

[343]

Satan is not asleep; he is wide awake to make of no effect the sure word of prophecy. With skill and deceptive power he is working to counterwork the expressed will of God, made plain in His word. For years Satan has been gaining control of human minds through subtle sophistries that he has devised to take the place of the truth. In this time of peril, rightdoers, in the fear of God, will glorify His name by repeating the words of David: “It is time for Thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void Thy law.” [Psalm 119:126](#).<sup>608</sup>

We as a people profess to have truth in advance of every other people upon the earth. Then our life and character should be in harmony with such a faith. The day is just upon us when the righteous shall be bound like precious grain in bundles for the heavenly garner, while the wicked are, like the tares, gathered for the fires of the last great day. But the wheat and tares “grow together until the harvest.”

In the discharge of life’s duties the righteous will to the last be brought in contact with the ungodly. The children of light are scattered among the children of darkness, that the contrast may be seen by all. Thus are the children of God to “show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.” The divine love glowing in the heart, the Christ like harmony manifested in the life, will be as a glimpse of heaven granted to men of the world that they may see and appreciate its excellence.<sup>609</sup>

No man can serve God without uniting against himself evil men and evil angels. Evil spirits will be put upon the track of every soul that seeks to join the ranks of Christ, for Satan wishes to recover the prey taken from his grasp. Evil men will give themselves over to believe strong delusions, that they may be damned. These men will put on the garments of sincerity and deceive, if possible, the very elect.<sup>610</sup>

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<sup>607</sup>Testimonies for the Church 6:404, 405

<sup>608</sup>Testimonies for the Church 9:92

<sup>609</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:100

<sup>610</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:595

## **The End Is Near**

The return of Christ to our world will not be long delayed. Let this be the keynote of every message.

The restraining Spirit of God is even now being withdrawn from the world. Hurricanes, storms, tempests, fire and flood, disasters by sea and land, follow each other in quick succession. Science seeks to explain all these. The signs thickening around us, telling of the near approach of the Son of God, are attributed to any other than the true cause. Men cannot discern the sentinel angels restraining the four winds that they shall not blow until the servants of God are sealed; but when God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture.

Could the curtain be rolled back, could you discern the purposes of God and the judgments that are about to fall upon a doomed world, could you see your own attitude, you would fear and tremble for your own souls and for the souls of your fellow men. Earnest prayers of heart-rending anguish would go up to heaven. You would weep between the porch and the altar, confessing your spiritual blindness and backsliding.<sup>611</sup>

## **The Danger of Thinking Christ's Coming Is Delayed**

[344]

That evil servant who said in his heart, "My Lord delayeth His coming," professed to be waiting for Christ. He was a "servant," outwardly devoted to the service of God while at heart he had yielded to Satan.

He does not, like the scoffer, openly deny the truth, but reveals in his life the sentiment of the heart—that the Lord's coming is delayed. Presumption renders him careless of eternal interests. He accepts the world's maxims and conforms to its customs and practices. Selfishness, worldly pride, and ambitions predominate. Fearing that his brethren may stand higher than himself, he begins to disparage their efforts and impugn their motives. Thus he smites his fellow servants.

As he alienates himself from the people of God he unites more and more with the ungodly. He is found eating and drinking "with

<sup>611</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 6:406, 408](#)

the drunken”—joining with worldlings and partaking of their spirit. Thus he is lulled into a carnal security and overcome by forgetfulness, indifference, and sloth.<sup>612</sup>

### **So-called New Light Will Deceive Many**

Satan hopes to involve the remnant people of God in the general ruin that is coming upon the earth. As the coming of Christ draws nigh, he will be more determined and decisive in his efforts to overthrow them. Men and women will arise professing to have some new light or some new revelation whose tendency is to unsettle faith in the old landmarks. Their doctrines will not bear the test of God’s word, yet souls will be deceived.

False reports will be circulated, and some will be taken in this snare. They will believe these rumors and in their turn will repeat them, and thus a link will be formed connecting them with the archdeceiver. This spirit will not always be manifested in an open defiance of the messages that God sends, but a settled unbelief is expressed in many ways. Every false statement that is made feeds and strengthens this unbelief, and through this means many souls will be balanced in the wrong direction.

We cannot be too watchful against every form of error, for Satan is constantly seeking to draw men from the truth.<sup>613</sup>

### **Importance of Personal Devotions**

When secret prayer and reading of the Scriptures are neglected today, tomorrow they can be omitted with less remonstrance of conscience. There will be a long list of omissions, all for a single grain sown in the soil of the heart. On the other hand, every ray of light cherished will yield a harvest of light. Temptation once resisted will give power to more firmly resist the second time; every new victory gained over self will smooth the way for higher and nobler triumphs. Every victory is a seed sown to eternal life.<sup>614</sup>

[345] Every saint who comes to God with a true heart, and sends his

<sup>612</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:101, 102

<sup>613</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:295, 296

<sup>614</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:120



honest petitions to Him in faith, will have his prayers answered. Your faith must not let go of the promises of God, if you do not see or feel the immediate answer to your prayers. Be not afraid to trust God. Rely upon His sure promise: “Ask, and ye shall receive.” [John 16:24](#).

God is too wise to err, and too good to withhold any good thing from His saints that walk uprightly. Man is erring, and although his petitions are sent up from an honest heart, he does not always ask for the things that are good for himself, or that will glorify God. When this is so, our wise and good Father hears our prayers, and will answer, sometimes immediately; but He gives us the things that are for our best good and His own glory. God gives us blessings; if we could look into His plan, we would clearly see that He knows what is best for us and that our prayers are answered. Nothing hurtful is given, but the blessing we need, in the place of something we asked for that would not be good for us, but to our hurt.

I saw that if we do not feel immediate answers to our prayers, we should hold fast our faith, not allowing distrust to come in, for that will separate us from God. If our faith wavers, we shall receive nothing from Him. Our confidence in God should be strong; and when we need it most, the blessing will fall upon us like a shower of rain.<sup>615</sup>

### **Christians Love to Think and Talk of Heavenly Things**

In heaven God is all in all. There holiness reigns supreme; there is nothing to mar the perfect harmony with God. If we are indeed journeying thither, the spirit of heaven will dwell in our hearts here. But if we find no pleasure now in the contemplation of heavenly things; if we have no interest in seeking the knowledge of God, no delight in beholding the character of Christ; if holiness has no attractions for us—then we may be sure that our hope of heaven is vain.

Perfect conformity to the will of God is the high aim to be constantly before the Christian. He will love to talk of God, of Jesus, of the home of bliss and purity which Christ has prepared for them that love Him. The contemplation of these themes, when the soul

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<sup>615</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 1:120, 121](#)

feasts upon the blessed assurances of God, the apostle represents as tasting the powers of the world to come.”

Just before us is the closing struggle of the great controversy when, with “all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness,” Satan is to work to misrepresent the character of God, that he may “seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.” If there was ever a people in need of constantly increasing light from heaven, it is the people that, in this time of peril, God has called to be the depositaries of His holy law and to vindicate His character before the world. Those to whom has been committed a trust so sacred must be spiritualized, elevated, vitalized, by the truths they profess to believe.<sup>616</sup>

### [346] **God’s People Press Forward Regardless of Doubt and Fear**

The Lord is now dealing with His people who believe present truth. He designs to bring about momentous results, and while in His providence He is working toward this end, He says to His people: “Go forward.” True, the path is not yet opened; but when they move on in the strength of faith and courage, God will make the way plain before their eyes. There are ever those who will complain, as did ancient Israel, and charge the difficulties of their position upon those whom God has raised up for the special purpose of advancing His cause. They fail to see that God is testing them by bringing them into strait places, from which there is no deliverance except by His hand.

There are times when the Christian life seems beset by dangers, and duty seems hard to perform. The imagination pictures impending ruin before, and bondage or death behind. Yet the voice of God speaks clearly above all discouragements: “Go forward.” We should obey this command, let the result be what it may, even though our eyes cannot penetrate the darkness and though we feel the cold waves about our feet.<sup>617</sup>

In a divided, halfhearted life, you will find doubt and darkness. You cannot enjoy the consolations of religion, neither the peace which the world gives. Do not sit down in Satan’s easy chair of

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<sup>616</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:745, 746

<sup>617</sup>Testimonies for the Church 4:26

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do-little, but arise, and aim at the elevated standard which it is your privilege to attain. It is a blessed privilege to give up all for Christ. Look not at the lives of others and imitate them and rise no higher. You have only one true, unerring Pattern. It is safe to follow Jesus only. Determine that if others act on the principle of the spiritual sluggard you will leave them and march forward toward the elevation of Christian character. Form a character for heaven. Sleep not at your post. Deal faithfully and truly with your own soul.<sup>618</sup>

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<sup>618</sup>Testimonies for the Church 1:241

## Chapter 64—Christ Our Great High Priest

The correct understanding of the ministration in the heavenly sanctuary is the foundation of our faith.<sup>619</sup>

The earthly sanctuary was built by Moses according to the pattern shown him in the mount. It was “a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices;” its two holy places were “patterns of things in the heavens;” Christ, our great High Priest, is “a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” [Hebrews 9:9, 23; 8:2](#). As in vision the apostle John was granted a view of the temple of God in heaven, he beheld there “seven lamps of fire burning before the throne.”

Here the prophet was permitted to behold the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven; and he saw there the “seven lamps of fire” and the “golden altar” represented by the golden candlestick and the altar of incense in the sanctuary on earth. Again, “the temple of God was opened,” [Revelation 11:19](#), and he looked within the inner veil, upon the holy of holies. Here he beheld “the ark of His testament,” [Revelation 11:19](#), represented by the sacred chest constructed by Moses to contain the law of God.

John says that he saw the sanctuary in heaven. That sanctuary, in which Jesus ministers in our behalf, is the great original, of which the sanctuary built by Moses was a copy.

The heavenly temple, the abiding place of the King of kings, where “thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him,” [Daniel 7:10](#), that temple filled with the glory of the eternal throne, where seraphim, its shining guardians, veil their faces in adoration—no earthly structure could represent its vastness and its glory. Yet important truths concerning the heavenly sanctuary and the great work there carried forward for man’s redemption were to be taught by the earthly sanctuary and its services.

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<sup>619</sup>[Evangelism, 221](#)

After His ascension, our Saviour was to begin His work as our High Priest. Says Paul, “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.” [Hebrews 9:24](#). As Christ’s ministration was to consist of two great divisions, each occupying a period of time and having a distinctive place in the heavenly sanctuary, so the typical ministration consisted of two divisions, the daily and the yearly service, and to each a department of the tabernacle was devoted.

As Christ at His ascension appeared in the presence of God to plead His blood in behalf of penitent believers, so the priest in the daily ministration sprinkled the blood of the sacrifice in the holy place in the sinner’s behalf.

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The blood of Christ, while it was to release the repentant sinner from the condemnation of the law, was not to cancel the sin; it would stand on record in the sanctuary until the final atonement; so in the type the blood of the sin offering removed the sin from the penitent, but it rested in the sanctuary until the day of atonement.

In the great day of final award, the dead are to be “judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” [Revelation 20:12](#). Then by virtue of the atoning blood of Christ, the sins of all the truly penitent will be blotted from the books of heaven. Thus the sanctuary will be freed, or cleansed, from the record of sin. In the type, this great work of atonement, or blotting out of sins, was represented by the services of the Day of Atonement—the cleansing of the earthly sanctuary, which was accomplished by the removal, by virtue of the blood of the sin offering, of the sins by which it had been polluted.<sup>620</sup>

Satan invents unnumbered schemes to occupy our minds, that they may not dwell upon the very work with which we ought to be best acquainted. The archdeceiver hates the great truths that bring to view an atoning sacrifice and an all-powerful mediator. He knows that with him everything depends on his diverting minds from Jesus and His truth.

Jesus pleads in their behalf His wounded hands, His bruised body; and He declares to all who would follow Him: “My grace is

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<sup>620</sup>[Patriarchs and Prophets, 356-358](#)

sufficient for thee.” [2 Corinthians 12:9](#). “Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.” [Matthew 11:29, 30](#). Let none, then, regard their defects as incurable. God will give faith and grace to overcome them.

We are now living in the great day of atonement. In the typical service, while the high priest was making the atonement for Israel, all were required to afflict their souls by repentance of sin and humiliation before the Lord, lest they be cut off from among the people. In like manner, all who would have their names retained in the book of life should now, in the few remaining days of their probation, afflict their souls before God by sorrow for sin and true repentance. There must be deep, faithful searching of heart. The light, frivolous spirit indulged by so many professed Christians must be put away. There is earnest warfare before all who would subdue the evil tendencies that strive for the mastery. The 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. Though all nations are to pass in judgment before God, yet He will examine the case of each individual with as close and searching scrutiny as if there were not another being upon the earth. Everyone must be tested and found without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Solemn are the scenes connected with the closing work of the atonement. Momentous are the interests involved therein. The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. For many years this work has been in progress. Soon—none know how soon—it will pass to the cases of the living. In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review. At this time above all others it behooves every soul to heed the Saviour’s admonition: “Watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.” [Mark 13:33](#).

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When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. Christ in the Revelation, looking forward to that time, declares: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly;

and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” [Revelation 22:11, 12](#).

The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state—men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the sanctuary above.

Silently, unnoticed as the midnight thief, will come the decisive hour which marks the fixing of every man’s destiny, the final withdrawal of mercy’s offer to guilty men.<sup>621</sup>

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<sup>621</sup>The Great Controversy, 488-491

## Chapter 65—Joshua and the Angel

If the veil which separates the visible from the invisible world could be lifted, and the people of God could behold the great controversy that is going on between Christ and holy angels and Satan and his evil hosts concerning the redemption of man; if they could understand the wonderful work of God for the rescue of souls from the bondage of sin, and the constant exercise of His power for their protection from the malice of the evil one, they would be better prepared to withstand the devices of Satan. Their minds would be solemnized in view of the vast extent and importance of the plan of redemption and the greatness of the work before them as colaborers with Christ. They would be humbled, yet encouraged, knowing that all heaven is interested in their salvation.

A most forcible and impressive illustration of the work of Satan and the work of Christ, and the power of our Mediator to vanquish the accuser of His people, is given in the prophecy of Zechariah. In holy vision the prophet beholds Joshua the high priest, “clothed with filthy garments,” standing before the Angel of the Lord, entreating the mercy of God in behalf of his people who are in deep affliction. Satan stands at his right hand to resist him. The high priest cannot defend himself or his people from Satan’s accusations. He does not claim that Israel are free from fault. In his filthy garments, symbolizing the sins of the people, which he bears as their representative, he stands before the Angel, confessing their guilt, yet pointing to their repentance and humiliation, relying upon the mercy of a sin-pardoning Redeemer and in faith claiming the promises of God.

Then the Angel, who is Christ Himself, the Saviour of sinners, puts to silence the accuser of His people, declaring: “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?” [Zechariah 3:2](#). As the intercession of Joshua is accepted, the command is given, “Take away the filthy garments from him,” and to Joshua the Angel



declares, “Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.” “So they set a fair miter upon his head, and clothed him with garments.” [Zechariah 3:4, 5](#). His own sins and those of his people were pardoned. Israel was clothed with “change of raiment”—the righteousness of Christ imputed to them.

As Satan accused Joshua and his people, so in all ages he accuses those who are seeking the mercy and favor of God. In the Revelation he is declared to be the “accuser of our brethren,” “which accused them before our God day and night.” [Revelation 12:10](#). The controversy is repeated over every soul that is rescued from the power of evil and whose name is registered in the Lamb’s book of life. Never is one received from the family of Satan into the family of God without exciting the determined resistance of the wicked one. Satan’s accusations against those who seek the Lord are not prompted by displeasure at their sins. He exults in their defective characters. Only through their transgression of God’s law can he obtain power over them. His accusations arise solely from his enmity to Christ. Through the plan of salvation, Jesus is breaking Satan’s hold upon the human family and rescuing souls from his power. All the hatred and malignity of the archrebel is stirred as he beholds the evidence of Christ’s supremacy, and with fiendish power and cunning he works to wrest from Him the remnant of the children of men who have accepted His salvation.

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He leads men into skepticism, causing them to lose confidence in God and to separate from His love; he tempts them to break His law, and then he claims them as his captives and contests the right of Christ to take them from him. He knows that those who seek God earnestly for pardon and grace will obtain it; therefore he presents their sins before them to discourage them. He is constantly seeking occasion against those who are trying to obey God. Even their best and most acceptable services he seeks to make appear corrupt. By countless devices, the most subtle and the most cruel, he endeavors to secure their condemnation.

Man cannot meet these charges himself. In his sin-stained garments, confessing his guilt, he stands before God. But Jesus our Advocate presents an effectual plea in behalf of all who by repentance and faith have committed the keeping of their souls to Him.

He pleads their cause and vanquishes their accuser by the mighty arguments of Calvary. His perfect obedience to God's law, even unto the death of the cross, has given Him all power in heaven and in earth, and He claims of His Father mercy and reconciliation for guilty man. To the accuser of His people He declares: "'The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan.' These are the purchase of My blood, brands plucked from the burning." Those who rely upon Him in faith receive the comforting assurance: "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment."

All that have put on the robe of Christ's righteousness will stand before Him as chosen and faithful and true. Satan has no power to pluck them out of the hand of Christ. Not one soul that in penitence and faith has claimed His protection will Christ permit to pass under the enemy's power. His word is pledged: "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me." [Isaiah 27:5](#). The promise given to Joshua is made to all: "[352] "If thou wilt keep My charge, ... I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by." [Zechariah 3:7](#). Angels of God will walk on either side of them, even in this world, and they will stand at last among the angels that surround the throne of God.

The fact that the acknowledged people of God are represented as standing before the Lord in filthy garments should lead to humility and deep searching of heart on the part of all who profess His name. Those who are indeed purifying their souls by obeying the truth will have a most humble opinion of themselves. The more closely they view the spotless character of Christ, the stronger will be their desire to be conformed to His image, and the less will they see of purity or holiness in themselves. But while we should realize our sinful condition, we are to rely upon Christ as our righteousness, our sanctification, and our redemption. We cannot answer the charges of Satan against us. Christ alone can make an effectual plea in our behalf. He is able to silence the accuser with arguments founded not upon our merits, but on His own.

### **The Remnant Church**

Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing up of the

great day of atonement. The remnant church will be brought into great trial and distress. Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts. Satan numbers the world as his subjects, he has gained control of the apostate churches; but here is a little company that are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to destroy the people of God. All will be required to render obedience to human edicts in violation of the divine law. Those who will be true to God and to duty will be menaced, denounced, and proscribed. They will “be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends.”

Their only hope is in the mercy of God; their only defense will be prayer. As Joshua was pleading before the Angel, so the remnant church, with brokenness of heart and earnest faith, will plead for pardon and deliverance through Jesus their Advocate. They are fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives, they see their weakness and unworthiness, and as they look upon themselves they are ready to despair. The tempter stands by to accuse them, as he stood by to resist Joshua. He points to their filthy garments, their defective characters. He presents their weakness and folly, their sins of ingratitude, their unlikeness to Christ, which has dishonored their Redeemer. He endeavors to affright the soul with the thought that their case is hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes to so destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations, turn from their allegiance to God, and receive the mark of the beast. Satan urges before God his accusations against them, declaring that they have by their sins forfeited the divine protection, and claiming the right to destroy them as transgressors. He pronounces them just as deserving as himself of exclusion from the favor of God. “Are these,” he says, “the people who are to take my place in heaven and the place of the angels who united with me? While they profess to obey the law of God, have they kept its precepts? Have they not been lovers of self more than of God? Have they not placed their own interests above His service? Have they not loved the things of the world? Look at the sins which have marked

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their lives. Behold their selfishness, their malice, their hatred toward one another.”

The people of God have been in many respects very faulty. Satan has an accurate knowledge of the sins which he has tempted them to commit, and he presents these in the most exaggerated light, declaring: “Will God banish me and my angels from His presence, and yet reward those who have been guilty of the same sins? Thou canst not do this, O Lord, in justice. Thy throne will not stand in righteousness and judgment. Justice demands that sentence be pronounced against them.”

But while the followers of Christ have sinned, they have not given themselves to the control of evil. They have put away their sins, and have sought the Lord in humility and contrition, and the divine Advocate pleads in their behalf. He who has been most abused by their ingratitude, who knows their sin, and also their repentance, declares: “‘The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan.’ I gave My life for these souls. They are graven upon the palms of My hands.”

### **Covered With the Robe of Christ’s Righteousness**

As the people of God afflict their souls before Him, pleading for purity of heart, the command is given, “Take away the filthy garments” from them, and the encouraging words are spoken, “Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.” The spotless robe of Christ’s righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, yet faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, nevermore to be defiled by the corruptions of the world. Their names are retained in the Lamb’s book of life, enrolled among the faithful of all ages. They have resisted the wiles of the deceiver; they have not been turned from their loyalty by the dragon’s roar. Now they are eternally secure from the tempter’s devices. Their sins are transferred to the originator of sin.

And the remnant are not only pardoned and accepted, but honored. “A fair miter” is set upon their heads. They are to be as kings and priests unto God. While Satan was urging his accusations and seeking to destroy this company, holy angels, unseen, were passing to and fro, placing upon them the seal of the living God. These are

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they that stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having the Father's name written in their foreheads. They sing the new song before the throne, that song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God." [Revelation 14:4, 5.](#)<sup>622</sup>

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<sup>622</sup>Testimonies for the Church 5:467-476

## Chapter 66—“Behold, I Come Quickly”

Recently in the night season, my mind was impressed by the Holy Spirit with the thought that if the Lord is coming as soon as we believe He is, we ought to be even more active than we have been in years past in getting the truth before the people.

In this connection my mind reverted to the activity of the Advent believers in 1843 and 1844. At that time there was much house-to-house visitation, and untiring efforts were made to warn the people of the things that are spoken of in God’s Word. We should be putting forth even greater effort than was put forth by those who proclaimed the first angel’s message so faithfully. We are rapidly approaching the end of this earth’s history; and as we realize that Jesus is indeed coming soon, we shall be aroused to labor as never before. We are bidden to sound an alarm to the people. And in our own lives we are to show forth the power of truth and righteousness. The world is soon to meet the great Lawgiver over His broken law. Those only who turn from transgression to obedience can hope for pardon and peace.

Oh, how much good might be accomplished if all who have the truth, the Word of life, would labor for the enlightenment of those who have it not. When the Samaritans came to Christ at the call of the Samaritan woman, Christ spoke of them to His disciples as a field of grain ready for harvesting. “Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?” He said, “Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.” [John 4:35](#). Christ abode with the Samaritans for two days; for they were hungry to hear the truth. And what busy days they were! As a result of those days of labor, “many more believed because of his own word.” [John 4:41](#). This was their testimony: “We have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.” [John 4:42](#).<sup>623</sup>

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<sup>623</sup>2sm 402, 403

## **Your Redemption Draweth Nigh**

As I hear of the terrible calamities that from week to week are taking place, I ask myself: What do these things mean? The most awful disasters are following one another in quick succession. How frequently we hear of earthquakes and tornadoes, of destruction by fire and flood, with great loss of life and property! Apparently these calamities are capricious outbreaks of seemingly disorganized, unregulated forces, but in them God’s purpose may be read. They are one of the means by which He seeks to arouse men and women to a sense of their danger. [356]

The coming of Christ is nearer than when we first believed. The great controversy is nearing its end. The judgments of God are in the land. They speak in solemn warning, saying: “Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.” [Matthew 24:44](#).

But there are many, many in our churches who know little of the real meaning of the truth for this time. I appeal to them not to disregard the fulfilling of the signs of the times, which says so plainly that the end is near. Oh, how many who have not sought their souls’ salvation will soon make the bitter lamentation: “The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved”!

We are living in the closing scenes of this earth’s history. Prophecy is fast fulfilling. The hours of probation are fast passing. We have no time—not a moment—to lose. Let us not be found sleeping on guard. Let no one say in his heart or by his works: “My Lord delayeth His coming.” Let the message of Christ’s soon return sound forth in earnest words of warning. Let us persuade men and women everywhere to repent and flee from the wrath to come. Let us arouse them to immediate preparation, for we little know what is before us. Let ministers and lay members go forth into the ripening fields to tell the unconcerned and indifferent to seek the Lord while He may be found. The workers will find their harvest wherever they proclaim the forgotten truths of the Bible. They will find those who will accept the truth and will devote their lives to winning souls to Christ.

The Lord is soon to come, and we must be prepared to meet Him in peace. Let us be determined to do all in our power to impart light

to those around us. We are not to be sad, but cheerful, and we are to keep the Lord Jesus ever before us. He is soon coming, and we must be ready and waiting for His appearing. Oh, how glorious it will be to see Him and be welcomed as His redeemed ones! Long have we waited, but our hope is not to grow dim. If we can but see the King in His beauty we shall be forever blessed. I feel as if I must cry aloud: "Homeward bound!" We are nearing the time when Christ will come in power and great glory to take His ransomed ones to their eternal home.

In the great closing work we shall meet with perplexities that we know not how to deal with; but let us not forget that the three great powers of heaven are working, that a divine hand is on the wheel, and that God will bring His promises to pass. He will gather from the world a people who will serve Him in righteousness.<sup>624</sup>

### **The Promise of Victory**

[357] I pray earnestly that the work we do at this time shall impress itself deeply on heart and mind and soul. Perplexities will increase; but let us, as believers in God, encourage one another. Let us not lower the standard, but keep it lifted high, looking to Him who is the author and finisher of our faith. When in the night season I am unable to sleep, I lift my heart in prayer to God, and He strengthens me, and gives me the assurance that He is with His ministering servants in the home field and in distant lands. I am encouraged and blessed as I realize that the God of Israel is still guiding His people, and that He will continue to be with them, even to the end.

The Lord desires to see the work of proclaiming the third Angel's message carried forward with increasing efficiency. As He has worked in all ages to give victories to His people, so in this age He longs to carry to a triumphant fulfillment His purposes for His church. He bids His believing saints to advance unitedly, going from strength to greater strength, from faith to increased assurance and confidence in the truth and righteousness of His cause.

We are to stand firm as a rock to the principles of the word of God, remembering that God is with us to give us strength to meet each new experience. Let us ever maintain in our lives the principles

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<sup>624</sup>Testimonies for the Church 8:252-254



of righteousness, that we may go forward from strength to strength in the name of the Lord. We are to hold as very sacred the faith that has been substantiated by the instruction and approval of the Spirit of God from our earliest experience until the present time. We are to cherish as very precious the work that the Lord has been carrying forward through His commandment-keeping people, and which, through the power of His grace, will grow stronger and more efficient as time advances. The enemy is seeking to becloud the discernment of God’s people, and to weaken their efficiency; but if they will labor as the Spirit of God shall direct, He will open doors of opportunity before them for the work of building up the old waste places. Their experience will be one of constant growth, until the Lord shall descend from heaven with power and great glory to set His seal of final triumph upon His faithful ones.

The work that lies before us is one that will put to the stretch every power of the human being. It will call for the exercise of strong faith and constant vigilance. At times the difficulties that we shall meet will be most disheartening. The very greatness of the task will appall us. And yet, with God’s help, His servants will finally triumph. “Wherefore,” my brethren, “I desire that ye faint not” because of the trying experiences that are before you. Jesus will be with you; He will go before you by His Holy Spirit, preparing the way; and He will be your helper in every emergency.

“Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.” [Ephesians 3:20, 21](#).<sup>625</sup>

I have been deeply impressed by scenes that have recently passed before me in the night season. There seemed to be a great movement—a work of revival—going forward in many places. Our people were moving into line, responding to God’s call. My brethren, the Lord is speaking to us. Shall we not heed His voice? Shall we not trim our lamps and act like men who look for their Lord to come? The time is one that calls for light-bearing, for action.

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“I therefore ... beseech you,” brethren, “that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meek-

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<sup>625</sup>2sm 407, 408

ness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” [Ephesians 4:1-3](#).<sup>626</sup>

### **The Reward of the Faithful**

My brother, my sister, I urge you to prepare for the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven. Day by day cast the love of the world out of your hearts. Understand by experience what it means to have fellowship with Christ. Prepare for the judgment, that when Christ shall come, to be admired in all them that believe, you may be among those who will meet Him in peace. In that day the redeemed will shine forth in the glory of the Father and the Son. The angels, touching their golden harps, will welcome the King and His trophies of victory—those who have been washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb. A song of triumph will peal forth, filling all heaven. Christ has conquered. He enters the heavenly courts, accompanied by His redeemed ones, the witnesses that His mission of suffering and sacrifice has not been in vain.

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.

There are homes for the pilgrims of earth. There are robes for the righteous, with crowns of glory and palms of victory. All that has perplexed us in the providences of God will in the world to come be made plain. The things hard to be understood will then find explanation. The mysteries of grace will unfold before us. Where our finite minds discovered only confusion and broken promises, we shall see the most perfect and beautiful harmony. We shall know that infinite love ordered the experiences that seemed most trying. 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.

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<sup>626</sup>2sm 402

Pain cannot exist in the atmosphere of heaven. In the home of the redeemed there will be no 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.” [Isaiah 33:24](#). One rich tide of happiness will flow and deepen as eternity rolls on.

It will not be long till we shall see Him in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered. And in His presence, all the trials and sufferings of this life will be as nothingness. “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.” [Hebrews 10:35-37](#). Look up, look up, and let your faith continually increase. Let this faith guide you along the narrow path that leads through the gates of the city of God into the great beyond, the wide, unbounded future of glory that is for the redeemed. “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.” [James 5:7, 8](#).<sup>627</sup>

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“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.” [1 John 3:2](#).

Then, in the results of His work, Christ will behold its recompense. In that great multitude which no man could number, presented “faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,” [Jude 24](#), He whose blood has redeemed and whose life has taught us, “shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied.” [Isaiah 53:11](#).<sup>628</sup>

### **Parting Word of Courage and Confidence**

I do not expect to live long. My work is nearly done.... I do not think I shall have more Testimonies for our people. Our men of solid minds know what is good for the uplifting and upbuilding of

<sup>627</sup>[Testimonies for the Church 9:285-288](#)

<sup>628</sup>[Education, 309](#)

the work. But with the love of God in their hearts, they need to go deeper and deeper into the study of the things of God.<sup>629</sup>

In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.<sup>630</sup>

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<sup>629</sup>Fundamentals of Christian Education, 547, 548

<sup>630</sup>Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 196