

Ellen G. White Estate

PASTORAL MINISTRY

ELLEN G. WHITE

Pastoral Ministry

Ellen G. White

1995

**Copyright © 2017
Ellen G. White Estate, Inc.**

Information about this Book

Overview

This eBook is provided by the [Ellen G. White Estate](#). It is included in the larger free [Online Books](#) collection on the Ellen G. White Estate Web site.

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

[A Brief Biography of Ellen G. White](#)
[About the Ellen G. White Estate](#)

End User License Agreement

The viewing, printing or downloading of this book grants you only a limited, nonexclusive and nontransferable license for use solely by you for your own personal use. This license does not permit republication, distribution, assignment, sublicense, sale, preparation of derivative works, or other use. Any unauthorized use of this book terminates the license granted hereby.

Further Information

For more information about the author, publishers, or how you can support this service, please contact the Ellen G. White Estate at mail@whiteestate.org. We are thankful for your interest and feedback and wish you God's blessing as you read.

Contents

Information about this Book	i
Preface	x
Section 1—Growth and Work	13
Chapter 1—Personal Devotions	14
Bible Study	17
Prayer	19
Meditation	21
Chapter 2—Adventism—a Unique, Worldwide Movement .	24
Unique Message	24
Loyalty to Adventist Doctrine	25
Doctrinal Argumentation	28
Worldwide Movement	29
Chapter 3—Characteristics of a Minister	32
Consecration	33
Self-Sacrifice	33
Compassion	35
Positive Attitude	36
Dependability	37
Humility	37
Responsibility	38
Chapter 4—Church Policies	39
Church Organization	39
Ministerial Ordination	40
Chapter 5—Ministerial Training	42
Called to Service	43
Classroom Training	44
Field Training	45
Continuing Education	47
Chapter 6—Development of a Personal Support Group	50
Chapter 7—Filing System	52
Chapter 8—Leadership	54
Chapter 9—Ministerial Ethics	57
Ethics and Fellow Pastors	59
Ethics and the Opposite Sex	62

Chapter 10—Personal Appearance	64
Minister’s Appearance	64
Family’s Appearance	66
Chapter 11—Personal Finance	69
Chapter 12—Personal Health	73
Stress	73
Exercise	74
Diet	75
Health Reform	76
Balance	77
Chapter 13—Women as Soulwinners	79
Team Ministry With Spouse	80
Remuneration of Spouses	81
Chapter 14—Time Management	85
Section 2—Relationships	89
Chapter 15—Relationships in the Pastoral Family	90
Home	90
Spouse	90
Children	93
Chapter 16—Relationships With Others	96
Community	96
Clergy of Other Denominations	97
People of Other Cultures	98
Chapter 17—Relationships Within the Church	101
Christ’s Representative	101
Congregation—Pastor’s Part	105
Congregation—People’s part	107
Alienation	109
Tenure	110
Conference	111
Pastor-President	112
Salary	116
Other Church Workers	117
Medical Missionaries	117
Teachers	118
Literature Evangelists	119
Business Administrators	121
Section 3—Evangelism and Church Growth	123

Chapter 18—Community Awareness	124
Community Services	124
Public Relations	125
Media	126
Chapter 19—Outreach	127
Publications	128
Health Ministry	129
Family Ministry	129
Chapter 20—Planning and Strategy	131
Time for Evangelism	131
Church Planning	132
Chapter 21—Getting Decisions	134
Public	135
Personal	137
Bible Class	137
Securing Interests	138
Chapter 22—Personal Evangelism	140
Visiting Non-members	141
Bible Studies	142
Friendship Soulwinning	142
Chapter 23—Public Evangelism	144
Crusade	144
Seminar	145
Chapter 24—Small Group Evangelism	147
Chapter 25—Specialized Outreaches	148
Cities	148
Prisons	149
Disadvantaged	150
Section 4—Lay Training	153
Chapter 26—Recruiting and Training Volunteers	154
Church Work Shared by Pastor and People	157
Minister’s Responsibility	160
Vocational Witnessing	161
Spiritual Gifts	162
Motivating Volunteers	165
Ministers as Trainers	167
Teach All to Be Active	170
Section 5—Worship and Special Services	173

Chapter 27—Baptism	174
Preparing Candidates	174
Children	175
Baptismal Service	176
Chapter 28—Child Dedication	178
Chapter 29—Communion	181
Footwashing	182
Bread and Wine	184
Chapter 30—Funeral	185
Chapter 31—Planning and Leading Worship	187
Reverence	187
Formal Versus Informal	188
Congregational Participation	189
Beginning of Worship	190
Music	191
Congregational singing	191
Instrumental	192
Not for Display	192
Public Prayer	193
Offering Appeal	195
Reading Scripture	196
Chapter 32—Prayer Meeting	197
Testimonies	199
Chapter 33—Preaching	201
Biblical	202
Christ-centered	205
Relating Faith to Life	207
Practical Application	207
Inappropriate Illustrations	208
Good Illustrations	209
Jesus' Illustrations	209
Positive Versus Negative	211
Negative	211
Positive	212
Conviction	212
Feeling	213
Decision	213
Delivery—Words	214

Delivery—Gestures	215
Delivery—Voice and Diction	215
Delivery—Length	216
Chapter 34—Wedding	218
Section 6—Pastoral Care and Nurture	221
Chapter 35—Assimilating New Members	222
Doctrinal Grounding	223
Converts Copy Their Minister	224
Chapter 36—Church Discipline	226
Necessity of Discipline	226
Attitude in Discipline	230
Chapter 37—Counseling	232
Family	233
Grief	234
Limitations	235
Chapter 38—Former Members, Inactive Members	237
Find Them	237
Win Them	239
Chapter 39—Personal Ministry to Members	241
Less Sermonizing, More Personal Ministry	243
Members and Personal Ministry	244
Chapter 40—Visitation of Special Member Groups	247
Family	247
Poor	249
Discouraged	249
Sick	250
Anointing and Divine Healing	251
Section 7—Organization and Administration	255
Chapter 41—Christian Education	256
Purpose	256
Teachers	258
School Building	259
Financing	259
Manual Labor	260
Chapter 42—Church Building	261
Location	261
Design	262
Construction	263

Financing	264
Maintenance	265
Help Others Build	265
Chapter 43—Church Social Life	267
Importance	267
Problems	269
Chapter 44—Committees	271
Principles in Forming	271
Principles of Conducting	272
Chapter 45—Conference Departments	274
Conference and Department Leaders	274
Cooperation Between Departments	275
Chapter 46—Finance	277
Stewards	278
World Church	279
Local Church	280
Ministers Need Some Financial Ability	280
Ministers Not Specialists in Finance	281
Chapter 47—Pastoring a Multi-Church District	282
Develop Church Talent	282
Worship Service When No Pastor Present	284
Chapter 48—Problem Solving and Conflict Resolution	286
Unity	288
Chapter 49—Promotion	290
Publications	290
Ingathering	291
Chapter 50—Adult Sabbath School	293
Value of Small Group Bible Study	294
Sabbath School Teachers	294
Chapter 51—Youth Leadership	296
Pastor-Parent Team	298
Train to Serve	299
Children’s Sabbath School	300
Chapter 52—Jesus as Model Pastor	303
Devotional Life	304
Love for People	305
Servant Leader	307
Soul Winner	307

Preacher-Teacher	308
Under-shepherd's Shepherd	310

Preface

For over half a century Ellen White worked shoulder to shoulder with ministers of the gospel, and shared with them inspired counsel. She held a high view of their calling, as is clear from statements such as the following: “The gospel minister is engaged in a very solemn, sacred work” (EV 184); “The minister stands as God’s mouthpiece to the people, and in thought, in word, in act, he is to represent his Lord” ([Gospel Workers, 20](#)).

From the rich treasury of her writings, the compilers of this book have brought together a selection of inspired counsels that apply most directly to the life and work of the local church pastor. Research was done by the General Conference Ministerial Association using the CD-ROM, 1990 edition, of *The Published Ellen G. White Writings*. It was discovered that Mrs. White used some derivative of the word *Clergy* 114 times, *Minister* 10,762 times, *Pastor* 385 times, *Preacher* 735 times, and *Shepherd* 1,540 times. Research focused especially on these quotes. The goal was to be complete, but not exhaustive; that is, to include material on every area of pastoral ministry, but not to quote every statement she made on each. Thus the principles are set forth, but not repeated unnecessarily.

Quotations usually include full paragraphs. If a paragraph is interrupted and continued later, this is indicated. In each case, the source is given, so the reader may search out and study the quotation in its original context. As a rule, quotation marks are not used around selections from the inspired writings, inasmuch as all text not in bold face, enclosed in brackets, or otherwise noted, is from Ellen White. Subheadings have been supplied by the compilers, and appear in bold type. In general, these include words or phrases borrowed from the quotations they introduce.

A large portion of Mrs. White’s writings are anecdotal; that is, they are accounts of events that happened in her life, the life of another person, or the history of the church. Principles are set forth, but often indirectly. To find these principle requires more effort

on the part of the reader than would be necessary if the writings were straightforward essays. However, this style makes interesting reading, and makes clear the fact that Ellen White's work for the church was a hands-on work.

Readers should look for the central principles contained in her counsel, and then apply those principles in a practical way in their own time and culture. She herself wrote, "regarding the testimonies, nothing is ignored; nothing is cast aside; but time and place must be considered" (1 SM 57). Thus, her counsels regarding camp meetings apply most directly to evangelistic meetings today, for in her day at least half of those who attended the typical Adventist camp meeting were not Seventh-day Adventists.

[14]

Compilations of Mrs. White's writings are helpful, for they offer a convenient way to see quickly what she has said on a variety of subjects. The goal in producing compilations is to represent her thought accurately and without bias. Thus, in most cases, before any selection of material is made, the full range of her writings on a given topic is brought together. This method has been followed in preparing this book. Where Ellen White has said much, much has been included. Where she has said little, little has been included.

The White Estate acknowledges with appreciation the work of the staff of the General Conference Ministerial Association in producing this valuable compilation. It is the earnest prayer both of the Ministerial Association and of the White Estate that as you read this book you may receive a rich blessing. May your Christian experience deepen and your ministry be strengthened as you study from the early chapters, which deal with the pastor's personal relationship with Christ, to the final chapter, which summarizes lessons from the ministry of Jesus, the model Pastor.

Board of Trustees of the Ellen G. White Estate, Inc.

Section 1—Growth and Work

[15]

[16]

[17]

1. Personal Devotions
3. Characteristics of a Minister
4. Church Policies
5. Ministerial Training
6. Development of a Personal Support Group
7. Filing System
8. Leadership
9. Ministerial Ethics
10. Personal Appearance
11. Personal Finance
12. Personal Health
13. Women as Soulwinners
14. Time Management

[18]

Chapter 1—Personal Devotions

[19]

We must have a converted ministry—The efficiency and power attending a truly converted minister would make the hypocrites in Zion tremble and sinners afraid. The standard of truth and holiness is trailing in the dust. If those who sound the solemn notes of warning for this time could realize their accountability to God, they would see the necessity for fervent prayer. When the cities were hushed in midnight slumber, when every man had gone to his own house, Christ, our example, would repair to the Mount of Olives, and there, amid the overshadowing trees, would spend the entire night in prayer. He who was Himself without the taint of sin,—a treasure-house of blessing; whose voice was heard in the fourth watch of the night by the terrified disciples upon the stormy sea, in heavenly benediction; and whose word could summon the dead from their graves,—He it was who made supplication with strong crying and tears. He prayed not for Himself, but for those whom He came to save. As He became a suppliant, seeking at the hand of His Father fresh supplies of strength, and coming forth refreshed and invigorated as man's substitute, He identified Himself with suffering humanity, and gave them an example of the necessity of prayer.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:528](#).

Unless ministers are daily converted, they can never reveal the truth as it is in Jesus—I am unable to describe to you the impression made upon my mind when I realize that many, even among our brethren who are teachers of the Word, are not daily converted. Christ stands ready to impart wisdom and grace; but those in important positions of responsibility can not guide others in the right paths unless they are converted daily. If they rely upon their own supposed wisdom, they will mislead others who look to them believing that these ministers understand the sacred work entrusted to them. Those who accept responsible charges need to be on their guard, and by humble prayer to be sanctified, refined, and purified. Unless they sense their true condition, and unless they

become Christlike, they can never reveal the truth as it is in Jesus.—[Letter 64, 1906 \(The Paulson Collection of Ellen G. White Letters, 43\)](#).

Ministers who are not converted daily do rash, unwise things—Some ministers who are connected with sacred responsibilities have lost all realization of what it means to watch for souls as they that must give an account. They do rash, unwise things. They have not discernment to see what their unwise movements are doing, because they are not daily converted. It is a sad thing to lose confidence in men in whom we ought to have confidence. The precious souls for whom Christ has died must not be left to be the sport of Satan’s snares and temptations.—[Manuscript Releases 19:212](#). [20]

Do not preach until you know what Christ is to you—Will my brethren take heed that no glory is given to men? Will they acknowledge that Christ does the work upon the human heart, and not they themselves. Will my ministering brethren plead with God alone in secret prayer for His presence and His power? Dare not to preach another discourse until you know, by your own experience, what Christ is to you. With hearts made holy through faith in the righteousness of Christ, you can preach Christ, you can lift up the risen Saviour before your hearers; with hearts subdued and melted with the love of Jesus you can say, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 154, 155](#).

The more you associate with the Master, the more closely you will resemble Him—The more that the minister of Christ associates with his Master, through contemplation of His life and character, the more closely will he resemble Him, and the better qualified will he be to teach His truths. Every feature in the life of the great Example should be studied with care, and close converse should be held with Him through the prayer of living faith. Thus will the defective human character be transformed into the image of His glorious character. Thus will the teacher of the truth be prepared to lead souls to Christ.—[The Spirit of Prophecy 3:244](#).

The yielding of self to the will of God is not an easy attainment—The warfare against self is the greatest battle that was ever fought. The yielding of self, surrendering all to the will of God,

and being clothed with humility, possessing that love that is pure, peaceable, and easy to be entreated, full of gentleness and good fruits, is not an easy attainment. And yet it is [our] privilege and [our] duty to be a perfect overcomer here. The soul must submit to God before it can be renewed in knowledge and true holiness. The holy life and character of Christ is a faithful example. His confidence in His heavenly Father was unlimited. His obedience and submission were unreserved and perfect. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister to others. He came not to do His own will, but the will of Him that sent Him. In all things He submitted Himself to Him that judgeth righteously. From the lips of the Saviour of the world were heard these words, “I can of mine own self do nothing.”—[Testimonies for the Church 3:106, 107.](#)

[21] **The Lord cannot work with those who are self-sufficient—**Do the shepherds of the flock expect that God will work with them? From the light that God has given me, I know that there might have been twenty-fold more accomplished than has been accomplished, if the workers had sought God for strength and support instead of depending so much upon man. There is need of men of faith for this time, not simply to be preachers, but to be ministers to the people of God. We want men that walk with God daily, that have a living connection with Heaven. The Lord cannot work with those who are self-sufficient, and who exalt themselves. Self must be hid in Jesus. If we would see the deep movings of the Spirit of God, we must have the truth as it is in Jesus. The efficiency of a discourse depends on the application of the truth to the heart by the Spirit of God. When Elijah sought God in the mountains, a devouring fire swept by; but God was not in the flame. A tempest rose, the thunder rolled, and the lightnings flashed; but God was not in all this. Then there came a still small voice, and the prophet covered his head before the presence of the Lord. It is the still, small voice of the Spirit of God that has the power to convict and convert men’s souls.—[The Review and Herald, June 18, 1889.](#)

The people are far in advance of many ministers—Ministers should seek a heart preparation before entering upon the work of helping others, for the people are far in advance of many of the ministers. They should untiringly wrestle in prayer until the Lord blesses them. When the love of God is burning on the altar of their

hearts, they will not preach to exhibit their own smartness, but to present Christ who taketh away the sins of the world.—[The Review and Herald, August 15, 1882.](#)

Ministers learn to do without the Spirit of God—The reason why there is so little of the Spirit of God manifested is that ministers learn to do without it. They lack the grace of God, lack forbearance and patience, lack a spirit of consecration and sacrifice; and this is the only reason why some are doubting the evidences of God's Word. The trouble is not at all with the Word of God, but in themselves. They lack the grace of God; lack devotion, personal piety, and holiness. This leads them to be unstable, and throws them often on Satan's battle-field. I saw that however strongly men may have advocated the truth; however pious they may appear to be; when they begin to talk unbelief in regard to some scriptures, claiming that they cause them to doubt the inspiration of the Bible, we should be afraid of them; for God is at a great distance from them.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:383, 384.](#)

Guard jealously your hours for prayer, Bible study, and self-examination—In the great conflict before us, he who would keep true to Christ must penetrate deeper than the opinions and doctrines of men. My message to ministers, young and old, is this: Guard jealously your hours for prayer, Bible study, and self-examination. Set aside a portion of each day for a study of the Scriptures and communion with God. Thus you will obtain spiritual strength, and will grow in favor with God. He alone can give you noble aspirations; He alone can fashion the character after the divine similitude. Draw near to Him in earnest prayer, and He will fill your hearts with high and holy purposes, and with deep, earnest longings for purity and clearness of thought.—[Gospel Workers, 100.](#)

[22]

Bible Study

It is a sin for those who teach the Word to be neglectful of its study—Ministers who would labor effectively for the salvation of souls must be both Bible students and men of prayer. It is a sin for those who attempt to teach the Word to others to be themselves neglectful of its study. Are the truths which they handle mighty? Then they should handle them skillfully. Their ideas should be clearly

and strongly presented. Of all men upon the face of the earth, those who are proclaiming the message for this time should understand their Bible, and be thoroughly acquainted with the evidences of their faith. One who does not possess a knowledge of the Word of life, has no right to try to instruct others in the way to heaven.—[Gospel Workers, 249](#).

Young ministers should search the Scriptures for themselves—I call upon the young men who are entering the work as ministers to take heed how they hear. Be careful how you oppose the precious truths of which you now have so little knowledge. Search the Scriptures for yourselves. You have altogether too limited knowledge of yourself. Know for yourselves what is truth. Do not take any man’s words, any man’s prejudices, any man’s arguments, any man’s theories. This has been done by ministers to the injury of their experience, and it has left them novices when they should be wise in the Scriptures and in the power of God. Take your Bibles, humble yourselves, and weep and fast and pray before the Lord, as did Nathanael, seeking to know the truth. Jesus’ divine eye saw Nathanael praying, and answered his prayer.—EGW’88 141.

Bible truth not felt by the minister’s own soul is rejected by hearers as error—We have a dwarfed and defective ministry. Unless Christ shall abide in the men who preach the truth, they will lower the moral and religious standard wherever they are tolerated. One example is given them, even Christ. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” In the Bible we have the unerring counsel of God. Its teachings, practically carried out, will fit men for any position of duty. It is the voice of God speaking every day to the soul. How carefully should the young study the Word of God and treasure up its sentiments in the heart, that its precepts may be made to govern the whole conduct. Our young ministers, and those who have been some time preaching, show a marked deficiency in their understanding of the Scriptures. The work of the Holy Spirit is to enlighten the darkened understanding, to melt the selfish, stony heart, to subdue the rebellious transgressor, and save him from the corrupting influences of the world. The prayer of Christ for His disciples was: “Sanctify them through Thy truth:

Thy word is truth.” The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, pierces the heart of the sinner and cuts it in pieces. When the theory of the truth is repeated without its sacred influence being felt upon the soul of the speaker, it has no force upon the hearers, but is rejected as error, the speaker making himself responsible for the loss of souls.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:441](#).

Prayer

Great results attend the labors of praying ministers—Be instant in prayer. You are a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. You occupy a fearfully responsible position. I entreat you to redeem the time. Come very near to God in supplication, and you will be like a tree planted by the river of waters, whose leaf is always green, and whose fruit appears in due season. Ministers of Christ, you need divine power, which God is willing to give without stint, when the draft is made upon him. Only go to God, and take Him at his Word, and let your works be sustained by living faith in His promises. God does not require from you eloquent prayers and logical reasoning; but only a humble, contrite heart, ready and willing to learn of Him. The praying minister, who has living faith, will have corresponding works, and great results will attend his labors, despite the combined obstacles of earth and hell.—[The Review and Herald, August 8, 1878](#).

No work for the church should take precedence over communion with God—There is nothing more needed in the work than the practical results of communion with God. We should show by our daily lives that we have peace and rest in God. His peace in the heart will shine forth in the countenance. It will give to the voice a persuasive power. Communion with God will impart a moral elevation to the character and to the entire course of action. Men will take knowledge of us, as of the first disciples, that we have been with Jesus. This will impart to the minister’s labors a power even greater than that which comes from the influence of his preaching. Of this power he must not allow himself to be deprived. Communion with God through prayer and the study of His word must not be neglected, for here is the source of his strength. No work for the church should take precedence of this.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:47](#).

Ministers' prayers unheard if they regard iniquity—"God has chosen us out of the world that we might be a peculiar and holy people. Who gave

[24] Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." God's workers must be men of prayer, diligent students of the Scriptures, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, that they may be a light and strength to others. Our God is a jealous God; and He requires that we worship Him in spirit and in truth, in the beauty of holiness. The psalmist says, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." As workers, we must take heed to our ways. If the psalmist could not be heard if he regarded iniquity in his heart, how can the prayers of ministers be heard if iniquity is regarded among them? There are dangers to which we are continually exposed. It is Satan's studied plan to make the workers weak in prayer, weak in power, and weak in influence before the world, because of the defects in their characters,—defects which in no way harmonize with the truth.—[The Review and Herald, November 10, 1885.](#)

Doubts destroy a ministry—Some are not naturally devotional, and therefore should encourage and cultivate a habit of close examination of their own lives and motives, and should especially cherish a love for religious exercises and for secret prayer. They are often heard talking of doubts and unbelief, and dwelling upon the wonderful struggles they have had with infidel feelings. They dwell upon discouraging influences as so affecting their faith, hope, and courage in the truth and in the ultimate success of the work and cause in which they are engaged, as to make it a special virtue to be found on the side of the doubting. At times they seem to really enjoy hovering about the infidel's position and strengthening their unbelief with every circumstance they can gather as an excuse for their darkness. To such we would say: You would better come down at once and leave the walls of Zion until you become converted men and good Christians. Before you take the responsibility of becoming ministers you are required of God to separate yourselves from the love of this world. The reward of those who continue in this doubting position will be that given to the fearful and unbelieving.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:513.](#)

Christ united prayer with work—Overburdened, a minister is often so hurried that he scarcely finds time to examine himself, whether he be in the faith. He finds very little time to meditate and pray. Christ in His ministry united prayer with work. Night after night He spent wholly in prayer. Ministers must seek God for His Holy Spirit, in order that they may present the truth aright.—[Evangelism, 91](#).

Meditation

Nearly all neglect self-examination—I have been shown that many are in the greatest danger of failing to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord. Ministers are in danger of losing their own souls. Some who have preached to others will themselves be cast away because they have not perfected a Christian character. In their labor they do not save souls, and fail even to save their own. They do not see the importance of self-knowledge and self-control. They do not watch and pray, lest they enter into temptation. If they would watch, they would become acquainted with their weak points, where they are most likely to be assailed by temptation. With watchfulness and prayer their weakest points can be so guarded as to become their strongest points, and they can encounter temptation without being overcome. Every follower of Christ should daily examine himself, that he may become perfectly acquainted with his own conduct. There is with nearly all a neglect of self-examination. This neglect is positively dangerous in one who professes to be a mouthpiece for God, occupying the fearful, responsible position of receiving the words from God to give to His people. The daily conduct of such a person has great influence upon others. If he has any success in labor, he brings his converts to his own low standard, and it is seldom that they rise higher. Their minister's ways, his words, his gestures and manners, his faith, and his piety, are considered a sample of those of all Sabbathkeeping Adventists; and if they pattern after him who has taught them the truth, they think they are doing all their duty.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:511](#).

[25]

Ministers should make the actions of each day a subject of deliberate review—There is much in the conduct of a minister that he can improve. Many see and feel their lack, yet they seem to be

ignorant of the influence they exert. They are conscious of their actions as they perform them, but suffer them to pass from their memory, and therefore do not reform. If ministers would make the actions of each day a subject of careful thought and deliberate review, with the object to become acquainted with their own habits of life, they would better know themselves. By a close scrutiny of their daily life under all circumstances they would know their own motives, the principles which actuate them. This daily review of our acts, to see whether conscience approves or condemns, is necessary for all who wish to arrive at the perfection of Christian character. Many acts which pass for good works, even deeds of benevolence, will, when closely investigated, be found to be prompted by wrong motives. Many receive applause for virtues which they do not possess. The Searcher of hearts inspects motives, and often the deeds which are highly applauded by men are recorded by Him as springing from selfish motives and base hypocrisy. Every act of our lives, whether excellent and praiseworthy or deserving of censure, is judged by the Searcher of hearts according to the motives which prompted it.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:511, 512.](#)

One hour's meditation is more valuable than days spent studying the most able authors—Bro. Hull, God wants you to come nearer to Him, where you can take hold of His strength, and by living faith claim His salvation, and be a strong man. If you were a devotional, godly man in the pulpit and out, a mighty influence would attend your preaching. You do not closely search your own heart. You have studied many works to make your discourses thorough, able, and pleasing. But the greatest and most necessary study you have neglected—the study of yourself. A thorough knowledge of yourself, meditation and prayer, have been neglected by you too much. They have come in as secondary things. Your success as a minister depends upon your keeping your own heart. You will receive more strength by spending one hour each day in meditation, and mourning over your failings and heart-corruptions, and pleading for God's pardoning love, and the assurance of sins forgiven, than you would by spending many hours and days in studying the most able authors, and making yourself acquainted with every objection to our faith, and the most powerful evidences in favor of our faith.—[The Review and Herald, January 19, 1864.](#)

A large portion of the time being spent in study should rather be spent in prayer and meditation—I was shown that the time that is consumed in so much reading and study is often worse than thrown away. A large portion of the time spent over books and in studying should be spent before God imploring Him for heavenly wisdom and for strength and power to let the truth, which they do fully understand, shine out before the people in its clearness and harmonious beauty. There is too little time spent in secret prayer and in sacred meditation. The cry of God's servants should be for the holy unction and to be clothed with salvation, that what they preach may reach hearts. Time is so short and ministers of these last days are so few that they should throw all their energies into the work, and should be in close connection with God and holy angels, that a tremendous power may be in their preaching—a compelling power, to draw every soul who is honest and loves the truth right along to embrace it.—[The Voice in Speech and Song, 219.](#)

Meditate especially on the mediatorial work of Christ—Ministers of the gospel would be powerful men if they set the Lord always before them and devoted their time to the study of His adorable character. If they did this, there would be no apostasies, there would be none separated from the conference because they have, by their licentious practices, disgraced the cause of God and put Jesus to an open shame. The powers of every minister of the gospel should be employed to educate the believing churches to receive Christ by faith as their personal Saviour, to take Him into their very lives and make Him their Pattern, to learn of Jesus, believe in Jesus, and exalt Jesus. The minister should himself dwell on the character of Christ. He should ponder the truth, and meditate upon the mysteries of redemption, especially the mediatorial work of Christ for this time.—[Selected Messages 3:187.](#)

Chapter 2—Adventism—a Unique, Worldwide Movement

Unique Message

In every age there is some special truth that separates God’s church from the world—“Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth,” was the prayer of Christ for His disciples. In every age God has committed to His people some special truth which is directly opposed to the desires and purposes of the human heart, and which tends to separate His church from the world; and it has been the duty of His ministers to proclaim this truth, whether men would hear or forbear.—[The Signs of the Times, January 28, 1886](#).

Study the doctrine of the righteousness of Christ in connection with the law—I know it would be dangerous to denounce Dr. Waggoner’s position as wholly erroneous. This would please the enemy. I see the beauty of truth in the presentation of the righteousness of Christ in relation to the law as the doctor has placed it before us. You say, many of you, it is light and truth. Yet you have not presented it in this light heretofore. Is it not possible that through earnest, prayerful searching of the Scriptures he has seen still greater light on some points? That which has been presented harmonizes perfectly with the light which God has been pleased to give me during all the years of my experience. If our ministering brethren would accept the doctrine which has been presented so clearly—the righteousness of Christ in connection with the law—and I know they need to accept this, their prejudices would not have a controlling power, and the people would be fed with their portion of meat in due season. Let us take our Bibles, and with humble prayer and a teachable spirit, come to the great Teacher of the world; let us pray as did David, “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law” ([Psalm 119:18](#)).—EGW’88 164.

Ministers may not appreciate the value of the truth they present—The world is to be warned of its coming doom. The

slumbers of those who are lying in sin and error are so deep, so deathlike, that the voice of God through a wide-awake minister is needed to awaken them. Unless the ministers are converted, the people will not be. The cold formalism that is now prevailing among us must give place to the living energy of experimental godliness. There is no fault with the theory of the truth; it is perfectly clear and harmonious. But young ministers may speak the truth fluently, and yet have no real sense of the words they utter. They do not appreciate the value of the truth they present, and little realize what it has cost those who, with prayers and tears, through trial and opposition, have sought for it as for hid treasures. Every new link in the chain of truth was to them as precious as tried gold. These links are now united in a perfect whole. Truths have been dug out of the rubbish of superstition and error, by earnest prayer for light and knowledge, and have been presented to the people as precious pearls of priceless value.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:445, 446](#).

[28]

The Lord keeps truth fresh, placing it in new settings—How do you know but that the Lord is giving fresh evidences of his truth, placing it in a new setting, that the way of the Lord may be prepared? What plans have you been laying that new light may be infused through the ranks of God’s people? What evidence have you that God has not sent light to His children? All self-sufficiency, egotism, and pride of opinion must be put away. We must come to the feet of Jesus, and learn of Him who is meek and lowly of heart.—[Selected Messages 1:414](#).

Loyalty to Adventist Doctrine

Teaching doctrine and dealing with human minds is the nicest job every committed to humans—There is pastoral work to do, and this means to reprove and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine; that is, he should present the Word of God, to show wherein there is a deficiency. If there is anything in the character of the professed followers of Christ, the burden should certainly be felt by the minister, and not that he should lord it over God’s heritage. To deal with human minds is the nicest job that was ever committed to mortal man.—[Evangelism, 347](#).

Ministers must first be converted to the truth themselves—I attended the ministerial council and made some important remarks in regard to the necessity of the ministerial school, and the importance of ministers' spending some time in obtaining a drill in Bible study, which would qualify them to do better work. Thus they would place themselves in the most favorable position to obtain a knowledge of how to work. This is necessary because there has been so much counterworking in our midst that the churches have received very confusing theories in regard to the truth for this time. It is essential that our ministers speak the same things in our churches, and give the trumpet no uncertain sound. Our ministers need first to be converted to the truth themselves. Then they can go forth everywhere, bearing the message of truth for this time.—[Manuscript Releases 3:193](#).

[29] **We are not to make less prominent the special truths that have separated us from the world**—The message we have to bear is not a message that men need to cringe to declare. They are not to seek to cover it, to conceal its origin and purpose. Its advocates must be men who will not hold their peace day nor night. As those who have made solemn vows to God, and who have been commissioned as the messengers of Christ, as stewards of the mysteries of the grace of God, we are under obligation to declare faithfully the whole counsel of God. We are not to make less prominent the special truths that have separated us from the world and made us what we are; for they are fraught with eternal interests. God has given us light in regard to the things that are now taking place in the last remnant of time, and with pen and voice we are to proclaim the truth to the world, not in a tame, spiritless way, but in demonstration of the Spirit and power of God. The mightiest conflicts are involved in the furtherance of the message, and the results of its promulgation are of moment to both heaven and earth.—[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 329](#).

Ministers must not stand by as our doctrines are eroded—In a representation which passed before me, I saw a certain work being done by medical missionary workers. Our ministering brethren were looking on, watching what was being done, but they did not seem to understand. The foundation of our faith, which was established by so much prayer, such earnest searching of the Scriptures, was being taken down, pillar by pillar. Our faith was to have nothing to

rest upon—the sanctuary was gone, the atonement was gone.—[The Upward Look, 152.](#)

Do not preach just that part of the truth that pleases the people—Paul exhorted Timothy, “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” We are to give the message of warning to the world, and how are we doing our work? Are you, brethren, preaching that part of the truth that pleases the people, while other parts of the work are left incomplete? Will it be necessary for some one to follow after you, and urge upon the people the duty of faithfully bringing all the tithes and offerings into the Lord’s treasury? This is the work of the minister, but it has been sadly neglected. The people have robbed God, and the wrong has been suffered because the minister did not want to displease his brethren. God calls these men unfaithful stewards. The charge to his servants is, “Be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine.” If the under shepherds do their duty with fidelity, when the chief Shepherd shall appear he will give them “a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” Daniel saw their reward, and he says, “They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever.”—[The Review and Herald, July 8, 1884.](#)

Shun the burning desire to get up something new and bring it in as new light—If we only knew what is before us, we should not be so dilatory in doing the work of the Lord. There are ministers and workers who will present a tissue of nonsensical falsehoods as testing truths, even as the Jewish rabbis presented the maxims of men as the bread of heaven. These are given to the flock of God, as their portion of meat in due season, while the poor sheep are starving for the bread of life. Even now there seems to be a burning desire to get up something startling, and bring it in as new light. Thus men are weaving into the web as important truths a tissue of lies. This imaginary food that is being prepared for the flock will cause spiritual consumption, decline, and death.—[The Review and Herald, January 22, 1901.](#) [30]

Respect the rights of others by studying to see if their presumed new light is scriptural—We must learn that others have rights as well as we ourselves. When a brother receives new light

upon the Scriptures, he should frankly explain his position, and every minister should search the Scriptures with the spirit of candor, to see if the points presented can be substantiated by the Inspired Word. “The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth” (2 Timothy 2:24, 25).—[Gospel Workers, 303](#).

Doctrinal Argumentation

Some ministers are as dependent on the invigoration of argumentation as the drunk is on drink—Debating ministers are the most unreliable among us, because they cannot be depended upon when the work goes hard. Bring them into a place where there is but little interest, and they manifest a want of courage, zeal, and real interest. They depend as much upon being enlivened and invigorated by the excitement created by debate or opposition as does the inebriate upon his dram. These ministers need to be converted anew. They need to drink deep of the unceasing streams which proceed from the eternal Rock.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:217](#).

There is danger in dwelling too much on doctrine—We are one in faith in the fundamental truths of God’s Word. And one object must be kept in view constantly, that is harmony and cooperation must be maintained without compromising one principle of truth. And while constantly digging for the truth as for hidden treasure, be careful how you open new and conflicting opinions. We have a worldwide message. The commandments of God and the testimonies of Jesus Christ are the burden of our work. To have unity and love for one another is the great work now to be carried on. There is danger of our ministers dwelling too much on doctrines, preaching altogether too many discourses on

[31] argumentative subjects when their own soul needs practical godliness.—[Manuscript Releases 15:23](#).

Preaching an incontrovertible truth may make the preacher overly self-confident and self-inflated—We have the most solemn message of truth ever borne to the world. This truth is more and more respected by unbelievers because it cannot be controverted. In view

of this fact, our young men become self-confident and self-inflated. They take the truths which have been brought out by other minds, and without study or earnest prayer meet opponents and engage in contests, indulging in sharp speeches and witticisms, flattering themselves that this is doing the work of a gospel minister. In order to be fitted for God's work, these men need as thorough a conversion as Paul experienced. Ministers must be living representatives of the truth they preach. They must have greater spiritual life, characterized by greater simplicity.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:446](#).

Those proclaiming the church is Babylon divert money from a channel of usefulness into a channel of evil—Those who advocate error, will say, “The Lord saith, when the Lord hath not spoken.” They testify to falsehood, and not to truth. If those who have been proclaiming the message that the church is Babylon, had used the money expended in publishing and circulating this error, in building up, instead of tearing down, they would have made it evident that they were with the people whom God is leading.... If those who have done this kind of work, had felt the necessity of answering the prayer of Christ that He offered to His Father just previous to His crucifixion,—that the disciples of Christ might be one as He was one with the Father,—they would not be wasting the means intrusted to them, and so greatly needed to advance the truth. They would not be wasting precious time and ability in disseminating error, and thus necessitate the devoting of the laborer's time to counteracting and quenching its influence. A work of this character is inspired not from above, but from beneath.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 43, 44](#).

Worldwide Movement

Home and foreign missions are to share God's money equally—Home and foreign missions are to share equally of God's trust money. In planning for the work, the difficulties to be met in foreign fields are to be considered. Let not those who have every advantage be niggardly in appropriating means for the advancement of the work in mission fields. For Christ's sake, willing support is to be given to the work of the gospel, which is to be carried to all parts of the world.—[The General Conference Bulletin, July 1, 1900](#).

[32] **The urgency of the mission within our borders**—In the great cities are multitudes who receive less care and consideration than are given to dumb animals. Think of the families herded together in miserable tenements, many of them dark basements, reeking with dampness and filth. In these wretched places children are born and grow up and die. They see nothing of the beauty of natural things that God has created to delight the senses and uplift the soul. Ragged and half-starved, they live amid vice and depravity, molded in character by the wretchedness and sin that surround them. Children hear the name of God only in profanity. Foul speech, imprecations, and revilings fill their ears. The fumes of liquor and tobacco, sickening stench, moral degradation, pervert their senses. Thus multitudes are trained to become criminals, foes to society that has abandoned them to misery and degradation.

Not all the poor in the city slums are of this class. God-fearing men and women have been brought to the depths of poverty by illness or misfortune, often through the dishonest scheming of those who live by preying upon their fellows. Many who are upright and well-meaning become poor through lack of industrial training. Through ignorance they are unfitted to wrestle with the difficulties of life. Drifting into the cities, they are often unable to find employment. Surrounded by the sights and sounds of vice, they are subjected to terrible temptation. Herded and often classed with the vicious and degraded, it is only by a superhuman struggle, a more than finite power, that they can be preserved from sinking to the same depths. Many hold fast their integrity, choosing to suffer rather than to sin. This class especially demand help, sympathy, and encouragement.—[The Ministry of Healing, 189, 190.](#)

Home missions prosper when there is liberality with foreign missions—The home missionary work will be farther advanced in every way when a more liberal, self-denying, self-sacrificing spirit is manifested for the prosperity of foreign missions; for the prosperity of the home work depends largely, under God, upon the reflex influence of the evangelical work done in countries afar off. It is in working actively to supply the necessities of the cause of God that we bring our souls in touch with the Source of all power.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:27.](#)

Work for those suffering as a result of their own course of action should not hinder the work of foreign missions—Men’s feelings may become greatly moved as they see human beings suffering as the result of their own course of action. There are those who are specially impressed to come into direct contact with this class, and the Lord gives them a commission to work in the worst places of the earth, doing what they can to redeem outcasts and bring them where they will be under the care of the churches. But the Lord has not called Seventh-day Adventists to make this work a specialty. He would not have them in this work engross many workers or exhaust the treasury by erecting institutions for the care of outcasts, thus hindering the work of foreign missions. God calls for one hundred missionaries where there is now one. These are to go forth to foreign countries.—[Manuscript Releases 14:164](#).

Self-supporting missionaries needed—A great work is going [33] silently on through the distribution of our publications; but what a great amount of good might be done if some of our brethren and sisters from America would come to these colonies, as fruit growers, farmers, or merchants, and in the fear and love of God, would seek to win souls to the truth. If such families were consecrated to God, He would use them as His agents. Ministers have their place and their work, but there are scores that the minister cannot reach, who might be reached by families who could visit with the people and impress upon them the truth for these last days. In their domestic or business relations they could come in contact with a class who are inaccessible to the minister, and they could open to them the treasures of the truth, and impart to them a knowledge of salvation. There is altogether too little done in this line of missionary work; or the field is large, and many workers could labor with success in this line of effort.—[Fundamentals of Christian Education, 212](#).

[34]

Chapter 3—Characteristics of a Minister

[35]

The influence of a minister's true Christian character is like cheering rays of sunlight—God calls upon ministers who accept His truth, and bear, in His name, the most solemn message ever given to the world, to lift the standard of Bible truth, and exemplify its precepts in their daily lives. Such a course would charm into believing many who have intrenched themselves behind the breastworks of infidelity. The influence of a true Christian character is like the cheering rays of sunlight that pierce to the remotest corners of the dark places into which they are allowed to enter. The light emanating from the example of the true Christian minister should not be fitful and uncertain like the flash of a meteor, but it should have the calm and steady radiance of the heavenly stars.—[The Review and Herald, August 8, 1878.](#)

Judas exemplifies ministers who may love Jesus, but cling to their objectionable traits of character—In Christ he beheld a character that was pure, harmless, and undefiled, and his heart was drawn out in love for his Master. But the light that was shed upon him from the character of Christ, brought with it the responsibility of yielding up every natural or acquired trait that was not in harmony with the character of Christ. In this Judas did not stand the test. The love of the world was deeply rooted in his heart, and he did not give up his love for the world, nor surrender his ambition to Christ. He never came to the point of surrendering himself fully to Jesus. He felt that he could retain his own individual judgment and opinion. While he accepted the position of the minister of Christ, yet he never brought himself under the divine moulding of Christ. He clung to his objectionable traits of character, and indulged in his own sinful habits, and, instead of becoming pure and Christlike, he became selfish and covetous.—[The Signs of the Times, December 18, 1893.](#)

Consecration

What we need is a converted ministry—What we need in this time of peril is a converted ministry. We need men who realize their soul poverty, and who will earnestly seek for the endowment of the Holy Spirit. A preparation of heart is necessary that God may give us His blessing, but this heart work is not done. O, when will the ministry awake to the solemn responsibilities that are laid upon them, and earnestly plead for heavenly power? It is the Holy Spirit that must give edge and power to the discourse of the minister, or his preaching will be as destitute of the righteousness of Christ as was the offering of Cain.—[The Review and Herald, April 5, 1892.](#)

[36]

Those with incorrigible, unbending, stubborn traits of character, when transformed, make the most valuable ministers—Ministers have been presented to me, with their course of action and their character before they were converted—the hardest and most incorrigible, the most unbending, the most stubborn—and yet, every one of these traits of character was what they needed in the work of God. We don't want to kill that. It is needed in order to fill important positions of trust in the cause of God. There must be a transformation of character. The leaven must work in the human heart, until every action is in conformity to the will of God, and they are sanctified; then they become the most valuable. It is this very kind of individuals that God can use in the different branches of His work.—[Manuscript Releases 9:61.](#)

Piety and devotion are what count—It is not always men who are best adapted to the successful management of a church. If faithful women have more deep piety and true devotion than men, they could indeed by their prayers and their labors do more than men who are unconsecrated in heart and in life.—[Manuscript Releases 19:56.](#)

Self-Sacrifice

The minister's work demands sacrifice, but less than many who have gone before—The preachers are not all given up to the work of God, as He requires them to be. Some have felt that the lot of a preacher was hard because they had to be separated from their families. They forget that once it was harder laboring than it is now.

Once there were but few friends of the cause. They forget those upon whom God laid the burden of the work in the past. There were but a few then who received the truth as the result of much labor. God's chosen servants wept and prayed for a clear understanding of truth, and suffered privation and much self-denial in order to carry it to others. Step by step they followed as God's opening providence led the way. They did not study their own convenience or shrink at hardships. Through these men God prepared the way and made the truth plain to the understanding of every honest mind. Everything has been made ready to the hands of ministers who have since embraced the truth, yet some of them have failed to take upon them the burden of the work. They seek for an easier lot, a less self-denying position. This earth is not the resting place of Christians, much less for the chosen ministers of God. They forget that Christ left His riches and glory in heaven, and came to earth to die, and that He has commanded us to love one another even as He has loved us. They forget those of whom the world was not worthy, who wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, and were afflicted and tormented.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:370, 371](#).

Let ministers who feel they are suffering hardships, visit the workshop of the apostle Paul—Although feeble in health, he labored during the day in serving the cause of Christ, and then toiled a large share of the night, and frequently all night, that he might make provision for his own and others' necessities.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:410](#).

Trials prepare preachers for success as shepherds—Moses was directed of God to obtain an experience in care-taking, in thoughtfulness, in tender solicitude for his flock, that he might, as a faithful shepherd, be ready when God should call him to take charge of His people. A similar experience is essential for those who engage in the great work of preaching the truth. In order to lead souls to the life-giving fountain, the preacher must first drink at the fountain himself. He must see the infinite sacrifice made by the Son of God to save fallen men, and his own soul must be imbued with the spirit of undying love. If God appoints us hard labor to perform, we must do it without a murmur. If the path is difficult and dangerous, it is God's plan to have us follow in meekness and cry unto Him for strength. A lesson is to be learned from the experience

of some of our ministers who have known nothing comparatively of difficulties and trials, yet ever look upon themselves as martyrs. They have yet to learn to accept with thankfulness the way of God's choosing, remembering the Author of our salvation. The work of the minister should be pursued with an earnestness, energy, and zeal as much greater than that put forth in business transactions as the labor is more sacred and the result more momentous.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:442](#).

Compassion

Shepherds need kindly, compassionate traits of character—Brother A, you need to work with the utmost diligence to control self and develop a character in harmony with the principles of the Word of God. You need to educate and train yourself in order to become a successful shepherd. You need to cultivate a good temper—kindly, cheerful, buoyant, generous, pitiful, courteous, compassionate traits of character. You should overcome a morose, bigoted, narrow, faultfinding, overbearing spirit. If you are connected with the work of God you need to battle with yourself vigorously and form your character after the divine Model.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:420](#).

Christlikeness means living to love and serve—especially the unlovely—What a wonderful reverence Jesus expressed in His life mission for human life! He stood not among the people as a king demanding attention, reverence, service, but as one who wished to serve, to lift up humanity. He said He had not come to be ministered unto, but to minister. I am sure that the great lesson of forgiveness must be learned more perfectly by us all, and we must practice the Christian graces. Wherever Christ saw a human being He saw one who needed human sympathy. Many of us are willing to serve certain ones,—those whom we honor,—but the very ones to whom Christ would make us a blessing if we were not so cold-hearted, so unkind and selfish, we pass by as unworthy of our notice. We do not help them, though it is our duty to do this,—to bear with their rudeness, while seeking to cultivate the opposite traits of character.—[The Review and Herald, April 12, 1887](#).

[38]

Positive Attitude

Be cheerful and happy without indulging in lightness or frivolity—Jesting, joking, and worldly conversation belong to the world. Christians who have the peace of God in their hearts, will be cheerful and happy without indulging in lightness or frivolity. While watching unto prayer, they will have a serenity and peace which will elevate them above all superfluities.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:241](#).

Doubt and unbelief, resulting from unfavorable circumstances, indicate spiritual problems—No greater evidence need be asked that a person is at a great distance from Jesus, and living in neglect of secret prayer, neglecting personal piety, than the fact that he thus talks doubts and unbelief because his surroundings are not favorable. Such persons have not the pure, true, undefiled religion of Christ. They have a spurious article which the refining process will utterly consume as dross. As soon as God proves them, and tests their faith, they waver, they stand feebly, swaying first one way, then the other. They have not the genuine article that Paul possessed, that could glory in tribulation because “tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.” They have a religion of circumstance. If all around them are strong in faith and courage in the ultimate success of the third angel’s message, and no special influence is brought to bear against them, they then appear to have some faith. But as soon as adversity seems to come upon the cause, and the work drags heavily, and the help of everyone is needed, these poor souls, though they may be professed ministers of the gospel, expect everything to come to nought. These hinder instead of helping.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:514](#).

When the shepherd becomes discouraged, wolves devour the sheep—Satan will work by any and every means which he can employ to discourage the active servants of God. If the shepherd can be beguiled from his duty, then the way is clear for wolves to scatter and devour the sheep.—[The Signs of the Times, January 3, 1884](#).

Dependability

[39]

Ministers need a steady experience, not one that flames up on special occasions, then grows dim—The ministers of Jesus Christ must teach, both in the church and to individuals, the fact that a profession of faith, even by Seventh-day Adventists, unless it proceeds from heartfelt piety, is powerless for good. Religious light is to shine forth from the church, and especially from the ministers, in clear, steady rays. It is not to flame up on special occasions, and then grow dim, and flicker, as if about to go out.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:531](#).

If a minister is not reliable, other gifts cannot make up for it—Brother C can speak in a manner to interest a congregation, and if this were all that is necessary to make a successful preacher, then a class of brethren and sisters would be right in their estimation of him. But he is not a thorough workman; he is not reliable.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:448](#).

Humility

Keep Jesus prominent and self out of sight—Your danger will ever be in despising counsel and in placing a higher value on yourself than God places upon you. There are many who are always ready to flatter and praise a minister who can talk. A young minister is ever in danger of being petted and applauded to his own injury, while at the same time he may be deficient in the essentials which God requires of everyone who professes to be a mouthpiece for Him. You have merely entered the school of Christ. The fitting up for your work is a life business, a daily, laborious, hand-to-hand struggle with established habits, inclinations, and hereditary tendencies. It requires a constant, earnest, and vigilant effort to watch and control self, to keep Jesus prominent and self out of sight.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:376](#).

It takes time to learn to properly shepherd God's flock—How long did it take Moses to learn the lesson of meekness, and become fitted to be a general to lead the armies of Israel out of Egypt? He went through a long discipline. For forty years he tended sheep in the land of Midian, learning how to be a good shepherd to

the flock. In his position of shepherd he was called upon to care for the weak, to guide the wayward, to seek for the wandering. This was an essential training for him who was to be the leader of Israel; for in the care of the flock of God he would be called upon to nourish the weak, to instruct the wayward, and to bring the lost one back to the fold.—[The Signs of the Times, January 16, 1893.](#)

Responsibility

[40] **Feed, oversee, and be an example to your flock**—The ministers of the Word, and others who fill responsible positions, as well as the body of the church, need this spirit of humility and contrition. The apostle Peter writes to those who labor in the gospel: “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.”—[The Review and Herald, December 16, 1890.](#)

Preach the Word, and visit the people—No part of the minister’s duty is to be neglected. He is to preach the Word, not the opinions of men. He is to labor with individuals, to visit families, not simply to talk of the commonplace happenings, but of things of eternal interest, praying with them, and teaching in all simplicity the truth of God.—[The Review and Herald, June 30, 1891.](#)

Arrange for each member to have something to do—The work of the minister represented by the seven stars is a high and sacred work. When he entertains the idea that his work is comprehended in sermonizing, he overlooks, and is sure to neglect, the work devolving upon a shepherd of the flock. It is his work to have care, to oversee the flock, to so arrange the elements of the church that each may have something to do.—[The Review and Herald, May 31, 1887.](#)

Chapter 4—Church Policies

[41]

Church Organization

The church must be organized to carry out and enforce order, or it will scatter into fragments—I was shown that some have been fearing they should become Babylon if they organize; but the churches in Central New York have been perfect Babylon, confusion. And now unless the churches are so organized that they can carry out and enforce order, they have nothing to hope for in the future.—[The Review and Herald, August 27, 1861.](#)

Medical missionary work must not stand aloof from church organization—Temptations will come to you to think that in order to carry forward the medical missionary work you must stand aloof from church organization or church discipline. To stand thus would place you on an unsound footing. The work done for those who come to you for instruction is not complete unless they are educated to work in connection with the church.—[Testimonies for the Church 8:161.](#)

Preachers should not unite their influence with critics of the church—When plied with the arguments and suggestions of such advisers, it would be well for us each to inquire, “Should I, who am a Christian, a child of God; one called to be the light of the world, a preacher of righteousness; who have so often expressed my confidence in the truth and the way in which the Lord has led us, should I unite my influence with those who bitterly oppose the work of God? Should I, a steward of the mysteries of God, open to His worst enemies the counsels of His people? Would not such a course embolden the wicked in their opposition to the truth of God and to His covenant-keeping people? Would not such concession prevent me from opening my lips in exhortation, warning, or entreaty in my own family or in the church of God? If Paul or Peter were placed in similar circumstances, would he thus betray a sacred trust?”—[The Signs of the Times, January 3, 1884.](#)

Ministerial Ordination

[42] **Ordination is the church's public recognition of a divine appointment**—The Christian church was at this time entering upon an important era. The work of proclaiming the gospel message among the Gentiles was now to be prosecuted with vigor; and as a result the church was to be strengthened by a great ingathering of souls. The apostles who had been appointed to lead out in this work would be exposed to suspicion, prejudice, and jealousy. Their teachings concerning the breaking down of “the middle wall of partition” ([Ephesians 2:14](#)) that had so long separated the Jewish and the Gentile world, would naturally subject them to the charge of heresy, and their authority as ministers of the gospel would be questioned by many zealous, believing Jews. God foresaw the difficulties that His servants would be called to meet, and, in order that their work should be above challenge, He instructed the church by revelation to set them apart publicly to the work of the ministry. Their ordination was a public recognition of their divine appointment to bear to the Gentiles the glad tidings of the gospel.—[The Acts of the Apostles, 161](#).

By the laying on of hands, the church authorizes ministers to teach, baptize, and organize churches—“There were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, ... and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them” ([Acts 13:1, 2](#)). Before being sent forth as missionaries to the heathen world, these apostles were solemnly dedicated to God by fasting and prayer and the laying on of hands. Thus they were authorized by the church, not only to teach the truth, but to perform the rite of baptism, and to organize churches, being invested with full ecclesiastical authority.—[Gospel Workers, 441](#).

Before ordination, ministers should give evidence that they have dedicated themselves to the work—There must be evidence on the part of those who take the solemn position of shepherds, that they have without reservation, dedicated themselves to the work. They must take Christ as their personal Saviour.... Hands are laid upon men to ordain them for the ministry before they are thoroughly

examined as to their qualifications for the sacred work; but how much better would it be to make thorough work before accepting them as ministers, than to have to go through this rigid examination after they have become established in their position, and have put their mould upon the work.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 171, 172.](#)

Chapter 5—Ministerial Training

The times demand an intelligent, educated ministry—The times demand an intelligent, educated ministry, not novices. False doctrines are being multiplied. The world is becoming educated to a high standard of literary attainment; and sin, unbelief, and infidelity are becoming more bold and defiant, as intellectual knowledge and acuteness are acquired. This state of things calls for the use of every power of the intellect; for it is keen minds, under the control of Satan, that the minister will have to meet. He should be well balanced by religious principles, growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Too much haphazard work has been done, and minds have not been exercised to their fullest capacity. Our ministers will have to defend the truth against base apostates, as well as to measure Scripture evidence with those who advocate specious errors. Truth must be placed in contrast with bold assertions. Our ministers must be men who are wholly consecrated to God, men of no mean culture; but their minds must be all aglow with religious fervor, gathering divine rays of light from heaven and flashing them amid the darkness that covers the earth and the gross darkness that surrounds the people.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:528](#).

Do not expect an important position if you have neglected to train and discipline yourself—Do men think that they will be able, under pressure of circumstances, to step into an important position, when they have neglected to train and discipline themselves for the work? Do they imagine that they can be polished instruments in the hands of God for the salvation of souls, if they have not used the opportunities placed at their command for obtaining a fitness for the work? The cause of God calls for all-round men, who can devise, plan, build up, and organize. And those who appreciate the probabilities and possibilities of the work for this time, will seek by earnest study to obtain all the knowledge they can from the Word, to use in ministering to needy, sin-sick souls.—[Gospel Workers, 93](#).

Called to Service

Qualified youth should be encouraged to enter the ministry—There is an urgent demand for laborers in the gospel field. Young men are needed for this work; God calls for them. Their education is of primary importance in our colleges, and in no case should it be ignored or regarded as a secondary matter. It is entirely wrong for teachers, by suggesting other occupations, to discourage young men who might be qualified to do acceptable work in the ministry. Those who present hindrances to prevent young men from fitting themselves for this work are counterworking the plans of God, and they will have to give an account of their course. There is among us more than an average of men of ability. If their capabilities were brought into use, we should have twenty ministers where we now have one.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:135](#).

[44]

The call to preach is proven by example and work—Those whom God has called to the ministry are to give evidence by the influence they exert, that they are fit for the holy calling in which they are found. Paul writes, “Be thou an example of the believers.” Then shall young ministers be excused for their lightness and trifling? Shall the church be expected to listen to their words, to receive their testimony, when their example misrepresents the character of Christ, and leads away from the path cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in? What can we think of churches that will listen to the testimony of men who have no power in prayer, no fervency in their devotion, no freedom in personal labor for souls? The Lord has commanded, “Be ye holy in all manner of conversation.” “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.” The proof of the minister’s call to preach the gospel is seen in his example and work.—[The Review and Herald, April 5, 1892](#).

We must not rely on human judgment alone in selecting ministers—Those who are about to enter upon the sacred work of teaching Bible truth to the world should be carefully examined by faithful, experienced persons. After these have had some experience, there is still another work to be done for them; they should be presented before the Lord in earnest prayer that He would indicate by His Holy Spirit if they are acceptable to Him. The apostle says:

“Lay hands suddenly on no man.” In the days of the apostles, the ministers of God did not dare to rely up on their own judgment in selecting or accepting men to take the solemn and sacred position of mouthpiece for God. They selected the men whom their judgment would accept, and then they placed them before the Lord to see if He would accept them to go forth as His representatives. No less than this should be done now.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:406](#).

Classroom Training

Ministers should be educated and examined before entering their work—Some young men who enter the field are not successful in teaching the truth to others because they have not been educated themselves. Those who cannot read correctly should learn, and they [45] should become apt to teach before they attempt to stand before the public. The teachers in our schools are obliged to apply themselves closely to study, that they may be prepared to instruct others. These teachers are not accepted until they have passed a critical examination and their capabilities to teach have been tested by competent judges. No less caution should be used in the examination of ministers; those who are about to enter upon the sacred work of teaching Bible truth to the world should be carefully examined by faithful, experienced persons.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:406](#).

The Scriptural method of ministerial training combines study in school with personal spiritual growth—Those especially who have the ministry in view, should feel the importance of the Scriptural method of ministerial training. They should enter heartily into the work, and while they study in the schools, they should learn of the great Teacher the meekness and humility of Christ. A covenant-keeping God has promised that in answer to prayer His Spirit shall be poured out upon these learners in the school of Christ, that they may become ministers of righteousness.—[Gospel Workers, 81](#).

Those entering the ministry should have done close study of both the sciences and the Bible—Some who enter the ministry do not feel the burden of the work upon them. They have received incorrect ideas of the qualifications of a minister. They have thought that it required but little close study in the sciences or in the Word

of God to make a minister. Some who are teaching present truth are not acquainted with their Bibles. They are so deficient in Bible knowledge that it is difficult for them to quote a text of Scripture correctly from memory. By blundering along in the awkward manner they do, they sin against God. They mangle the Scripture, and make the Bible say things that are not written therein.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:341, 442.](#)

Jesus studied plants, animals, and man so He might use the knowledge to teach truth—The question asked during the Saviour’s ministry, “How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?” ([John 7:15](#)), does not indicate that Jesus was unable to read, but merely that He had not received a rabbinical education. Since He gained knowledge as we may do, His intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures shows how diligently His early years were given to the study of God’s Word. And spread out before Him was the great library of God’s created works. He who had made all things studied the lessons which His own hand had written in earth and sea and sky. Apart from the unholy ways of the world, He gathered stores of scientific knowledge from nature. He studied the life of plants and animals, and the life of man. From His earliest years He was possessed of one purpose; He lived to bless others. For this He found resources in nature; new ideas of ways and means flashed into His mind as He studied plant life and animal life. Continually He was seeking to draw from things seen illustrations by which to present the living oracles of God. The parables by which, during His ministry, He loved to teach His lessons of truth, show how open His spirit was to the influences of nature, and how He had gathered the spiritual teaching from the surroundings of His daily life.—[The Desire of Ages, 70.](#)

[46]

Field Training

Young ministers should receive and respect counsel from supervising ministers—In gaining a preparation for the ministry, young men should be associated with older ministers. Those who have gained an experience in active service are to take young, inexperienced workers with them into the harvest-field, teaching them how to labor successfully for the conversion of souls. Kindly and

affectionately these older workers are to help the younger ones to prepare for the work to which the Lord may call them. And the young men in training should respect the counsel of their instructors, honoring their devotion, and remembering that their years of labor have given them wisdom.—[Evangelism, 683, 684.](#)

Young ministers should learn from both the strengths and weaknesses of their mentors—Frequently a young man is sent out to labor with a more experienced minister; and if he is defective in his manner of speaking, the young man is very apt to copy his defects. Therefore, it is important that ministers who have been long in the field should reform, though it cost them much painstaking and the exercise of much patience, that their defects may not be reproduced in young and inexperienced laborers. The young preacher should copy only the admirable traits of character possessed by the more experienced laborer, while at the same time he should see and avoid his errors.—[The Review and Herald, February 5, 1880.](#)

Yearning to do work beyond your capabilities can lead to failure—There are many, even among our preachers, who want to rise in the world without effort. They are ambitious to do some great work of usefulness, while they disregard the little everyday duties which would render them helpful and make them ministers after Christ's order. They wish to do the work others are doing, but have no relish for the discipline necessary to fit them for it. This yearning desire by both men and women to do something far in advance of their present capabilities is simply causing them to make decided failures in the outset. They indignantly refuse to climb the ladder, wishing to be elevated by a less laborious process.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:417.](#)

Canvassing provides excellent preparation for the ministry—I was shown some men whom God was calling to the work of the ministry, entering the field as canvassers. This is an excellent preparation if their object is to disseminate light, to bring the truth revealed in God's Word, directly to the home circle. In conversation [47] the way will frequently be opened to speak of the religion of the Bible. If the work is taken hold of as it should be, families will be visited, the workers will carry with them tender hearts and love for souls, and will bear, in words and deportment, the fragrance of the grace of Christ, and great good will be the result. This would be an

excellent experience for any who have the ministry in view.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:603](#).

Canvassing must not be made a prerequisite to ministry—Some who did not receive their counsel from God, prepared a resolution, which was carried, that no one should labor as a minister unless he first made a success in the canvassing field. The Spirit of the Lord did not indite that resolution. It was born of minds that were taking a narrow view of God's vineyard and his workmen. It is not the work of any man to prescribe the work for any other man contrary to his own convictions of duty. He is to be advised and counselled, but he is to seek his directions from God, whose he is, and whom he serves.—[The Publishing Ministry, 260](#).

Canvassing provides opportunities and experience—All who wish an opportunity for true ministry, and who will give themselves unreservedly to God, will find in the canvassing work opportunities to speak upon many things pertaining to the future immortal life. The experience thus gained will be of the greatest value to those who are fitting themselves for the work of the ministry. It is the accompaniment of the Holy Spirit of God that prepares workers, both men and women, to become pastors to the flock of God.—[The Review and Herald, January 15, 1901](#).

Continuing Education

Education should continue throughout the minister's lifetime—A minister should never think that he has learned enough, and may now relax his efforts. His education should continue throughout his lifetime; every day he should be learning, and putting to use the knowledge gained.—[Gospel Workers, 94](#).

Ministers should continually study and improve even in their later years—The true minister of Christ should make continual improvement. The afternoon sun of his life may be more mellow and productive of fruit than the morning sun. It may continue to increase in size and brightness until it drops behind the western hills. My brethren in the ministry, it is better, far better, to die of hard work in some home or foreign mission field, than to rust out with inaction. Be not dismayed at difficulties; be not content to settle

down without studying and without making improvement.—[The Review and Herald, April 6, 1886.](#)

[48] **Some ministers might have done tenfold more if they had cared to become intellectual giants**—The men who now stand before the people as representatives of Christ have generally more ability than they have training, but they do not put their faculties to use, making the most of their time and opportunities. Nearly every minister in the field, had he exerted his God-given energies, might not only be proficient in reading, writing, and grammar, but even in languages. It is essential for them to set their aim high. But there has been but little ambition to put their powers to the test to reach an elevated standard in knowledge and in religious intelligence. Our ministers will have to render to God an account for the rusting of the talents He has given to improve by exercise. They might have done tenfold more work intelligently, had they cared to become intellectual giants. Their whole experience in their high calling is cheapened because they are content to remain where they are. Their efforts to acquire knowledge will not in the least hinder their spiritual growth if they will study with right motives and proper aims.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 194.](#)

The gospel is not properly taught by ministers who have ceased to be students—Some of our ministers have a runway of discourses which they use without variation year after year. The same illustrations, the same figures, and almost the same words. They have ceased to be students. There is an end to improvement, and they stagger under the load of a few set discourses to prevent mental decrepitude. But by the ever-learning student new light, new ideas, new gems of truth will be found and eagerly grasped.... The gospel is not properly taught and represented before unbelievers by men who have ceased to be students, who have, as it were, graduated as far as searching the Scriptures is concerned, and they bring a reproach upon the truth by the manner in which they handle it.—[The Voice in Speech and Song, 323.](#)

Time for preaching, study, and visitation must each be kept in balance—The ministers of the Word are God's chosen agency to spread the knowledge of His will; but there is too little of a missionary spirit, even among our ministers. After preaching the Word, some confine themselves almost wholly to reading and study,

to the neglect of other and vitally important duties. While it is right to devote some time to study, every minister should feel a deep interest to do all that it is possible for him to do for the salvation of souls for whom Christ died. He should visit the people, and with care and wisdom seek to interest them in spiritual things.—[The Review and Herald, July 10, 1883.](#)

Chapter 6—Development of a Personal Support Group

Happy the minister who has an Aaron and a Hur—Happy the minister who has a faithful Aaron and Hur to strengthen his hands when they become weary and to hold them up by faith and prayer. Such a support is a powerful aid to the servant of Christ in his work and will often make the cause of truth to triumph gloriously.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:531](#).

Call others together to pray for you—I felt in my soul it would be a great privilege for me to call together a few of the old tried servants of God and engage in united prayer for the help and strength I so much needed. I followed out the earnest wish of my heart. All present, ministering brethren, united in prayer. The Lord indited those prayers. We were so glad Brother Butler was present to engage with us in prayer. I realized it was a most precious season, and I felt that Christ was present. A sweet fragrance was sensibly realized by me, and I am sure those present must have felt the deep influence of the Holy Spirit. I felt that the canopy of God was over me. I could say fully, Whether I live or die it is well, it is well, with my soul. My life is hid with Christ in God.—[Manuscript Releases 18:125](#).

God's plan is for leaders to make use of counselors—God gave to Moses special direction for the management of his work. He directed Moses to associate men with him as counselors, that his burdens might be lightened.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 340](#).

Groups should be praying for their minister—And let those who love the Lord and His truth unite by twos and threes to seek places of retirement and pray for God's blessing upon the minister who can hardly find time to pray because he is constantly engaged attending to so many requests, sitting in councils, answering inquiries, giving advice, writing important letters. Let the fervent, effectual prayer of the righteous ascend to God, that the word spoken may be a message of truth to reach the hearts of the hearers, and that souls

may thereby be won to Christ.—[The Review and Herald, July 24, 1883](#).

A minister's problems can sometimes be best dealt with in a small group—He was willing to go into the congregation at once and confess his sins, and his backsliding from God. He was advised that this was not wisdom, and would not result in glorifying God, but would give our enemies occasion to cast reflections upon the whole ministry. It is Satan's object to ensnare men who handle sacred things, that he may lead them to do things that will bring the ministry down on a level with common things, so that sinners may be furnished with an excuse for their own impenitence and sin. When the words and the deportment of the minister are not after the Christ's example, but are in imitation of the words and ways of the great deceiver, our enemies have occasion to blaspheme. We decided that it would meet the approval of God for a few, thirty or forty, who had heard the testimony given me of God, to be present and hear his acknowledgment of the reproof given, and hear his confession.—EGW'88 54. [50]

Chapter 7—Filing System

The importance of a filing system to any speaker or writer is best demonstrated, not by what Mrs. White said about it, but by what she did about it. The following three quotations were not written by her, but taken from her biography. The first two were written by her son, W. C. White, the third by her grandson, Arthur White.

Ellen White’s writings were filed and indexed during her Australian years—For some months Sister Peck has devoted a portion of her time to sorting, filing, reading, and indexing all of Mother’s manuscripts within our reach, and Mother has been looking over her old diaries and manuscripts that were never copied on the typewriter. In these she finds many precious things that are being copied, filed, and indexed with the rest.—4BIO 451.

Ellen White was dependent on her files in her ministry to the church—As we find new material from the file and add to the chapters that have already been prepared and passed upon, and reread these amplified portions to her, she seems to enjoy going over them anew. This perfecting of the manuscript is slow work, but very interesting; and we are hopeful of the outcome.—6BIO 419.

A careful filing system is what makes Ellen White’s writings readily available today—First, the typewritten copies of manuscripts and letters brought from America and those produced in Australia were sorted out by years. Then the general manuscripts were separated from the letters. Manuscripts were placed in chronological order and numbered serially. Letters were sorted out alphabetically and then numbered in sequence. These were punched at the top and filed in “Shannon” file drawers. This formed the basic E. G. White manuscript file as it stands today. From that time on, as the materials were copied they were given file numbers. This put the letters in chronological order. The record books started by Miss Peck, while valuable and still used occasionally, have been superseded by more comprehensive records that better serve the work of

letters on four-by-six-inch cards, which serve today, and copies of which serve in the Berrien Springs, Michigan, branch office and the Ellen G. White SDA Research Centers.—4BIO 451.

Chapter 8—Leadership

Working for God in a lowly station helps prepare one for pastoral leadership—Brethren, treat men as men, not as servants to be ordered about at your pleasure. He who indulges a harsh, overbearing spirit might better become a tender of sheep as did Moses, and thus learn what it means to be a true shepherd. Moses gained in Egypt an experience as a mighty statesman and as a leader of the armies, but he did not there learn the lessons essential for true greatness. He needed an experience in more humble duties, that he might become a caretaker, tender toward every living thing. In keeping the flocks of Jethro his sympathies were called out to the sheep and lambs, and he learned to guard these creatures of God with the gentlest care. Although their voice could never complain of mistreatment, yet their attitude might show much. God cares for all the creatures He has made. In working for God in this lowly station, Moses learned to be a tender shepherd for Israel.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 262, 263.](#)

Leadership necessitates gaining the confidence of those for whom you labor—In order for a man to become a successful minister, something more than book knowledge is essential. The laborer for souls needs integrity, intelligence, industry, energy, and tact. All these are highly essential for the success of a minister of Christ. No man with these qualifications can be inferior, but will have commanding influence. Unless the laborer in God's cause can gain the confidence of those for whom he is laboring, he can do but little good.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:553.](#)

Do not lead with harshness and severity, but with respect, kindness, confidence, and love—You do not feel under sound obligation to God to be patient and kind and respectful toward your ministering brethren and toward every member of the church. They lose confidence in you and then your influence is crippled. You need the kindness, courtesy, meekness, and lowliness of Christ. You have many valuable qualifications that can be perfected for high-

est service if sanctified to God. You should feel the necessity of approaching your brethren with kindness and courtesy, not with harshness and severity. You do not realize the harm you do by your sharp, domineering spirit toward them.—EGW'88 245.

Do not exercise arbitrary authority—When our schemes and our plans have been broken; when men who have depended upon our judgment conclude the Lord would lead them to act and judge for themselves, we should not feel like censuring, and like exercising arbitrary authority to compel them to receive our ideas. Those who are placed in authority should constantly cultivate self-control.—[Counsels to Writers and Editors, 37, 38.](#)

[54]

Do not pervert your pastoral power into despotism over your flock—The minister is not to rule imperiously over the flock entrusted to his care, but to be their ensample, and to show them the way to heaven. Following the example of Christ, he should intercede with God for the people of his care till he sees that his prayers are answered. Jesus exercised human and divine sympathy toward man. He is our example in all things. God is our Father and Governor, and the Christian minister is the representative of His Son on earth. The principles that rule in heaven should rule upon earth; the same love that animates the angels, the same purity and holiness that reign in heaven, should, as far as possible, be reproduced upon earth. God holds the minister responsible for the power he exercises, but does not justify His servants in perverting that power into despotism over the flock of their care.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:267, 268.](#)

Leaders should act as wise counselors, not exacting rulers—Sometimes a man who has been placed in responsibility as a leader, gains the idea that he is in a position of supreme authority, and that all of his brethren, before making advance moves, must first come to him for permission to do that which they feel should be done. Such a man is in a dangerous position. He has lost sight of the work of a true leader among God's people. Instead of acting as a wise counselor, he assumes the prerogatives of an exacting ruler. God is dishonored by every such display of authority and self-exaltation. No man standing in his own strength is ever to be mind and judgment for another man whom the Lord is using in His work. No one is to lay down man-made rules and regulations to govern arbitrarily his fellow laborers

who have a living experience in the truth.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 491](#).

Encourage and respect the input of others—Link up with your brethren, if you would have them link up with you, and give you their confidence. Confidence and faith will beget confidence and faith. You should gather into your confidence not only your ministering brethren but those with whom you are brought in contact, and show them that you have confidence, and that you believe that they are taught of God as much as you yourself are taught of God. Open your plans before them. One will be free to speak, and another will be free to speak, and they may call your attention to some things that you had not thought of before.—[Manuscript Releases 9:145](#).

We should be living examples of what we preach—We shall seek God earnestly, and as ministers of God preaching the gospel, we should carry these great truths into our daily lives, and show that we are living examples of what we preach—that we are carrying into our everyday life practical godliness—then wherever we go we will be a power.—[Sermons and Talks, 1:63](#).

Ministers who preach one way and live another are wolves in sheep's clothing—Wearing the insignia of Christ, they serve the Lord's worst enemy, and heed not the injunction, "Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." Christ plainly states that this class of teachers are as wolves in sheep's clothing. They talk of grace, they preach of grace, apparently they pray for grace; but they have not the grace of Christ in their hearts. In the pulpit such ministers may appear to be excellent; but they destroy the force of their words when out of the pulpit by such a course of iniquity that they prove themselves to be ministers of sin, wolves in sheep's clothing.—[The Signs of the Times, July 18, 1892](#).

Let ministers show to others that the truth has done something for them—Young preachers, and men who have once been ministers, who have been coarse and rough in their manners, making expressions in their conversation which were not perfectly modest and chaste, are not fit to engage in this work until they give evidence of an entire reform. One word spoken unadvisedly may do more harm than a series of meetings held by them will do good. They leave the standard of truth, which should be ever exalted, lowered to the dust before the community. Their converts generally come up no higher than the standard raised for them by the ministers. Men who are standing between the living and the dead should be just right. The minister should not be off his guard for a single moment. He is laboring to elevate others by bringing them up upon the platform of truth. Let him show to others that the truth has done something for him.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:445](#).

The success of ministers depends on their deportment— Godly men, faithful, holy men, who carry out in their everyday life that which they preach,

[56] will exert a saving influence. A powerful discourse delivered from the desk may affect minds; but a little imprudence upon the part of the minister out of the pulpit, a lack of gravity of speech and true godliness, will counteract his influence, and do away the good impressions made by him. The converts will be his; in many instances they will seek to rise no higher than their preacher. There will be in them no thorough heart work. They are not converted to God. The work is superficial, and their influence will be an injury to those who are really seeking the Lord.

The success of a minister depends much upon his deportment out of the desk. When he ceases preaching, and leaves the desk, his work is not finished; it is only commenced. He must then carry out what he has preached. He should not move heedlessly, but set a watch over himself, lest something that he may do and say be taken advantage of by the enemy, and a reproach be brought upon the cause of Christ.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:380](#).

Peter an example of one who stumbles and is restored— Some assert that if a soul stumbles and falls, he can never regain his position; but the case before us contradicts this. Before his denial Christ said to Peter, “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” In committing to his stewardship the souls for whom He had given His life, Christ gave to Peter the strongest evidence of His confidence in his restoration. And he was commissioned to feed not only the sheep, but the lambs—a broader and more delicate work than had hitherto been appointed him. Not only was he to hold forth the Word of life to others, but he was to be a shepherd of the flock.—[The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 5:1152](#).

The Lord tests us to see if we will deal faithfully in regard to sin even in our honored men—I am troubled in regard to Elder H. He writes me nothing, and I feel deeply pained on his account. It seems sometimes to me that the Lord is testing us to see whether we will deal faithfully in regard to sin in one of our honored men.—[Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce, 185](#).

Ethics and Fellow Pastors

Ministers of Christ should be of one heart and mind—Ministers of Christ should be united,—of one heart and one mind. They should counsel with one another. None should require their brethren to labor exactly after their plan, but each should preserve his individuality, and all labor for the good of others, esteeming their brethren better than themselves. It is Satan's work to excite envy and jealousy, to alienate affection, weaken confidence, and engender distrust and suspicion. All this hinders unity of faith in intercession with God for the weak and the desponding, for the grace of Christ, for the conversion of sinners, and thus shuts away the blessing which might be ours.—[The Review and Herald, July 10, 1883.](#)

Ministers who seem amiable and yet abuse the reputations of their brethren, are especially dangerous—The excuse made for him is: “Oh, Brother D is such a good man. He is a pattern of amiability and kindheartedness, and is a ready helper anywhere.” Brother D has many excellent traits of character. He has no great ability as a preacher, but may become an earnest, faithful worker. The enemy has come in through his estimation of himself. Had he not esteemed himself more highly than he should, he would never have dared to use the reputation of his brethren as he has done. By his freedom in gathering up and repeating false reports, he has come in between the people and the message which God has given His ministers to bear to them to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord. His good traits have made him all the more dangerous; for they have given him influence. People have thought that what he said must be so. Had he been an immoral or quarrelsome person, he could not have succeeded in winning the confidence of so many.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:289.](#)

[57]

Never speak disparagingly of ministers regardless of their origin—Our ministers in responsible places are men whom God has accepted. No matter what their origin, no matter what their former position, whether they followed the plow, worked at the carpenter's trade, or enjoyed the discipline of a college; if God has accepted them, let every man beware of casting the slightest reflection upon them. Never speak disparagingly of any man, for he may be great in the sight of the Lord, while those who feel great may be lightly

esteemed of God because of the perversity of their hearts. Our only safety is to lie low at the foot of the cross, be little in our own eyes, and trust in God; for He alone has power to make us great.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:607, 608](#).

Do not copy others. God has given you your own qualifications—God never designed that one man’s judgment and plans should be regarded as supreme. He says, Ye are laborers together with God. Let no man undertake to repress or discourage. Let him not seek to put his armor upon his brother, for he has not proved it.... And the ministers are never to copy any man’s gestures, his habits, his attitude, his expressions, the tones of his voice. They are to become no man’s shadow, in thought, in sentiment, or in devising and executing the great whole. If God has made you a shepherd of the flock, He has given you qualification to do that work.—[Evangelism, 685](#).

Entreat rather than rebuke ministers in error—Follow the instruction of the Word of God, in dealing with your ministering brethren. Paul says, “Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father, and the younger men as brethren.” There may be occasion to speak of their errors to those who have long been in the ministry, but let it be done as a matter of entreaty, and not rebuke. The younger ministers are to be treated as brethren, and may God help us that we may help one another. We must have a living connection with God. We must be clothed with power from on high by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, that we may reach a higher standard; for there is help for us in no other way.—[The Review and Herald, April 5, 1892](#).

Conferences should not neglect aged ministers—If I see those in positions of trust neglecting aged ministers, I am to present the matter to those whose duty it is to care for them. Ministers who have faithfully done their work are not to be forgotten or neglected when they have become feeble in health. Our conferences are not to disregard the needs of those who have borne the burdens of the work. It was after John had grown old in the service of the Lord that he was exiled to Patmos. And on that lonely isle he received more communications from heaven than he had received during the rest of his lifetime.—[Selected Messages 1:33, 34](#).

Make no compromise with those who have apostatized, but treat them kindly—We are not to throw our arms about the men

who are Satan's masterpieces for working out his will, as were the opposers on the campground at Adelaide. Truth is to be proclaimed in warnings that will make hearts tremble in contrition before God. The sharp, clean-cut testimony must be borne.... Make no compromise with those who have apostatized, but treat them kindly, giving no occasion for your good to be evil spoken of.—[Manuscript Releases 9:363](#).

Confine minister's mistakes to as small a group as possible—Frequently there is necessity for plainly rebuking sin and reproofing wrong. But ministers who are working for the salvation of their fellow men should not be pitiless toward the errors of one another, nor make prominent the defects in their organizations. They should not expose or reprove their weaknesses. They should inquire if such a course, pursued by another toward themselves, would bring about the desired effect; would it increase their love for, and confidence in, the one who thus made prominent their mistakes? Especially should the mistakes of ministers who are engaged in the work of God be kept within as small a circle as possible, for there are many weak ones who will take advantage if they are aware that those who minister in Word and doctrine have weaknesses like other men. And it is a most cruel thing for the faults of a minister to be exposed to unbelievers, if that minister is counted worthy to labor in the future for the salvation of souls. No good can come of this exposure, but only harm. The Lord frowns upon this course, for it is undermining the confidence of the people in those whom He accepts to carry forward His work. The character of every fellow laborer should be jealously guarded by brother ministers. Saith God: "Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm." Love and confidence should be cherished. A lack of this love and confidence in one minister for another does not increase the happiness of the one thus deficient, but as he makes his brother unhappy he is unhappy himself. There is greater power in love than was ever found in censure. Love will melt its way through barriers, while censure will close up every avenue of the soul.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:93](#).

[59]

Ethics and the Opposite Sex

Acquire moral stamina by saying, “I will not dishonor my Redeemer”—You ask me if you shall make a public confession. I say, No. Do not dishonor the Master by making public the fact that one ministering in the Word could be guilty of such sin as you have committed. It would be a disgrace to the ministry. Do not give publicity to this matter by any means. It would do injustice to the whole cause of God. It would create impure thoughts in the minds of many even to hear these things repeated. Defile not the lips even by communicating this to your wife, to make her ashamed and bow her head in sorrow. Go to God and to the brethren who know this terrible chapter in your experience and say what you have to say, then let prayer be offered to God in your behalf. Cultivate sobriety. Walk carefully and prayerfully before God. Acquire moral stamina by saying, “I will not dishonor my Redeemer.”—[Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce, 128.](#)

Practical religion leads its possessor to control the affections—You may intelligently believe the truth, but the work is still before you to bring every action of your life and every emotion of your heart into harmony with your faith. The prayer of Christ for His disciples just prior to His crucifixion was: “Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth.” The influence of the truth should affect not merely the understanding, but the heart and life. Genuine, practical religion will lead its possessor to control his affections.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:371.](#)

Sin is sin even when the seducer is a minister—If the sisters were elevated and possessing purity of heart, any corrupt advances, even from their minister, would be repulsed with such positiveness as would never need a repetition. Minds must be terribly befogged by Satan when they can listen to the voice of the seducer because he is a minister, and therefore break God’s plain and positive commands and flatter themselves that they commit no sin. Have we not the words of John: “He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him”? What saith the law? “Thou shalt not commit adultery.” When a man professing to keep God’s holy law, and ministering in sacred things, takes advantage of the confidence his position gives him and seeks to

indulge his base passions, this fact should of itself be sufficient to make a woman professing godliness to see that, although his profession is as exalted as the heavens, an impure proposal coming from him is from Satan disguised as an angel of light. I cannot believe that the Word of God is abiding in the hearts of those who so readily yield up their innocency and virtue upon the altar of lustful passions.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:457, 458.](#)

[60]

Never take advantage of the confidence your people place in you—When ministers thus take advantage of the confidence the people place in them and lead souls to ruin, they make themselves as much more guilty than the common sinner as their profession is higher. In the day of God, when the great Ledger of Heaven is opened, it will be found to contain the names of many ministers who have made pretensions to purity of heart and life and professed to be entrusted with the gospel of Christ, but who have taken advantage of their position to allure souls to transgress the law of God.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:143.](#)

Ministers violating the seventh commandment must not be entrusted with guardianship of souls—I have no real ground of hope for those who have stood as shepherds to the flock, and have for years been borne with by the merciful God, following them with reproof, with warnings, with entreaties, but who have hid their evil ways, and continued in them, thus defying the laws of the God of heaven by practicing fornication. We may leave them to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, after all has been done to reform them; but in no case entrust to them the guardianship of souls. False shepherds! Oh, can it be that the men who have been engaged in this work for a long time will corrupt their ways before the Lord after great experience and special light?—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 428.](#)

Chapter 10—Personal Appearance

The worker's dress is no trivial matter—Our words, our actions, and our dress are daily, living preachers, gathering with Christ, or scattering abroad. This is no trivial matter, to be passed off with a jest. The subject of dress demands serious reflection and much prayer. Many unbelievers have felt that they were not doing right in permitting themselves to be slaves of fashion; but when they see some who make a high profession of godliness dressing as worldlings dress, enjoying frivolous society, they decide that there can be no wrong in such a course.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:641](#).

The sanctuary shows God has a preference in regard to the dress of those who minister for Him—There should be no carelessness in dress. For Christ's sake, whose witnesses we are, 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. But the Word of God gives no sanction to the making of changes in apparel merely for the sake of fashion,—that we may appear like the world. Christians are not to decorate the person with costly array or expensive ornaments.—[Evangelism, 268](#).

Minister's Appearance

Whether out of the pulpit or in, your appearance matters—The work in which we are engaged is a responsible and exalted work. Those who minister in Word and doctrine should themselves be patterns of good works. They should be examples in holiness,

cleanliness, and order. The appearance of the servant of God, out of the pulpit and in, should be that of a living preacher. He can accomplish far more by his godly example than by merely preaching in the desk, while his influence out of the desk is not worthy of imitation. Those who labor in this cause are bearing to the world the most elevated truth that was ever committed to mortals.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:446](#). [62]

Your clothes preach to your people—Carefulness in dress is an important item. There has been a lack here with ministers who believe present truth. The dress of some has been even untidy. Not only has there been a lack of taste and order in arranging the dress in a becoming manner upon the person, and in having the color suitable and becoming for a minister of Christ, but the apparel of some has been even slovenly. Some ministers wear a vest of a light color, while their pants are dark, or a dark vest and light pants, with no taste or orderly arrangement of the dress upon the person when they come before the people. These things are preaching to the people. The minister gives them an example of order, and sets before them the propriety of neatness and taste in their apparel, or he gives them lessons in slackness and lack of taste which they will be in danger of following.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:610](#).

Ministers negligent of their apparel wound those of refined sensibilities—A minister who is negligent in his apparel often wounds those of good taste and refined sensibilities. Those who are faulty in this respect should correct their errors and be more circumspect. The loss of some souls at last will be traced to the untidiness of the minister. The first appearance affected the people unfavorably because they could not in any way link his appearance with the truths he presented. His dress was against him; and the impression given was that the people whom he represented were a careless set who cared nothing about their dress, and his hearers did not want anything to do with such a class of people.—[Selected Messages 3:251](#).

Inappropriate dress can destroy your influence—Some who minister in sacred things so arrange their dress upon their persons that, to some extent at least, it destroys the influence of their labor. There is an apparent lack of taste in color and neatness of fit. What is the impression given by such a manner of dress? It is that the work

in which they are engaged is considered no more sacred or elevated than common labor, as plowing in the field. The minister by his example brings down sacred things upon a level with common things. The influence of such preachers is not pleasing to God.—[Selected Messages 3:251](#).

Neglecting the body is not the humility that savors of heaven—But this voluntary humility, this will-worship and neglecting of the body, is not the humility that savors of heaven. That humility will be particular to have the person and actions and apparel of all who preach the holy truth of God, right and perfectly proper, so that every item connected with us will recommend our holy religion. The very dress will be a recommendation of the truth to unbelievers. It will be a sermon in itself.—[Selected Messages 3:251](#).

[63] **Cultivate courtesy and a quiet dignity**—The minister must remember that favorable or unfavorable impressions are made upon his hearers by his deportment in the pulpit, his attitude, his manner of speaking, his dress. He should cultivate courtesy and refinement of manner, and should carry himself with a quiet dignity becoming to his high calling. Solemnity and a certain godly authority mingled with meekness, should characterize his demeanor. Coarseness and rudeness are not to be tolerated in the common walks of life, much less should they be permitted in the work of the ministry. The minister's attitude should be in harmony with the holy truths he proclaims. His words should be in every respect earnest and well chosen.—[Gospel Workers, 172](#).

Family's Appearance

Shun the idolatry of dress. God wants beautiful character, not stylish appearance—Ministers and ministers' wives should be an example in reproving the fashionable display in our sisters who claim to believe the truth. They should have their children dressed in a way that God would approve, presenting them to the church in simplicity, and modesty of apparel. Far greater pains should be taken to instruct them so that they shall have beautiful characters and keep the way of the Lord than to have them make a stylish appearance,

taking the way of the Sodomites.—[Testimonies on the Case of Elder E. P. Daniels, 15 \(Ph 96\)](#).

Clothing should be plain, neat, comfortable, and of good material—Our ministers and their wives should be an example in plainness of dress; they should dress neatly, comfortably, wearing good material, but avoiding anything like extravagance and trimmings, even if not expensive; for these things tell to our disadvantage. We should educate the youth to simplicity of dress, plainness with neatness. Let the extra trimmings be left out, even though the cost be but a trifle.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 180](#).

Women in the public eye should not feel too poor to provide themselves suitable clothing—Fannie, wherever you go, wherever you may be, you need to study that the colors and material and style of your dress should be adapted to, and correspond with, your age and to the faith you profess. You remember I made the remark to Elder Olsen that when at Preston you were destitute of suitable clothing and felt too poor to supply yourself with what you should have. The remarks you made showed that you did not understand me. I want to be understood now. You need comfortable underclothing, which you must have in order to have health. But I certainly do not, in all respects, approve of your style of dress. I felt rather sad and ashamed when you stood upon the platform before the large crowd under the tent, with that light, large-figured dress. It was not appropriate for the occasion. Your judgment in the matter of dress may be much improved, and I hope you will not consult your dressmaker but those who are of sensible minds and who will not flatter you or have any guile in their mouths as to suitable clothing that will make a proper impression upon the minds of both believers and unbelievers. We who claim to be in the light, and who take prominent positions to instruct others in children's meetings, need to be severely plain, yet tidy and tasteful, in dress; we should not give a semblance of excuse to any for patterning after the worldly, changing fashions of this corrupt age. Those who dress after the order given in the Bible can, with appropriate words, help others to reach a proper standard. Do not come to me to ask how you shall dress. If our sisters have the Spirit of God abiding as a living principle in the heart, they will not in a single instance give occasion for any to turn aside the counsels of God by quoting the ministers'

[64]

wives or those engaged in giving Bible-readings. Ever have your dress of good, durable material, and modest colors; let it be made plainly, without adornment. You certainly need to improve in your style of dress.—[Letter 7, 1894](#).

Those not qualified to manage their own business affairs are not fitted to become ministers—No man is excusable for being without financial ability. Of many a man it may be said, He is kind, amiable, generous, a good man, and a Christian, but he is not qualified to manage his own business. As far as the proper outlay of money is concerned, he is a mere child. He has not been educated by his parents to understand and practice the principles of self-support. Such a man is not fitted to become a minister.—[The Youth's Instructor, February 7, 1901.](#)

Refuse to engage in any business that would hinder you from giving yourself fully to your sacred calling—The energies of the minister are all needed for his high calling. His best powers belong to God. He should not engage in speculation or in any other business that would turn him aside from his great work. “No man that warreth,” Paul declared, “entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (2 Timothy 2:4). Thus the apostle emphasized the minister’s need of unreserved consecration to the Master’s service. The minister who is wholly consecrated to God refuses to engage in business that would hinder him from giving himself fully to his sacred calling. He is not striving for earthly honor or riches; his one purpose is to tell others of the Saviour, who gave Himself to bring to human beings the riches of eternal life. His highest desire is not to lay up treasure in this world, but to bring to the attention of the indifferent and the disloyal the realities of eternity. He may be asked to engage in enterprises which promise large worldly gain, but to such temptations he returns the answer, “What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul” (Mark 8:36)?—[The Acts of the Apostles, 365, 366.](#)

No separate business can be engaged in without lessening the vigor and force of our labor in the cause of God—Wrong habits of life have lessened our mental and physical sensibilities, and

[66] all the strength we can acquire by right living and placing ourselves in the best relation to health and life should be devoted unreservedly to the work which God has assigned us. We cannot afford to use the few enfeebled, crippled energies which we possess to serve tables or to mingle merchandise with the work God has committed to us. Every faculty of mind and body is now needed. The work of God requires this, and no separate business can be engaged in aside from this great work without taking time and strength of mind and body, and thus lessening the vigor and force of our labor in the cause of God. Ministers who do this will not have all that time for meditation and prayer, and all that strength and clearness of mind that they should have to understand the cases of those who need help, and to be prepared to “be instant in season, out of season.” A word fitly spoken at the right time may save some poor, erring, doubting, fainting soul. Paul exhorted Timothy: “Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.”—[Testimonies for the Church 1:470](#).

Ministers should not gain wealth by speculation—I cannot lend my influence in any way to prompt you or any of my brethren to gain wealth by speculation and extortion; you are not to be united with those who certainly do this. The men of solid worth are most apt to be found with those who possess little of this world’s goods, and what they do possess they have gained by diligence, honesty, and economy, and not by speculation. Those who are suitably remunerated for their labors ought not, if they practice economy, to be in rags, or on the verge of pauperism, or overwhelmed in debt.—[Testimonies on the Case of Elder E. P. Daniels, 36 \(Ph 96\)](#).

Do not influence members to engage in business speculation—I have been shown of God the sinfulness of the course you have been pursuing. You have engaged in mining and real-estate business, and while an acknowledged minister of the gospel, you have worked upon the minds of your brethren, and have influenced them to invest their means in real estate and in mining shares. You told them the investment would bring large returns; that they would more than treble their money, and could help the cause so much more. You represented that this was a golden opportunity which you did not want them to lose, and urged them to avail themselves of the advantages that God had placed right within their reach. With your

powers of exaggeration you represented the matter in such a light that many were deceived, and some lost their money, which should have gone into the cause of God.—[Testimonies on the Case of Elder E. P. Daniels, 71 \(Ph 96\)](#).

Do not sell merchandise to your people for your personal gain—A great mistake has been made by some who profess present truth, by introducing merchandise in the course of a series of meetings and by their traffic diverting minds from the object of the meetings. If Christ were now upon earth, He would drive out these peddlers and traffickers, whether they be ministers or people, with a scourge of small cords, as when He entered the temple anciently “and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves, and said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.” These traffickers might have pleaded as an excuse that the articles they held for sale were for sacrificial offerings. But their object was to get gain, to obtain means, to accumulate.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:471](#).

[67]

It is a sacrilege to take one dollar from God’s treasury for yourself—That which has been set apart according to the Scripture as belonging to the Lord, constitutes the revenue of the gospel, and it is no longer ours. We are to treat it as wholly the Lord’s. It is no better than sacrilege for any man to take one dollar from God’s treasury to serve himself or to serve others in their secular business. This has been done, and some ministers are at fault in diverting from the altar of God that which has been especially dedicated to him. Ministers should regard this matter in a right light. Let them not, when brought into a strait place, take money consecrated to religious purposes, and use it for their own advantage, soothing their conscience by saying that they will repay it at some future time. Far better cut down your expenses to your income, restrict your wants, and live within your means, than use the Lord’s money for secular purposes. This subject is not regarded as it should be. Under no pretext is the money paid into the treasury of God to be used for the benefit of any one in temporal affairs. It must be kept for the object for which it was given.—[The Review and Herald, May 23, 1893](#).

Your reward comes when the work is done—A faithful shepherd will not study his own ease and convenience, but will labor for the interest of the sheep. In this great work he will forget self; in his search for the lost sheep he will not realize that he himself is weary, cold, and hungry. He has but one object in view; to save the lost and wandering sheep, at whatever expense it may be to himself. His wages will not influence him in his labor, nor turn him from his duty. He has received his commission from the Majesty of heaven, and he expects his reward when the work intrusted to him is done.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:341](#).

Chapter 12—Personal Health

[68]

[69]

Stress

Ministry is exhausting work—If a minister, during his leisure time, engages in labor in his orchard or garden, shall he deduct that time from his salary? Certainly not, any more than he should put in his time when he is called to work over hours in ministerial labor. Some ministers spend many hours in apparent ease, and it is right that they should rest when they can; for the system could not endure the heavy strain were there no time for letting up. There are hours in the day that call for severe taxation, for which the minister receives no extra salary, and if he chooses to chop wood several hours a day, or work in his garden, it is as much his privilege to do this as to preach. A minister cannot always be preaching and visiting, for this is exhaustive work.—[Evangelism, 660](#).

Rest may be the answer to mental depression—You should labor with care and observe periods of rest. By so doing you will retain your physical and mental vigor and render your labor much more efficient. Brother F, you are a nervous man and move much from impulse. Mental depression influences your labor very much. At times you feel a want of freedom and think it is because others are in darkness or wrong or that something is the matter, you can hardly tell what, and you make a drive somewhere and upon somebody which is liable to do great harm. If you would quiet yourself when in this restless, nervous condition and rest and calmly wait on God and inquire if the trouble is not in yourself, you would save wounding your own soul and wounding the precious cause of God.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:622](#).

Provision should be made to care for ministers who, through overwork in His cause, have become ill—Some provision should be made for the care of ministers and others of God's faithful servants who through exposure or overwork in His cause have become ill and need rest and restoration, or who through age or loss of health are

[70] no longer able to bear the burden and heat of the day. Ministers are often appointed to a field of labor that they know will be detrimental to their health; but, unwilling to shun trying places, they venture, hoping to be a help and a blessing to the people. After a time they find their health failing. A change of climate and of work is tried, without bringing relief; and then what are they to do?—[Gospel Workers, 426](#).

Exercise

Exercise renews the body and makes more pastoral labor possible—The whole system needs the invigorating influence of exercise in the open air. A few hours of manual labor each day would tend to renew the bodily vigor and rest and relax the mind. In this way the general health would be promoted and a greater amount of pastoral labor could be performed. The incessant reading and writing of many ministers unfit them for pastoral work.—[Counsels on Health, 193](#).

Ministers should not act as though physical activity is beneath their dignity—My dear sister, I speak plainly; for I dare not do otherwise. I plead with you to take up life's burdens instead of shunning them. Help your husband by helping yourself. The ideas which you both hold of the dignity to be maintained by the minister are not in accordance with the example of our Lord. The minister of Christ should possess sobriety, meekness, love, long-suffering, forbearance, pity, and courtesy. He should be circumspect, elevated in thought and conversation, and of blameless deportment. This is gospel dignity. But if a minister comes to a family where he can wait on himself, he should do so by all means; and he should by his example encourage industry by engaging in physical labor when he has not a multiplicity of other duties and burdens. He will not detract from his dignity, and will better relate himself to health and life, by engaging in useful labor. The circulation of the blood will be better equalized. Physical labor, a diversion from mental, will draw the blood from the brain. It is essential for your husband to have more physical labor in order to relieve the brain. Digestion will be promoted by physical exercise. If he would spend a part of every day in physical exercise, when not positively urged by a protracted

effort in a course of meetings, it would be an advantage to him, and would not detract from ministerial dignity. The example would be in accordance with that of our divine Master.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:568](#).

Physical labor is a blessing, but spending too much time at it robs God of the service He requires of the minister—Brother D is active and willing to do, willing to bear burdens that are not connected with his calling; and he has had his mind and time too much engrossed in temporal things. Some ministers maintain a certain dignity not in accordance with the life of Christ, and are unwilling to make themselves useful by engaging in physical labor, as occasion may require, to lighten the burdens of those whose hospitalities they share, and to relieve them of care. Physical exercise would prove a blessing to them, rather than an injury. In helping others they would advantage themselves. But some go to the other extreme. When their time and strength are all required in the work and cause of God, they are willing to engage in labor and become servants of all, even in temporal things; and they really rob God of the service He requires of them. Thus trivial matters take up precious time which should be devoted to the interests of God's cause.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:643](#).

[71]

Diet

Too much food and too little exercise enfeeble the mental and moral powers—Some of our ministers eat very heartily and then do not exercise sufficiently to work off the waste matter which accumulates in the system. They will eat and then spend most of their time sitting down, reading, studying, or writing, when a share of their time should be devoted to systematic physical labor. Our preachers will certainly break down in health unless they are more careful not to overload the stomach by too great a quantity of even healthful food. I saw that you, Brother and Sister A, were both in danger on this point. Overeating prevents the free flow of thought and words, and that intensity of feeling which is so necessary in order to impress the truth upon the heart of the hearer. The indulgence of appetite beclouds and fetters the mind, and blunts the holy emotions of the soul. The mental and moral powers of some of our preachers are

enfeebled by improper eating and lack of physical exercise. Those who crave great quantities of food should not indulge their appetite, but should practice self-denial and retain the blessings of active muscles and unoppressed brains. Overeating stupefies the entire being by diverting the energies from the other organs to do the work of the stomach.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:310](#).

Replace flesh foods with fruits and grains in proper quantities—As God’s messengers, shall we not bear a decided testimony against the indulgence of perverted appetite? Will those who claim to be ministers of the gospel, proclaiming the most solemn truth ever given to mortals, make the stomach a cesspool? God has provided an abundance of fruits and grains, which may be healthfully prepared and used in proper quantities. Why, then, do men continue to choose flesh-meats? Can we possibly have confidence in ministers who at tables where flesh is served join with others in eating it?—[Pacific Union Recorder, October 9, 1902](#).

Health Reform

Preachers should teach health reform, but they should not make it their leading theme—The health reform is closely connected with the work of the third message, yet it is not the message. [72] Our preachers should teach the health reform, yet they should not make this the leading theme in the place of the message. Its place is among those subjects which set forth the preparatory work to meet the events brought to view by the message; among these it is prominent.—[The Review and Herald, May 7, 1914](#).

Some ministers have little interest in health reform because it opposes their self-indulgence—Why do some of our ministering brethren manifest so little interest in health reform? It is because instruction on temperance in all things is opposed to their practice of self-indulgence. In some places this has been the great stumbling block in the way of our bringing the people to investigate and practice and teach health reform. No man should be set apart as a teacher of the people while his own teaching or example contradicts the testimony God has given His servants to bear in regard to diet, for this will bring confusion. His disregard of health reform unfits him

to stand as the Lord's messenger.—[Counsels on Diet and Foods, 453.](#)

Pale-faced ministers cause a stigma to rest on the cause of health reform—Because of imprudence in eating, the senses of some seem to be half paralyzed, and they are sluggish and sleepy. These pale-faced ministers who are suffering in consequence of selfish indulgence of the appetite are no recommendation of health reform. When suffering from overwork, it would be much better to drop out a meal occasionally and thus give nature a chance to rally. Our laborers could do more by their example to advance health reform than by preaching it. When elaborate preparations are made for them by well-meaning friends, they are strongly tempted to disregard principle; but by refusing the dainty dishes, the rich condiments, the tea and coffee, they may prove themselves to be practical health reformers. Some are now suffering in consequence of transgressing the laws of life, thus causing a stigma to rest on the cause of health reform.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:417.](#)

Balance

The mind may be exercised with comparative safety if the physical powers are equally taxed—The mind is not to be constantly taxed to the neglect of the physical powers. The ignorance of physiology, and a neglect to observe the laws of health, have brought many to the grave who might have lived to labor and study intelligently. The proper exercise of mind and body will develop and strengthen all the powers. Both mind and body will be preserved, and will be capable of doing a variety of work. Ministers and teachers need to learn in regard to these things, and they need to practice as well. The proper use of their physical strength, as well as of the mental powers, will equalize the circulation of the blood, and keep every organ of the living machinery in running order. Minds are often abused; they are goaded on to madness by pursuing one line of thought; the excessive employment of the brain power and the neglect of the physical organs create a diseased condition of things in the system. Every faculty of the mind may be exercised with comparative safety if the physical powers are equally taxed, and the subject of thought varied. We need a change of employment,

[73]

and nature is a living, healthful teacher.—[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 353, 354.](#)

Chapter 13—Women as Soulwinners

[74]

[75]

Women should be set aside for church work—Women who are willing to consecrate some of their time to the service of the Lord should be appointed to visit the sick, look after the young, and minister to the necessities of the poor. They should be set apart to this work by prayer and laying on of hands. In some cases they will need to counsel with the church officers or the minister; but if they are devoted women, maintaining a vital connection with God, they will be a power for good in the church. This is another means of strengthening and building up the church. We need to branch out more in our methods of labor. Not a hand should be bound, not a soul discouraged, not a voice should be hushed; let every individual labor, privately or publicly, to help forward this grand work. Place the burdens upon men and women of the church, that they may grow by reason of the exercise, and thus become effective agents in the hand of the Lord for the enlightenment of those who sit in darkness.—[The Review and Herald, July 9, 1895.](#)

Follow the example of Christ and Paul in putting women to work—Women who have the cause of God at heart can do a good work in the districts in which they reside. Christ speaks of women who helped Him in presenting the truth before others, and Paul also speaks of women who labored with him in the gospel. But how very limited is the work done by those who could do a large work if they would! There are families that have means which they could use for God's glory in going to distant lands to let their light shine forth in good works to those who need help. Why do not men and women engage in the missionary work, following the example of Christ?—[The Review and Herald, July 21, 1896.](#)

Women to engage in ministering—There certainly should be a larger number of women engaged in the work of ministering to suffering humanity, uplifting, educating them how to believe—simply to believe—in Jesus Christ our Saviour.—[Evangelism, 465.](#)

Women to help carry the truth—God wants workers who can carry the truth to all classes, high and low, rich and poor. In this work women may act an important part. God grant that those who read [76] these words may put forth earnest efforts to present an open door for consecrated women to enter the field.—[Manuscript Releases 5:162](#).

Women are needed in the work for the salvation of souls—Women can be the instruments of righteousness, rendering holy service. It was Mary that first preached a risen Jesus. In fulfillment of the divine plan, the Son of Man came to seek and save that which was lost.... Those who engage with the Son of God in His work, be they ever so aspiring, can have no greater, no holier work than this. If there were twenty women where now there is one, who would make this holy mission their cherished work, we should see more converts to the truth. The refining, softening influence of Christian women is needed in the great work of preaching the truth. The Lord of the vineyard is saying to many women who are now doing nothing, “Why stand ye here all day idle?” Zealous and continued diligence in our sisters toiling for the spread of the truth would be wholly successful, and would astonish us with its results. Through patience and perseverance, the work must be accomplished.... We are lacking in deeds of sympathy and benevolence, in sacred and social ministering to the needy, the oppressed, and the suffering. Women who can work are needed now, women who are not self-important, but meek and lowly of heart, who will work with the meekness of Christ wherever they can find work to do for the salvation of souls.—[The Review and Herald, January 2, 1879](#).

Team Ministry With Spouse

Spouses may unite in work—There are women who should labor in the gospel ministry. In many respects they would do more good than the ministers who neglect to visit the flock of God. Husband and wife may unite in this work, and when it is possible, they should. The way is open for consecrated women.—[Manuscript Releases 5:325, 326](#).

The Lord would have ministers and their spouses closely united in the work—The work of God demands most earnest labor, and the Lord would have ministers and their wives closely united in

this work. The husband and wife can so blend in labor that the wife shall be the complement of the husband. The Lord desires them unitedly to watch for His voice, to draw closer and still closer unto Him, feeding upon His Word, and receiving light and blessing to impart to others. They should be as free as possible to attend campmeetings and other general gatherings. And the wife may continually be a great help to her husband in visiting and other personal labor.... The wives of many of the Lord's servants have united heartily with their husbands in the work of saving souls. Through her unselfish interest to advance the cause of God, the wife has made her husband's work much more complete.—[Manuscript Releases 6:43](#).

When possible, let minister and spouse work together— [77]
When it is possible, let the minister and his wife go forth together. The wife can often labor by the side of her husband, accomplishing a noble work. She can visit the homes of the people and help the women in these families in a way that her husband cannot.—[Evangelism, 491](#).

The spouse can reach some, especially among their own sex, whom the minister cannot—The wife of a minister can do much if she will. If she possesses the spirit of self-sacrifice, and has a love for souls, she can with him do almost an equal amount of good. A sister-laborer in the cause of truth can understand and reach some cases, especially among the sisters, that the minister cannot.—[Gospel Workers, 201, 202](#).

If minister and companion can jointly engage in visitation, they should do so—Keep on the track of souls. Show tact and skill when visiting families. Pray with them and for them. Bear the truth to them in great tenderness and love, and returns will surely come. If the minister and his wife can jointly engage in this work, they should do so.—[Evangelism, 437](#).

Remuneration of Spouses

Some spouses should receive wages—There are ministers' wives, Sisters Starr, Haskell, Wilson and Robinson, who have been devoted, earnest, whole-souled workers, giving Bible readings and praying with families, helping along by personal efforts just as successfully as their husbands. These women give their whole time,

and are told that they receive nothing for their labors because their husbands receive their wages. I tell them to go forward and all such decisions shall be reversed. The Word says, "The laborer is worthy of his hire." When any such decision as this is made, I will in the name of the Lord, protest. I will feel it in my duty to create a fund from my tithe money, to pay these women who are accomplishing just as essential work as the ministers are doing, and this tithe I will reserve for work in the same line as that of the ministers, hunting for souls, fishing for souls. I know that the faithful women should be paid wages proportionate to the pay received by ministers. They carry the burden of souls, and should not be treated unjustly. These sisters are giving their time to educating those newly come to the faith, and hire their own work done, and pay those who work for them. All these things must be adjusted and set in order, and justice be done to all. Proof-readers in the office receive their wages, two dollars and a half and three dollars a week. This I have had to pay, and others have to pay. But ministers' wives, who carry a tremendous responsibility, devoting their entire time, have nothing for their labor.—[Manuscript Releases 12:160, 161](#).

[78] **In not paying qualified spouses, we have sometimes done an injustice to them**—Injustice has sometimes been done to women who labor just as devotedly as their husbands, and who are recognized by God as being necessary to the work of the ministry. The method of paying men-laborers, and not paying their wives who share their labors with them, is a plan not according to the Lord's order, and if carried out in our conferences, is liable to discourage our sisters from qualifying themselves for the work they should engage in. God is a God of justice, and if the ministers receive a salary for their work, their wives, who devote themselves just as disinterestedly to the work, should be paid in addition to the wages their husbands receive, even though they may not ask for this.—[Gospel Workers, 452, 453](#).

Women's wages proportionate to time they give the work—Injustice has been done to women who labor just as devotedly as their husbands, and who are recognized by God as being necessary to the work of ministry as their husbands. The method of paying men-laborers and not their wives, is a plan not after the Lord's order. Injustice is thus done. A mistake made. The Lord does not favor this

plan. This arrangement, if carried out in our conferences, is liable to discourage our sisters from qualifying themselves for the work they should engage in.

A mistake is made when the burden of the work is left entirely upon the ministers. This plan was certainly arranged without the mind of God. Some women are now teaching young women to work successfully as visitors and Bible readers. Women who work in the cause of God should be given wages proportionate to the time they give the work. God is a God of justice, and if the ministers receive a salary for their work, their wives, who devote themselves just as interestedly to the work as laborers together with God, should be paid in addition to the wages their husbands receive, notwithstanding that they might not ask. As the devoted minister and his wife engage in the work, they should be paid wages proportionate to the wages of two distinct workers, that they may have means to use as they shall see fit in the cause of God. The Lord has put His Spirit upon them both. If the husband should die, and leave his wife, she is fitted to continue her work in the cause of God, and receive wages for the labor she performs.—[Manuscript Releases 5:323, 324](#)

Woman who labor in the gospel to be paid—Seventh-day Adventists are not in any way to belittle woman's work. If a woman puts her housework in the hands of a faithful, prudent helper, and leaves her children in good care, while she engages in the work, the conference should have wisdom to understand the justice of her receiving wages. Women helped our Saviour by uniting with Him in His work.... If women do the work that is not the most agreeable to many of those who labor in word and doctrine, and if their works testify that they are accomplishing a work that has been manifestly neglected, should not such labor be looked upon as being as rich in results as the work of the ordained ministers? Should it not command the hire of the laborers? Would not such workers be defrauded if they were not paid? This question is not for men to settle. The Lord has settled it. You are to do your duty to the women who labor in the gospel, whose work testifies that they are essential to carry the truth into families. Their work is just the work that must be done. In many respects a woman can impart knowledge to her sisters that a man cannot. The cause would suffer great loss without this kind of labor. Again and again the Lord has shown me that women teachers

[79]

are just as greatly needed to do the work to which He has appointed them as are men. They should not be compelled by the sentiments and rules of others to depend upon donations for their payment, any more than should the ministers.—[Manuscript Releases 5:324, 325](#).

Ministers are paid. Should their companion's labors be counted for naught?—The minister is paid for his work, and this is well. And if the Lord gives the wife as well as the husband the burden of labor, and she devotes her time and strength to visiting from family to family and opening the Scriptures to them, although the hands of ordination have not been laid upon her, she is accomplishing a work that is in the line of ministry. Then should her labors be counted as naught?—[Gospel Workers, 452](#).

The Lord has a work for women—The Lord has a work for women as well as for men. They may take their places in His work at this crisis, and He will work through them. If they are imbued with a sense of their duty, and labor under the influence of the Holy Spirit, 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 will give them a power that exceeds 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 labor is needed.—[The Review and Herald, August 26, 1902](#).

Chapter 14—Time Management

[80]

[81]

Success or failure in ministry depends much on one's use of time—Some might now have been thorough workmen had they made a good use of their time, feeling that they would have to give an account to God for their misspent moments. They have displeased God because they have not been industrious. Self-gratification, self-love, and selfish love of ease have kept some from good, withheld them from obtaining a knowledge of the Scriptures that they might be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Some do not appreciate the value of time and have idled away in bed the hours that might have been employed in the study of the Bible.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:499](#).

Arise early and economize your moments so you have time for Bible study—By rising early and economizing their moments, ministers can find time for a close investigation of the Scriptures. They must have perseverance, and not be thwarted in their object, but persistently employ their time in a study of the Word, bringing to their aid the truths which other minds, through wearing labor, have brought out for them, and with diligent, persevering effort prepared to their hand. There are ministers who have been laboring for years, teaching the truth to others, while they themselves are not familiar with the strong points of our position. I beg of such to have done with their idleness. It is a continual curse to them. God requires them to make every moment fruitful of some good to themselves or to others.—[The Review and Herald, May 12, 1885](#).

Take a book with you—Ministers should devote time to reading, to study, to meditation and prayer. They should store the mind with useful knowledge, committing to memory portions of Scripture, tracing out the fulfillment of the prophecies, and learning the lessons which Christ gave to his disciples. Take a book with you to read when traveling on the cars or waiting in the depot. Employ every spare moment in doing something. In this way an effectual door

will be closed against a thousand temptations.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:412](#).

[82] **Ministers should not spend too much time with business matters, settling church difficulties, or in long committee meetings**—To every man is given his work. Those who enter the ministry engage in a special work and should give themselves to prayer and to the speaking of the Word. Their minds should not be burdened with business matters. For years the Lord has been instructing me to warn our ministering brethren against allowing their minds to become so engrossed with business matters that they will have no time to commune with God and to have fellowship with the Spirit. A minister cannot keep in the best spiritual frame of mind while he is called upon to settle little difficulties in the various churches. This is not his appointed work. God desires to use every faculty of His chosen messengers. Their mind should not be wearied by long committee meetings at night, for God wants all their brain power to be used in proclaiming the gospel clearly and forcibly as it is in Christ Jesus.—[Evangelism, 91](#).

Do not waste time with chronic church grumblers—The ministers of Christ should take their position, and not be hindered in their work by these agents of Satan. There will be enough of these to question, and quibble, and criticize, to keep the ministers of God constantly busy, if they will allow themselves to be detained from the great work of giving the last saving message of warning to the world. If the church has no strength to stand against the unsanctified, rebellious feelings of church grumblers, it is better to let church and grumblers go overboard together than lose the opportunity of saving hundreds who would make better churches, and have the elements existing within themselves of strength and union and power.—[Evangelism, 371](#).

Jesus organized His day so working people could be ministered to in the evening—All day He ministered to those who came to Him; in the evening He gave attention to such as through the day must toil to earn a pittance for the support of their families.—[Evangelism, 652](#).

Take time for your family—Ministers' children are in some cases the most neglected children in the world, for the reason that

the father is with them but little, and they are left to choose their own employment and amusement.—[The Adventist Home, 354.](#)

Do not spend too much of your time attending to home matters—Some ministers linger about their homes, and run out on the Sabbath, and then return and exhaust their energies in farming or in attending to home matters. They labor for themselves through the week, and then spend the remnant of their exhausted energies in laboring for God. But such feeble efforts are not acceptable to Him. They have no mental or physical strength to spare. At best their efforts are feeble enough. But after they have been engrossed and entangled all through the laboring days of the week with the cares and perplexities of this life, they are wholly unfitted for the high, the sacred, the important work of God.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:471.](#)

Section 2—Relationships

[83]

- 15. Relationships in the Pastoral Family
- 16. Relationships With Others
- 17. Relationships Within the Church

[84] **Chapter 15—Relationships in the Pastoral Family**

[85]

Home

The real character of the minister is revealed at home—It is not so much the religion of the pulpit as the religion of the family that reveals our real character. The minister's wife, his children, and those who are employed as helpers in his family are best qualified to judge of his piety. A good man will be a blessing to his household. Wife, children, and helpers will all be the better for his religion.—[The Adventist Home, 354.](#)

The spiritual welfare of your family comes first—Nothing can excuse the minister for neglecting the inner circle for the larger circle outside. The spiritual welfare of his family comes first. In the day of final reckoning, God will inquire what he did to win to Christ those whom he took the responsibility of bringing into the world. Great good done for others cannot cancel the debt that he owes to God to care for his own children.—[Gospel Workers, 204.](#)

A minister needs to show kindly consideration as head of the family before succeeding in winning souls—You must show in your family that kindly consideration, that tenderness, love, gentleness, noble forbearance, and true courtesy, that is becoming to the head of a family, before you can make a success of winning souls to Christ.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:556.](#)

Some ministers are drawn away from their work by home ties—Some ministers are easily diverted from their work. They become discouraged, or are drawn away by their home ties, and leave a growing interest to die for want of attention. The loss sustained by the cause in this way can scarcely be estimated.—[Gospel Workers, 371.](#)

Spouse

Treat your wife tenderly—Treat your wife tenderly. She needs all the care and comfort and encouragement that you promised in

your marriage vow to give her. Do not give her the slightest occasion to question your loyalty or your sincere desire to fulfil your obligations.—[Manuscript Releases 6:47](#).

[86]

A minister's success or failure depends very much on the spouse—The wife of a minister of the gospel can be either a most successful helper and a great blessing to her husband or a hindrance to him in his work. It depends very much on the wife whether a minister will rise from day to day in his sphere of usefulness, or whether he will sink to the ordinary level.—[The Adventist Home, 355](#).

Discontented ministers' spouses cause disheartened ministers—I was shown the life of Christ. When His self-denial and sacrifice is compared with the trials and sufferings of the wives of some of our ministers, it causes anything which they may call sacrifice to sink into insignificance. If the minister's wife speaks words of discontent and discouragement, the influence upon the husband is disheartening, and tends to cripple him in his labor, especially if his success depends upon surrounding influences. Must the minister of God in such cases be crippled or torn from his field of labor to gratify the feelings of his wife, which arise from an unwillingness to yield inclination to duty? The wife should conform her wishes and pleasures to duty, and give up her selfish feelings for the sake of Christ and the truth. Satan has had much to do with controlling the labors of the ministers, through the influence of selfish, ease-loving companions.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:451](#).

Satan controls ministers through selfish, ease-loving companions—Satan is ever at work to dishearten and lead astray ministers whom God has chosen to preach the truth. The most effectual way in which he can work is through home influences, through unconsecrated companions. If he can control their minds, he can through them the more readily gain access to the husband, who is laboring in word and doctrine to save souls.... Satan has had much to do with controlling the labors of the ministers through the influence of selfish, ease-loving companions.—[The Adventist Home, 355](#).

Ministers' spouses who minister to others have no opportunity to be lonesome—The light which the Lord has given me in regard to minister's wives is, If their life is kept in close consecration to God, as is the duty of all who are laborers together with Him,

they will find so many souls to minister unto that they will have no opportunity to be lonesome or to cultivate selfishness in any line. Jesus says, "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." Those who heed this invitation will have no thought of repining, no thought of loneliness. Their work is to do the will of Christ. As they do this, they will have sweet peace, and rest of soul.—[Manuscript Releases 14:307](#).

[87] **Being overly swayed by one's companion can prove harmful to the minister**—The wife of one of our ministers kept her husband, who was a very sensitive-minded man, tortured by suggestions similar to those you have uttered. Upon the words and actions of others she cast untruthful suspicions, and presented her views in such a strong light that her husband thought that she possessed superior insight into character. The Lord gave me a message for this brother and sister, but neither of them received it. He thought that he was right in his belief that his wife possessed superior discernment, and he believed that her suggestions were perfectly true. Any effort made to enlighten him, or to remove the wrong impressions he had received, were looked upon as a design to deceive him. And the unruly tongue of his wife was constantly at work. Any endeavor to save him from a breakdown was interpreted by her as a desire to put someone else in his place. His brethren worked with all their power to save him, but their plans were construed as deep-laid schemes set on foot to hurt his influence. Thus the work of God was counteracted by home influence.—[Manuscript Releases 12:341](#).

Workers with marriage problems may present themselves as having been wronged, when it is their companions who have been most wronged—I cannot appear to justify your course of action in your married life. Leaving your wife and family is an offense to God, and I must present this matter as it is, before the president of your conference, Elder Williams. I had hoped that when you saw your delusion you would feel that repentance for your course of action that needeth not to be repented of. But my experience at Armadale, and the burden brought upon me there, made me a great sufferer; and matters in regard to your past life have been more fully opened before me.... You have thought that you would receive the credentials of a minister of the gospel, but had these been given

you, reproach would have been brought upon the cause of God. You have represented yourself as being a wronged man, but it is your wife who has been most wronged. She should never have been treated as you have treated her. You pursued such a course toward your little ones that your wife could not but be estranged from you. Her heart was wounded, bruised, and she was almost distracted by your overbearing, masterly government in discipline of your children.—[Testimonies on Sexual Behavior, Adultery, and Divorce](#), 213.

Children

The first duty of ministers is to their children—The minister's duties lie around him, nigh and afar off; but his first duty is to his children. He should not become so engrossed with his outside duties as to neglect the instruction which his children need. He may look upon his home duties as of lesser importance; but in reality they lie at the very foundation of the well-being of individuals and of society. To a large degree the happiness of men and women and the success of the church depend upon home influence. Eternal interests are involved in the proper discharge of the every-day duties of life. The world is not so much in need of great minds, as of good men, who are a blessing in their homes.—[Gospel Workers](#), 204.

[88]

No matter how great your ability, you are not best serving God while neglecting your own children—Those who realize their deficiency in a matter which concerns the happiness and usefulness of future generations, should make the subject of family government their most diligent study. As an objection to this, many point to the children of ministers, teachers, and other men of high repute for learning and piety, and urge that if these men, with their superior advantages, fail in family government, those who are less favorably situated need not hope to succeed. The question to be settled is, Have these men given to their children that which is their right—a good example, faithful instruction, and proper restraint? It is by a neglect of these essentials that such parents give to society children who are unbalanced in mind, impatient of restraint, and ignorant of the duties of practical life. In this they are doing the world an injury which outweighs all the good that their labors accomplish. Those children

transmit their own perversity of character as an inheritance to their offspring, and at the same time their evil example and influence corrupt society and make havoc in the church. We cannot think that any man, however great his ability and usefulness, is best serving God or the world while his time is given to other pursuits, to the neglect of his own children.—[The Signs of the Times, February 9, 1882.](#)

The negative influence of ministers' families can do more harm than their ministry does good—A double obligation rested upon you, Brother B, as a minister of God, to rule well your own house and bring your children into subjection. But you have been pleased with their aptness and have excused their faults. Sin in them did not appear very sinful. You have displeased God and nearly ruined your children by your neglect of duty, and you have continued this neglect after the Lord had reproved and counseled you. The injury done to the cause of God by your influence as a family in the different places where you have lived has been greater than the good that you have accomplished. You have been blinded and deceived by Satan in regard to your family. You and your wife have made your children your equals. They have done about as they pleased. This has been a sad drawback to you in your work as a minister of Christ, and the neglect of your duty to bring your children into subjection has led to a still greater evil, which threatens to destroy your usefulness.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:620.](#)

[89]

Shepherds who fail at home will fail at church—He who is engaged in the work of the gospel ministry must be faithful in his family life. It is as essential that as a father he should improve the talents God has given him for the purpose of making the home a symbol of the heavenly family, as that in the work of the ministry, he should make use of his God-given powers to win souls for the church. As the priest in the home, and as the ambassador of Christ in the church, he should exemplify in his life the character of Christ. He must be faithful in watching for souls as one that must give an account. In his service there must be seen no carelessness and inattentive work. God will not serve with the sins of men who have not a clear sense of the sacred responsibility involved in accepting a position as pastor of a church. He who fails to be a faithful, discerning shepherd in the home, will surely fail of being a faithful

shepherd of the flock of God in the church.—[Manuscript Releases 6:49](#).

[90]

Chapter 16—Relationships With Others

[91]

Community

We must not build a wall between ourselves and the world—Our greatest necessity is a pure, clean heart and an understanding mind. All kinds of malicious falsehoods were circulated against Christ, and they will be circulated against God’s commandment-keeping people. How shall we prove these to be false? Shall it be by building up a wall between us and the world? Christ’s prayer answers this point: “I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” While our work is aggressive, it must be conducted on Bible principles. All our enterprises are to be carried forward with Christlike simplicity, patience, forbearance, and love for God and for Christ. Our work is to convince, not to condemn. The human beings around us possess like infirmities with ourselves.—[Manuscript Releases 2:195](#).

Do not denounce other denominations—When some who lack the Spirit and power of God enter a new field, they commence denouncing other denominations, thinking that they can convince the people of the truth by presenting the inconsistencies of the popular churches. It may seem necessary on some occasions to speak of these things, but in general it only creates prejudice against our work and closes the ears of many who might otherwise have listened to the truth. If these teachers were connected closely with Christ, they would have divine wisdom to know how to approach the people.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:535](#).

Ministers should not create schisms by fighting battles in the political world—Those who stand as educators, as ministers, as laborers together with God in any line, have no battles to fight in the political world. Their citizenship is in heaven. The Lord calls upon them to stand as separate and peculiar people. He would have no schisms in the body of believers. His people are to possess the elements of reconciliation. Is it their work to make enemies

in the political world? No, no. They are to stand as subjects of Christ's kingdom, bearing the banner on which is inscribed, "The commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." They are to carry the burden of a special work, a special message. We have a personal responsibility, and this is to be revealed before the heavenly universe, before angels, and before men. God does not call upon us to enlarge our influence by mingling with society, by linking up with men on political questions, but by standing as individual parts of His great whole, with Christ as our head. Christ is our Prince, and as His subjects we are to do the work appointed us by God.—[Fundamentals of Christian Education](#), 478.

[92]

Clergy of Other Denominations

God's servants are to approach the ministers of other denominations—More work should have been done for those in high places. Those who give the last message of mercy to a fallen world are not to pass by the ministers. God's servants are to approach them as those who have a deep interest in their welfare, and then plead for them in prayer. If they refuse to accept the invitation, tell the Master about it, and then your duty is done.—[The Review and Herald](#), May 8, 1900.

Pray for and with ministers of other denominations—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.—[Testimonies for the Church](#) 6:78.

It takes moral courage for a minister to step out for the Sabbath—It requires moral courage to take a position to keep the commandments of the Lord. An opposer of the truth once said that it was only weak-minded people, foolish, ignorant persons, who would turn away from the churches to keep the seventh day as the Sabbath. But a minister who embraced the truth replied, "If you think it takes weak-minded persons, just try it." It takes moral courage, firmness, decision, perseverance, and very much prayer to step out on the unpopular side.—[Evangelism](#), 240.

Ministers of other denominations, if truly converted to our message, will be polished instruments in the hands of God—Much has been lost by our people through the following such narrow plans that the most intelligent, better-educated classes are not reached. Too often the work has been so conducted as to impress unbelievers that it is of very little consequence,—some stray offshoot of religious enthusiasm, entirely beneath their notice. Much has been lost for want of wise methods of labor. Every effort should be made to give character and dignity to the work. It requires much wisdom to reach ministers and men of influence. But why should they be neglected as they have been by our people? These men are responsible to God just in proportion to the talents intrusted to them. Where much is given, much will be required. Should there [93] not be deeper study and much more prayer for wisdom, that we may learn how to reach these classes? Should not wisdom and tact be used to gain these souls, who, if truly converted, will be polished instruments in the hands of God to reach others?—[Evangelism, 562, 563.](#)

People of Other Cultures

Those close to Christ are lifted above color or caste—He who is closely connected with Christ is lifted above the prejudice of color or caste. His faith takes hold of eternal realities. The divine Author of truth is to be up lifted. Our hearts are to be filled with the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. The work of the good Samaritan is the example that we are to follow.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:209.](#)

When the Holy Spirit moves, all prejudice will be melted away and we will approach God as one brotherhood—When the Holy Spirit moves upon human minds, all petty complaints and accusations between man and his fellow man will be put away. The bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness will shine into the chambers of the mind and heart. In our worship of God there will be no distinction between rich and poor, white and black. All prejudice will be melted away. When we approach God, it will be as one brotherhood. We are pilgrims and strangers, bound for a better country, even a heavenly. There all pride, all accusation, all self-

deception, will forever have an end. Every mask will be laid aside, and we shall “see Him as He is.” There our songs will catch the inspiring theme, and praise and thanksgiving will go up to God.—[The Review and Herald, October 24, 1899.](#)

Societal distinctions should become contemptible—The cross of Calvary should make the distinctions of society fade away and become contemptible. If the Lord is so gracious as to accept sinners from the white race, and forgive their sins, holding out to them the assurance of the higher life, the hope of a place in the redeemed family when he comes in the clouds of heaven, and the righteous dead rise from their grave to meet Him, will he not accept sinners from the black race, and will He not forgive their sins? Does He not hold out to them the same hope that He holds out to the white race? Will He not, if they believe on Him, receive them as His sons and daughters? Will He not raise them from ignorance and degradation by the working out of His plan? Does He not, through the instrumentality of the more favored white race, who claim to be children of the same Father, wish to uplift and ennoble them?—[Manuscript 70, 1902.](#) (Quoted in [Spalding and Magan Collection, 220, 221.](#)).

Racial separation is not permanent—Walls of separation have been built up between the whites and the blacks. These walls of prejudice will tumble down of themselves, as did the walls of Jericho, when Christians obey the Word of God, which enjoins on them supreme love to their Maker and impartial love to their neighbors.... [94] Let every church whose members claim to believe the truth for this time, look at this neglected, downtrodden race, that as a result of slavery have been deprived of the privilege of thinking and acting for themselves.—[The Review and Herald, December 17, 1895.](#)

We dare not ignore existing racial prejudice—I am burdened, heavily burdened, for the work among the colored people. The gospel is to be presented to the downtrodden Negro race. But great caution will have to be shown in the efforts put forth for the uplifting of this people. Among the white people in many places there exists a strong prejudice against the Negro race. We may desire to ignore this prejudice, but we cannot do it. If we were to act as if this prejudice did not exist we could not get the light before the white

people. We must meet the situation as it is and deal with it wisely and intelligently.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:204](#).

The work must not be hindered through prejudice caused by national customs—There must be a firm determination on the part of our laborers to break with the established customs of the people whenever it is essential to the advancement of the work of God. The work might be much farther advanced in Europe if some of those who have embraced the truth were not so wedded to the habits and customs of nationalities. They plead that the efforts of our ministers must be made to conform to these customs and prejudices, or nothing will be accomplished. This has had a binding influence upon the work from its commencement. The effort that has been made to conform to English customs, to eat and drink English, to dress and sleep English, has circumscribed the work, and it is now years behind what it might have been. The effort to keep bound about by French customs and ideas has hindered the work in France. My heart aches as I hear our brethren say, Such an one does not understand how to labor for these nationalities. Does not God know what the people need? and will He not direct His servants? Is not the truth one? Are not the teachings of the Bible one? Let God give His messengers the word to speak, and His blessing will not fail to attend their labors.—[The Review and Herald, December 8, 1885](#).

We must not build up separate interests between different nationalities—I felt urged by the Spirit of God throughout the meetings to impress upon all the importance of cultivating love and unity. I tried to present the danger of building up separate interests between different nationalities.—[The Review and Herald, November 3, 1885](#).

Practice patient tenderness with the faults of others—Christ came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; and when His love reigns in the heart, we shall follow His example. If we keep uppermost in our minds the unkind and unjust acts of others, we shall find it impossible to love them as Christ has loved us; for there are few persons who do not on close acquaintance reveal unamiable traits of character. Even the best of us have these unlovely traits; and in selecting friends we should choose those who will not be driven away from us when they learn that we are not perfect. Mutual forbearance is called for. We should love and respect one another notwithstanding the faults and imperfections that we cannot help seeing; for this is the Spirit of Christ. Humility and self-distrust should be cultivated, and a patient tenderness with the faults of others. This will kill out all narrowing selfishness and make us large-hearted and generous.—[The Signs of the Times, March 5, 1885.](#)

Christ's Representative

Through His ministers, Christ moves visibly upon the earth—Ambassadors for Christ have a solemn and important work, which rests upon some altogether too lightly. While Christ is the minister in the sanctuary above, He is also, through His delegates, the minister of His church on earth. He speaks to the people through chosen men, and carries forward His work through them, as when in the days of His humiliation He moved visibly upon the earth. Although centuries have passed, the lapse of time has not changed His parting promise to His disciples: “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” From Christ’s ascension to the present day, men ordained of God, deriving their authority from Him, have become teachers of the faith. Christ, the True Shepherd, superintends His work through the instrumentality of these

undershepherds. Thus the position of those who labor in word and doctrine becomes very important. In Christ's stead they beseech the people to be reconciled to God.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:393](#).

[96] **Every minister who does not have the love of Jesus in the heart, will reveal the fact**—I feel sorry that poor souls, failing to find relief, appeal to Sister White. I want them to have confidence that the shepherds of the flock will care for the flock of God. Every minister of Christ who does not have the precious love of Jesus in the heart, will reveal the fact. The Lord Jesus has given to every man precious lessons of instruction in His holy Word. The Lord Jesus is our pattern. The impress of the image of Christ will be manifest upon the entire character of those who yield themselves to Him. Then the mental and physical powers will be renewed day by day; for the true believer is daily eating of the flesh and drinking of the blood of the Son of God. Jesus says, “The flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life.”—EGW'88 1276.

Walk with, talk about, exemplify Christ—To minister, comprehends much more than mere preaching. In order to fulfill this sacred and important work freighted with eternal interests, the minister must be a man of vital piety, or his labors will not be accepted of God. He must be a man who will not have an exalted opinion of himself, or of his own ability, but who will lose a sense of his importance in the exalted view he has of the matchless mercy and love of Jesus Christ. He then has a close walk with God. His life of piety and true holiness which he carries with him wherever he goes, and which is interwoven in all his works, makes him a successful and efficient worker. He is a co-laborer with Jesus Christ, and is faithful in his appointed work, as Christ was faithful in his work. He will not, in word or action, exalt self, but in private conversation will talk of Christ; he will pray Christ, he will preach Christ. This is the kind of ministry that proves the worker to be called and chosen of God for his sacred work.—[The Review and Herald, February 22, 1887](#).

Rely more on your knowledge of Christ than on your learning from books—In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, the Lord calls for men who will be earnest and prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord.

The men who have spent long terms in the study of books are not revealing in their lives that earnest ministry which is essential for this last time. They do not bear a simple, straightforward testimony. Among ministers and students there is need of the infusion of the Spirit of God. The prayerful, earnest appeals that come from the heart of a whole-souled messenger will create convictions. It will not need the learned men to do this; for they depend more on their learning from books than upon their knowledge of God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. All who know the only true and living God will know Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, and will preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified.—[Selected Messages 2:152](#).

Christ-centered pastors have growing churches—I have felt anguish of soul as I have seen the true state of things. There are dishonest men in our churches; there are licentious men. In this large conference [Michigan] there is declension in the place of constant advancement to a higher, holier standard. And there is little of the proper labor done by ministers in the churches, because many do not carry the burden of the souls for whom they labor. The truth has not sanctified their own hearts. [97]

Oh, there is need of most earnest, devoted, self-sacrificing labor—the preaching of the truth, preaching Christ, and living Christ. Oh, that all our workers would be laborers together with God, not trifling with time, not trifling with sacred responsibilities, with solemn, sacred truth, the presentation of which is deciding the destiny of souls, but representing Christ in all things, watching for souls as they that must give an account, day by day, hour by hour, living in the channel of light. This is the only course that you can pursue with safety in the churches, and among the people in cities and villages, diffusing the light received from the Sun of Righteousness.

In order to do this, you must devote much time to prayer. Brethren, be instant in prayer. When in society, when compelled to be among the frivolous, the careless and inconsiderate, you are not to descend to their level and engage in cheap and frivolous talk, but dart up your petitions to heaven, that the God of all grace will keep your souls in the love of Christ. When the workers are thus connected with God, there will be continual growth in every church blessed with this labor in Michigan.—[Sermons and Talks, 2:73, 74](#).

Many ministers can talk doctrine, but are ignorant of the lessons of Christ—The minister cannot give to others that which he himself does not possess. If Christ is not abiding in the soul, how can He be presented to others in harmonious words of love? Many are able to talk upon doctrinal points, but they are ignorant of the lessons of Christ. Such men cannot be a blessing either in the pulpit or at the fireside.—[The Review and Herald, September 2, 1890.](#)

Genuine love for Christ will lead directly to hearty obedience to all the law of God—While men profess to rejoice in the intercession and grace of Jesus Christ they should not forget that harmony with Christ cannot be gained while there is a spirit of war in their hearts against his Father’s commandments. Love genuine love to Jesus Christ will lead directly to hearty obedience of all the law of God, and there will be the deepest repentance whenever they break, or teach men by their example to break one of the least of God’s commandments. Ministers who soothe the consciences of the people by participating with them in transgression through any cause, are rejoicing in iniquity. And when Christ comes, to judgment, the stoutest hearts, the most confident boasters of religious attainments while breaking the law of God, will faint and fail, every excuse will then be silenced, every heart corrupt in its disobedience will be revealed just as it is. There will be recriminations with the companions in pouring contempt upon the law of God; but the heaviest denunciations will come upon the unfaithful minister who professed to be sent of God to show them the way of salvation. Tempter and tempted will suffer condemnation according to their responsibility and the wrong that they have done in leading souls to transgression. Of all the crimes that God will visit none are in His sight so grievous as those who tempt and encourage others in sin. God would have His ministers ever in all places show themselves decidedly on the Lord’s side, loyal and true to His commandments in a rebellious world, thus rebuking the disobedient however difficult or contrary to the natural feelings. “Those that honor me,” saith God, “I will honor.” God looks to those who bear His commission to be true and faithful, and to exalt the dignity of his claims.—[The Signs of the Times, May 20, 1880.](#)

Do not clothe yourself in Christ’s righteousness, and trample underfoot His rule of right—That law flashes conviction on

every side. Sinners desire to be freed from it, and many who call themselves Christians clothe their sinful, hypocritical souls in the garments of Christ's righteousness, and trample under their feet God's great rule of right. The worship offered to God by this class is similar to Balaam's offering in behalf of Balak. They are equally offensive to God.—[The Signs of the Times, December 2, 1880.](#)

Congregation—Pastor's Part

Good shepherds love their sheep—The preacher who bears the sacred truth for these last days must be the opposite of all this and, by his life of practical godliness, plainly mark the distinction existing between the false and the true shepherd. The Good Shepherd came to seek and to save that which was lost. He has manifested in His works His love for His sheep. All the shepherds who work under the Chief Shepherd will possess His characteristics; they will be meek and lowly of heart. Childlike faith brings rest to the soul and also works by love and is ever interested for others. If the Spirit of Christ dwells in them, they will be Christlike and do the works of Christ.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:377.](#)

Shepherds may care more for themselves than for their sheep—Brother R, I was shown in what marked contrast with the requirements of God's Word your course of labor has been. You have been careless in your words and in your deportment. The sheep have had the burden to care for the shepherd, to warn, reprove, exhort, and weep over the reckless course of their shepherd, who, by accepting his office, acknowledges that he is mouthpiece for God. Yet he cares far more for himself than he does for the poor sheep. You have not felt a burden for souls. You have not gone forth to your labors weeping and praying for souls that sinners might be converted. Had you done this you would be sowing seed which would spring up after many days and bear fruit to the glory of God.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:234.](#)

Unconsecrated ministers discourage members—Your case, Brother R, is similar to this. But the accountability of a minister of Christ, who is to warn the world of a coming judgment, is as much more important than that of the common workman as eternal things are of more consequence than temporal. If the minister of the

gospel yields to his inclination rather than to be guided by duty, if he indulges self at the expense of spiritual strength, and as the result moves indiscreetly, souls will rise up in the judgment to condemn him for his unfaithfulness. The blood of souls will be found on his garments. It may seem to the unconsecrated minister a small thing to be fitful, impulsive, and unconsecrated; to build up, and then to tear down; to dishearten, distress, and discourage the very souls that have been converted by the truth he has presented. It is a sad thing to lose the confidence of the very ones whom he has been laboring to save. But the result of an unwise course pursued by the minister will never be fully understood until the minister sees as God seeth.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:243](#).

What excuse could a shepherd have for allowing the flock to stray?—What is a shepherd for, unless it be to watch for every danger lest the sheep be harmed and destroyed by wolves? What excuse could a shepherd plead for suffering the flock to stray from the true pasture, and be torn and scattered and devoured by wolves? How would an excuse stand made by the shepherd that the sheep led him astray? They left the true pasture, and led him out of the way? Such a plea would tell with force against that shepherd's ability to watch over the sheep. No more confidence could be placed in him as a faithful shepherd to care for the sheep, and bring them back as they might stray from the right path.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:314, 315](#).

Confessing your own mistakes encourages a spirit of confession in your church—Those who profess to be servants of the living God must be willing to be servants of all, instead of being exalted above the brethren, and they must possess a kind, courteous spirit. If they err, they should be ready to confess thoroughly. Honesty of intention cannot stand as an excuse for not confessing errors. Confession would not lessen the confidence of the church in the messenger, and he would set a good example; a spirit of confession would be encouraged in the church, and sweet union would be the result. Those who profess to be teachers should be patterns of piety, meekness, and humility, possessing a kind spirit, to win souls to Jesus and the truth of the Bible. A minister of Christ should be pure in conversation and in actions. He should ever bear in mind that he is handling words of inspiration, words of a holy God. He must also

bear in mind that the flock is entrusted to his care, and that he is to bear their cases to Jesus, and plead for them as Jesus pleads for us with the Father.—[Early Writings, 102](#).

Help your church understand why it should not expect the minister to wait on them—My heart has been filled with sadness as I have looked over the field and seen the barren places. What does this mean? Who are standing as representatives of Jesus Christ? Who feels a burden for the souls who cannot receive the truth till it is brought to them? Our ministers are hovering over the churches, as though the angel of mercy was not making efforts to save souls.

[100]

God holds these ministers responsible for the souls of those who are in darkness. He does not call you to go into fields that need no physician. Establish your churches with the understanding that they need not expect the minister to wait upon them and to be continually feeding them. They have the truth; they know what truth is. They should have root in themselves. These should strike down deeply, that they may reach up higher and still higher. They must be rooted and grounded in the faith. EGW'88 1752.

Congregation—People's part

Members should wrestle with God for their ministers—Brethren and sisters, have you forgotten that your prayers should go out, like sharp sickles, with the laborers in the great harvest field? As young men go forth to preach the truth, you should have seasons of prayer for them. Pray that God will connect them with Himself and give them wisdom, grace, and knowledge. Pray that they may be guarded from the snares of Satan and kept pure in thought and holy in heart. I entreat you who fear the Lord to waste no time in unprofitable talk or in needless labor to gratify pride or to indulge the appetite. Let the time thus gained be spent in wrestling with God for your ministers. Hold up their hands as did Aaron and Hur the hands of Moses.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:162](#).

Members should work with their ministers, rather than hanging burdens on them—I entreat you, my brethren and sisters, to be self-reliant in the strength of Jesus. Do not hang the weight of your perplexities and burdens upon your ministers. Christ has invited you to come to him, your burden-bearer. If you pass

along in a state of unbelief and lack of consecration to God, you hang your weight upon the heart of your ministers, and you take just so much time and strength from them which God requires them to use in giving the message to those who have not heard it. Brethren, will you not rather work yourselves in union with the ambassadors of Christ in seeking to win souls to the truth? When tempted to become unbelieving and discouraged, you will find the very best cure for this in talking faith to others, and in presenting the truth to those who are in darkness. Extend your efforts to your neighbors, and to those who have not the privileges of meetings. Sow the seeds of truth beside all waters, and encourage the hearts of the servants of God when they visit you by showing that you have not been idle, but through your instrumentality one or more have been brought from darkness to light. You can keep above despondency and doubt by making it your practice to daily pray for the blessing of God to rest upon the men who are presenting the solemn message of warning to the world. Let your prayers follow the servants of God like sharp sickles in the harvest field. God will hear the earnest entreaties of his people. The prayer of faith will move the arm of God.—[The Signs of the Times, September 4, 1879.](#)

Members must not expect their minister to do the church's work—Ministers should not do work that belongs to the laymen, thus wearying themselves, and preventing others from doing their duty. They should teach the members how to work in the church and community, to build up the church, to make the prayer-meeting interesting, and to train for missionaries youth of ability. The members of the church should cooperate actively with the ministers, making the section of country around them their field of missionary labor. Churches that are weak or few in numbers, should be looked after by sister churches.—[The Review and Herald, October 12, 1886.](#)

Members depending on their minister for power, become powerless—The success of a church does not depend on the efforts and labor of the living preacher, but it depends upon the piety of the individual members. When the members depend upon the minister as their source of power and efficiency, they will be utterly powerless. They will imbibe his impulses, and be stimulated by his ideas, but when he leaves them, they will find themselves in a more hopeless condition than before they had his labors. I hope that none

of the churches in our land will depend upon a minister for support in spiritual things; for this is dangerous. When God gives you light, you should praise Him for it. If you extol the messenger, you will be left to barrenness of soul. Just as soon as the members of a church call for the labors of a certain minister, and feel that he must remain with them, it is time that he was removed to another field, that they may learn to exercise the ability which God has given them. Let the people go to work. Let them thank God for the encouragement they have received, and then make it manifest that it has wrought in them a good work. Let each member of the church be a living, active agent for God, both in the church and out of it. We must all be educated to be independent, not helpless and useless. Let it be seen that Christ, not the minister, is the head of the church. The members of the body of Christ have a part to act, and they will not be accounted faithful unless they do act their part. Let a divine work be wrought in every soul, until Christ shall behold His image reflected in His followers.—[The Signs of the Times, January 27, 1890.](#)

Negligent ministers and members discourage each other—The negligence on the part of the ministers has discouraged the people, and the lack of interest, self-sacrifice, and appreciation of the work on the part of the people has discouraged the ministers.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:257.](#)

Alienation

[102]

When alienation exists between pastor and people, something should be done immediately—The subject of the Christian ministry must be set in a new light before the minds of the people. I entreat of you to study the Word of God on this point. If you think a minister is making mistakes, it is your duty to go to him in love and meekness and present the matter before him. You may not have a correct idea of his motive or work, and under misapprehension may grow cold to him, close the door of your heart, and fail to receive his message or appreciate his labors. Where alienation exists between a minister and the people, there is something decidedly wrong, either in him or the church members, and something should be done immediately to work a reform in whoever may be the erring party. He should not be left to wonder what all this coldness and

indifference means. He should not be left to seek in vain to find out why he cannot reach the hearts of the people with the message God has given him, and to question why it is that the door of the heart has been closed; for he can realize there is no affection for him, and can have no fellowship with the people for whom he is sent to labor. Has he dropped a word, or done a deed which has wounded you in some way, and he does not know that it has hurt you? Then go to him, tell him his faults between him and you alone, and have the coldness and bitterness of spirit that has been created by an unwitting act on his part, changed to respect and love.—[The Review and Herald, July 25, 1893.](#)

Be kind to those who oppose you—If the minister, when before his congregation, sees a disbelieving smile upon the faces of opponents, let him be as one who sees not. If any should be so impolite as to laugh and sneer, let not the minister, by voice or attitude, reflect the same spirit. Show that you handle no such weapons.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 248.](#)

Tenure

Some ministers need to move on before their character defects cause people to lose confidence—When you, Brother F, first commence to labor in a place, you generally have the confidence of the people; but after a more thorough acquaintance your defects of character become so apparent that many lose confidence in your piety. Reflections are thus cast upon all the ministers of the denomination. A short stay in a place would not injure your reputation. While engaged in earnest labor, pressed by opposing influences, your mind is absorbed in the work in which you are engaged, and you have neither time nor opportunity to think and reflect upon yourself. But when the work is over, and you begin to think upon self, as it is natural for you to do, you pet yourself, become babyish, sharp, and cross in temper, and thus greatly mar the work of God. You manifest the same spirit in the church, and thus your influence is greatly injured in the community, in some cases beyond remedy. You have frequently exhibited childish contention, even while laboring to convert souls to the truth; and the impressions made have been terrible upon those who were witnesses. Now, one of two things

must be done; you must either be a consecrated man at home, in your family, and in the church, at all times tender and patient, or you must not settle down in a church; for your defects will be made apparent, and the Redeemer you profess to love and serve will be dishonored.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:344](#).

If ministers stay too long in a church, people may learn to look to them instead of to God—I have been shown that ministers should not be retained in the same district year after year, nor should the same man long preside over a conference. A change of gifts is for the good of our conferences and churches.

Ministers have sometimes felt unwilling to change their field of labor; but if they understood all the reasons for making changes, they would not draw back. Some have pleaded to remain one year longer in the same field, and frequently the request has been respected. They have claimed to have plans for accomplishing a greater work than heretofore. But at the close of the year there was a worse state of things than before. If a minister has been unfaithful in his work, it is not likely that he will mend the matter by remaining. The churches become accustomed to the management of that one man, and think they must look to him instead of to God.—[Gospel Workers, 420](#).

Conference

Shepherds have been treated with reckless disregard by those in high positions—Sinful and worthless creatures though we are, through a vital connection with Christ we yet may be renewed in knowledge and true holiness, and thus reflect the glory and image of our Creator and Redeemer, and be qualified to care for His sheep and lambs. Not only have the sheep and lambs been dealt with in hardness, but even the shepherds themselves have been treated with reckless disregard. They have been spoken of in a way that shows that many in high and lower positions have little courtesy to give to God's ordained ministers. The churches themselves have been educated in such a way that they have had too little respect for those who preach the Word of God, and who for years have given full proof of their ministry. But this way of dealing with the ministers and with the members of the family of God must be changed. The blessing of God cannot rest upon those who manifest little respect for the

workers together with Him.—[The Review and Herald, October 24, 1893.](#)

Ministers should not act independently of the opinions of their brethren—Though we have an individual work and an individual responsibility before God, we are not to follow our own independent judgment, regardless of the opinions and feelings of our brethren; for this course would lead to disorder in the church.

[104] It is the duty of ministers to respect the judgment of their brethren; but their relations to one another, as well as the doctrines they teach, should be brought to the test of the law and the testimony; then, if hearts are teachable, there will be no divisions among us. Some are inclined to be disorderly, and are drifting away from the great landmarks of the faith; but God is moving upon His ministers to be one in doctrine and in spirit.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 30.](#)

Pastor-President

There must be harmony between pastors and their presidents—For the last forty years the Lord has been revealing to me the necessity of harmony of action on the part of ministers and the presidents of Conferences. The president of a Conference should be careful to give respect to all who are laborers together with God. One man's mind and judgment is not to control. The ministers who are connected with him in the work are to be respected and loved; criticism should have no room to work. Let envy and evil-surmising be expelled from the soul. Nothing can grieve the Spirit of God more than dissension and depreciation of brethren. In order to have prosperity in labor, there must be confidence in and union with our brethren, who are laboring just as earnestly and disinterestedly as we are. There are those who do not possess a harmonious character in all respects, yet God has accepted them as laborers together with Christ. Then, how out of place it is for one to stand apart from another because their ideas and judgment do not in all things agree.—[The General Conference Bulletin, February 11, 1895.](#)

Conference presidents are to arouse their ministers to work as they should—Can nothing be devised to arouse presidents of Conferences to a sense of their obligations? Would they could

see that their position of trust only increases and intensifies their responsibility. If each president would feel the necessity of diligent improvement of his talents in devising ways and means for arousing ministers to work as they should, what a change would take place in every Conference. Do these men realize that the solemn scrutiny of every man's work is soon to begin in heaven? When the Master went away, He gave to every man in every age and in every generation, His work; and He says to us all, "Occupy till I come." Have ministers thought how much is comprehended in these words? Verily there may be but a step between them and death. How stands the record of sacred trusts committed for wise improvement? Misused talents, wasted hours, neglected opportunities, duties left undone, sickly churches, the flock of God not strengthened by having their portion of meat in due season.—[Appeal and Suggestions to Conference Officers \(Ph 2\) 20, 21.](#)

The conference president's job is not to do the work, but to see that others are working to the best advantage—The church militant is not the church triumphant, but is composed of erring men and women. As in an army soldiers must be trained and disciplined for active service, so must the soldiers of Christ be educated for usefulness in His cause. It may be far easier for the president of a Conference to labor himself than to direct the work of others; but it is his duty to take an oversight of the field, and see that all are working to the best advantage. The younger men should be developing their talents, and preparing for future usefulness; and the older and more experienced ministers should not be left to expend their energies on work that others could do as well as not, and would be willing to do if they were only told how.—[The Review and Herald, April 22, 1884.](#)

[105]

Conference presidents should educate ministers to educate members—The president of a State Conference is, by his manner of dealing, educating the ministers under him, and together they can so educate the churches that it will not be necessary to call the ministers of the conference from the field to settle difficulties and dissensions in the church. If the officers in the conference will, as faithful servants, perform their Heaven-appointed duties, the work in our conferences will not be left to become entangled in such perplexities as heretofore. And in laboring thus, the workers will

become solid, responsible men, who will not fail nor be discouraged in a hard place.—[Gospel Workers](#), 419.

Have an encouraging attitude toward your president—especially when he makes mistakes—While your president neglected his work and failed in his duty, your attitude was not such as to give him any encouragement. The one in authority should have acquitted himself as a man of God, reproving, exhorting, encouraging, as the case demanded, whether you would receive or reject his testimony. But he was easily discouraged, and left you without the help that a faithful minister of Christ should have given. He failed in not keeping up with the opening providence of God, and in not showing you your duty and educating you up to the demands of the time; but the minister's neglect should not dishearten you and lead you to excuse yourselves for neglecting duty. There is the more need of energy and fidelity on your part.—[Testimonies for the Church](#) 5:281.

[106] **Great care should be exercised in the selection of conference presidents**—The Lord has been pleased to present before me many things in regard to the calling and labor of our ministers, especially those who have been appointed as presidents of Conferences. Great care should be exercised in the selection of men for these positions of trust. There should be earnest prayer for divine enlightenment. Those who are thus appointed as overseers of the flock should be men of good repute, men who give evidence that they have not only a knowledge of the Scriptures, but an experience in faith, in patience, that in meekness they may instruct those who oppose the truth. They should be men of thorough integrity; not novices, but intelligent students of the Word, able to teach others also, bringing from the treasure-house things new and old,—men who in character, in words, in deportment, will be an honor to the cause of Christ, teaching the truth, living the truth, growing up to the full stature in Christ Jesus. This means the development and strengthening of every faculty by exercise, that the workers may become qualified to bear larger responsibilities as the work increases.—[Gospel Workers](#), 232.

Presidents may become too conservative and narrow in their leadership—Elder M, as president of the _____ Conference, you have shown by your general management that you are unworthy of

the trust reposed in you. You have shown that you are conservative, and that your ideas are narrow. You have not done one half what you might have done had you had the true spirit of the work. You might have been far more capable and experienced than you now are; you might have been far better prepared to manage successfully this sacred and important mission a work which would have given you the strongest claim to the general confidence of our people. But, like the other ministering brethren in your state, you have failed to advance with the opening providence of God; you have not shown that the Holy Spirit was deeply impressing your heart, so that God could speak through you to His people. If in this crisis you do anything to strengthen doubt and distrust in the churches of your state, anything that will prevent the people from engaging heartily in this work, God will hold you responsible. Has God given you unmistakable evidence that the brethren of your state are excused from the responsibility of putting their arms about the city of _____ as Christ has put His arms about them? If you were standing in the light, you would encourage this mission by your faith.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:370](#).

Conference presidents, even more than other ministers, should set an example of holy living—Presidents of Conferences should be men who can be fully trusted with God’s work. They should be men of integrity, unselfish, devoted, working Christians. If they are deficient in these respects, the churches under their care will not prosper. They, even more than other ministers of Christ, should set an example of holy living, and of unselfish devotion to the interests of God’s cause, that those looking to them for an example may not be misled. But in some instances they are trying to serve both God and mammon. They are not self-denying; they do not carry a burden for souls. Their consciences are not sensitive; when the cause of God is wounded, they are not bruised in spirit. In their hearts they question and doubt the Testimonies of the Spirit of God. They do not themselves bear the cross of Christ; they know not the fervent love of Jesus. And they are not faithful shepherds of the flock over which they have been made overseers; their record is not one that they will rejoice to meet in the day of God.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:379, 380](#).

God gives wisdom to conference presidents who come to [107]

Him as little children—Presidents of conferences, you will be wise if you will decide to come to God. Believe in Him. He will hear your prayer, and come to your assistance, in much less time than the public conveyance could take one, two, three, or four men from a long distance, at a great expense, to decide questions which the God of wisdom can decide far better for you. He has promised, “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” If you will sincerely humble your hearts before Him, empty your souls of self-esteem, and put away the natural defects of your character, and overcome your love of supremacy, and come to God as little children, He will bestow on you His Holy Spirit. When two or three shall agree as touching anything, and shall ask the Lord, in the name of Jesus, it shall be done for them.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 323, 324.](#)

Salary

Laborers should not be forced to accept small remuneration because there is a lack of money in the treasury—Instead of bringing the expense of the work down to a low figure, it is your duty to bring the minds of the people to understand that the “laborer is worthy of his hire” ([Luke 10:7](#)). The churches need to be impressed with the fact that it is their duty to deal honestly with the cause of God, not allowing the guilt to the worst kind of robbery to rest upon them, that of robbing God in tithes and offerings. When settlements are made with the laborers in His cause, they should not be forced to accept small remuneration because there is a lack of money in the treasury. Many have been defrauded of their just dues in this way, and it is just as criminal in the sight of God as for one to keep back the wages of those who are employed in any other regular business.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:374.](#)

Inadequate wages demonstrate disrespect for ministers—When their accounts are audited, if selfish men shall, with voice or stroke of pen, limit the worker in his wages, they discourage and depress him. Every minister must have a salvage compensation to work upon, that he may have something with which to lead out in good enterprises, pushing the work with zeal. He tells us, “thou

shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.” This is a figure of those who work under the eye of God to advance His cause in lifting the minds of men from the contemplation of earthly things to heaven. These God loves, and He would have men respect their rights.—[East Michigan Banner, March 29, 1905](#).

Other Church Workers

God has ordained that the talents of minds in various callings be blended to do His work—No one man, whether a teacher, a physician, or a minister, can ever hope to be a complete whole. God has given to every man certain gifts and has ordained that men be associated in His service in order that the varied talents of many minds may be blended. The contact of mind with mind tends to quicken thought and increase the capabilities. The deficiencies of one laborer are often made up by the special gifts of another.—[Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 521](#).

[108]

Minister, teacher, medical missionary, and canvasser should respect and appreciate each other—The preaching of the Word is a means by which the Lord has ordained that His warning message shall be given to the world. In the Scriptures the faithful teacher is represented as a shepherd of the flock of God. He is to be respected and his work appreciated. Genuine medical missionary work is bound up with the ministry, and the canvassing work is to be a part both of the medical missionary work and of the ministry.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:323](#).

Medical Missionaries

The medical missionary work and the gospel ministry must not be separated—The medical missionary work is not to be carried forward as something apart from the work of the gospel ministry. The Lord’s people are to be one. There is to be no separation in His work. Time and means are being absorbed in a work which is carried forward too earnestly in one direction. The Lord has not appointed this. He sent out his twelve apostles and afterward the seventy to preach the Word to the people, and He gave them power to heal the sick and to cast out devils in his name. The two lines of work must

not be separated. Satan will invent every possible scheme to separate those whom God is seeking to make one. We must not be misled by his devices. The medical missionary work is to be connected with the work of the third angel's message, as the hand is connected with the body; and the education of students in medical missionary lines is not complete unless they are trained to work in connection with the church and the ministry.—[Counsels on Health, 557](#).

Ministers and medical workers should cooperate with each other—He calls upon His people to work in harmony. He calls upon those engaged in our medical work to unite with the ministry: He calls upon the ministers to cooperate with the medical missionary workers: and He calls upon the church to take up their appointed duty, holding up the standard of true reform in their own territory, leaving the trained and experienced workers to press on into new fields.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:292](#).

[109]

The faithful physician should have as much claim to the prayers of God's people as the minister—The duties of the physician are arduous. Few realize the mental and physical strain to which he is subjected. Every energy and capability must be enlisted with the most intense anxiety in the battle with disease and death. Often he knows that one unskillful movement of the hand, even but a hairbreadth in the wrong direction, may send a soul unprepared into eternity. How much the faithful physician needs the sympathy and prayers of the people of God. His claims in this direction are not inferior to those of the most devoted minister or missionary worker. Deprived, as he often is, of needed rest and sleep, and even of religious privileges on the Sabbath, he needs a double portion of grace, a fresh supply daily, or he will lose his hold on God and will be in danger of sinking deeper in spiritual darkness than men of other callings. And yet often he is made to bear unmerited reproaches and is left to stand alone, the subject of Satan's fiercest temptations, feeling himself misunderstood, betrayed by his friends.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:446](#).

Teachers

The influence of Christian teachers ranks with that of Christian ministers—Those who undertake the work of educating others,

will need patience, that they may carry their pupils forward from one point to another in intellectual and spiritual attainment. Those who instruct in the various branches of the work, should feel how great is the responsibility that rests upon them. They need enlarged views, for their work, in its influence, ranks with that of the Christian minister. Meetings for instruction should be called, time should be given, facilities should be provided, that all the knowledge possible may be imparted during the meeting. The work of co-operating with the gospel minister in carrying the present truth to all nations, tongues, and peoples, is indeed a most essential one. It should be conducted in a manner in keeping with the exalted truth which we profess to love.—[The Review and Herald, May 20, 1890.](#)

There must be no spirit of strife between ministers, physicians, and teachers—This is my prayer, “Remove from our ministers, our physicians, and the teachers in our schools everything that will gender the spirit of strife.” We are none of us to have the spirit of exaltation.—[Letter 8, 1910.](#) (Quoted in 6BIO 270.).

The ministry of teachers—Often it will seem to the teacher that the words of God have little effect upon the minds and hearts of many students; but if his work has been wrought in God, some lessons of truth will linger in the memory of the most careless. The Holy Spirit will water the seed sown, and it will spring up after many days and bear fruit to the glory of God.—[Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 435.](#)

The Holy Spirit works with the teacher—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 minds of others. The Spirit fills the mind and heart with sweet hope and courage and Bible imagery, and all this will be communicated to the youth under his instruction. [Christ’s Object Lessons, 131, 132.](#)

[110]

Literature Evangelists

Ministers should work in cooperation with canvassers—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.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:315](#).

The canvasser occupies a position equal to that of the gospel minister—The canvassing work is an important field for labor; and the intelligent, God-fearing, truth-loving canvasser occupies a position equal to that of the gospel minister. Then should the canvasser feel at liberty, any more than the ordained minister, to act from selfish motives? Should he be unfaithful to all the principles of missionary work, and sell only those books that are cheapest and easiest to handle, neglecting to place before the people the books which will give most light, because by so doing, he can earn more money for himself?—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 317, 318](#).

Do not flatter good colporteurs into becoming poor ministers—In all parts of the field canvassers should be selected, not from the floating element in society, not from among men and women who are good for nothing else and have made a success of nothing, but from among those who have good address, tact, keen foresight, and ability. Such are needed to make a success as colporteurs, canvassers, and agents. Men suited to this work undertake it, but some injudicious minister will flatter them that their gift should be employed in the desk instead of simply in the work of the colporteur. Thus this work is belittled. They are influenced to get a license to preach; and the very ones who might have been trained to make good missionaries to visit families at their homes and talk and pray with them are caught up to make poor ministers; and the field where

so much labor is needed, and where so much good might be accomplished for the cause, is neglected. The efficient colporteur, as well as the minister, should have a sufficient remuneration for his services if his work is faithfully done.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:389](#).

Business Administrators

Finances should be managed by those not set aside for preaching—The finances of the cause are to be properly managed by businessmen of ability; but preachers and evangelists are set apart for another line of work. Let the management of financial matters rest on others than those set apart for the work of preaching the gospel. Our ministers are not to be heavily burdened with the business details of the evangelical work carried on in our large cities. Those in charge of our conferences should find businessmen to look after the financial details of city work. If such men cannot be found, let facilities be provided for training men to bear these burdens.—[The Review and Herald, October 5, 1905](#).

Section 3—Evangelism and Church Growth

[112]

[113]

18. Community Awareness
19. Outreach
20. Planning and Strategy
21. Getting Decisions
22. Personal Evangelism
23. Public Evangelism
24. Small Group Evangelism
25. Specialized Outreach

[114]

Chapter 18—Community Awareness

[115]

Compilers' note: Because the book Evangelism has already covered the subject thoroughly, this section is purposely more limited than its importance warrants.

Christ followed various methods to gain the attention of the multitude—From Christ's methods of labor we may learn many valuable lessons. He did not follow merely one method; in various ways He sought to gain the attention of the multitude, and having succeeded in this, He proclaimed to them the truths of the gospel. His chief work lay in ministering to the poor, the needy, and the ignorant. In simplicity He opened before them the blessings they might receive, and thus he aroused their soul's hunger for the truth, the bread of life.—[The Review and Herald, December 24, 1914.](#)

Community Services

Every merciful act to the needy is regarded as though done to Jesus—Pure religion and undefiled before the Father is this: “To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” Good deeds are the fruit that Christ requires us to bear: kind words, deeds of benevolence, of tender regard for the poor, the needy, the afflicted. When hearts sympathize with hearts burdened with discouragement and grief, when the hand dispenses to the needy, when the naked are clothed, the stranger made welcome to a seat in your parlor and a place in your heart, angels are coming very near, and an answering strain is responded to in heaven. Every act of justice, mercy, and benevolence makes melody in heaven. The Father from His throne beholds those who do these acts of mercy, and numbers them with His most precious treasures. “And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels.” Every merciful act to the needy, the suffering, is regarded as though done to Jesus. When you succor the poor, sympathize with the afflicted and oppressed, and befriend the

orphan, you bring yourselves into a closer relationship to Jesus.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:25](#).

Some ministers cannot feel for the poor, needy, and ignorant—Christ’s heart is cheered by the sight of those who are poor in every sense of the term; cheered by His view of the ill-used ones who are meek; cheered by the seemingly unsatisfied hungering after righteousness, by the inability of many to begin. He welcomes, as it were, the very condition of things that would discourage many ministers. He corrects our erring piety, giving the burden of the work for the poor and needy in the rough places of the earth, to men and women who have hearts that can feel for the ignorant and for those that are out of the way. The Lord teaches these workers how to meet those whom He wishes them to help. They will be encouraged as they see doors opening for them to enter places where they can do medical missionary work. Having little self-confidence, they give God all the glory. Their hands may be rough and unskilled, but their hearts are susceptible to pity; they are filled with an earnest desire to do something to relieve the woe so abundant; and Christ is present to help them. He works through those who discern mercy in misery, gain in the loss of all things. When the Light of the world passes by, privileges appear in all hardships, order in confusion, the success and wisdom of God in that which has seemed to be a failure.—[Counsels on Health, 26](#).

[116]

Public Relations

The best way to deal with error is to present truth—The best way to deal with error is to present the truth, and leave wild ideas to die for want of notice. Contrasted with truth, the weakness of error is made apparent to every intelligent mind. The more the erroneous assertions of opposers, and of those who rise up among us to deceive souls, are repeated, the better the cause of error is served. The more publicity is given to the suggestions of Satan, the better pleased is his satanic majesty.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 165](#).

Do not misrepresent in order to gain favor—We are not to misrepresent what we profess to believe in order to gain favor. God despises misrepresentation and prevarication. He will not tolerate

the man who says and does not. The best and noblest work is done by fair, honest dealing.—[Evangelism, 132](#).

Media

Let important discourses be published in the newspapers—Those who become interested have to meet sophistry and misrepresentation from popular ministers, and they know not how to answer these things. The truth presented by the living preacher should be published in as compact a form as possible, and circulated widely. As far as practicable, let the important discourses given at our camp meetings be published in the newspapers. Thus the truth which was placed before a limited number may find access to many minds. And where the truth has been misrepresented, the people will have an opportunity of knowing just what the minister said.—[Evangelism, 130](#).

Christ ministered to people's needs before inviting them to follow Him—Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me."—[The Ministry of Healing, 143.](#)

Devise methods to reach the people where they are—Let every worker in the Master's vineyard, study, plan, devise methods, to reach the people where they are. We must do something out of the common course of things. We must arrest the attention. We must be deady in earnest. We are on the very verge of times of trouble and perplexities that are scarcely dreamed of.—[Evangelism, 122, 123.](#)

A "beehive" church will have a multi-faceted program for reaching the community—During the past few years the "beehive" in San Francisco has been indeed a busy one. Many lines of Christian effort have been carried forward by our brethren and sisters there. These included visiting the sick and destitute, finding homes for orphans and work for the unemployed, nursing the sick, and teaching the truth from house to house, distributing literature, and conducting classes on healthful living and the care of the sick. A school for the children has been conducted in the basement of the Laguna Street meetinghouse. For a time a workingmen's home and medical mission was maintained. On Market Street, near the city hall, there were treatment rooms, operated as a branch of the St. Helena Sanitarium. In the same locality was a health-food store. Nearer the center of the city, not far from the Call building, was conducted a vegetarian cafe, which was open six days in the week and entirely closed on the Sabbath. Along the water front, ship mission work was carried on. At various times our ministers conducted meetings in large halls in the city. Thus the warning message was given by many.—[The Review and Herald, July 5, 1906.](#)

[118] **Seek until you have the joy of finding**—The lesson of persevering faith and labor Christ Himself has taught us. In the parable of the lost sheep He has presented to our imagination no picture of a sorrowful shepherd returning without the sheep. The shepherd's search ceases not until the lost is brought back to the fold. The woman whose coin is lost searches till she finds it. These parables do not speak of failure but of success and joy in the recovery of the lost. Here is the divine guarantee that not one lost soul is overlooked, not one is left unsuccored. With all our efforts in seeking for the lost, Christ will cooperate.—([Australasian Union Conference Record, July 1, 1900.](#))

Publications

Reading prepares the way for the spoken word—I have been shown that few have any correct idea of what the distribution of papers and tracts is doing. The missionary work, in circulating the publications upon present truth, is opening doors everywhere, and preparing minds to receive the truth, when the living preacher shall come among them. The success which attends the efforts of ministers in the field is not due alone to their efforts, but in a great degree to the influence of the reading matter which has enlightened the minds of the people and removed prejudice. Thus many are made susceptible to the influence of the truth when it is presented before them.—([The Publishing Ministry, 398.](#))

Get books into the hands of all who will read—In every important place there should be a depository for publications. And someone who really appreciates the truth should manifest an interest to get these books into the hands of all who will read.—([Testimonies for the Church 1:473.](#))

We should get out books that can be sold cheaply—Do not accept the temptations which will come to you with peculiar force to get out books which involve a large investment of money. The Lord is not in this matter. The thousands of dollars expended in illustrations could be invested in getting out books and selling them cheaply. As ministers attend tent meetings, they should have the privilege of taking these books with them, and selling them as cheaply as possible. With the money they receive above what the books have

cost them, they should buy books to present to those of our people who cannot afford to purchase them, or to unbelievers, who may thus be brought to a knowledge of the truth.—[Counsels to Writers and Editors](#), 168, 169.

Health Ministry

Combining medical missionary work and ministry of the Word, we can reach all classes—The gospel ministry is an organization for the proclamation of the truth to the sick and to the well. It combines the medical missionary work and the ministry of the Word. By these combined agencies opportunities are given to communicate light and to present the gospel to all classes and all grades of society. God wants the ministers and the church members to take a decided, active interest in the medical missionary work.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:300](#), 301. [119]

Ministers should sometimes gain listeners' interest in Bible doctrine by first giving talks on health—In our sanitariums our ministers, who labor in Word and doctrine, should give short talks upon the principles of temperance, showing that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and bringing to the minds of the people the responsibility resting upon them as God's purchased possession to make the body a holy temple, fit for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. As this instruction is given, the people will become interested in Bible doctrine.—[Temperance](#), 245.

If physicians and ministers will work together in the presentation of truth, more will be reached—The work you have been doing in the city is meeting Heaven's approval. What you have done demonstrates that if our physicians and our ministers can work together in the presentation of truth to the people, more can be reached than could be influenced by the ministers laboring alone. I trust that your example in this respect may be followed by other physicians.—[Counsels on Health](#), 543.

Family Ministry

Uplifting humanity begins in the home—The restoration and uplifting of humanity begins in the home. The work of parents

underlies every other. Society is composed of families, and is what the heads of families make it. Out of the heart are “the issues of life” ([Proverbs 4:23](#)); and the heart of the community, of the church, and of the nation is the household. The well-being of society, the success of the church, the prosperity of the nation, depend upon home influences.—[The Ministry of Healing, 349](#).

Chapter 20—Planning and Strategy

[120]

[121]

Ministers weighted with the burden of soul-saving will see fruit for their labors—Through the grace of Christ, God’s ministers are made messengers of light and blessing. As by earnest, persevering prayer they obtain the endowment of the Holy Spirit and go forth weighted with the burden of soul-saving, their hearts filled with zeal to extend the triumphs of the cross, they will see fruit of their labors. Resolutely refusing to display human wisdom or to exalt self, they will accomplish a work that will withstand the assaults of Satan. Many souls will be turned from darkness to light, and many churches will be established. Men will be converted, not to the human instrumentality, but to Christ. Self will be kept in the background; Jesus only, the Man of Calvary, will appear.—[The Review and Herald, August 24, 1911.](#)

Time for Evangelism

Center your mind on the one object of saving souls—Some ministers are easily diverted from their work. They become discouraged, or are attracted to their homes, and leave a growing interest to die for want of attention. The harm done to the cause in this way can scarcely be estimated. When an effort to promulgate the truth is started, the minister in charge should feel responsible to carry it through successfully. If his labors appear to be without result, he should seek by earnest prayer to discover if they are what they should be. He should humble his soul before God in self-examination, and by faith cling to the divine promises, humbly continuing his efforts till he is satisfied that he has faithfully discharged his duty, and done everything in his power to gain the desired result.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:265.](#)

Ministers who hover over their churches do them harm—The churches that have not life in themselves, that have lost their spiritual discernment, call for ministers to come to their help, to

[122]

bring them the breath of life. But the ministers have other work to do. They must carry the message of truth to those who know it not. Those ministers who hover about the churches, who have not a clear cut message, which, like a sharp, two-edged sword, cuts both ways, will do the churches harm. They will not work for the salvation of souls that are in great peril because they know not the truth, and they will die spiritually themselves, and trouble and discourage those who try to help them. [Manuscript Releases 6:65](#).

Soul winning ministers produce soul winning members—When the church sees that the ministers are all aglow with the spirit of the work, that they feel deeply the force of the truth, and are seeking to bring others to the knowledge of it, it will put new life and vigor into them. Their hearts will be stirred to do what they can to aid in the work. There is not a class of people in the world who are more willing to sacrifice of their means to advance the cause than are Seventh-day Adventists. If the ministers do not utterly discourage them by their indolence and inefficiency, and by their lack of spirituality, they will generally respond to any appeal that may be made that commends itself to their judgment and consciences. But they want to see fruit.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:49](#).

Church Planning

Present your plans to the church in such a manner as to win members' interest and cooperation—There is need of Nehemiahs in the church today, not men who can pray and preach only, but men whose prayers and sermons are braced with firm and eager purpose. The course pursued by this Hebrew patriot in the accomplishment of his plans is one that should still be adopted by ministers and leading men. When they have laid their plans, they should present them to the church in such a manner as to win their interest and cooperation. Let the people understand the plans and share in the work, and they will have a personal interest in its prosperity.—[The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 3:1137](#).

Keep members in close touch with your plans—Why not put them to work visiting the sick and assisting in other ways, and thus keep the church in a workable condition? All would thus be kept in close touch with the minister's plans, so that he could call for

their assistance at any moment, and they would be able to labor intelligently with him. All should be laborers together with God, and then the minister can feel that he has helpers in whom it is safe to trust. The minister can hasten this desirable end by showing that he has confidence in the workers by setting them to work.—[The Review and Herald, July 9, 1895.](#)

Take officers and members into your confidence and share the work with them—Many members of the church have been deprived of the experience which they should have had, because the sentiment has prevailed that the minister should do all the work and bear all the burdens. Either the burdens have been crowded upon the minister, or he has assumed those duties that should have been performed by the members of the church. Ministers should take the officers and members of the church into their confidence, and teach them how to labor for the Master. Thus the minister will not have to perform all the labor himself, and at the same time the church will receive greater benefit than if he endeavored to do all the work, and release the members of the church from acting the part which the Lord designed that they should.—[The Review and Herald, July 9, 1895.](#)

[123]

[124]

Chapter 21—Getting Decisions

[125]

Many are waiting only to be gathered in—This Ethiopian represented a large class who need to be taught by such missionaries as Philip—men who will hear the voice of God and go where He sends them. There are many who are reading the Scriptures who cannot understand their true import. All over the world men and women are looking wistfully to heaven. Prayers and tears and inquiries go up from souls longing for light, for grace, for the Holy Spirit. Many are on the verge of the kingdom, waiting only to be gathered in.—[The Acts of the Apostles, 109.](#)

Conversions are not all alike—All are not constituted alike. Conversions are not all alike. Jesus impresses the heart, and the sinner is born again to new life. Often souls have been drawn to Christ when there was no violent conviction, no soul rending, no remorseful terrors. They looked upon an uplifted Saviour, they lived. They saw the soul's need, they saw the Saviour's sufficiency, and His claims, they heard His voice saying, "Follow Me," and they rose up and followed Him. This conversion was genuine, and the religious life was just as decided as was that of others who suffered all the agony of a violent process.—[Selected Messages 1:177.](#)

Do not be discouraged if some decisions are delayed—The priests were convinced of the divine power of the Saviour. Opportunity was granted them to know the truth and to be profited by the light. Rejected, it would pass away, never to return. By many the light was rejected; yet it was not given in vain. Many hearts were moved that for a time made no sign. During the Saviour's life, His mission seemed to call forth little response of love from the priests and teachers; but after His ascension "a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."—[The Desire of Ages, 266.](#)

Public

To get decisions, Christ must be placed above theory—Many of our ministers have made a great mistake in giving discourses which were wholly argumentative. There are souls who listen to the theory of the truth and are impressed with the evidences brought out, and then if a portion of the discourse presents Christ as the Saviour of the world, the seed sown may spring up and bear fruit to the glory of God. But in many discourses the cross of Christ is not presented before the people. Some may be listening to the last sermon they will ever hear, and some will never again be so situated that they can have the chain of truth brought before them and a practical application made of it to their hearts. That golden opportunity lost is lost forever. Had Christ and His redeeming love been exalted in connection with the theory of truth, it might have balanced them on His side.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:393](#).

[126]

Eloquence may mask truth and not produce decisions—He who presents eloquent words, simply causes the people to forget the truth that is mingled with his oratory. When the excitement passes away, it is found that the Word of God has not been fastened upon the mind; nor have the simple gained in understanding. The people may go away from the church and may speak in admiration of the oratorical powers of the man who has preached to them, but they may not be convicted by the truth or brought any nearer to the point of decision. They speak of the sermon in the same way as they would of a play, and of the minister in the same manner as they would of an actor at a theater. They may come again to listen to the same kind of discourse, and may again go away unimpressed and unfed.—[The Voice in Speech and Song, 283](#).

Decisions should be called for in every meeting—Prompt, energetic, and earnest action may save an undecided soul. No one can tell how much is lost by attempting to preach without the unction of the Holy Spirit. There are souls in every congregation who are hesitating, almost persuaded to be wholly for God. The decision is being made for time and for eternity; but it is too often the case that the minister has not the spirit and power of the message of truth in his own heart, hence no direct appeals are made to those souls that are trembling in the balance. The result is that impressions

are not deepened upon the hearts of the convicted ones, and they leave the meeting feeling less inclined to accept the service of Christ than when they came. They decide to wait for a more favorable opportunity, but it never comes. That godless discourse, like Cain's offering, lacked the Saviour. The golden opportunity is lost, and the cases of these souls are decided. Is not too much at stake to preach in an indifferent manner and without feeling the burden of souls?—[Testimonies for the Church 4:446](#).

[127] **Give an invitation for people to come forward**—The Lord especially blessed in speaking Sunday afternoon. All listened with the deepest interest, and at the close of the discourse an invitation was given for all who desired to be Christians, and all who felt that they had not a living connection with God, to come forward, and we would unite our prayers with theirs for the pardon of sin, and for grace to resist temptation. This was a new experience for many of our brethren in Europe, but they did not hesitate. It seemed that the entire congregation were on their feet, and the best they could do was to be seated, and all seek the Lord together. Here was an entire congregation manifesting their determination to put sin away, and to engage most earnestly in the work of seeking God. In every company there are two classes, the self-complacent and the self-abhorring. To the first class the gospel has no charms except as they can construe detached portions to flatter their vanity. They love those peculiar features of lofty morality which they think they possess. But many of those who view Jesus in the perfection of His character see their own imperfections in such a light that they are almost in despair. Such was the case here; but the Lord was present to instruct and reprove, to comfort and bless as the several cases required. Earnest prayer was then offered, not for a happy flight of feeling, but for a true sense of our sinfulness, and of our hopelessness without the atoning sacrifice. Never did Jesus seem dearer than on this occasion. There was weeping throughout the congregation. The promise was grasped, "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out." If the vail could have been withdrawn, we should have seen angels of God standing to minister to the humble, penitent ones. After prayer, one hundred testimonies were borne. Many of these showed a real, genuine experience in the things of God.—[The Review and Herald, November 3, 1885](#).

Personal

Five words spoken privately will do more than a whole public discourse—After the meetings are through, there should be a personal investigation with each one on the ground. Each one should be asked how he is going to take these things, if he is going to make a personal application of them. And then you should watch and see if there is an interest in this one or that. Five words spoken to them privately will do more than the whole discourse has done.—[Evangelism, 285](#).

Ministers must learn to work differently with each individual type of temperament—As the physician deals with physical disease, so does the pastor minister to the sin-sick soul. And his work is as much more important than that of the physician as eternal life is more valuable than temporal existence. The pastor meets with an endless variety of temperaments, and it is his duty to become acquainted with the members of the families that listen to his teachings in order to determine what means will best influence them in the right direction.—[Gospel Workers, 338](#).

Bible Class

Special meetings should be held to give Bible instruction to those interested—Do not immediately follow one discourse with another, but let a period of rest intervene, that the truth may be fastened in the mind, and that opportunity for meditation and prayer may be given for both minister and people. In this way there will be growth in religious knowledge and experience. Bible readings should be given, and believers and unbelievers should have an opportunity to ask questions on points not fully understood. Those who profess to be advocates of truth, should ask questions that will bring forth answers that will shed light upon the present truth. If any ask questions that serve to confuse the mind, and to sow doubt and questioning, they should be advised to abstain from such questioning, that others may be brought to Christ. We must learn when to speak and when to keep silent, and learn to sow seeds of faith, to reflect light and not darkness. Special meetings should be appointed for

[128]

those who are interested in the truth, and who need instruction.—[The Review and Herald, June 23, 1891.](#)

Conduct a Bible class in connection with evangelistic meetings—There is danger of passing too rapidly from point to point. Give short lessons, and often. Your work is not only to preach, but to minister. Personal effort for families and individuals should comprise a large share of your labors. After you have opened to the people the precious mines of truth, there is yet a great work to be done for those who have become interested in the subjects presented. After a short discourse, change the order of the exercises, and give opportunity for all who desire it, to remain for an after-interview, or Bible class, where they can ask questions upon subjects that trouble them. You will find great success in coming close to the people in these Bible lessons. The workers who labor in connection with the minister should make special efforts patiently and kindly to lead inquirers to an understanding of the truth. If you have not more than one to instruct, that one, thoroughly convinced, will communicate the light to others. These testing truths are of so great importance that they may be presented again and again, and impressed upon the minds of the hearers. The decisions men reach in regard to these things mean everything to them.—SpT-A7, 7.

Securing Interests

Do not leave until interests have decided, been baptized, and gotten into a church—For years light has been given upon this point, showing the necessity of following up an interest that has been raised, and in no case leaving it until all have decided that lean toward the truth and have experienced the conversion necessary for baptism and united with some church or formed one themselves. There are no circumstances of sufficient importance to call a minister from an interest created by the presentation of truth. Even sickness and death are of less consequence than the salvation of souls for whom Christ made so immense a sacrifice.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:540.](#)

[129] **Be a lamplighter, not just a torchbearer**—In the place of having one mammoth camp meeting, have several small camp meetings. And when companies are raised up in the places where these meet-

ings are held, let a place of worship be built for them. We cannot do otherwise here, so that labor shall not be lost. To do otherwise is too much like carrying a torch through a district in the night. The places where the torchbearer goes are light, but there are not many tapers kindled from his torch, to become true workers in giving light to others.—[Manuscript Releases 15:250](#).

[130]

Chapter 22—Personal Evangelism

[131]

Personal work cannot be looked upon as of secondary importance—The ministers of Jesus Christ will have more than a mere casual interest for the people. They will seek to know the state of their spiritual being, even as a physician seeks to understand the physical difficulties of his patients. They will engage in personal conversation, and adapt their counsel to every individual case according to the need of the soul. This personal work cannot be looked upon as of secondary importance. The minister is the Lord's appointed under-shepherd to the flock of God, and it is his business to minister to the sin-sick, tempted, and erring. This very work is needed among all classes and in all places.—[The Review and Herald, March 11, 1902.](#)

Ministers satisfied with the stimulus of sensational meetings must also learn to do personal work—Close investigation reveals the fact that there are but very few sheaves to be gathered after these specially exciting meetings. Yet, from all the experience of the past, you have not learned to change your manner of labor. You have been slow to learn how to shape your future labors in such a manner as to shun the errors of the past. The reason of this has been, that, like the inebriate, you love the stimulus of these sensational meetings; you long for them as the drunkard longs for a glass of liquor to arouse his flagging energies. These debates, which create an excitement, are mistaken for zeal for God and love for the truth. You have been almost destitute of the Spirit of God to work with your efforts. If you had God with you in all your moves, and if you felt a burden for souls and had the wisdom to skillfully manage these exciting seasons to press souls into the kingdom of Christ, you could see fruits of your labors, and God would be glorified. Your soul should be all aglow with the spirit of the truth you present to others. After you have labored to convict souls of the claims that the law of God has upon them, teaching them repentance toward God and faith in Christ, then your work is but just begun. You too frequently excuse

yourself from completing the work and leave a heavy burden for others to take up in finishing the work that you ought to have done. You say that you are not qualified to finish up the work. Then the sooner you qualify yourself to bear the burdens of a shepherd, or pastor, of the flock, the better.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:227](#). [132]

Visiting Non-members

Gaining people's confidence through personal visitation will have greater influence than preaching—When there are only evening meetings to attend, there is much time that can be used to great advantage in visiting from house to house, meeting the people where they are. And if ministers of Christ have the graces of the Spirit, if they imitate the great Exemplar, they will find access to hearts and will win souls to Christ. Some ministers bearing the last message of mercy are too distant. They do not improve the opportunities that they have of gaining the confidence of unbelievers, by their exemplary deportment, their unselfish interest for the good of others, their kindness, forbearance, humbleness of mind, and their respectful courtesy. These fruits of the Spirit will exert a far greater influence than will the preaching in the desk without individual effort in families. But the preaching of pointed, testing truths to the people, and corresponding individual efforts from house to house to back up pulpit effort, will greatly extend the influence for good, and souls will be converted to the truth.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:233](#).

Do not spend visitation time talking on common themes—In all his labors, let the minister educate his hearers from the very first. Let him present to them the precious pearls of truth, and not confine his work to mere sermonizing, but let him minister to the people. Let him visit his hearers at their homes, not waiting for invitations, but going as one sent of God. Let him invite himself to the people's homes, in meekness and humbleness of mind seeking admission, and then present to them a sin-pardoning Saviour. The minister, when visiting at the homes of the people, is not to spend the precious time in mere talk upon common themes of conversation, but he is to watch for an opportunity to introduce them to his best Friend. Too often men and women are indifferent and careless in regard to that

which concerns their spiritual interests, but even to this class, a word in season may be as seed dropped into good soil.—[The Review and Herald, March 11, 1902.](#)

Do not at first urge your peculiar views too strongly—Here is a lesson for all our ministers, colporters, and missionary workers. When you meet those, who, like Nathanael, are prejudiced against the truth, do not urge your peculiar views too strongly. Talk with them at first of subjects upon which you can agree. Bow with them in prayer, and in humble faith present your petitions at the throne of grace. Both you and they will be brought into a closer connection with heaven, prejudice will be weakened, and it will be easier to reach the heart.—[Evangelism, 446.](#)

[133]

Bible Studies

Interest awakened by preaching should be followed up by visitation and Bible studies—A minister may enjoy sermonizing; for it is the pleasant part of the work, and is comparatively easy; but no minister should be measured by his ability as a speaker. The harder part comes after he leaves the desk, in watering the seed sown. The interest awakened should be followed up by personal labor,—visiting, holding Bible readings, teaching how to search the Scriptures, praying with families and interested ones, seeking to deepen the impression made upon hearts and consciences.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:255.](#)

Ministers' wives may give Bible studies as successfully as their husbands—There are ministers' wives, Sisters Starr, Haskell, Wilson and Robinson, who have been devoted, earnest, whole-souled workers, giving Bible readings and praying with families, helping along by personal efforts just as successfully as their husbands.—[Manuscript Releases 21:360.](#)

Friendship Soulwinning

The church succeeds when members seek out friends and tell their personal experience with Jesus—The atmosphere of the church is so frigid, its spirit is of such an order, that men and women cannot sustain or endure the example of primitive and heaven-born

piety. The warmth of their first love is frozen up, and unless they are watered over by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, their candlestick will be removed out of its place, except they repent and do their first works. The first works of the church were seen when the believers sought out friends, relatives, and acquaintances, and with hearts overflowing with love, told the story of what Jesus was to them and what they were to Jesus.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers](#), 167.

Friends may do more to meet the needs of families than could a minister—It is not God's purpose that ministers should be left to do the greatest part of the work of sowing the seeds of truth. Men who are not called to the gospel ministry are to be encouraged to labor for the Master according to their several ability. Hundreds of men and women now idle could do acceptable service. By carrying the truth into the homes of their neighbors and friends, they could do a great work for the Master. God is no respecter of persons. He will use humble, devoted Christians who have the love of the truth in their hearts. Let such ones engage in service for him by doing house-to-house work. Sitting by the fireside, such men—if humble, discreet, and godly—can do more to meet the real needs of families than could a minister.—[The Review and Herald](#), August 26, 1902.

[134]

Chapter 23—Public Evangelism

[135]

Win people by exalting Jesus and hiding self—Those who labor for Christ should be men and women of great discretion, so that those who do not understand their doctrines may be led to respect them, and regard them as persons void of fanaticism, void of rashness and impetuosity. Their discourses and conduct and conversation should be of a nature that will lead men to the conclusion that these ministers are men of thought, of solidity of character, men who fear and love their heavenly Father. They should win the confidence of the people, so that those who listen to the preaching may know that the ministers have not come with some cunningly devised fable, but that their words are words of worth, a testimony that demands thought and attention. Let the people see you exalting Jesus, and hiding self.—[The Review and Herald, April 26, 1892.](#)

Gain the confidence of people before introducing the Sabbath and immortality questions—I have been shown that our ministers go too rapidly through their subjects and bring the most objectionable features of our faith too early into their effort. There are truths that will not involve so great a cross, that should be kept before their minds, day after day and even weeks before the Sabbath and immortality questions are entered upon. Then you gain the confidence of the people as being men who have clear, forcible arguments, and they think you understand the Scriptures. When once the confidence of the people is gained, then it is time enough to introduce publicly the Sabbath and immortality questions.—[Evangelism, 246.](#)

Crusade

Using Christ's methods will still attract crowds—Those who will study the manner of Christ's teaching, and educate themselves to follow His way, will attract and hold large numbers now, as Christ held the people in His day.... When the truth in its practical character is urged upon the people because you love them, souls

will be convicted, because the Holy Spirit of God will impress their hearts.—[Evangelism, 124](#).

Associates should be trained to be part of the evangelistic team—When an effort is made to introduce the truth in an important place, our ministers should give special attention to the instruction and training of those who are to cooperate with them. Colporteurs and canvassers are needed, and those who are fitted to give Bible readings in families, so that while the ministers are laboring in Word and doctrine, these can also be calling minds to the truth.—[The Publishing Ministry, 307](#).

[136]

Do not rely on worldly singers and theatrical display to waken interest—In their efforts to reach the people, the Lord's messengers are not to follow the ways of the world. In the meetings that are held, they are not to depend on worldly singers and theatrical display to awaken an interest. How can those who have no interest in the Word of God, who have never read His Word with a sincere desire to understand its truths, be expected to sing with the spirit and the understanding? How can their hearts be in harmony with the words of sacred song? How can the heavenly choir join in music that is only a form?—[Testimonies for the Church 9:143](#).

Seminar

Teaching combined with discussion is a most effective way to spread our message—During the past season, Bro. Geymet has been visiting and holding Bible readings with the people in these stables. At the time we were there, he was holding two meetings a week in a stable in the Angrogna valley, about seven miles from Torre Pellice. The interest was good, and the average attendance was from forty to fifty. There, on the dirt floor of the stable which was sometimes strewn with leaves or straw, or sitting on boards placed across boxes, these would sit and listen for an hour or two, and then would remain after the meeting closed, to talk over what had been said.—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 248](#).

Let Daniel and Revelation speak in a noncontroversial, Christ-centered atmosphere—We have no time to lose; God calls upon us to watch for souls as they that must give an account. Ad-

vance new principles, and crowd in the clear-cut truth. It will be as a sword cutting both ways. But be not too ready to take a controversial attitude. There will be times when we must stand still and see the salvation of God. Let Daniel speak, let the Revelation speak, and tell what is truth. But whatever phase of the subject is presented, uplift Jesus as the center of all hope, “the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star.”—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers](#), 118.

Hold Bible readings and pray with families and little companies—My ministering brethren, do not think that the only work you can do, the only way you can labor for souls, is to give discourses. The best work you can do is to teach, to educate. Whenever you can find an opportunity to do so, sit down with some family and let them ask questions. Then answer them patiently, humbly. Continue this work in connection with your more public efforts. Preach less and educate more by holding Bible readings, and by praying with families and little companies.—[The Review and Herald, December 8, 1885](#).

Members can invite friends and neighbors to their home then ask the minister to meet with them—The interest continues to grow, and those who embrace the truth go right to work for their friends, inviting them to come out to hear. More than this, they invite their neighbors and friends to come to their house. They then secure one of our ministers to give a Bible reading. These meetings are made very interesting.—[Manuscript Releases 16:45](#).

Hold Bible readings for families and their neighbors—There is need of a different kind of labor in our churches from what they have had. Those ministers who are inclined merely to preach, and not to visit and put forth personal effort, need to break up this habit by working earnestly in families. Let families invite in their neighbors, and then let the minister hold Bible readings with them, and become acquainted with them. There needs to be less preaching and more pastoral work done in our churches. Those who have no aptitude for this kind of labor, should educate themselves, and come more into harmony with Christ's manner of working.—[The Home Missionary, November 1, 1890](#).

[138]

Chapter 25—Specialized Outreaches

[139]

Cities

Cities may be worked by renting a house and bringing together a family of helpers—Brother and Sister Haskell have rented a house in one of the best parts of the city, and have gathered round them a family of helpers, who day by day go out giving Bible readings, selling our papers, and doing medical missionary work. During the hour of worship, the workers relate their experiences. Bible studies are regularly conducted in the home, and the young men and young women connected with the mission receive a practical, thorough training in holding Bible readings and in selling our publications. The Lord has blessed their labors, a number have embraced the truth, and many others are deeply interested.—[The Review and Herald, September 7, 1905.](#)

Young workers should associate with experienced workers in doing city work—Many young men who have had the right kind of education at home are to be trained for service and encouraged to lift the standard of truth in new places by well-planned and faithful work. By associating with our ministers and experienced workers in city work, they will gain the best kind of training. Acting under divine guidance and sustained by the prayers of their more experienced fellow workers, they may do a good and blessed work. As they unite their labors with those of the older workers, using their youthful energies to the very best account, they will have the companionship of heavenly angels; and as workers together with God, it is their privilege to sing and pray and believe, and work with courage and freedom. The confidence and trust that the presence of heavenly agencies will bring to them and to their fellow workers will lead to prayer and praise and the simplicity of true faith.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:119.](#)

Training schools and public meetings should be combined when doing city work—A well-balanced work can be carried on

best in the cities when a Bible school for the training of workers is in progress while public meetings are being held. Connected with this training-school or city mission should be experienced laborers of deep spiritual understanding, who can give the Bible-workers daily instruction, and who can also unite whole-heartedly in the general public effort. And as men and women are converted to the truth, those standing at the head of the mission should, with much prayer, show these new converts how to experience the power of the truth in their hearts. Such a mission, if conducted by those who know how to manage wisely, will be a light shining in a dark place.—[Gospel Workers](#), 364, 365. [140]

City work should include restaurants and health lectures—The Lord has a message for our cities, and this message we are to proclaim in our camp-meetings, and by other public efforts, and also through our publications. In addition to this, hygienic restaurants are to be established in the cities, and by them the message of temperance is to be proclaimed. Arrangements should be made to hold meetings in connection with our restaurants. Whenever possible, let a room be provided where the patrons can be invited to lectures on the science of health and Christian temperance, where they can receive instruction on the preparation of wholesome food and on other important subjects. In these meetings there should be prayer and singing and talks, not only on health and temperance topics, but also on other appropriate Bible subjects. As the people are taught how to preserve physical health, many opportunities will be found to sow the seeds of the gospel of the kingdom.—[Counsels on Diet and Foods](#), 276, 277.

Prisons

Those within prison walls need comfort and encouragement—Then what is traced in your diary this year? Does it record an experience gained by ministering to the suffering, the poor, and the needy? Those who are suffering for Christ's sake, who will not yield the truth for error, who, perhaps, are incarcerated within prison walls, these need comfort and encouragement. This is the kind of work that is deciding our destiny. There is a precious reward awaiting those who are faithful in their ministry. They will have

a home in the mansions that Christ has gone to prepare for them that love him and wait for his appearing.—[The Youth's Instructor, August 19, 1897.](#)

It would be unsafe to take to heaven, persons who claim to be Christ's servants, yet neglect to visit those who are in prison—But God's law plainly reveals to us the duty of man to his fellow man. All who neglect their fellow creatures—the very least of those whom Christ calls His brethren—are recorded in the books of heaven as “weighed in the balances” and “found wanting.” In disregarding His special commandment, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;” in passing by the suffering, the needy, and the wounded, they have left the side of Christ, their example, and taken the side of the enemy of God. In neglecting to clothe the naked, to feed the hungry, to visit those who are in prison, they show what spirit they are of. It would not be safe for such characters to enter heaven; for by their selfishness and hard-heartedness, by their failure to appreciate their brethren here, they plainly reveal the fact that they could not appreciate God, His Son, or the saints in the kingdom of heaven.—[The Home Missionary, October 1, 1897.](#)

[141]

Ellen White visited a prison and spoke to the convicts—During my stay in Oregon, I visited the prison in Salem, and by invitation spoke to the convicts in the prison chapel.—[The Signs of the Times, July 25, 1878.](#)

Disadvantaged

Churches are to bring hope to the hopeless—There is a work to be done by our churches that few have any idea of.... We shall have to give of our means to support laborers in the harvest field, and we shall rejoice in the sheaves gathered in. But while this is right, there is a work, as yet untouched, that must be done. The mission of Christ was to heal the sick, encourage the hopeless, bind up the brokenhearted. This work of restoration is to be carried on among the needy, suffering ones of humanity. God calls not only for your benevolence, but your cheerful countenance, your hopeful words, the grasp of your hand. Relieve some of God's afflicted ones. Some are sick, and hope has departed. Bring back the sunlight to them. There are souls who have lost their courage; speak to them, pray

for them. There are those who need the bread of life. Read to them from the Word of God. There is a soul sickness no balm can reach, no medicine heal. Pray for these, and bring them to Jesus Christ. And in all your work, Christ will be present to make impressions upon human hearts.—[Welfare Ministry, 71](#).

To minister as Jesus did is to minister to the afflicted—But what a scene met their eyes as they entered again the courts of the temple. Christ was ministering to the poor, the suffering, and the afflicted. These had cried in their anguish because they could not find relief from their affliction and their sin. They had heard of this man Jesus, they had heard a rumor concerning His compassion and love. They had heard how He had healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind, and made the lame to walk; and one cry for pity went up from their lips. One after another they began to relate the story of their affliction, and He bent over them as a tender mother bends over her suffering child. He bade the sick and the afflicted to come forth into health and peace. He gave the suffering tender comfort. He took the little ones in His arms, and commanded freedom from disease and suffering. He gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, health to the diseased, and comfort to the afflicted.—[The Review and Herald, August 27, 1895](#).

We have a duty to minister to the poor, lame, halt, and blind—In His conversation at the table the Lord was not speaking new truth, advancing new doctrines, or expounding new principles. He was repeating an old commandment which He had previously given to Moses to be given to them. He wished them to understand that His teachings in nowise lessened the force of the commandments previously given. The feasts and the suppers that were given by the priests, the Pharisees, and rulers, were given merely for selfish enjoyment. They called in their favorites, their wealthy relatives and friends, who would in their turn invite them to feasts at their houses, and, if possible, spread before them more abundant supplies. Jesus sought to extend their vision, to show them that they had a duty, which was obligatory upon them for all time, and that was to minister to the poor, the lame, the halt, and the blind. He also would have them consider the fact that no duty done to the needy, the afflicted, and the sorrowing, would lose its reward.—[The Signs of the Times, May 14, 1896](#).

[142]

Christ answers the prayers of the afflicted by sending His followers—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, He expels selfishness from the soul, He unseals the fountain of benevolence. He tests the love of His professed followers by committing to their tender mercies the afflicted and bereaved ones, the poor and the orphan. These are in a special sense the little ones whom Christ looks upon, whom it is an offense to Him to neglect. Those who do neglect them are neglecting Christ in the person of His afflicted ones. Every kind act done to them in the name of Jesus, is accepted by Him as if done to Himself, for He identifies His interest with that of suffering humanity, and He has intrusted to His church the grand work of ministering to Jesus by helping and blessing the needy and suffering. On all who shall minister to them with willing hearts, the blessing of the Lord will rest.—[The Review and Herald, June 27, 1893.](#)

Teach the afflicted to care for themselves—It means to teach the improvident the need of economy. There are thousands of the widows and the fatherless, the young and the aged, the afflicted and the crippled, who should be taught how to help themselves. Many confined to their beds, are unable to work. But those who can work should be made to realize that if they do not work, they shall not be fed. Every one who is capable of eating a square meal is capable of working to pay for that meal. If made to pay for his food, he will appreciate the money-value of strength and time. Such beneficence carries with it valuable lessons. It not only ministers to the needs of the poor, but teaches them how to care for themselves.—[Manuscript 156a, 1901 \(Battle Creek Letters, 46\).](#)

Section 4—Lay Training

[143]

26. Recruiting and Training Volunteers

[144] **Chapter 26—Recruiting and Training Volunteers**

[145]

Where there is now one at work there should be more than 1,000—Christ is saying to us, “O ye of little faith.” Our hearts must be worked by the Holy Spirit. We must believe that the Lord wants us to come to Him just as we are, without any delay, and in faith call upon Him to work for us. The Lord desires to manifest His power among His people. Where there is now one at work there should be more than a thousand, not ordained ministers, but men and women of faith and prayer, who can work for God.—[Manuscript Releases 5:336](#).

God requires personal service of everyone to whom He entrusts His truth—God will require personal service at the hands of every one to whom He entrusts His truth. Not one is excused. Some may feel that if they give of their substance they are excused from personal efforts. But God forbid that they should deceive themselves in this. Gifts of means do not meet the requirement of God, for the duty is but half done. He will accept nothing short of yourselves. You must work to save souls. All will not be called to go to foreign missions, but you may be missionaries at home, in your own families and in your neighborhoods.—[The Signs of the Times, September 4, 1879](#).

Genuine Christians are known by their usefulness—Now I wish to state to you that the Lord is opening before me that great weakness has come upon our people by the various ways that lead men to so thoroughly look to and depend upon his fellow men, that the Lord is left out of the question. As the glory of the good tree testifies of its value by the fruit it bears, so also the genuine Christian is known by his usefulness. He does not merely blossom out with a pretentious show in professing godliness, but he bears fruit, with all his might and main. There is not a dying twig or a barren bough on the whole tree which grows by the rivers of waters of the grace of Christ. The fruit is yielded in varieties. They may be in foreign mission fields or in home missions; the fruit appears ripening under

the sunshine of the righteousness of Christ. “Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.”—SpT-A11, 28.

There is an abundance of talent in the church that should be put to use—But in every department of the cause of God there are plenty of openings for those who will work in the spirit of humility that characterized the Master. From every direction voices are calling to us for help. Ministers alone can never do this work. There is an abundance of talent in the church that should be put to use. There are men and women who have ability, and whom God would accept as laborers in his cause; but they are shirking responsibilities under the plea of unfitness for the work. Ladies who in the parlor can engage in conversation with wonderful tact and earnestness, shrink from pointing the sinner to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, and then kneeling in prayer, pleading that light may shine into the mind and heart of this precious one for whom Christ died. Oh! there is so much work for God and souls that is left undone because it is a cross, and because each seeks his own amusement, and works for his own selfish interest.—[The Review and Herald, October 7, 1884.](#)

[146]

All can minister—All may not be preachers, but all can minister, showing others how to be tidy and hopeful. This is like medicine to body and soul. Thus we may add grace to grace, and be all the time fitting ourselves for heaven. I send this that you may read it to the church.—[Letter 106, 1898 \(The Paulson Collection of Ellen G. White Letters, 49\).](#)

Members with no burden for souls will be continually backsliding—Those who profess to believe the truth, but feel no burden for the souls of others, will be continually backsliding, and it will require time and strength on the part of the minister to keep them from making shipwreck of faith, when they should be laboring with all their might to present the way of life and salvation to their friends and neighbors. Hundreds of men and women who at the present time are professedly engaged in the work of God, are not doing one-tenth that they might do if they would only improve all the powers God has given them. Some are doing literally nothing for the truth, and by their example of indifference are bringing others into the same position of uselessness, and thus are scattering from Christ. This latter class includes by far the greater number. They are thinking

and planning only for themselves. Fathers and mothers with their little ones around them make their little circle their world. Every power of their being is centered on “me and mine,” and they are becoming narrower and more circumscribed every year of their lives. They do not open their hearts to the grace and love of Christ, and liberalize their nature and ennoble their being by placing themselves in sympathy with their fellow-men.—[The Review and Herald, June 10, 1880.](#)

[147] **Working for friends and relatives will increase the member’s own faith**—In these first few disciples the foundation of the Christian church was being laid by individual effort. John first directed two of his disciples to Christ. Then one of these finds a brother, and brings him to Christ. He then calls Philip to follow Him, and he went in search of Nathanael. Here is an instructive lesson for all the followers of Christ. It teaches them the importance of personal effort, making direct appeals to relatives, friends, and acquaintances. There are those who profess to be acquainted with Christ for a life time who never make personal effort to induce one soul to come to the Saviour. They have left all the work with the minister. He may be well qualified for his work; but he cannot do the work which God has left upon the members of the church. Very many excuse themselves from being interested in the salvation of those who are out of Christ, and are content to selfishly enjoy the benefits of the grace of God themselves, while they make no direct effort to bring others to Christ. In the vineyard of the Lord there is a work for all to do, and unselfish, interested, faithful workers will share largely of His grace here, and of the reward He will bestow hereafter. Faith is called into exercise by good works, and courage and hope are in accordance with working faith. The reason many professed followers of Christ have not a bright and living experience, is because they do nothing to gain it. If they would engage in the work which God would have them do, their faith would increase, and they would advance in the divine life.—[The Spirit of Prophecy 2:66.](#)

Church Work Shared by Pastor and People

Members should not look to ministers to do the members' work—Look not to the ministers to do your work; sleep not as did the foolish virgins, who had no oil in their lamps. Have your lamps supplied with the oil of the grace of Christ. Should every one in the church let his light shine forth to others as God designs he should, what a work would be done. A living church will be a working church. Bring your powers to Jesus; put them into exercise. Think, meditate, watch, and pray. A close connection with Jesus will increase your power of accomplishing good, your intellect will be strengthened. The time that will try men's souls is just before us. We shall then have no advocate to rebuke the devil, and plead in our behalf.—[The Review and Herald, September 22, 1896.](#)

Every member has a work to do—This time demands that advance moves be made, that resolute, persevering faith be exercised, that a patient, self-denying, long-suffering spirit be manifested by every member of our churches, and that each one who professes to follow Christ shall become a worker in his moral vineyard. The God-fearing members of the church can do more good by devoted, personal effort than our ministers can accomplish when they feel no burden to labor from house to house. Our ordained ministers must do what they can, but it must not be expected that one man can do the work of all. The Master has appointed unto every man his work. There are visits to be made, there is praying to be done, there is sympathy to be imparted; and the piety—the heart and hand—of the whole church is to be employed, if the work is to be accomplished. You can sit down with your friends, and in a pleasant, social way, talk of the precious Bible faith.—[The Review and Herald, August 13, 1889.](#)

God is displeased with ease-loving dispositions—The laborers together with God will be aroused to do their work for the Master. Instead of doing so little, they must do very much more, and act as if they were plucking souls as brands from the burning fires. God is displeased with the ease-loving dispositions of those who have the light of truth. Time is golden. Lay hold of God by living faith, and exert your powers to their very utmost, having your testimony so vitalized by the Spirit of God that sinners will feel and sense their

[148]

danger. Let faith be woven into your experience. Let every believer in the truth be thoroughly alive to the danger of this time. Let them awake from their stupor and feel that the delegated ministers are not the only ones to be workers together with God. Every soul must have a part in this. Says Christ, “Ye are the light of the world.” This not only applies to the ministers, but to every soul to whom Christ has revealed Himself. In your several churches you are to be active, living, Christian workers. Are you acquainted with your neighbors? Have you labored for those close by your own homes? Have you the love of Jesus? If so, you will feel an interest for the souls for whom Christ died. Pure religion and undefiled is an active principle. It overreaches the walls of home. It goes forth in quest of objects that need help. Its light flashes into the highways and hedges, and it is seen and felt in the larger places of the earth. The lost sheep are searched for diligently, and wanderers are brought back to the fold.—[The Review and Herald, March 8, 1887.](#)

Too many rely on their preacher to support them, when they should be ministering to others—There is a terrible amount of guilt for which the church is responsible. Why are not those who have the light putting forth earnest efforts to give that light to others? They see that the end is near. They see multitudes daily transgressing God’s law; and they know that these souls cannot be saved in transgression. Yet they have more interest in their trades, their farms, their houses, their merchandise, their dress, their tables, than in the souls of men and women whom they must meet face to face in the judgment. The people who claim to obey the truth are asleep. They could not be at ease as they are if they were awake. The love of the truth is dying out of their hearts. Their example is not such as to convince the world that they have truth in advance of every other people upon the earth. At the very time when they should be strong in God, having a daily, living experience, they are feeble, hesitating, relying upon the preachers for support, when they should be ministering to others with mind and soul and voice and pen and time and money.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:457.](#)

Members encourage themselves and their ministers by sharing their faith—I entreat you, my brethren and sisters, to be self-reliant in the strength of Jesus. Do not hang the weight of your perplexities and burdens upon your ministers. Christ has invited

you to come to Him, your burden-bearer. If you pass along in a state of unbelief and lack of consecration to God, you hang your weight upon the heart of your ministers, and you take just so much time and strength from them which God requires them to use in giving the message to those who have not heard it. Brethren, will you not rather work yourselves in union with the ambassadors of Christ in seeking to win souls to the truth? When tempted to become unbelieving and discouraged, you will find the very best cure for this in talking faith to others, and in presenting the truth to those who are in darkness. Extend your efforts to your neighbors, and to those who have not the privileges of meetings. Sow the seeds of truth beside all waters, and encourage the hearts of the servants of God when they visit you by showing that you have not been idle, but through your instrumentality one or more has been brought from darkness to light.—[The Signs of the Times, September 4, 1879.](#)

Members must not wait for ministers to come and help inquirers—Many who are now left to darkness and ruin could have been helped, had their brethren—common men and women—come to them with the love of Christ glowing in their hearts, and put forth personal efforts for them. Many are waiting to be thus personally addressed. Humble, earnest conversation with such persons, and prayer for them, heart being brought close to heart, would in most cases be wholly successful. But instead of this, those who profess to be following their Saviour rest content with expressing a desire that some brother or minister may come and help them. Thus they neglect the very work that God has left for them to do. Just the way in which this work is to be done in every case cannot be rigidly prescribed, but as they come in closer connection with the world's Redeemer, ways and means will be suggested to their minds.—[The Review and Herald, June 10, 1880.](#)

As far as possible, ministers should be relieved from cares of a temporal nature—The same order and system that were necessary in the days of the apostles should be maintained in the church of today. The prosperity of the cause depends very largely upon its various departments being conducted by men of ability, who are qualified to fill the positions in which they are placed. Those who are chosen of God to be leaders in the cause of truth, having the general oversight of the spiritual interests of the church, should be

[150]

relieved as far as possible from cares and perplexities of a temporal nature. Those whom God has called to minister in word and doctrine should have time for meditation, prayer, and a study of the Scriptures. Their clear spiritual discernment is dimmed if they are obliged to enter into the lesser details of business, and to deal with the various temperaments of those who meet together in church capacity. All difficult matters of a temporal nature should be brought before the proper officers, to be adjusted by them. But if these matters are of so perplexing a character as to baffle the wisdom of these officers, they should be carried into the council of those who have the oversight of the entire church.—[The Review and Herald, February 16, 1911.](#)

Minister's Responsibility

Some churches would prosper more if their ministers got out of the way and let them work—It is often the case that ministers are inclined to visit almost entirely among the churches, devoting their time and strength where their labor will do no good. Frequently the churches are in advance of the ministers who labor among them, and would be in a more prosperous condition if those ministers would keep out of their way and give them an opportunity to work. The effort of such ministers to build up the churches only tears them down. The theory of the truth is presented over and over again, but it is not accompanied by the vitalizing power of God. They manifest a listless indifference; the spirit is contagious, and the churches lose their interest and burden for the salvation of others. Thus by their preaching and example the ministers lull the people to carnal security. If they would leave the churches, go out into new fields, and labor to raise up churches, they would understand their ability and what it costs to bring souls out to take their position upon the truth. And they would then realize how careful they should be that their example and influence might never discourage or weaken those whom it had required so much hard, prayerful labor to convert to the truth. “Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.”—[Testimonies for the Church 2:340.](#)

Caring for the flock includes laying out work for them—“Watchman, what of the night?” Are the watchmen to whom comes

this cry able to give the trumpet a certain sound? Are the shepherds faithfully caring for the flock as those who must give an account? Are the ministers of God watching for souls, realizing that those under their care are the purchase of the blood of Christ? A great work is to be done in the world, and what efforts are we putting forth that it may be accomplished? The people have listened to too much sermonizing; but have they been instructed as to how to labor for those for whom Christ died? Has there been a line of work devised and laid out before the people in such a way that each one saw the necessity of taking part in the work?—[Testimonies for the Church 6:431](#).

Ministers should not first seek to convert unbelievers, but to secure an army of workers—A serious and perhaps unsuspected hindrance to the success of the truth is to be found in our churches themselves. When an effort is made to present our faith to unbelievers, the members of the church too often stand back, as though they were not an interested party, and let all the burden rest upon the minister. For this reason the labor of our most able ministers has been at times productive of little good. The very best sermons may be preached, the message may be just what the people need, and yet no souls are gained as sheaves to present to Christ. [151]

In laboring where there are some already in the faith, the minister should at first seek not so much to convert unbelievers as to secure his army of workers. Let him labor for the members of the church individually, seeking to arouse them to gain a deeper experience themselves, and to work for others. When the members of the church are prepared to sustain the minister by their prayers and labors, greater success will attend his efforts.—[Gospel Workers, 196](#).

Vocational Witnessing

Every member of every vocation has as much responsibility to advance the cause as does the minister—When a minister who has labored successfully in securing souls to Jesus Christ abandons his sacred work in order to secure temporal gain, he is called an apostate, and he will be held accountable to God for the talents that he has misapplied. When men of business, farmers, mechanics,

merchants, lawyers, etc., become members of the church, they become servants of Christ; and although their talents may be entirely different, their responsibility to advance the cause of God by personal effort, and with their means, is no less than that which rests upon the minister. The woe which will fall upon the minister if he preach not the gospel, will just as surely fall upon the businessman, if he, with his different talents, will not be a co-worker with Christ in accomplishing the same results. When this is brought home to the individual, some will say, "This is an hard saying;" nevertheless it is true, although continually contradicted by the practice of men who profess to be followers of Christ.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:468](#).

Faithful members minister through their vocations—We must be full of Christ and then we shall estimate worldly things in the light of God, and when at work upon your farms, when engaged in your business vocations, you are not separating your souls from God, because you labor with the true purpose and object, recognizing God as the owner of all that you possess and you seeking wisdom to use his goods to advance his glory. You then are ministering, not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Then human lives will be blessed through your influence. The mind will be on heavenly things, you will be as in the presence of Jesus, and diffuse light to all around you. A truly Christian life will cost us thoughtfulness, searching of the Scriptures, and most earnest, persevering prayer. It will not be prayer without point and purpose, but it will be the intercession of a heart burdened for poor sinners out of Christ. It will be a heart longing to do service for Jesus in personal effort for the saving of souls of men.—[Important Testimony to our Brethren and Sisters in New York \(Ph 39\) 9, 10](#).

[152]

Spiritual Gifts

The Holy Spirit commits to every Christian some gift or talent which is to be used to advance the kingdom—The present is our day of trust. To every person is committed some peculiar gift or talent which is to be used to advance the Redeemer's kingdom. All God's responsible agents, from the lowliest and most obscure to those in high positions in the church, are entrusted with the Lord's

goods. It is not the minister alone who can work for the salvation of souls. Those who have the smallest gifts are not excused from using the very best gifts they have, and in so doing their talents will be increased. It is not safe to trifle with moral responsibilities nor to despise the day of small things. God's providence proportions His trusts according to the varied capabilities of the people. None should mourn because they cannot glorify God with talents which they never possessed and for which they are not responsible.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:618](#).

Ministers should encourage those in the church whom God has selected to do a special work—There is danger that ministers, that presidents of conferences, will take too much upon themselves and manifest too little confidence in the people. The people should be educated in such a way that they will search the Scriptures for themselves. The Holy Spirit is to work to mold every man after the similitude of Christ. Men have made a great mistake in not considering that God works through His church. Ministers should give ample encouragement to the individual members of the church and to those whom God shall select to do a special work in maturing thoughtful plans for the saving of the souls of those who are in error.—[Manuscript Releases 9:146](#).

Ministers should get out of the way and let members have freedom to carry out that which the Holy Spirit indicates—God has given “to every man his work.” Why is it that ministers and Conference officers do not recognize this fact? Why do they not manifest their appreciation of the help that individual members of the church could give? Let church-members awake. Let them take hold and help to stay up the hands of the ministers and the workers, pushing forward the interests of the cause. There must be no measuring of talent by comparison. If a man exercises faith, and walks humbly with his God, he may have little education, he may be accounted a weak man, yet he can fill his appointed place as well as the man who has the finest education. He who yields himself most unreservedly to the influence of the Holy Spirit is best qualified to do acceptable service for the Master. God will inspire men who do not occupy responsible positions to work for Him. If ministers and men in positions of authority will get out of the way, and let the Holy Spirit move upon the minds of the lay brethren, God will

[153] direct them what to do for the honor of His name. Let men have freedom to carry out that which the Holy Spirit indicates. Do not put the shackles upon humble men whom God would use. If those who now occupy positions of responsibility had been kept at one class of work year after year, their talents would not have developed, and they would not have been qualified for the positions they hold; and yet they make no special effort to test and develop the talents of those newly come into the faith.—[The Review and Herald, July 9, 1895.](#)

Trust the Holy Spirit to use every worthy member of the church—Neither Conference officer nor minister has a call from God to indulge distrust of God's power to use every individual who is considered a worthy member of the church. This cautiousness, so-called, is retarding almost every line of the Lord's work. God can and will use those who have not had a thorough education in the schools of men. A doubt of His power to do this is manifest unbelief; it is limiting the Omnipotent power of the One with whom nothing is impossible. O for less of this unsanctified, distrustful caution! It leaves so many forces of the church unused; it closes up the way so that the Holy Spirit cannot use men; it keeps in idleness those who are willing and anxious to labor in Christ's lines; it discourages many from entering the work who would become efficient laborers together with God if they were given a fair chance. Those who would be laborers, who see the great necessity for consecrated workers in the church and in the world, should seek strength in the secret places of prayer. They should go forth to labor, and God will bless them, and make them a blessing to others. Such members would give strength and stability to the church. It is the lack of spiritual exercise that makes church-members so weak and inefficient; but again I would ask, Who is to blame for the state of things that now exists?—[The Review and Herald, July 9, 1895.](#)

Every Christian is anointed for the mission of sharing Christ—It is not merely the duty of the minister, but of every member of the church, to represent Christ to the world. They are to catch the rays of light from Jesus, and reflect them upon souls blinded by error and infatuated with false doctrines. They are to hold up the only true standard of righteousness, which is God's holy law, while the world is holding up a false standard. Satan is seeking to present

light for darkness, and darkness for light, the truth for error, and error for the truth. He would extinguish every ray of light shining from the throne of God, and in its place put his darkness. But the sons of God are here, every one of them, for the purpose of irradiating the world. The more light is despised, opposed, and condemned, the greater evidence they have in regard to their work to let their light shine forth to others. They receive their orders from God to guide souls to righteousness, truth, and heaven. The torch of truth must shine to willing as well as unwilling eyes. When Christ ascended on high, the church was to be the agent, or medium, through which light was to be communicated to the world. "Ye are the light of the world." Every individual Christian is required of God to be a living, shining light in the world. He must wrestle with God in secret prayer; then he will go forth in the spirit of Christ to hold converse with men. Anointed for the mission, he bears with him the atmosphere of paradise. His words will be well-chosen, and his face will reflect the image of his Master. He will be the light of the world, a living epistle known and read by all men.—[The Review and Herald, March 8, 1887.](#)

[154]

Each member should be educated to do the work for which he/she is best adapted—Sabbath after Sabbath many of you hear the voice of the living preacher, but how many feel the need of bringing the truth into your practical life? How many realize that light is given you that you may reflect it upon others? There is great need that the people should be educated that they may do the part of the work that has been appointed unto them to do; but the education of church members has been neglected. If the minister would instruct his people, he might have an army to help him in diffusing the light when a crisis comes in the work. Each member of the church should do the work for which he is best adapted, and the work could be so arranged that everything would move off harmoniously, and the prosperity of a working church would be manifested in the vital interest which would spring up among those who put their energies into the cause of Christ.—[The Home Missionary, September 1, 1892.](#)

Motivating Volunteers

When the converting power of God comes upon the people they will become workers—This class is well represented by the

valley of dry bones Ezekiel saw in vision. Those who have had committed to them the treasures of truth, and yet who are dead in trespasses and sin, need to be created anew in Christ Jesus. There is so little real vitality in the church at the present time, that it takes constant labor to give men the appearance of life to the professed people of God. When the converting power of God comes upon the people, it will be made manifest by activity. They will become workers, and will esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of the world.—[The Review and Herald, January 17, 1893](#).

True conversion is followed by a desire to share Jesus—A man is no sooner converted than in his heart is born a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus; the saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart. The Spirit of Christ illuminating the soul is represented by the light, which dispels all darkness; it is compared to salt, because of its preserving qualities; and to leaven, which secretly exerts its transforming power.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:318, 319](#).

Those not fulfilling their responsibility should be visited—
 [155] Let ministers and responsible men impress the individual members of the church that in order to grow in spirituality they must take the burden of the work which the Lord has laid upon them—the burden of leading souls into the truth. Let them teach the people that they should have a strong desire to see those not in the faith converted to the truth. Let those who have opportunity do their God-given work. Those who are not fulfilling their responsibility should be visited, prayed with, and labored for, that they may become faithful stewards of the grace of Christ. Do not lead the people to depend upon you as ministers, but teach every one who shall embrace the truth that he has a work to do in using the talents God has given him to save the souls of those who are nigh him. In thus working, the people will have the cooperation of the angels of God. They will obtain a valuable experience which will increase their faith and give them a strong hold of God.—[Manuscript 21a, 1894 \(Notebook Leaflets 1:127, 128\)](#).

The Saviour was disappointed in His lack of success in recruiting workers but persisted—If our workers had been baptized with the Spirit of Christ, they would have done fifty times more than

they have done to train men for laborers. Though one or two, or even many, have not borne the test, we should not cease our efforts; for this work must be done for Christ. The Saviour was disappointed; because of the perversity of human hearts, His efforts were not rewarded with success; but He kept at the work, and so must we. If we had toiled with fidelity, patience, and love, we should have had one hundred workers where there is one. Unimproved opportunities are written against us in the same book that bears the record of envy and rebellion against God. Years have been lost to us in our foreign missions. There have been a few earnest workers; but to a great extent their energies have been employed in keeping men who profess the truth from making shipwreck of faith. Had these men who required so much help to keep them propped up, been working for the salvation of their fellowmen, they would have forgotten their trials, and would have become strong in helping others. We are able to achieve vastly more than we have done, if we will call to our aid all whom we can get to enlist in the work. Some will prove worthless; but while finding this out, we must yet keep at work. One worthy, God-fearing worker will repay all our effort, care, and expense.—[The Review and Herald, December 15, 1885.](#)

Ministers as Trainers

You help members most, not by sermonizing, but by planning work for them—The best help that ministers can give the members of our churches is not sermonizing, but planning work for them. Give each one something to do for others. Help all to see that as receivers of the grace of Christ they are under obligation to work for Him. And let all be taught how to work. Especially should those who are newly come to the faith be educated to become laborers together with God. If set to work, the despondent will soon forget their despondency; the weak will become strong, the ignorant intelligent, and all will be prepared to present the truth as it is in Jesus. They will find an unfailing helper in Him who has promised to save all that come unto Him.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:49.](#)

[156]

Spend less time in preaching and more time in studying how to teach others to work—Our ministers must become educators as well as preachers. They should teach the people not to depend upon

them, but upon Christ. The minister who preaches two hours when he should not exceed one, would far better serve the cause of God by devoting that extra hour to earnest, careful thought in studying how to direct others, how to teach them to work.—[The Signs of the Times, May 17, 1883.](#)

Ministers should teach members how to work—When Jesus ascended to heaven, He committed His work on earth to those who had received the light of the gospel. They were to carry the work forward to completion. He has provided no other agency for the promulgation of His truth. “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” “And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” This solemn commission reaches us in this age. God leaves with His church the responsibility of receiving or rejecting it. Many seem to rest perfectly easy, as if heavenly messengers were to come to this earth, to proclaim with an audible voice the message of warning; but while angels have their work to do, we are to do ours in opening the Bible truth to those who are in darkness. Is your interest selfishly shut up in your own family, to your church? God pity your narrowness! You should have that undying zeal, that far-reaching love, which encircles the world. Those who are not called to go to foreign countries have a work to do in their own borders, to keep up the interest in their churches by well-directed effort, that they may be spiritual and self-sacrificing, and by their means and earnest prayers may aid those who enter new and difficult fields.—[The Review and Herald, October 12, 1886.](#)

We must teach members how to use their talents in ministering to others—This work of enlightening others is not the work of the minister only, but it is the work of all who profess the truth of God. God has given to every man his work in making Christ known to the world. We must teach the members of the church how they may effectually minister to others. There are many who are ordained ministers, who have never yet exercised a shepherd’s care over the flock of God, who have never yet watched for souls as they that must give an account. Were the kind of labor of which it stands in need, bestowed upon the church, many who are doing nothing would be educated to become diligent laborers in the harvest field. An education should be given to the people of God that would result in furnishing hundreds who would put out to the exchangers

valuable talents, whose use would develop men for positions of trust and influence, and great good would be accomplished for the Master.—*Appeal to Our Churches in Behalf of Home Missionary Work (Ph 7) 14.* [157]

Educate members to be soulwinners—There is not only danger that those in positions of trust will fail to encourage individuals in trading upon their talents, but there is also danger that those who do little or nothing themselves for Christ, will also seek to discourage some one who is trying to work in the Lord's vineyard. Keep your hands off. Educate every one who is drawing from Christ the streams of salvation. It is not necessary that the Word of God should be disseminated only by a few ordained ministers. The truth must be sown beside all waters.—*Sowing Beside All Waters, 37 (Ph 78).*

Instruct members how to work in medical missionary lines—Pastors and teachers are to work intelligently in their lines, instructing church members how to work in medical missionary lines. When the professed followers of Christ have an indwelling Saviour, they will be found doing as Christ did. They will have no opportunity to rust through inaction. They will have enough to do. And the work which they do under the auspices of the church will be their greatest means of communicating light.—*Welfare Ministry, 123.*

If members are not taught to work, the minister's work is nearly a failure—The cause might be in a healthful condition in every field, and it would be if ministers would trust in God and allow nothing to come between them and their work. Laborers are needed much more than mere preachers, but the two offices must be united. It has been proved in the missionary field that, whatever may be the preaching talent, if the laboring part is neglected, if the people are not taught how to work, how to conduct meetings, how to act their part in missionary labor, how to reach people successfully, the work will be nearly a failure. There is much to be done in the Sabbath school work also in bringing the people to realize their obligation and to act their part. God calls them to work for Him, and the ministers should guide their efforts.—*Testimonies for the Church 5:256.*

If ministers have properly instructed those under their care, when they leave, the work will not ravel out—The work of the

[158]

ambassadors for Christ is far greater and more responsible than many dream of. They should not be at all satisfied with their success until they can, by their earnest labors and the blessing of God, present to Him serviceable Christians who have a true sense of their responsibility and will do their appointed work. The proper labor and instruction will result in bringing into working order those men and women whose characters are strong and their convictions so firm that nothing of a selfish character is permitted to hinder them in their work, to lessen their faith, or to deter them from duty. If the minister has properly instructed those under his care, when he leaves for other fields of labor the work left will not ravel out, for it will be bound off so firmly as to be secure. Unless those who receive the truth are thoroughly converted and there is a radical change in their life and character, the soul is not riveted to the eternal Rock; and after the labor of the minister ceases, and the novelty is gone, the impression soon wears away, the truth loses its power to charm, and they exert no holier influence, and are no better for their profession of the truth.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:398](#).

Teach All to Be Active

Ministers should help potential church workers develop their talents—Some workers are incapable of filling positions that others can fill. Many who might have been able to fill positions of trust, have not disciplined themselves, nor have they done that which they could have done from day to day to meet the increasing demands of the present time. Others are able to bear responsibilities, and would do so, if they were encouraged, and if there were some one who, with patience, kindness, and forbearance, would teach them how to work. Ministers should show a real earnestness in helping such persons succeed, and should put forth persevering effort to develop talent. The inexperienced are in need of wise generals who by prayer and personal effort will encourage and help them to become perfect in Christ Jesus, wanting in nothing. This is the work which every gospel minister should endeavor to do, but which some are liable to fail of doing.—[The Review and Herald, December 1, 1904](#).

Teach the people how to work—Ministers, teach the people how to work. Tell them that their usefulness does not depend so much on wealth or learning or power as on a willing mind, their consecration to Christ and His cause. In times past, God has used humble men, and because of their faith and devotion, they have often accomplished more than many more pretentious laborers. They realized their weakness and dependence upon God; and by letters, by tracts, by personal effort in appeals and warnings, by a well-ordered life and godly conversation, they turned many from error to truth, from the path of transgression to obedience to God's law. The mighty power of grace worked with them, and success attended their efforts. "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence."—[The Review and Herald, June 24, 1884.](#)

Members' doubt will be dispelled if they can be led to help others—Our ministers may visit our churches, and may offer public prayer to God for the comfort of the sorrowing, asking Him to dispel doubt from their minds, and shed light into their darkened hearts. But this will not be so effective in helping these sorrowful, doubting, sin-burdened ones, as to lead them to work for those more needy than themselves. The darkness will be dispelled if they can be led to help others.—[The Review and Herald, May 5, 1904.](#)

[159]

Section 5—Worship and Special Services [160]

[161]

- 27. Baptism
- 28. Child Dedication
- 29. Communion
- 30. Funeral
- 31. Planning and Leading Worship
- 32. Prayer Meeting
- 33. Preaching
- 34. Wedding

[162]

Chapter 27—Baptism

[163]

Baptism commemorates Christ's resurrection and the candidate's new birth—The resurrection of Christ is commemorated by our being buried with Him by baptism, and raised up out of the watery grave in likeness of His resurrection, to live in newness of life.—[Early Writings, 217.](#)

Preparing Candidates

Ministers should give each candidate plain instruction regarding baptism's meaning—Our churches are becoming enfeebled by receiving for doctrines the commandments of men. Many are received into the church who are not converted. Men, women, and children are allowed to take part in the solemn rite of baptism without being fully instructed in regard to the meaning of this ordinance. Participation in this ordinance means much, and our ministers should be careful to give each candidate for baptism plain instruction regarding its meaning and its solemnity.—[The Review and Herald, October 6, 1904.](#)

Church membership of little value without conversion—All, high or low, if they are unconverted, are on one common platform. Men may turn from one doctrine to another. This is being done, and will be done. Papists may change from Catholicism to Protestantism; yet they may know nothing of the meaning of the words, "A new heart also will I give you." Accepting new theories, and uniting with a church, do not bring new life to any one, even though the church with which he unites may be established on the true foundation. Connection with a church does not take the place of conversion. To subscribe the name to a church creed is not of the least value to any one if the heart is not truly changed.—[The Review and Herald, February 14, 1899.](#)

Baptism should follow, not only instruction and belief, but also practice—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.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:91](#). [164]

Evidence of change must precede baptism—The test of discipleship is not brought to bear as closely as it should be upon those who present themselves for baptism. It should be understood whether those who profess to be converted are simply taking the name of Seventh-day Adventist, or whether they are taking their stand on the Lord's side, to come out of the world and be separate and touch not the unclean thing. When they give evidence that they fully understand their position, they are to be accepted. But when they show that they are following the customs and fashions and sentiments of the world, they are to be faithfully dealt with. If they feel no burden to change their course of action, they should not be accepted as members of the church. The Lord wants those who compose His church to be true, faithful stewards of the grace of Christ.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 128](#).

Children

Parents should play a significant role in the baptism of their children—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.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:93](#).

Baptismal Service

Baptism is an occasion for educating those who witness it—

[165] The one who administers the ordinance of baptism should seek to make it an occasion of solemn, sacred influence upon all spectators. Every ordinance of the church should be so conducted as to be uplifting in its influence. Nothing is to be made common or cheap, or placed on a level with common things. Our churches need to be educated to greater respect and reverence for the sacred service of God. As ministers conduct the services connected with God's worship, so they are educating and training the people. Little acts that educate and train and discipline the soul for eternity are of vast consequence in the uplifting and sanctifying of the church.—[Evangelism, 314](#).

Robes should be well constructed—The robes should be made of substantial material, of some dark color that water will not injure, and they should be weighted at the bottom. Let them be neat, well-shaped garments, made after an approved pattern. There should be no attempt at ornamentation, no ruffling or trimming. All display, whether of trimming or ornaments, is wholly out of place. When the candidates have a sense of the meaning of the ordinance, they will have no desire for personal adornment. Yet there should be nothing shabby or unseemly, for this is an offense to God. Everything connected with this holy ordinance should reveal as perfect a preparation as possible.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:98](#).

Each church should have its own baptismal robes—It is not well for one church to depend upon borrowing robes from another. Often when the robes are needed, they are not to be found; some

borrower has neglected to return them. Every church should provide for its own necessities in this line. Let a fund be raised for this purpose. If the whole church unite in this, it will not be a heavy burden.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:98](#).

Singing helps make a baptism impressive—Thirty-two candidates were buried with their Lord in baptism, and arose to walk in newness of life. This was a scene that angels of God witnessed with joy. Several children were baptized first, and then the older ones. Occasionally a stanza of some hymn of praise was sung. There was no confusion. The entire service was impressive.—[The Review and Herald, February 7, 1907](#).

A lake or stream provides an ideal setting for baptism—Whenever possible, let baptism be administered in a clear lake or running stream. And give to the occasion all the importance and solemnity that can be brought into it. At such a service angels of God are always present.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:97](#).

A bathtub may be appropriate for an emergency baptism—Arrangements will be made to fulfill the aged man's request for baptism. He is not strong enough to go to _____ or to _____, and the only way in which the ceremony can be performed is by getting a bathtub and letting him into the water.—[Evangelism, 315](#).

[166]

Chapter 28—Child Dedication

[167]

Let ministers take little children in their arms and bless them—The mothers that brought their children to Jesus, did well. Remember the text, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.” Let mothers now lead their children to Christ. Let ministers of the gospel take the little children in their arms, and bless them in the name of Jesus. Let words of tenderest love be spoken to the little ones; for Jesus took the lambs of the flock in His arms, and blessed them.—[The Review and Herald, March 24, 1896.](#)

Baby Jesus was dedicated at the temple—The priest went through the ceremony of his official work. He took the child in his arms, and held it up before the altar. After handing it back to its mother, he inscribed the name “Jesus” on the roll of the firstborn.—[The Desire of Ages, 52.](#)

Hannah dedicated her child to God from birth—The burden which she could share with no earthly friend she cast upon God. Earnestly she pleaded that He would take away her reproach and grant her the precious gift of a son to nurture and train for Him. And she made a solemn vow that if her request were granted, she would dedicate her child to God, even from its birth.—[Patriarchs and Prophets, 570.](#)

Hannah and her husband, in an act of worship, confirmed the dedication of their child—In her prayer, Hannah had made a vow that if her request were granted, she would dedicate her child to the service of God. This vow she made known to her husband, and he confirmed it in a solemn act of worship, before leaving Shiloh.—[The Signs of the Times, October 27, 1881.](#)

Parents should give their children to the Lord—Parents, give your children to the Lord, and ever keep it before their minds that they belong to Him, that they are lambs of Christ’s flock, watched over by the true Shepherd. Hannah dedicated Samuel to the Lord; and it is said of him, “Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him,

and did let none of his words [the Lord's words through Samuel] fall to the ground." In the case of this prophet and judge in Israel are presented the possibilities that are placed before a child whose parents co-operate with God, doing their appointed work.—[Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 143.](#)

[168]

The father is responsible for the dedication of every member of his home—The father was to act as the priest of the household, and if the father was dead, the eldest son living was to perform this solemn act of sprinkling the door-post with blood. This is a symbol of the work to be done in every family. Parents are to gather their children into the home and to present Christ before them as their Passover. The father is to dedicate every inmate of his home to God, and to do a work that is represented by the feast of the passover. It is perilous to leave this solemn duty in the hands of others.

This peril is well illustrated by an incident that is related concerning a Hebrew family on the night of the passover. The legend goes that the eldest daughter was sick; but that she was acquainted with the fact that a lamb was to be chosen for every family, and that its blood was to be sprinkled upon the lintel and side posts of the door so that the Lord might behold the mark of the blood, and not suffer the destroyer to enter in to smite the first-born. With what anxiety she saw the evening approach when the destroying angel was to pass by. She became very restless. She called her father to her side, and asked, "Have you marked the door-post with blood?" He answered, "Yes; I have given directions in regard to the matter. Do not be troubled; for the destroying angel will not enter here." The night came on, and again and again the child called her father, still asking, "Are you sure that the door-post is marked with blood?" Again and again the father assured her that she need have no fear; that a command which involved such consequences would not be neglected by his trustworthy servants.

As midnight approached, her pleading voice was heard saying, "Father, I am not sure. Take me in your arms, and let me see the mark for myself, so that I can rest." The father conceded to the wishes of his child; he took her in his arms and carried her to the door; but there was no blood mark upon the lintel or the posts. He trembled with horror as he realized that his home might have become a house of mourning. With his own hands he seized the hyssop bough, and

sprinkled the door-post with blood. He then showed the sick child that the mark was there.—[The Review and Herald, May 21, 1895.](#)

The Lord's Supper was the point of transition between two great festivals—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. In instituting the sacramental service to take the place of the Passover, Christ left for His church a memorial of His great sacrifice for man. "This do," He said, "in remembrance of Me." This was the point of transition between two economies and their two great festivals. The one was to close forever; the other, which He had just established, was to take its place, and to continue through all time as the memorial of His death.—[The Review and Herald, May 31, 1898.](#)

Members should not exclude themselves from Communion because some present are unworthy—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. It is at these, His own appointments, that Christ meets His people, and energizes them by His presence. Hearts and hands that are unworthy may even administer the ordinance, yet Christ is there to minister to His children. All who come with their faith fixed upon Him will be greatly blessed. All who neglect these seasons of divine privilege will suffer loss. Of them it may appropriately be said, "Ye are not all clean."—[The Desire of Ages, 656.](#)

Only open sin excludes persons from the Lord's Supper—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. 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 that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body.”—[The Desire of Ages, 656](#).

[170] **The Lord’s Supper is not to be observed only occasionally or yearly**—The salvation of men depends upon a continual application to their hearts of the cleansing blood of Christ. Therefore, the Lord’s Supper was not to be observed only occasionally or yearly, but more frequently than the annual passover. This solemn ordinance commemorates a far greater event than the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt. That deliverance was typical of the great atonement which Christ made by the sacrifice of His own life for the final deliverance of His people.—[The S.D.A. Bible Commentary 6:1090](#).

Footwashing

Jesus established footwashing as a religious ceremony—When they assembled to partake of the Lord’s Supper, the ordinance of feet-washing was to be established as a religious ceremony.—[The Review and Herald, June 21, 1898](#).

Footwashing teaches the humility of Christ and makes participants’ hearts tender toward one another—These ordinances are regarded too much as a form, and not as a sacred thing to call to mind the Lord Jesus. Christ ordained them, and delegated His power to His ministers, who have the treasure in earthen vessels. They are to superintend these special appointments of the One who established them to continue to the close of time. It is on these, His own appointments, that He meets with and energizes His people by His personal presence. Notwithstanding that there may be hearts and hands that are unsanctified who will administer the ordinance, still Jesus is in the midst of His people to work on human hearts. All who keep before them, in the act of feet-washing, the humiliation of Christ, all who will keep their hearts humble, and keep in view the true tabernacle and service, which the Lord pitched and not man, will never fail to derive benefit from every discourse given, and spiritual strength from every communion. These ordinances are established for a purpose. Christ’s followers are to bear in mind the example of Christ in His humility. This ordinance is to encourage

humility, but it should never be termed humiliating, in the sense of being degrading to humanity. It is to make tender our hearts toward one another.—[The Review and Herald, May 31, 1898.](#)

Footwashing is meant to clear away the assumption that one person is higher than another—The object of this service is to call to mind the humility of our Lord, and the lessons He has given in washing the feet of His disciples. There is in man a disposition to esteem himself more highly than his brother, to work for himself, to serve himself, to seek the highest place; and often evil-surmisings and bitterness of spirit spring up over mere trifles. This 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 spirit that will lead him to wash his brother's feet. It is not in God's plan that this should be deferred because some are considered unworthy to engage in it. The Lord washed the feet of Judas. He did not refuse him a place at the table, although He knew that he would leave that table to act his part in the betrayal of his Lord. It is not possible for human beings to tell who is worthy, and who is not. They can not read the secrets of the soul. It is not for them to say, I will not attend the ordinance if such a one is present to act a part. Nor has God left it to man to say who shall present themselves on these occasions.—[The Review and Herald, May 31, 1898.](#)

[171]

Footwashing should be introduced carefully to previously uninformed people—Duties are laid down in God's Word, the performance of which will keep the people of God humble and separate from the world, and from backsliding, like the nominal churches. The washing of feet and partaking of the Lord's supper should be more frequently practiced. Jesus set us the example, and told us to do as He had done. I saw that His example should be as exactly followed as possible; yet brethren and sisters have not always moved as judiciously as they should in washing feet, and confusion has been caused. It should be introduced into new places with carefulness and wisdom, especially where the people are not informed relative to the example and teachings of our Lord on this point, and where they have prejudice against it. Many honest souls, through the influence of former teachers in whom they had confidence, are much prejudiced against this plain duty, and the subject should be

introduced to them in a proper time and manner.—[Early Writings, 116.](#)

Bread and Wine

Only unfermented wine should be used at the Communion table—Christ did not contradict His own teaching. The unfermented wine that He provided for the wedding guests was a wholesome and refreshing drink. This is the wine that was used by our Saviour and His disciples in the first Communion. It is the wine that should always be used on the Communion table as a symbol of the Saviour's blood. The sacramental service is designed to be soul-refreshing and life-giving. There is to be connected with it nothing that could minister to evil.—[The Ministry of Healing, 333.](#)

Communion bread must be unleavened—The broken bread and pure juice of the grape are to represent the broken body and spilled blood of the Son of God. Bread that is leavened must not come on the communion table; unleavened bread is the only correct representation of the Lord's Supper. Nothing fermented is to be used. Only the pure fruit of the vine and the unleavened bread are to be used.—[The Review and Herald, June 7, 1898.](#)

Chapter 30—Funeral

[172]

[173]

Jesus, the minister’s model, wept in the face of death—Christ was a close observer, noticing many things that others passed by. He was ever helpful, ever ready to speak words of hope and sympathy to the discouraged and the bereaved. He allowed the crowd to press round Him, and complained not, though sometimes almost lifted off His feet. When He met a funeral, He did not pass by indifferently. Sadness came over His face as He looked upon death, and He wept with the mourners.—[The Upward Look, 57.](#)

Death, in the presence of the Lifegiver, is only temporary—In clear, authoritative voice the words are spoken, “Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.” That voice pierces the ears of the dead. The young man opens his eyes. Jesus takes him by the hand, and lifts him up. His gaze falls upon her who has been weeping beside him, and mother and son unite in a long, clinging, joyous embrace. The multitude look on in silence, as if spellbound. “There came a fear on all.” Hushed and reverent they stood for a little time, as if in the very presence of God. Then they “glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited His people.” The funeral train returned to Nain as a triumphal procession. “And this rumor of Him went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.”—[The Desire of Ages, 318.](#)

A Christian’s funeral can provide a powerful witness for Christianity—When we called at night we found the young man very near his end. His mortal frame was racked with pain. We prayed with him, and his heavy breathing and groaning ceased while we were praying. The blessing of God rested down in that sick room, and we felt that angels were hovering around. He was relieved a little, yet knew that he was dying. He tried to have us understand that hope lightened up the future, and that to him it was not a dark uncertainty. We understood from broken sentences that he should have part in the first resurrection, and then be made immortal. Said he, “Tell Bro. Bates that I will meet him then.” His faltering tongue often

[174]

spoke that dear name, so precious to the dying Christian—Jesus—in whom all his hope of eternal life centered. He fell asleep in Jesus a few hours after we left. My husband attended the funeral. There were many present who had listened to his faithful exhortations, and despised them while he was living, and some who had abused him on account of his faith, a short time before. They looked upon the countenance of the dead, which bore a pleasant smile, and turned from the sight with quivering lip and moistened eye. We could but think, though dead, he speaketh. It was the testimony of all present that they had never seen so pleasant and lovely an expression upon the face of the dead. We followed the body to the grave, to rest until the righteous dead awake to immortality.—[Spiritual Gifts 2:92](#).

Funerals should not include ostentatious and extravagant display—Concerning the burial of Israel’s high priest, the Scriptures give only the simple record, “There Aaron died, and there he was buried.” [Deuteronomy 10:6](#). In what striking contrast to the customs of the present day was this burial, conducted according to the express command of God. In modern times the funeral services of a man of high position are often made the occasion of ostentatious and extravagant display. When Aaron died, one of the most illustrious men that ever lived, there were only two of his nearest friends to witness his death and to attend his burial. And that lonely grave upon Mount Hor was forever hidden from the sight of Israel. God is not honored in the great display so often made over the dead, and the extravagant expense incurred in returning their bodies to the dust.—[Patriarchs and Prophets, 427](#).

Chapter 31—Planning and Leading Worship

[175]

None should neglect the public worship of God—It is a serious mistake to neglect the public worship of God. The privileges of divine service should not be lightly regarded. Those who attend upon the sick are often unable to avail themselves of these privileges, but they should be careful not to absent themselves needlessly from the house of worship.—[The Ministry of Healing, 511](#).

Church meetings may be made of no effect due simply to a lack of pure air—The preacher marvels that he has not power to impress the people, when they, as well as himself, are suffering from lack of vitalizing air, and are thus rendered incapable of appreciating the subject upon which he is speaking. The want of the circulation of pure air in a church makes many a meeting of no effect; for labor is expended for naught, because the people can not keep awake.—[The Signs of the Times, September 23, 1897](#).

Reverence

Reverence is inspired by a sense of God's greatness and a realization of His presence—Another precious grace that should be carefully cherished is reverence. 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 the heart of every child should be deeply impressed. The hour and place of prayer and the services of public worship the child should be taught to regard as sacred because God is there. And as reverence is manifested in attitude and demeanor, the feeling that inspires it will be deepened.—[Education, 242, 243](#).

The place of worship is as the gate of heaven—“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.” One of your strong temptations is to irreverence. God is high and holy; and to the humble, believing soul, His house on earth, the place where His people meet for worship, is as the gate of heaven. The song of praise, the words

spoken by Christ's ministers, are God's appointed agencies to prepare a people for the church above, for that loftier worship into which there can enter nothing that is impure, unholy.—[Messages to Young People, 265.](#)

[176] **Worshippers should act as in the visible presence of God—**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 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.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:493, 494.](#)

Formal Versus Informal

Make the worship service both interesting and attractive—Our meetings should be made intensely interesting. They should be pervaded with the very atmosphere of heaven. Let there be no long, dry speeches and formal prayers merely for the sake of occupying the time. All should be ready to act their part with promptness, and when their duty is done, the meeting should be closed. Thus the interest will be kept up to the last. This is offering to God acceptable worship. His service should be made interesting and attractive and not be allowed to degenerate into a dry form.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:609.](#)

The house of God the gate of heaven—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.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:491.](#)

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.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:492, 493.](#)

Worship should not include a bedlam of noise—It is impossible to estimate too largely the work that the Lord will accomplish through His proposed vessels in carrying out His mind and purpose. The things you have described as taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music, and dancing. The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit.—[Selected Messages 2:36.](#)

Congregational Participation

[177]

Where the church is walking in the light, there will be cheerful, hearty responses and words of joyful praise—The Lord would have His ministers who preach the Word energized by His Holy Spirit; and the people who hear should not sit in drowsy indifference, or stare vacantly about, making no responses to what is said. The impression that is thus given to the unbeliever is anything but favorable for the religion of Christ. These dull, careless professed Christians are not destitute of ambition and zeal when engaged in worldly business; but things of eternal importance do not move them deeply. The voice of God through His messengers may be a pleasant song; but its sacred warnings, reproofs, and encouragements are all unheeded. The spirit of the world has paralyzed them. The truths of God's Word are spoken to leaden ears and hard, unimpressible hearts. There should be wide-awake, active churches to encourage and uphold the ministers of Christ and to aid them in the work of saving souls. Where the church is walking in the light, there will ever be cheerful, hearty responses and words of joyful praise.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:318.](#)

Those who worship should not be responseless listeners—Through the psalmist God declares, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." Much of the public worship of God consists of praise and prayer, and every follower of Christ should engage in this worship. There

is also the preaching service, conducted by those whose work it is to instruct the congregation in the Word of God. Although all are not called to minister in word and doctrine, they need not be cold and responseless listeners. When the Word of God was spoken to the Hebrews anciently, the Lord said to Moses, "And let all the people say, Amen." This response, in the fervor of their souls, was required as evidence that they understood the word spoken and were interested in it.—[The Signs of the Times, June 24, 1886.](#)

Beginning of Worship

When ministers enter the platform they should bow down in silent prayer—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.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:492.](#)

[178] **There should be a prayerful attitude on the platform**—But things that transpire in the sacred desk are often wrong. One minister conversing with another in the desk before the congregation, laughing and appearing to have no burden of the work, or lacking a solemn sense of their sacred calling, dishonors the truth, and brings the sacred down upon a low level with common things. The example is to remove the fear of God from the people, and to detract from the sacred dignity of the gospel Christ died to magnify. According to the light that has been given me, it would be pleasing to God for them to bow down as soon as they step into the pulpit, and solemnly ask help from God.—[The Review and Herald, May 30, 1871.](#)

Music

Worship music should be cheerful, yet solemn—Those who make singing a part of divine worship should select hymns with music appropriate to the occasion, not funeral notes, but cheerful, yet solemn melodies. The voice can and should be modulated, softened, and subdued.—[The Signs of the Times, June 22, 1882](#).

The use of musical instruments to create a bedlam of noise, shocks the senses and perverts the worship—The Holy Spirit never reveals itself in such methods, in such a bedlam of noise. This is an invention of Satan to cover up his ingenious methods for making of none effect the pure, sincere, elevating, ennobling, sanctifying truth for this time. Better never have the worship of God blended with music than to use musical instruments to do the work which last January was represented to me would be brought into our camp meetings. The truth for this time needs nothing of this kind in its work of converting souls. A bedlam of noise shocks the senses and perverts that which if conducted aright might be a blessing. The powers of satanic agencies blend with the din and noise, to have a carnival, and this is termed the Holy Spirit's working.—[Selected Messages 2:36](#).

Congregational singing

Organize a group of the best singers to lead congregational singing—Another matter which should receive attention, both at our camp meetings and elsewhere, is that of singing. A minister should not give out hymns to be sung, until it has first been ascertained that they are familiar to those who sing. A proper person should be appointed to take charge of this exercise, and it should be his duty to see that such hymns are selected as can be sung with the spirit and with the understanding also. Singing is a part of the worship of God, but in the bungling manner in which it is often conducted, it is no credit to the truth, and no honor to God. There should be system and order in this as well as every other part of the Lord's work. Organize a company of the best singers, whose voices can lead the congregation, and then let all who will, unite with them. Those who sing should make an effort to sing in harmony; they should devote

some time to practice, that they may employ this talent to the glory of God.—[The Review and Herald, July 24, 1883.](#)

Singing is as much an act of worship as is prayer—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.—[Patriarchs and Prophets, 594.](#)

Instrumental

Call instrumental music to your aid—Music can be a great power for good; yet we do not make the most of this branch of worship. The singing is generally done from impulse or to meet special cases, and at other times those who sing are left to blunder along, and the music loses its proper effect upon the minds of those present. Music should have beauty, pathos, and power. Let the voices be lifted in songs of praise and devotion. Call to your aid, if practicable, instrumental music, and let the glorious harmony ascend to God, an acceptable offering.—[Evangelism, 505.](#)

The guitar can be used to provide instrumental music for worship—Here a plan quite common in Sweden, but new to us, was adopted to supply the lack of an organ. A lady who occupied a room adjoining the meeting-hall, and who had charge of the building, was a skillful player on the guitar, and possessed a sweet, musical voice; at public worship she was accustomed to supply the place of both choir and instrument. At our request she played and sang at the opening of our meetings.—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 195.](#)

Not for Display

Musical talent too often fosters pride and ambition for display—Musical entertainments which, if conducted properly, will do no harm, are often a source of evil.... Musical talent too often fosters pride and ambition for display, and singers have but little thought of the worship of God.—[The Voice in Speech and Song, 422.](#)

Musical accomplishments as well as forms and ceremonies can take the place of God in worship—When professing Chris-

tians reach the high standard which it is their privilege to reach, the simplicity of Christ will be maintained in all their worship. Forms and ceremonies and musical accomplishments are not the strength of the church. Yet these things have taken the place that God should have, even as they did in the worship of the Jews.—[Evangelism](#), 512.

Public Prayer

[180]

Prayer moves God's arm—Prayer moves the arm of Omnipotence. He who marshals the stars in order in the heavens, whose word controls the waves of the great deep—the same infinite Creator will work in behalf of His people, if they will call upon Him in faith. He will restrain all the forces of darkness, until the warning is given to the world, and all who will heed it are prepared for His coming.—[The Review and Herald, December 14, 1905](#).

Public prayer should incorporate the principles included in the Lord's Prayer—Jesus taught His disciples that only that prayer which arises from unfeigned lips, prompted by the actual wants of the soul, is genuine, and will bring heaven's blessing to the petitioner. He gave a brief, comprehensive prayer to His disciples. This prayer, for its beautiful simplicity, is without a parallel. It is a perfect prayer for public and private life; it is dignified and elevated, yet so simple that the child at its mother's knee can understand it. The children of God have repeated this prayer for centuries, and yet its luster has not dimmed. Like a gem of value it continues to be loved and cherished. This prayer is a wonderful production. None will pray in vain if in their prayers are incorporated the principles contained therein. Our prayers in public should be short, and express only the real wants of the soul, asking in simplicity and simple trusting faith for the very things we need. Prayer from the humble, contrite heart is the vital breath of the soul hungering for righteousness.—[The Signs of the Times, December 3, 1896](#).

Holy Spirit in the life produces powerful prayers in public—I urge my ministering brethren to improve in their manner of praying. This can and must be done. I must say to them, The shorter you make your spiritless prayers, the better will it be for the congregation. It is generally the case that the less of heaven's vitality there is in a prayer,

the more lengthy it is. Do not spend a long time in prayer before a congregation unless you know that God is inditing the prayer. Let the prayers made in public be short and full of earnestness. The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much; but the prayer uttered in a low, monotonous tone and spiritless manner is not accepted by God. The voice of prayer should rise to God from hearts burdened by a sense of need. Let there be a revival of the Holy Spirit, that your prayers may be filled with the power of heaven.—[The Review and Herald, January 14, 1902.](#)

Public prayers should be spoken slowly, distinctly, and loudly enough so all may hear and unite in saying Amen—When in the congregation you offer prayer, remember that you are addressing God, and that He desires you to speak so that all who are present can hear and can blend their supplications with yours. A prayer uttered so hurriedly that the words are jumbled together, is no honor [181] to God and does the hearers no good. Let ministers and all who offer public prayer learn to pray in such a way that God will be glorified and the hearers will be blessed. Let them speak slowly and distinctly, and in tones loud enough to be heard by all, so that the people may unite in saying Amen.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:383.](#)

Simple language should be used in public prayer—High-flown language is inappropriate in prayer, whether the prayer be offered in the pulpit, in the family circle, or in secret. Especially should one use simple language when offering public prayer, that others may understand what he says, and unite with his petition.—[The Signs of the Times, November 18, 1903.](#)

We should customarily bow on our knees when praying—Both in public and in private worship, it is our duty to bow upon our knees [*There are instances where Ellen White stood at the desk while offering prayers of consecration during church services. See [Selected Messages 3:266-270.](#)*] before God when we offer our petitions to Him. Jesus, our example, “kneeling down, and prayed.” And of His disciples it is recorded that they, too, “kneeling down, and prayed.” Stephen “kneeling.” Paul declared: “I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” In confessing before God the sins of Israel, Ezra knelt. Daniel “kneeling upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God.” And the invitation of the psalmist is: “O come, let us worship and bow down:

let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.”—[The Review and Herald, November 30, 1905.](#)

Offering Appeal

An offering appeal should include both the practical need and the spiritual motivation for giving—I appeal to the congregation that regularly assemble at our Tabernacle: Will you not bring in your offerings to lift the debt from the Lord’s house? I appeal to those who send their children to Battle Creek, where they unite with us in the worship of God: Will you not assist us to lift this debt? I invite all to be especially liberal at this time. Let cheerful freewill—offerings be brought to the Lord, let us consecrate to Him all that we are, and all that we have....—[The Review and Herald, January 4, 1881.](#)

Offering appeals should emphasize the motive in giving more than the amount given—We have the privilege of listening to God’s word in our place of worship; but this building, called the Lord’s house, has a heavy debt. Shall not we who worship in this commodious edifice put forth earnest efforts to do our share in lifting the debt from the Tabernacle? The poor may be encouraged by the thought that the smallest sums, given in sincerity and cheerfulness, are as acceptable to God as are the thousands cast into the treasury by the rich. There are but few as poor as the widow who gave her two mites as an offering to God. The gift was small, yet it was all her living, and she was commended by the Master. He regarded the two mites of the poor widow as a greater contribution than the rich gifts of the wealthy. He did not measure the value of the offering by its amount, but by the motive, the cheerfulness and purity of the action.—[The Review and Herald, January 4, 1881.](#)

[182]

Christmas should be a special time for bringing gifts to Jesus—Yesterday was Christmas. Did you do as the Wise Men did by offering your gifts to Jesus? Or has the enemy changed the order of things, and directed the worship to himself? The gifts are now bestowed upon friends instead of Him who has made so great a sacrifice for us. All the gifts should flow in another channel, where they could be used in the salvation of men.—[The Upward Look, 374.](#)

Reading Scripture

Clear, distinct utterance is essential in public Bible reading—I am pained as I see how little the gift of speech is appreciated. In reading the Bible, in engaging in prayer, in bearing testimony in meeting, how necessary is clear, distinct utterance!—[Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 241](#).

Bible may be read by ministers so impressively that listeners never forget them—When I was only about eleven years old, I heard a minister read the account of Peter's imprisonment, as recorded in the book of Acts; and he read in so impressive a manner that the details of the story in all their reality seemed to be passing before my eyes. So deep was the impression made upon my mind that I have never forgotten it.—[The Voice in Speech and Song, 392, 393](#).

Chapter 32—Prayer Meeting

[183]

The church must pray often—Jesus prayed! The Majesty of Heaven prayed! He wept in behalf of man. Prayer, faithful, earnest prayer will move the arm that moves the world. The minister of Christ must pray if he would have the refreshing from the presence of God. The church must pray much if they would walk in the light, as He is in the light.—[The Signs of the Times, January 15, 1880.](#)

Prayer meeting is the pulse of the church body—A prayer meeting will always tell the true interest of the church members in spiritual and eternal things. The prayer meeting is as the pulse to the body; it denotes the true spiritual condition of the church. A lifeless, backslidden church has no relish for the prayer meetings.—[Selections from Testimonies to the Managers and Workers in our Institutions \(Ph 149\) 32.](#)

Members should give prayer meeting a higher priority—Many declare that it is certainly no harm to go to a concert and neglect the prayer-meeting, or absent themselves from meetings where God’s servants are to declare a message from heaven. It is safe for you to be just where Christ has said He would be. Those who appreciate the words of Christ will not turn aside from the prayer-meeting, or from the meeting where the Lord’s messenger has been sent to tell them concerning things of eternal interest. Jesus has said, “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Can you afford to choose your pleasure and miss the blessing? It is indulgence in these things that has a telling influence not only on your own life and character, but upon the life and character of your associates. If all who profess to be followers of Christ would be so in deed and in truth, they would have the mind of Christ, and would work the works of God. They would resist temptation to indulge self, and would show that they do not enjoy the frivolous pleasure of the world more than the privilege of meeting with Christ in the social meeting. They would

then have a decided influence upon others, and lead them to follow their example.—[The Youth's Instructor, April 23, 1912.](#)

[184] **Those really seeking for communion with God will be seen in the prayer meeting**—There is necessity for diligence in prayer; let nothing hinder you. Make every effort to keep open the communion between Jesus and your own soul. Seek every opportunity to go where prayer is wont to be made. Those who are really seeking for communion with God will be seen in the prayer meeting, faithful to do their duty and earnest and anxious to reap all the benefits they can gain. They will improve every opportunity of placing themselves where they can receive the rays of light from heaven.—[Steps to Christ, 98.](#)

Effective prayer meeting results when each who attends feels personally responsible for its success—Before leaving home, go to God in secret prayer. Plead with Him for His blessing, and He who “seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.” With your heart softened by the love of Jesus, go to the meeting, feeling that you are personally responsible for its success. If but few attend, you should feel under double responsibility. You are in the service of God, and should do what you can with your talent, tact, and skill to make His worship interesting.—[The Signs of the Times, December 4, 1884.](#)

Prayer meeting need not be dull, spiritless, and unattractive—Christians do not always make the public worship of God of sufficient importance. They do not realize their responsibility in the matter. The prayer-meeting, especially, is often dull, spiritless, and unattractive. But it need not be. Even where few love the hour of prayer, it may be made interesting and profitable. The presence of Jesus is not confined to large assemblies.—[The Signs of the Times, December 4, 1884.](#)

If people find the Bread of Life at prayer meeting, they will go there to receive it—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 prayer meeting, they will go there to receive it.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:70.](#)

Testimonies

The testimony meeting may be considered the most precious of all meetings—What deep and grave importance is attached to these little assemblies! Jesus Christ has paid the ransom money of His own blood for their souls, and He is in the midst of them when they meet to worship God. The Majesty of heaven identifies His interests with those of the believers, however humble may be their circumstances. And wherever they are privileged to meet together, it is appropriate that they speak often one to another, giving utterance to the gratitude and love that results from thinking upon the name of the Lord. Thus shall God be glorified as He hearkens and hears, and the testimony meeting will be considered the most precious of all meetings.—[Our High Calling, 168](#)

[185]

Meetings are interesting when everyone has something to say for the Lord—The Lord has shown me that great interest should be taken by Sabbathkeepers to keep up their meetings and make them interesting. There is great necessity of more interest and energy being manifested in this direction. All should have something to say for the Lord, for by so doing they will be blest. A book of remembrance is written of those who do not forsake the assembling of themselves together, but speak often one to another. The remnant are to overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. Some expect to overcome alone by the blood of the Lamb, without making any special effort of their own. I saw that God has been merciful in giving us the power of speech. He has given us a tongue, and we are accountable to Him for its use. We should glorify God with our mouth, speaking in honor of the truth and of His unbounded mercy, and overcome by the word of our testimony through the blood of the Lamb.—[Early Writings, 114](#).

Testimonies should be short and of a nature to help others—The prayer and social meeting should be a season of special help and encouragement. All should feel it a privilege to take part. Let every one who bears the name of Christ have something to say in the social meeting. The testimonies should be short, and of a nature to help others. Nothing will so completely kill the spirit of devotion as for one person to take up twenty or thirty minutes

in a long testimony. This means death to the spirituality of the meeting.—[Gospel Workers, 171](#).

Cold prayers and long testimonies cast a shadow over the prayer meeting—There are some, I fear, who do not take their troubles to God in private prayer, but reserve them for the prayer meeting, and there do up their praying for several days. Such may be named conference and prayer meeting killers. They emit no light; they edify no one. Their cold, frozen prayers and long, backslidden testimonies cast a shadow. All are glad when they get through, and it is almost impossible to throw off the chill and darkness which their prayers and exhortations bring into the meeting. From the light which I have received, our meetings should be spiritual and social, and not too long. Reserve, pride, vanity, and fear of man should be left at home. Little differences and prejudices should not be taken with us to these meetings. As in a united family, simplicity, meekness, confidence, and love should exist in the hearts of brethren and sisters who meet to be refreshed and invigorated by bringing their lights together.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:578](#).

[186] **Bring no dull, complaining spirit into the prayer meeting**—Many prayers and testimonies are as destitute of the Spirit of God as a dry sponge is of moisture; for there is no Jesus abiding in the heart. This makes the prayer-meeting cold and lifeless, and it is no wonder that children dread such seasons. Bring no dull, complaining spirit into the prayer-meeting. Do not compare notes to see how sorrowful a story you can tell. There is enough to talk about without raising one doleful strain. When we are willing to come as little children, conscious of our own weakness, and willing to be instructed by the Divine Teachers, our hearts will be filled with the love of Jesus, and we shall long to speak of his matchless worth. We shall cease to talk of self. Our trials will look so small that we shall forget to mention them. We have many blessings. Let us cultivate gratitude, and talk of the goodness of God.—[The Signs of the Times, December 4, 1884](#).

If the minister is surrendered, the Holy Spirit speaks through every discourse and makes it effective—It is the efficiency of the Holy Spirit that makes the ministry of the Word effective. When Christ speaks through the minister, the Holy Spirit prepares the hearts of the listeners to receive the Word. The Holy Spirit is not a servant, but a controlling power. He causes the truth to shine into minds, and speaks through every discourse where the minister surrenders himself to the divine working. It is the Spirit that surrounds the soul with a holy atmosphere, and speaks to the impenitent through words of warning, pointing them to Him who takes away the sin of the world.—[Gospel Workers, 155](#).

Do not present to others what your own soul has not felt—There is danger that ministers who profess to believe present truth will rest satisfied with presenting the theory only, while their own souls do not feel its sanctifying power. Some have not the love of God in the heart, softening, molding, and ennobling their lives.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:526](#).

We should not be satisfied using discourses that we have preached over and over—Brethren, we should not go into the desk unless we have previously devoted some time to wrestling with God in prayer. We should not be satisfied to use the set discourses that we have preached over and over for the last ten, fifteen, or twenty years. We should draw fresh, new matter from the store-house of God's Word. We are desirous that the angels of God may stand by our side when we are in the sacred desk, that God may impress the mind; that there may be glorious unfoldings of the truth; that it may be presented in the demonstration of the Spirit; that it may be meat in due season to the flock of God.—[The Review and Herald, June 4, 1889](#).

Heaven is ashamed of preachers who do less than their best in the sacred desk—Heaven is ashamed of many who are engaged in all branches of the work, and especially is Heaven ashamed of

[188] those who are called to the sacred desk, and yet who do not try to do their best. Many read newspapers and periodicals and books, and neglect the study of their Bibles. They do not wrestle with God in the closet, for the help which He alone can give. They go forth to their work spiritless and without Christ. Ministers go before their congregations, presenting fragments of a long-used discourse, instead of a fresh portion of meat in due season for the people. They drift into dry, controverted subjects, and the flock of God is unfed.—[The Review and Herald, May 20, 1890.](#)

Biblical

Many ministers take their text from St. Paul and preach from the newspapers—Flowery discourses will not be sufficient to feed the soul of the famishing child of God. The following desire will give a voice to the longing of many a heart that is fed on what are called “smart sermons.” An intelligent man remarked, “O that my pastor would give me something besides pretty flowers, and brilliant periods, and intellectual treats! My soul is famishing for the Bread of Life. I long for something simple and nourishing and scriptural.” Daniel Webster gave utterance to these forcible words: “If clergymen in our day would return to the simplicity of gospel truth, and preach more to individuals and less to the crowd, there would not be so much complaint of the decline of true religion. Many of the ministers of the present day take their text from St. Paul, and preach from the newspapers. When they do so, I prefer to enjoy my own thoughts, rather than listen. I want my pastor to come to me in the Spirit of the gospel, saying, ‘You are mortal. Your probation is brief, your work must be done speedily.... You are hastening to the bar of God. The Judge standeth before the door.’ ”—[The Review and Herald, June 23, 1891.](#)

Well educated shepherds may still not feed their flock if they do not consider the excellencies of Scripture—But the oracles of God have been so manifestly neglected that there are but few in our world, even of those who profess to explain it to others, who have the divine knowledge of the Scriptures. There are learned men who have a college education, but these shepherds do not feed the flock of God. They do not consider that the excellencies of the Scriptures will be

continually unfolding their hidden treasures as precious jewels are discovered by digging for them.—[Selected Messages 1:15](#).

Human assertions are of no value. Let the Word speak to the people—If ministers who are called upon to preach the most solemn message ever given to mortals, evade the truth, they are unfaithful in their work, and are false shepherds to the sheep and the lambs. The assertions of man are of no value. Let the Word of God speak to the people. Let those who have heard only traditions and maxims of men, hear the voice of God, whose promises are Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus. If the character and deportment of the shepherd is a living epistle to the people of the truth which he advocates, the Lord will set His seal to the work. True friendships will be formed with the people, and the shepherd and the flock will become one, united by a common hope in Christ Jesus.—[The Review and Herald, March 11, 1902](#).

Preachers who study their Bibles prayerfully, will see new beauty in every line—A great work must be accomplished for ministers in order for them to make the preaching of the truth a success. The Word of God should be thoroughly studied. All other reading is inferior to this. A careful study of the Bible will not necessarily exclude all other reading of a religious nature; but if the Word of God is studied prayerfully, all reading which will have a tendency to divert the mind from it will be excluded. If we study the Word of God with an interest, and pray to understand it, new beauties will be seen in every line. God will reveal precious truth so clearly that the mind will derive sincere pleasure and have a continual feast as its comforting and sublime truths are unfolded.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:337](#).

[189]

Search the Word to find truths both new and old for the benefit of others—The minister of the gospel of Christ is to watch for souls as he that must give an account. He is to be often on his knees in prayer, asking for heavenly wisdom, that he may strengthen “the things which remain, that are ready to die.” By living in accordance with the will of God, he is to place himself under divine power. The Word of God is to be his guide. In this Word there are promises, directions, warnings, and reproofs, which he is to use in his work as the occasion may require. With a humble heart and a willing mind he is to search this Word, that for the benefit of others he may draw

from the storehouse of truth things new and old. He is ever to seek to lead minds to gain a personal knowledge of the truth. Many are sorely tempted and ready to die because they have not a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.—[The Review and Herald, January 21, 1902.](#)

Up to this time, Bible truths are but feebly understood—Oh that it might be said of ministers who are preaching to the people and to the churches, “Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures”! I tell you in the fear of God that up to this time, the Bible truths connected with the great plan of redemption are but feebly understood. The truth will be continually unfolding, expanding, and developing, for it is Divine, like its Author.—[Selected Messages 3:188.](#)

Preach prophecy and center it on Christ—Ministers should present the sure word of prophecy as the foundation of the faith of Seventh-day Adventists. The prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation should be carefully studied, and in connection with them the words, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”—[Evangelism, 196.](#)

[190] **Do your own work**—The subjects which many of our ministers present before the people are not half as connected and as clear and strong in argument as they should be. They profess to be teachers of the Word, but they sadly neglect to search the Scriptures for themselves. They are content to use the arguments which are prepared in pamphlets and books, and which others have labored earnestly to search out; but they are not willing to tax their minds to study them out for themselves. In order to make full proof of their ministry, those who open the Word of God to others should search the Scriptures diligently. They should not be content to use other men’s thoughts, but should dig for truth as for hid treasures. While it is perfectly right to gather ideas from other minds, they should not be satisfied to take those ideas and repeat them in a poll-parrot manner. Make these ideas your own, brethren; frame the arguments yourselves, from your own study and research. Do not borrow the productions of other men’s brains and pens, and recite them as a lesson; but make the most of the talents, the brain power, that God has given you.—[The Review and Herald, April 6, 1886.](#)

Christ-centered

Study, and learn of Jesus—The minister of the gospel is never exhorted to strive to be a smart preacher, a popular speaker, but is commanded to “study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.” Will every messenger of God give heed to these words? We are laborers together with God, and if those who accept the responsibility of holding forth the Word of life to others do not daily yoke up with Christ, and lift His burdens, and learn of Jesus day by day; it were better for them to seek some other employment.—[This Day With God, 119.](#)

Study the character of Christ—The living water may be drawn from the fountain and yet there is no diminution of the supply. Ministers of the gospel would be powerful men if they set the Lord always before them and devoted their time to the study of His adorable character. If they did this, there would be no apostasies, there would be none separated from the conference because they have, by their licentious practices, disgraced the cause of God and put Jesus to an open shame. The powers of every minister of the gospel should be employed to educate the believing churches to receive Christ by faith as their personal Saviour, to take Him into their very lives and make Him their Pattern, to learn of Jesus, believe in Jesus, and exalt Jesus. The minister should himself dwell on the character of Christ. He should ponder the truth, and meditate upon the mysteries of redemption especially the mediatorial work of Christ for this time.—[Selected Messages 3:187.](#)

Salvation through Christ is to be the burden of every sermon—The science of salvation is to be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song. Let it be poured forth in every supplication. Let nothing be brought into the preaching of the Word to supplement Christ, the Word and power of God. Let His name, the only name given under heaven whereby we may be saved, be exalted in every discourse, and from Sabbath to Sabbath let the trumpet of the watchmen give a certain sound. Christ is the science and eloquence of the gospel, and His ministers are to hold forth the Word of life, presenting hope to the penitent, peace to the troubled and despond-

[191]

ing, and grace and completeness and strength to the believing.—[The Voice in Speech and Song, 337.](#)

The true preacher lifts up Jesus as the sinners only hope—If the man who feels that he is called of God to be a minister will humble himself and learn of Christ, he will become a true preacher. If his lips are touched with a live coal from the altar, he will lift up Jesus as the sinner's only hope. When the heart of the speaker is sanctified through the truth, his words will be living realities to himself and to others. Those who hear him will know that he has been with God, and has drawn near to him in fervent, effectual prayer. The Holy Spirit has fallen upon him, his soul has felt the vital, heavenly fire, and he is able to compare spiritual things with spiritual. Power will be given him to tear down the strongholds of Satan. Hearts will be broken by his presentation of the love of God, and many will inquire. "What must I do to be saved?"—[The Review and Herald, April 15, 1902.](#)

Many hearers want and need a clear explanation of conversion—Ministers should present the truth in a clear, simple manner. There are among their hearers many who need a plain explanation of the steps requisite in conversion. The great masses of the people are more ignorant on this point than is supposed. Among graduates from college, eloquent orators, able statesmen, men in high positions of trust, there are many who have given their powers to other matters, and have neglected the things of greatest importance. When such men form part of a congregation, the speaker often strains every power to preach an intellectual discourse, and fails to reveal Christ. He does not show that sin is the transgression of the law. He does not make plain the plan of salvation. That which would have touched the hearts of his hearers, would have been to point them to Christ dying to bring redemption within their reach.—[Gospel Workers, 170.](#)

Christ crucified, ascended, and coming again should so gladden ministers that they will present these truths to the people—Oh, that I could command language of sufficient force to make the impression I wish to make upon my fellow laborers in the gospel! My brethren, you are handling the words of life; you are dealing with minds that are capable of the highest development, if directed in the right channel. But there is too much exhibition of self in the discourses given. Christ crucified, Christ ascended into the heavens,

Christ coming again, should so soften, gladden, and fill the mind of the minister of the gospel that he will present these truths to the people in love and deep earnestness. The minister will then be lost sight of and Jesus magnified. The people will be so impressed with these all-absorbing subjects that they will talk of them and praise them, instead of praising the minister, the mere instrument.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:399](#). [192]

Christ-centered sermons come from Christ-centered preachers—Will my brethren take heed that no glory is given to men? Will they acknowledge that Christ does the work upon the human heart, and not they themselves? Will my ministering brethren plead with God alone in secret prayer for his presence and his power? Dare not to preach another discourse until you know, by your own experience, what Christ is to you.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 154, 155](#).

Relating Faith to Life

Through visitation, ministers learn how to feed the flock—It is in the labor out of the pulpit, among families, that the richest and most valuable experience is gained, and that the minister learns how he can feed the flock of God, giving to each his portion of meat in due season. If there is a backslider, the shepherd knows how to present the truth in such a manner that the soul will be convicted. He will leave the ninety and nine, and seek the lost sheep. But if the shepherd does not visit his flock, he knows not their condition, he knows not what truths to set before them, nor what is appropriate to their case.—[Appeal and Suggestions to Conference Officers, 18 \(Ph 2\)](#).

Practical Application

Practical religion should have a place in every discourse—A constant effort to promote personal piety should be seen in the minister's public labors. Sermon after sermon should not be given on the prophecies alone. Practical religion should have a place in every discourse.—[The Signs of the Times, March 16, 1882](#).

Sermons should fortify hearers for the daily battles of life—Paul was an eloquent speaker. Before his conversion he had often sought to impress his hearers by flights of oratory. But now he set all this aside. Instead of indulging in poetic descriptions and fanciful representations, which might please the senses and feed the imagination, but which would not touch the daily experience, Paul sought by the use of simple language to bring home to the heart the truths that are of vital importance. Fanciful representations of truth may cause an ecstasy of feeling, but all too often truths presented in this way do not supply the food necessary to strengthen and fortify the believer for the battles of life. The immediate needs, the present trials, of struggling souls—these must be met with sound, practical instruction in the fundamental principles of Christianity.—[The Acts of the Apostles, 251.](#)

[193]

Inappropriate Illustrations

Many illustrations belittle the sacred dignity of preaching—We do not want to lose sight of the peculiar sacredness of this mission of ministering in word and in doctrine to the people. It is the work of the minister to speak the words of truth to the people, solemn, sacred truth. Some form the habit of relating anecdotes in their discourses, which have a tendency to amuse and remove from the mind of the hearer the sacredness of the Word which they are handling. Such should consider that they are not giving to the people the Word of the Lord. Too many illustrations do not have a correct influence; they belittle the sacred dignity that should ever be maintained in the presentation of the Word of God to the people.—[The Review and Herald, February 22, 1887.](#)

Flowery speeches or inappropriate anecdotes do not convict the sinner—Unless ministers are guarded, they will hide the truth under human ornamentation. Let no minister suppose that he can convert souls by eloquent sermons. Those who teach others should plead with God to imbue them with His Spirit, and enable them to lift up Christ as the sinner's only hope. Flowery speeches, pleasing tales, or inappropriate anecdotes do not convict the sinner. Men listen to such words as they would to a pleasant song. The message that the sinner should hear is, "God so loved the world, that He gave

His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”—[Evangelism, 189](#).

Good Illustrations

Christ’s figures and illustrations help make the truth plain—Christ has the right and power to lay all human agencies and influences under tribute in His work for humanity. He uses human instrumentalities, and He does not destroy the individuality of His servants. He puts the Holy Spirit upon them, and shuts them in with Himself, and they have the mind of Christ, and become co-workers with Him. He presents before their minds figures and illustrations with which they are familiar, to make plain the truth He wishes them to communicate, and the Holy Spirit assists them in the use of these figures and illustrations.—BE Aug. 19, 1895.

Jesus’ Illustrations

Christ’s illustrations won attention, used imagination, and repeated His lessons—His messages of mercy were varied to suit His audience. He knew “how to speak a word in season to him that is weary;” for grace was poured upon His lips, that He might convey to men in the most attractive way the treasures of truth. He had tact to meet the prejudiced minds, and surprise them with illustrations that won their attention. Through the imagination He reached the heart. His illustrations were taken from the things of daily life, and although they were simple, they had in them a wonderful depth of meaning. The birds of the air, the lilies of the field, the seed, the shepherd and the sheep,—with these objects Christ illustrated immortal truth; and ever afterward, when His hearers chanced to see these things of nature, they recalled His words. Christ’s illustrations constantly repeated His lessons.—[The Desire of Ages, 254](#).

[194]

Christ gathered illustrations from the customs and experiences of daily life—Christ never flattered men; He never spoke that which would exalt their fancies and imaginations, or praised them for their clever inventions. But those who were deep, unprejudiced thinkers received His words, and found that it put their wisdom to the stretch to comprehend the spiritual truths which He revealed in

the simplest language. The so-called great men of the world are generally the most ignorant in regard to what constitutes true religion, and it is fitting to address to them the most simple language, for the eloquence of the truth forces conviction upon the soul. Both the educated and the uneducated have need to be addressed in the plainest, simplest language. The advocates of truth should learn from the World's Redeemer, and pattern after the greatest Teacher the world ever knew, who spake as never man spake.

Although the language of Christ was simple, the most educated were charmed with His manner of teaching, and the uneducated were always profited by His discourses. He used illustrations gathered from the customs and experiences of daily life, and whenever His hearers looked upon the familiar things of nature, the words of Christ were recalled to the mind. He drew illustrations from the birds of the air, the lilies of the field, from the shepherds of the flock, and various things of common occurrence in daily life. Thus were the lessons of Jesus made simple for the comprehension of the people. Instruction of the greatest importance was bound up in the smallest compass, and was so clearly stated that no one needed to misunderstand. The scribes and the Pharisees alone complained of finding it difficult to understand His teachings; but the reason of this was that they were filled with prejudice, and were determined to misconstrue His words. The common people heard Him gladly, for to the poor the gospel was preached, and many bore testimony to the fact that "never man spake like this man."—[Sabbath-School Worker, January 1, 1895](#).

The purpose of both illustration and the incarnation is to teach the unknown through the known—In Christ's parable teaching the same principle is seen as in His own mission to the world. That we might become acquainted with His divine character and life, Christ took our nature and dwelt among us. Divinity was revealed in humanity; the invisible glory in the visible human form. [195] Men could learn of the unknown through the known; heavenly things were revealed through the earthly; God was made manifest in the likeness of men. So it was in Christ's teaching: the unknown was illustrated by the known; divine truths by earthly things with which the people were most familiar.—[Christ's Object Lessons, 17](#).

Positive Versus Negative

Ministers must both encourage the obedient and warn the disobedient—Would that every minister might realize the sacredness of his office and the holiness of his work, and show the courage that Elijah showed. As divinely appointed messengers, ministers are in a position of awful responsibility. They are to reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering. In Christ's stead they are to labor as stewards of the mysteries of Heaven, encouraging the obedient, and warning the disobedient.—[The Review and Herald, September 11, 1913.](#)

Negative

Guilt, wrong, and sin are parts of the Laodicean message that the Adventist preacher must not neglect—Ministers who are preaching present truth should not neglect the solemn message to the Laodiceans. The testimony of the True Witness is not a smooth message. The Lord does not say to them, You are about right, you have borne chastisement and reproof that you never deserved, you have been discouraged unnecessarily by severity, you are not guilty of the wrongs and sins of which you have been reproved.—[The Review and Herald, September 16, 1873.](#)

Do not choose subjects that please people and offend none—Some ministers choose for their sermons subjects that will please the people and offend none. This is shunning the cross of Christ. You see one man selfish; another controlled by pride or passion; another robbing God in tithes and offerings; and another doubting and unbelieving. Do not leave these deceived ones to remain blinded by the enemy in regard to their own spiritual standing. For each of these there is a special message in the Word of God. Pray for wisdom that you may be able so to present the instructions of that sacred Word that all may see wherein their characters are defective, and what is required of them in order to conform to the true standard. Win their confidence and affection. Bring the truth as it is in Jesus to bear upon their hearts; for there is no other power that can keep the soul steadfast.—[The Review and Herald, June 17, 1884.](#)

Positive

[196] **Let us show that we have a living hope**—I have been referred by the Spirit of God to the many encouragements given to us in the Psalm. If more of our ministers were filled with soul-longings for God, His people would take hold of these encouragements, and thanksgiving and praise would flow from human lips. Encouragement and hope would come to many souls who are now weary and discouraged. If our people would realise the possibilities that lie in increased faith and prayer, there would be a decided change in our churches. Those who are now downcast and worried, would be lifted up from their discouragements, and would rejoice in the Lord. Brethren and sisters, let us show that we have a living hope, that our service is a living service.—([Australasian\) Union Conference Record, April 29, 1907.](#)

Plead for the warmth of Christ's love—Ministers too often act the part of critics, showing their aptness and sharpness in controversy. Sabbath after Sabbath passes away, and scarcely an impression of the grace of Christ is made upon the hearts and minds of the hearers. Thus the ministry comes to be regarded as unimportant. All heaven is working for the salvation of sinners; and when the poorest of the human family comes with repentance to his Father, as did the prodigal son, there is joy among the heavenly host. There is warmth and courtesy and love in heaven. Let ministers go before God in prayer, confessing their sins, and with all the simplicity of a little child ask for the blessings that they need. Plead for the warmth of Christ's love, and then bring it into your discourses; and let no one have occasion to go away and say that the doctrines you believe unfit you for expressing sympathy with suffering humanity—that you have a loveless religion.—([Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 153, 154.](#)

Conviction

Christ's messages pierced the conscience and revealed the inmost thoughts—When Christ preached, His message was like a sharp, two-edged sword, piercing the consciences of men and revealing their inmost thoughts. The work that Christ did His faithful

messengers will have to do. In simplicity, purity, and the strictest integrity they are to preach the Word. Those who labor in word or doctrine are to be faithful to their charge. They are to watch for souls as they that must give an account. Never are they to clothe a “Thus saith the Lord” with enticing words of man’s wisdom. Thus they destroy its living energy, making it weak and powerless, so that it fails to convict of sin. Every word spoken by the direction of the Holy Spirit will be full of the deepest solicitude for the salvation of souls.—[Selected Messages 2:159](#).

Feeling

Preaching must reach both mind and heart—The preaching of the Word should appeal to the intellect and should impart knowledge, but it should do more than this. The minister’s utterances, to be effectual, must reach the hearts of his hearers.—[Gospel Workers, 152](#).

Tame truth cannot convert. Sleeping ministers preach to sleeping people—By tamely presenting the truth, merely repeating the theory without being stirred by it themselves, they can never convert men. If they should live as long as did Noah, their efforts would be without effect. Their love for souls must be intense, and their zeal fervent. A listless, unfeeling manner of presenting the truth will never arouse men and women from their deathlike slumber. They must show by their manners, by their acts and words, and by their preaching and praying, that they believe that Christ is at the door. Men and women are in the last hours of probation, and yet are careless and stupid, and preachers have no power to arouse them; they are asleep themselves. Sleeping ministers preaching to a sleeping people!—[Testimonies for the Church 2:337](#).

[197]

Decision

Too often, preaching includes no direct appeals—No one can tell what is lost by attempting to preach without the unction of the Holy Spirit. In every congregation there are souls who are hesitating, almost decided to be wholly for God. Decisions are being made; but too often the minister has not the spirit and power of the message,

and no direct appeals are made to those who are trembling in the balance.—[Gospel Workers, 151](#).

Win decisions by combining the theory of the truth and Christ's redeeming love—Some ministers err in making their sermons wholly argumentative. There are those who listen to the theory of the truth, and are impressed with the evidences brought out; then, if Christ is presented as the Saviour of the world, the seed sown may spring up and bear fruit to the glory of God. But often the cross of Calvary is not presented before the people. Some may be listening to the last sermon they will ever hear, and the golden opportunity, lost, is lost forever. If in connection with the theory of the truth, Christ and His redeeming love had been proclaimed, these might have been won to His side.—[Gospel Workers, 158](#).

Delivery—Words

In simple language, with touching earnestness, present the truth as it is in Jesus—Ministers need to have a more clear, simple manner in presenting the truth as it is in Jesus.... Those who neglect this part of the work need to be converted themselves before venturing to give a discourse. Those whose hearts are filled with the love of Jesus, with the precious truths of His Word, will be able to draw from the treasure house of God things new and old. They will not find time to relate anecdotes; they will not strain to become orators, soaring so high that they cannot carry the people with them; but in simple language, with touching earnestness, they will present the truth as it is in Jesus.—[Selected Messages 1:157](#).

[198] **Ministers' words should be select, their speech sound**—The deportment of a minister while in the desk should be circumspect, not careless. He should not be negligent in regard to his attitude. He should possess order and refinement in the highest sense. God requires this of those who accept so responsible a work, that of receiving the words from His mouth and speaking them to the people, warning and reproving, correcting and comforting, as the case may require. God's representatives upon earth should be in daily communion with Him. Their words should be select, their speech sound. The haphazard words frequently used by ministers who preach not

the gospel in sincerity should be forever discarded.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:706](#).

Delivery—Gestures

In the desk, do not assume attitudes and expressions calculated for effect—I see that great reformation must take place in the ministry before it shall be what God would have it. Ministers in the desk have no license to behave like theatrical performers, assuming attitudes and expressions calculated for effect. They do not occupy the sacred desk as actors, but as teachers of solemn truths. There are also fanatical ministers, who, in attempting to preach Christ, storm, halloo, jump up and down, and pound the desk before them, as if this bodily exercise profited anything. Such antics lend no force to the truths uttered, but, on the contrary, disgust men and women of calm judgment and elevated views. It is the duty of men who give themselves to the ministry to leave all coarseness and boisterous conduct outside the desk at least.—[Evangelism, 640](#).

Refine your pulpit decorum—The man of God, the minister of Christ, is required to be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. A pompous minister, all dignity, is not needed for this good work. But decorum is necessary in the desk. A minister of the gospel should not be regardless of his attitude. If he is the representative of Christ, his deportment, his attitude, his gestures, should be of such a character as will not strike the beholder with disgust. Ministers should possess refinement. They should discard all uncouth manners, attitudes, and gestures, and should encourage in themselves humble dignity of bearing.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:648, 649](#).

Delivery—Voice and Diction

The unnatural strain of a forced voice in an unnatural tone wearies both preacher and people—A mistake has been made by many in their religious exercises in long praying and long preaching, upon a high key, with a forced voice, in an unnatural strain and an unnatural tone. The minister has needlessly wearied himself and really distressed the people by hard, labored exercise, which is all unnecessary. Ministers should speak in a manner to reach and

[199] impress the people. The teachings of Christ were impressive and solemn; His voice was melodious. And should not we, as well as Christ, study to have melody in our voices?—[Testimonies for the Church 2:617](#).

Preserve your usefulness by following the rules of proper speaking—Some of our most talented ministers are doing themselves great injury by their defective manner of speaking. While teaching the people their duty to obey God’s moral law, they should not be found violating the laws of God in regard to health and life. Ministers should stand erect, and speak slowly, firmly, and distinctly, taking a full inspiration of air at every sentence, and throwing out the words by exercising the abdominal muscles. If they will observe this simple rule, giving attention to the laws of health in other respects, they may preserve their life and usefulness much longer than men in any other profession. The chest will become broader, and ... the speaker need seldom become hoarse, even by constant speaking.—[Gospel Workers, 90](#).

Train your voice in such a way that it may be used to its highest capacity—Let those who labor in word and doctrine strive to perfect themselves in the use of language. The voice is a great power, and yet many have not trained their voices in such a way that they may be used to their highest capacity. Jesus is our example. His voice was musical, and was never raised in high, strained notes while He was speaking to the people. He did not speak so rapidly that His words were crowded one upon another in such a way that it made it difficult to understand Him. He distinctly enunciated every word, and those who heard His voice bore the testimony that “never man spake like this man.”—[The Review and Herald, March 5, 1895](#).

Delivery—Length

Do not give the people more than they can remember—Let the message for this time be presented, not in long, labored discourses, but in short talks, right to the point. Lengthy sermons tax the strength of the speaker and the patience of his hearers. If the speaker is one who feels the importance of his message, he will need to be especially careful lest he overtax his physical powers, and give

the people more than they can remember.—[Gospel Workers, 167, 168.](#)

When the discourse is too long, the last part detracts from that which preceded it—Speak short. Your discourses are generally double the length they should be. It is possible to handle a good thing in such a manner that it loses its flavor. When a discourse is too long, the last part of the preaching detracts from the force and interest of that which has preceded it. Do not wander, but come right to the point.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 311.](#)

That which is spoken in the first hour is of far more value if the sermon closes then—Those who shall be mouthpieces for God should know that their lips have been touched with a live coal from off the altar, and present the truth in the demonstration of the Spirit. But lengthy discourses are a taxation to the speaker and a taxation to the hearers who have to sit so long. One half the matter presented would be of more benefit to the hearer than the large mass poured forth by the speaker. That which is spoken in the first hour is of far more value if the sermon closes then than the words that are spoken in an added half hour. There is a burying up of the matter that has been presented.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 256.](#)

[200]

Chapter 34—Wedding

Angels attended the first wedding ceremony—I have often read these words: “Marriage is a lottery.” Some act as if they believed the statement, and their married life testifies that it is such to them. But true marriage is not a lottery. Marriage was instituted in Eden. After the creation of Adam, the Lord said, “It is not good that the man should be alone: I will make him an help meet [suitable] for him”. When the Lord presented Eve to Adam, angels of God were witnesses to the ceremony. But there are few couples who are completely united when the marriage ceremony is performed. The form of words spoken over the two who take the marriage vow, does not make them a unit. In their future life is to be the blending of the two in wedlock. It may be made a real happy union, if each will give to the other true, heart affection.—[Manuscript Releases 10:184](#).

Jesus was in full sympathy with the pure joy to be found at a marriage ceremony—By His presence Jesus honored the marriage ceremony. The active interest that He manifested on this occasion showed that He came not to put a cloud over the happiness of the family and the guests. Jesus was in full sympathy with the pure joy to be found in this occasion. By His presence He showed Himself to be in harmony with the blessed institution of marriage. And He gave His sanction to every gathering that is pure, and lovely, and of good report.—[Manuscript Releases 10:206](#).

Jesus began His ministry at a wedding to show His desire to minister to human happiness—Jesus did not begin His ministry by some great work before the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem. At a household gathering in a little Galilean village, His power was put forth to add to the joy of a wedding feast. Thus He showed His sympathy with men, and His desire to minister to their happiness. In the wilderness of temptation He Himself had drunk the cup of woe. He came forth to give to men the cup of blessing, by His benediction to hallow the relations of human life.—[The Desire of Ages, 144](#).

Mrs. White participated in a wedding at her own home—About 11:00 a.m. Tuesday our large dining room was prepared for the wedding ceremony. Brother Starr officiated in the service, and it passed off nicely. The request was made by Brother Hickox that Sister White should offer prayer after the marriage ceremony. The Lord gave me special freedom. My heart was softened and subdued by the Spirit of God. On this occasion there were no light jests or foolish sayings. Everything was solemn and sacred in connection with this marriage. Everything was of an elevating character and deeply impressive.—[Manuscript Releases 10:196](#).

[202]

In remarks made at a wedding, Ellen White urged the importance of blending together—And now I can at this time take by the hand this our brother; ... and we take by the hand you, his wife, and urge you to carry on the work of God unitedly. I would say, Make God your counselor. Blend, blend together.—[The Adventist Home, 102](#).

The wedding ceremony is a sacred service, not a time for hilarity—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.—[The Adventist Home, 101](#).

Weddings should be conducted without display and extravagance—Marriage ceremonies are made matters of display, extravagance, and self-indulgence. But if the contracting parties are agreed in religious belief and practice, and everything is consistent, and the ceremony be conducted without display and extravagance, marriage at this time need not be displeasing to God.—[The Adventist Home, 100](#).

Section 6—Pastoral Care and Nurture

[203]

- 35. Assimilating New Members
- 36. Church Discipline
- 37. Counseling
- 38. Former Members, Inactive Members
- 39. Personal Ministry to Members
- 40. Visitation of Special Member Groups

[204]

Chapter 35—Assimilating New Members

[205]

Ministers who stir up an interest, but leave the work in the rough, may need to be laid aside—Ministers should teach that all who accept the truth should bring forth fruit to the glory of God. They should teach that self-sacrifice must be practiced every day; that many things which have been cherished must be yielded; and that many duties, disagreeable though they may appear, must be performed. Business interests, social endearments, ease, honor, reputation,—in short, everything, must be held in subjection to the superior and ever-paramount claims of Christ. Ministers who are not men of vital piety, who stir up an interest among the people, but leave the work in the rough, leave an exceedingly difficult field for others to enter and finish the work they failed to complete. These men will be proved; and if they do not do their work more faithfully, they will, after a still further test, be laid aside as cumberers of the ground, unfaithful watchmen.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:317](#).

Give new members something to do—Those who are most actively employed in doing with interested fidelity their work to win souls to Jesus Christ are the best developed in spirituality and devotion. Their very active working formed the means of their spirituality. There is danger of religion losing in depth that which it gains in breadth. This need not be, if, in the place of long sermons, there is wise education given to those newly come to the faith. Teach them by giving them something to do, in some line of spiritual work, that their first love will not die but increase in fervour. Let them feel that they are not to be carried and to lean for support on the church; but they are to have root in themselves. They can be in many lines, according to their several abilities, useful in helping the church to come nearer to God, and working in various ways to act upon the elements outside the church which will be a means of acting beneficially upon the church.—[Evangelism, 356, 357](#).

Doctrinal Grounding

Give Bible studies to the newly converted to fully and firmly establish them in the truth—Direct the mind to Him who guides and controls all things. Christ will be the manna and the spiritual dew to these newly converted souls. In Him is no darkness at all. As men of spiritual understanding conduct Bible studies with them, telling them how to yield to the power of the Holy Spirit, that they may be fully and firmly established in the truth, the power of God will be revealed.—[Evangelism, 284](#).

[206]

Have special meetings with new members—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.”—[Testimonies for the Church 6:95](#).

Teach new converts to study the Scriptures—Upon all new converts should be impressed the truth that abiding knowledge can be gained only by earnest labor and persevering study. As a rule, those who are converted to the truth we preach have not previously been diligent students of the Scriptures; for in the popular churches there is little real study of the Word of God. The people look to the ministers to search the Scriptures for them and to explain what they teach.—[Evangelism, 367](#).

Reading grounds people in the truth—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.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:315](#).

Four neglected areas of instruction—Ministers frequently neglect these important branches of the work,—health reform, spiritual gifts, systematic benevolence, and the great branches of the missionary work. Under their labors large numbers may embrace the theory of the truth, but in time it is found that there are many who will not bear the proving of God. The minister laid upon the foundation, hay, wood, and stubble, which would be consumed by the fire of temptation. Some proved to be gold, silver, and precious stones; [207] these from principle would cling to the truth. But if the teacher of truth had brought these converts along as he should have done, presenting before them the obligation which rested upon them, many who afterward drew back to perdition, might have been saved.

Another minister follows the first, and in the fear of God presents the practical duties, the claims of God upon His people. Some draw back, saying, “Our minister who brought us the truth did not mention these things. We have been deceived. These things were kept back.” And they become offended because of the Word. Some will not accept the tithing system; they reject systematic benevolence, and become offended, turn away, and no longer walk with those who believe and love the truth. When the tract and missionary field is opened before them, inviting them to work in it, they answer, “It was not so taught us,” and they hesitate to engage in the work. How much better it would be for the cause, if the messenger of truth had faithfully and thoroughly educated these converts in regard to all these essential matters, even if there were less whom he could number as being added to the church under his labors.—[The Review and Herald, December 12, 1878](#).

Converts Copy Their Minister

When ministers walk with God their converts partake of their spirit—Converts seldom rise at once in spirituality above the level of their teachers. How important, then, that those teachers

should habitually put their trust in God, and seek for the manifestations of His divine power upon their labors; that they should be meek, spiritually-minded, and in constant communion with Heaven. Then those who are converted under their labors will partake of their spirit, and emulate their graces.—[The Review and Herald, August 8, 1878.](#)

Converts may set their affections more upon their minister than upon their Redeemer—The fact that a minister is applauded and praised is no evidence that he has spoken under the influence of the Spirit. It is too frequently the case that young converts, unless guarded, will set their affections more upon their minister than upon their Redeemer. They feel that they have been greatly benefited by their minister's labors. They conceive that he possesses the most exalted gifts and graces, and that no other can do as well as he; therefore they attach undue importance to the man and his labors. This is a confidence that disposes them to idolize the man, and look to him more than to God, and in doing this they do not please God nor grow in grace. They do great harm to the minister, especially if he is young, and developing into a promising gospel laborer.—[Evangelism, 330.](#)

[208]

Chapter 36—Church Discipline

[209]

Necessity of Discipline

Pastors having too little courage to reprove wrong are held accountable for the evil that may result—Those who have too little courage to reprove wrong, or who through indolence or lack of interest make no earnest effort to purify the family or the church of God, are held accountable for the evil that may result from their neglect of duty. We are just as responsible for evils that we might have checked in others by exercise of parental or pastoral authority as if the acts had been our own.—[Patriarchs and Prophets, 578.](#)

There will ever be a spirit to rise up against reproof—There will ever be a spirit to rise up against the reproof of sins and wrongs. But the voice of reproof should not be hushed because of this. Those whom God has set apart as ministers of righteousness have solemn responsibilities laid upon them to reprove the sins of the people. Paul commanded Titus, “These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.” There are ever those who will despise the one who dares to reprove sin. But when required, reproof must be given. Paul directs Titus to rebuke a certain class sharply, that they may be sound in the faith. And how shall the reproof be given? Let the apostle answer: “With all long-suffering and doctrine.” The one at fault must be shown that his course is not in harmony with the Word of God. But never should the wrongs of God’s people be passed by indifferently. Those who faithfully discharge their unpleasant duties under a sense of their accountability to God, will receive his blessing.—[The Signs of the Times, September 16, 1880.](#)

Those failing to reprove are not to be exalted—To exalt a minister as perfection because he has not displeased any one by reproofing errors, not only brings a snare upon the minister, but brings disaster upon the people. He who does not hurt the spiritual self-complacency of the people is almost deified by them, while a

devoted, faithful servant of God, who lays bare the errors of the church-members, is supposed to be defective, because he does not see what they suppose are their personal merits. He reprove wrongs which really exist, and this is counted an indignity, and his authority and instruction are cast aside and trodden under foot of men. [210] These extremes in the way the people look upon ministers are found among the professed children of God; and who will now examine their hearts, and tenderly, earnestly and faithfully set these things in order?—[The Review and Herald, July 25, 1893.](#)

Character deficiencies of members should burden pastors—Here we have presented before us the work of him who shall open the Scriptures to others. It is a most solemn work, and all who engage in it should be men of prayer. It is not enough for the minister to stand up in the desk and give an exposition of the Scriptures. His work has but just begun. There is pastoral work to do, and this means to reprove and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine; that is, he should present the Word of God, to show wherein there is a deficiency. If there is anything in the character of the professed followers of Christ, the burden should certainly be felt by the minister, and not that he should lord it over God's heritage. To deal with human minds is the nicest job that was ever committed to mortal man.—[Sermons and Talks, 1:61.](#)

God will not acknowledge as His shepherds those who speak smooth things—In this fearful time, just before Christ is to come the second time, God's faithful preachers will have to bear a still more pointed testimony than was borne by John the Baptist. A responsible, important work is before them; and those who speak smooth things, God will not acknowledge as His shepherds. A fearful woe is upon them.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:321.](#)

Church discipline is a disagreeable but necessary part of ministry—Paul charged Timothy to "preach the Word," but there was yet another part to be done,—“to reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.” This work cannot be neglected with safety. Ministers must be instant in season and out of season, watching for souls as they that must give an account. They must exercise great carefulness. Watch in all things, watch for the devices of Satan, lest you be beguiled from doing the disagreeable part of the work. Difficulties must not intimidate or discourage you. Having well-bal-

anced minds and established characters, meet the difficulties, and in overcoming them gain a rich experience.—[The Review and Herald, September 28, 1897.](#)

[211] **Although not congenial to the minister's natural inclinations, warnings are to be given, sins rebuked, and wrongs corrected**—He will have many straight and plain words to address to those who need them; for when God commissions men to do His work, He lays upon them the burden of watching for souls as they that must give an account. When needed warnings are to be given, sins are to be rebuked, errors and wrongs are to be corrected, not only in the pulpit but personal labor. This is divine work, and although it is not congenial to the natural inclinations, the minister must proclaim the straight truth which will make the ears of them that hear tingle; for they must lay before those who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, the dangers and perils that are around them, and the doom that awaits the impenitent. Because this message is not agreeable to their inclination, or welcome to those who must be warned, they are solemnly charged to be faithful in its declaration.—[The Review and Herald, September 6, 1892.](#)

Ministers do great harm by allowing their forbearance toward the erring to degenerate into toleration of their sins—Ministers of the gospel sometimes do great harm by allowing their forbearance toward the erring to degenerate into toleration of sins and even participation in them. Thus they are led to excuse and palliate that which God condemns; and after a time they become so blinded as to commend the very ones whom God commands them to reprove. The only safe-guard against these dangers is to add to patience godliness,—to reverence God, His character and His law, and to keep His fear ever before the mind. By communion with God, through prayer and the reading of His Word, we should cultivate such a sense of the holiness of His character that we shall regard sin as He regards it.—[The Acts of the Apostles, 504.](#)

Too many ministers leave plain dealing to be done by other ministers—Too many ministers neglect to deal faithfully with those with whom they come in contact. They leave plain dealing to be done by other ministers: for they do not want to run the risk of losing the friendship of those for whom they labor. If ministers would deal at the right time with those who err, they would prevent

an accumulation of wrong, and save souls from death. If the work of reproof is neglected by one minister, and taken up by another, those who are reproofed, receive the impression that the minister who did not point out their errors was a good minister. But this is not the case; he was merely a preacher, not a worker together with God for the suppression of sin. In the meekness of Jesus, you should do the work which will give full proof of your ministry. You should show a heartfelt sorrow for sin, but manifest no unholy passion in reproofing the error. All your efforts must be made with long-suffering and doctrine; and if you see but meager results of your work, do not be discouraged. This experience will call for the manifestation of long-suffering and patience. Keep working, be discreet, be discerning, understand when to speak and when to keep silence.—[The Review and Herald, September 28, 1897.](#)

People having a perverted sympathy for those under discipline are not helping them—I saw that some have been very jealous for you, fearing that you would not be rightly dealt with, and not have justice done you by your ministering brethren. Such should stand out of the way, and be faithful to confess their own wrongs, and let all the censure and weight of your wrongs rest upon your own head. God designs that they shall rest there until you thoroughly remove them by repentance and hearty confession. Those who have a perverted sympathy for you cannot help you. Let them manifest zeal in repenting of their own backslidings, and leave you to stand for yourself. You have been altogether out of the way, and unless you make thorough work, confess your wrongs without censuring your brethren, and are willing to be instructed, you can have no part with God's people.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:319.](#)

[212]

There is danger of doing too much to cure difficulties—The sincere believers of truth are made sad, and their trials and sorrows greatly increased, by the elements among them which annoy, dishearten, and discourage them in their efforts. But the Lord would teach His servants a lesson of great carefulness in all their moves. "Let both grow together." Do not forcibly pull up the tares, lest in rooting them up the precious blades will become loosened. Both ministers and church members should be very cautious, lest they get a zeal not according to knowledge. There is danger of doing too much to cure difficulties in the church, which, if let alone, will

frequently work their own cure. It is bad policy to take hold of matters in any church prematurely. We shall have to exercise the greatest care, patience, and self-control to bear these things and not go to work in our own spirit to set them in order.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:113](#).

Attitude in Discipline

Jesus taught love and tenderness toward the erring—I call to mind the shepherd hunting the lost sheep, and [the story of] the prodigal son. I want those parables to have their influence upon my heart and mind. I think of Jesus—what love and tenderness He manifested for erring, fallen man; and then I think of the severe judgment one pronounces upon his brother who has fallen under temptation, and my heart becomes sick. I see the iron in hearts, and think we should pray for hearts of flesh. Oh, how I long for Jesus to come! How I long for Him to set things in order! Come, Lord Jesus, and come quickly, is my prayer.—[Manuscript Releases 16:339](#).

Do not take away the erring's self-respect, but bind up and heal—We are to learn a lesson from the goodness and mercy and self-sacrificing life of the Father. We are to study how to give our sympathy and love to others. As we have received this priceless gift, so we are to impart it. We are to learn how to rule by love and kindness, rather than by severity and censure. When an erring person becomes conscious of his wrong, do not deal with him in a manner that will take away all his self-respect. Do not seek to tear to pieces, but to bind up and heal. You may see the errors of a brother. Yet he may not be able to discern his wrong; and it may be difficult to know how to act. But never pursue a course that will give him the impression that you regard yourself as his superior. You may think that your feelings, your pursuits, your organization, are superior to his, but do not seek to make this apparent; for such a course is altogether out of harmony with true refinement, true nobility of character. We are not to bruise the souls of the erring, but to go to them armed with humility and prayer. When the gospel minister, with his heart subdued by the love and grace of Christ, comes in touch with human minds, he can reveal his superior qualifications, not by destroying hope and courage, but by inspiring faith in the

faithless, by lifting up the hands that hang down, and confirming the feeble knees.—[The Review and Herald, November 21, 1899.](#)

A good shepherd approaches lost sheep, not with a harsh voice, but in soothing, winning tones—The shepherd's life is one full of peril. If he is a trustworthy shepherd, he will not be careless and study his own ease, but he will search for the straying sheep amid storm and tempest. Perhaps he will find the lost sheep slipped into some crevice of the rock, where he cannot find his way out. He is beset with fears on every hand. The good shepherd does not come with a harsh voice, scolding the poor frightened sheep, but he speaks in pitiful, soothing, winning tones, so that when the sheep hears his voice, he will follow, unless he is imprisoned in the rocks or tangled in the brambles. Then the only means by which the shepherd can find the sheep is by following up the bleat of distress that the wanderer sends in answer to his call. And when the good shepherd finds the lost one, he puts the weary wanderer upon his shoulder, and brings him back to the fold, rejoicing at every step.—[The Youth's Instructor, April 28, 1886.](#)

[214]

Chapter 37—Counseling

[215]

Counselors especially need the mind of Christ—Especially should those who have accepted the position of directors or counselors feel that they are required to be in every respect Christian gentlemen. While in dealing with others we are always to be faithful, we should not be rude. The souls with whom we have to do are the Lord's purchased possession, and we are to permit no hasty, overbearing expression to escape the lips. Brethren, treat men as men, not as servants, to be ordered about at your pleasure. He who indulges a harsh, overbearing spirit, might better become a tender of sheep, as did Moses, and thus learn what it means to be a true shepherd. Moses gained in Egypt an experience as a mighty statesman, and as a leader of the armies, but he did not there learn the lessons essential for true greatness. He needed an experience in more humble duties, that he might become a caretaker, tender toward every living thing. In keeping the flocks of Jethro, his sympathies were called out to the sheep and lambs, and he learned to guard these creatures of God with the gentlest care. Although their voice could never complain of mistreatment, yet their attitude might show much. God cares for all the creatures He has made. In working for God in this lowly station, Moses learned to be a tender shepherd for Israel.—SpT-A5, 18, 19.

The pastor needs to understand an endless variety of temperaments—As the physician deals with physical disease, so does the pastor minister to the sin-sick soul. And his work is as much more important than that of the physician as eternal life is more valuable than temporal existence. The pastor meets with an endless variety of temperaments, and it is his duty to become acquainted with the members of the families that listen to his teachings in order to determine what means will best influence them in the right direction.—[Gospel Workers, 338](#).

Family

The Word should be considered a family counselor—Parents need to reform; ministers need to reform; they need God in their households. If they would see a different state of things, they must bring His Word into their families and must make it their counselor. They must teach their children that it is the voice of God addressed to them, and is to be implicitly obeyed. They should patiently instruct their children, kindly and untiringly teach them how to live in order to please God. The children of such a household are prepared to meet the sophistries of infidelity. They have accepted the Bible as the basis of their faith, and they have a foundation that cannot be swept away by the incoming tide of skepticism.—[Patriarchs and Prophets, 143](#). [216]

Do not listen to the private troubles and family disappointments of women attracted to you—Women have been attracted to you, and have been ready to pour into your ears their private troubles and family disappointments. You ought not to lend an ear to them, but tell them that you are yourself only an erring mortal; that God is their helper.—[Mind, Character, and Personality 2:767](#).

If a woman manifests undue attention and mourns that her husband does not love her, do not try to supply this lack—Those who stand as ministers in the sacred desk should be men of blameless reputation; their lives should be spotless, above everything that savors of impurity. Do not place your reputation in jeopardy by going in the way of temptation. If a woman lingeringly holds your hand, quickly withdraw it and save her from sin. If she manifests undue affection and mourns that her husband does not love her and sympathize with her, do not try to supply this lack. Your only safe and wise course in such a case is to keep your sympathy to yourself. Such cases are numerous. Point such souls to the Burden Bearer, the true and safe Counselor. If she has chosen Christ as a companion, He will give her grace to bear neglect without repining; meanwhile she should diligently do all in her power to bind her husband to herself by strictest fidelity to him and faithfulness in making his home cheerful and attractive. If all her efforts are unavailing and unappreciated, she will have the sympathy and aid of her blessed Redeemer. He will help her to bear all her burdens and comfort

her in her disappointments. She shows distrust of Jesus when she reaches for human objects to supply the place that Christ is ever ready to fill. In her repining she sins against God. She would do well to examine her own heart critically to see if sin is not lurking in the soul. The heart that thus seeks human sympathy and accepts forbidden attentions from any one is not pure and faultless before God.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:598](#).

Grief

The minister offers grief counselees a special, significant hope—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.” One rich tide of happiness will flow and deepen as eternity rolls on.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:286](#).

[217] **Those not demonstrative in their grief may feel it deeper** [Ellen White speaks of the death of her son’s wife]—Poor Willie is indeed bereaved. He never is demonstrative, therefore he will mourn alone and feel it deeper. My heart is sore and sad.—EGW’88 678.

Grief can make the strongest despondent [Ellen White speaks of the death of her fourth child, three-month-old John Herbert]—After we returned from the funeral, my home seemed lonely. I felt reconciled to the will of God, yet despondency and gloom settled upon me.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:246](#).

Christianity brings a hope that rises above despondency in grief [Ellen White speaks of the death of her husband]—I shall give way to no outbursts of grief, if my heart breaks. I serve God, not impulsively, but intelligently. I have a Saviour who will be to me a very present help in time of trouble. I am a Christian. I know in whom I have believed. He expects from me implicit unwavering submission. Undue grief is displeasing to God. I take up my appointed cross and will follow the Lord fully. I will not give myself to abandonment of grief. I will not yield to a morbid and melancholy state of feeling. I will not complain or murmur at the providence of God. Jesus is my Saviour. He lives. He will never leave me nor forsake me.”—[This Day With God, 302](#).

Limitations

Counselors should not be mind and judgment for others—Instead of acting as a wise counselor, he assumes the prerogatives of an exacting ruler. God is dishonored by every such display of authority and self-exaltation. No man standing in his own strength is ever to be mind and judgment for another man whom the Lord is using in His work.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 491.](#)

Ministers may give counsel but seek wisdom from God—In the place of bearing your perplexities to a brother or a minister, take them to the Lord in prayer. Do not place the minister where God should be. The minister of Christ is like other men. True, he bears sacred responsibilities, but he is not infallible. He is compassed with infirmity, and needs grace and divine enlightenment. He needs the heavenly unction, in order to do his work with success. Those who know how to pray, who know what are the invitations of the gospel of Christ, show dishonor to God when they lay their burdens upon finite men. It is always right to counsel together; it is right to converse together; it is right to make the difficulties that present themselves in any enterprise plain before your brethren and your ministers. But do not depend upon man for wisdom. Seek God for the wisdom that comes from above. Ask your fellow laborers to pray with you; and the Lord will fulfill His Word, “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst.”—[The Youth’s Instructor, February 15, 1900.](#)

Members should not expect their minister to replace Christ as their guide and counselor—Many look to their ministers to bring the light from God to them, seeming to think this a cheaper way than to be to the trouble of going to God for it themselves. Such lose much. If they would daily follow Christ and make Him their guide and counselor, they might obtain a clear knowledge of His will, and thus be gaining a valuable experience. For want of this very experience, brethren professing the truth walk in the sparks of others’ kindling; they are unacquainted with the Spirit of God and have not a knowledge of His will, and are therefore easily moved from their faith. They are unstable, because they trusted in others to obtain an experience for them. Ample provisions have been made for [218]

every son and daughter of Adam to obtain individually a knowledge of the divine will, to perfect Christian character, and to be purified through the truth. God is dishonored by that class who profess to be followers of Christ and yet have no experimental knowledge of the divine will or of the mystery of godliness.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:644](#).

Chapter 38—Former Members, Inactive Members [219]

Wise efforts should be made to prevent straying and to bring back those who have strayed—Here were the cases of several who had backslidden, who had been in darkness, and who had strayed from the fold. But especially was the case of Brother A prominent. All the efforts were not made which should have been made in wisdom to prevent his straying from the fold; and after he had strayed, diligent efforts were not put forth to bring him back. There was more gossiping over his case than sincere sorrow for him. All these things kept him from the fold and caused his heart to be separated farther and farther from his brethren, making his rescue still more difficult. How different was this course from that pursued by the shepherd in the parable, when in pursuit of the lost sheep. The whole ninety and nine were left in the wilderness to care for themselves, exposed to dangers; yet the lone sheep, separated from the flock, was in greater danger, and to secure the one, the ninety and nine were left.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:218](#).

Many who have strayed will come back—When the storm of persecution really breaks upon us, the true sheep will hear the true Shepherd's voice. Self-denying efforts will be put forth to save the lost, and many who have strayed from the fold will come back to follow the great Shepherd. The people of God will draw together, and present to the enemy a united front.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:401](#).

Find Them

Some ministers, surrounded by backsliders, feel no burden for their souls—Some ministers who profess to be called of God have the blood of souls on their garments. They are surrounded with backsliders and sinners, and yet feel no burden for their souls; they manifest an indifference in regard to their salvation. Some are so nearly asleep that they seem to have no sense of the work of a

[220]

gospel minister. They do not consider that as spiritual physicians they are required to have skill in administering to souls diseased with sin. The work of warning sinners, of weeping over them and pleading with them, has been neglected until many souls are past all cure. Some have died in their sins, and will in the judgment confront with reproaches of their guilt those who might have saved them, but who did not. Unfaithful ministers, what a retribution awaits you!—[Testimonies for the Church 2:506](#).

Hunt up the backsliders with the message of mercy—God will work mightily with His ministers when their hearts are filled with love for the poor lost sheep of the house of Israel. Hunt up the backsliders, those who once knew what religion was, and give them the message of mercy.—[Counsels on Health, 533](#).

A straying sheep fills the shepherd with grief and anxiety—The shepherd who discovers that one of his sheep is missing, does not look carelessly upon the flock that is safely housed, and say, “I have ninety and nine, and it will cost me too much trouble to go in search of the straying one. Let him come back, and I will open the door of the sheepfold, and let him in.” No; no sooner does the sheep go astray than the shepherd is filled with grief and anxiety. He counts and recounts the flock. When he is sure that one sheep is lost, he slumbers not. He leaves the ninety and nine within the fold; and goes in search of the straying sheep. The darker and more tempestuous the night, and the more perilous the way, the greater is the shepherd’s anxiety, and the more earnest his search. He makes every effort to find that one lost sheep.—[Christ’s Object Lessons, 187, 188](#).

A good shepherd will leave the 99 and seek the lost sheep—If there is a backslider, the shepherd knows how to present the truth in such a manner that the soul will be convicted. He will leave the ninety and nine, and seek the lost sheep. But if the shepherd does not visit his flock, he knows not their condition, he knows not what truths to set before them, nor what is appropriate to their case. And more than this, as the preacher manifests so little interest in the souls under his charge, he cannot set an example to the flock to have an interest and love and watch-care for souls.—*Appeal and Suggestions to Conference Officers* (Ph 2)18.

Win Them

In the parables of the lost sheep and lost piece of silver, Jesus illustrated heaven's attitude toward the backslidden—They should be carefully and tenderly led and educated as pupils in school. Many have to unlearn theories which have been ingrafted into their lives. As they become convinced that they have been in error concerning Bible subjects, they are thrown into perplexity and doubt. They need the tenderest sympathy and the most judicious help; they should be carefully instructed; and should be prayed for and prayed with, watched and guarded with the kindest solicitude. Those who have fallen under temptation and have backslidden from God, need help. This class is represented in the lessons of Christ by the lost sheep. The shepherd left the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and hunted for the one lost sheep until he found it; he then returned with rejoicing, bearing it on his shoulder. Also by the illustration of the woman who searched for the lost piece of silver until she found it, and called together her neighbors to rejoice with her that the lost was found. The connection of heavenly angels with the Christian's work is here brought clearly to light. There is more joy in the presence of the angels in heaven over one sinner that repents than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance. There is joy with the Father and with Christ. All heaven is interested in the salvation of man. He who is instrumental in saving a soul is at liberty to rejoice; for angels of God have witnessed his efforts with the most intense interest, and rejoice with him in his success.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:263, 264.](#)

[221]

Let the love of Christ constrain you to feel compassion toward the backslidden—Let not the ministers of the cross of our dear Saviour forget their experience in these things, but ever bear in mind they are but men liable to err, of like passions with their brethren; and if they help their brethren, they must be persevering in their efforts to do them good, having their hearts filled with pity and love. They must come to the hearts of their brethren, and help them where they are weak and need help the most. Those who labor in word and doctrine should break their own hard, proud, unbelieving hearts, if they would witness the same in their brethren. Christ has done all for us because we were helpless, bound in chains of

darkness, sin, and despair, and because we could do nothing for ourselves. It is through the exercise of faith, hope, and love, that we come nearer and nearer to the standard of perfect holiness. Our brethren feel the same pitying need of help that we have felt. We should not burden them with unnecessary censure, but let the love of Christ constrain us to be very compassionate and tender, that we can weep over the erring and those who have backslidden from God. The soul is of infinite value. The worth of the soul can be estimated only by the price paid to ransom it. Calvary! Calvary! Calvary! will explain the true value of the soul.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:187, 188.](#)

Backsliders may rise up against ministers who deal with them faithfully—Some are so cold and backslidden that they do not realize that they are setting their affections on earthly treasure, which is soon to be swept away forever. The love of the world is binding them about, like a thick garment; and unless they change their course, they will not know how precious it is to practice self-denial for Christ's sake. All our idols, our love of the world, must be expelled from the heart. There are ministers and faithful friends who see the danger that surrounds these self-bound souls, and who faithfully present to them the error of their course, but instead of taking admonitions in the spirit in which they are given, and profiting thereby, those reprov'd rise up against the ones who deal with them faithfully. O that they might arouse from their spiritual lethargy, and now acquaint themselves with God! The world is blinding their eyes from seeing him who is invisible. They are unable to discern the most precious things that are of eternal interest, but view the truth of God in so dim a light that it seems of little value to them.—[The Review and Herald, October 31, 1893.](#)

One pastor said he would rather be horse-whipped than visit—Elder H used to live here and preach to the people, but he was not a shepherd of the flock. He would tell the poor sheep that he would rather be horse-whipped than visit. He neglected personal labor, therefore pastoral work was not done in the church and its borders. The deacons and elders of the church have acted wisely and worked judiciously to keep the church in order, and we find the people in a much better condition than we had expected. We are happily disappointed. But when I look over the years, and think of what might have been done, if the man entrusted with the flock had been a faithful steward of God, watching for souls as one that must give an account, my heart is made sad. Had the preacher done the work of a pastor, a much larger number would now be rejoicing in the truth.—[Manuscript Releases 9:343, 344](#).

Seclusion and study must not supersede visitation—The duties of a pastor are often shamelessly neglected because the minister lacks strength to sacrifice his personal inclinations for seclusion and study. The pastor should visit from house to house among his flock, teaching, conversing, and praying with each family, and looking out for the welfare of their souls. Those who have manifested a desire to become acquainted with the principles of our faith should not be neglected, but thoroughly instructed in the truth.—[Evangelism, 350](#).

Ministers who sermonize without shepherding should be dismissed—But there have been solemn duties neglected in accepting ministers to labor in word and doctrine who can only preach. They do not watch for souls as they that shall give an account. They sermonize; but the work is left undone which the sheep and lambs need to have done for them. And this half-hearted kind of work has been done all through America, and money paid to men employed, when they should have been dismissed to find work less responsible and care taking.... The flock of God have a right to expect to be visited by their pastor, to be instructed, advised, counseled, in their

[224] own homes. And if a man fails to do this part of the work, he can not be a minister after God's order. The churches that have such labor are disorganized, weak, and sickly, and ready to die. The sermons are not vitalized by the Spirit of God, because the blessing of God will not rest upon any man who is neglecting the flock of God.—*Appeal and Suggestions to Conference Officers (Ph 2)* 17, 18.

Walk in Jesus' footsteps, not by visiting where He lived, but by working as He worked—Among our workers are some who feel that a great object would be gained if their feet could tread the soil of old Jerusalem. But God's cause and work will never be advanced by His workers wandering about to find where Jesus traveled and wrought His miracles. Would you trace the footsteps of Christ, behold Him in that hovel, ministering to the poor; see Him at that sick bed, comforting the suffering, and speaking hope and courage to the desponding. Those who walk in the footsteps of Jesus will do as He did. "Whosoever will come after me," He said, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."—*The Review and Herald, July 30, 1901.*

Visit with a purpose—Many love to preach, but shun the labor that is required to lift souls out of sin. Men are dying all around us, and we have not made any special efforts to address them earnestly, interestedly, affectionately, as Christ would have done had he been on the earth. We are Christ's ambassadors, watchmen unto the house of Israel, to see the dangers that await souls, and give them warning. The pastor is a shepherd of the sheep, guarding them, feeding them, warning them, reproving them, or encouraging them, as the case may require. There is visiting to be done, not to have a pleasant chat, but to do the work required of a watchman. There should be earnest conversation and prayer with these souls. This is the kind of work that gains valuable experience in the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom.—*The Review and Herald, October 20, 1896.*

Women should be appointed to visit—Women who are willing to consecrate some of their time to the service of the Lord should be appointed to visit the sick, look after the young, and minister to the necessities of the poor. They should be set apart to this work by prayer and laying on of hands. In some cases they will need to counsel with the church officers or the minister; but if they are devoted women, maintaining a vital connection with God, they

will be a power for good in the church. This is another means of strengthening and building up the church. We need to branch out more in our methods of labor. Not a hand should be bound, not a soul discouraged, not a voice should be hushed; let every individual labor, privately or publicly, to help forward this grand work. Place the burdens upon men and women of the church, that they may grow by reason of the exercise, and thus become effective agents in the hand of the Lord for the enlightenment of those who sit in darkness.—[The Review and Herald, July 9, 1895.](#)

Less Sermonizing, More Personal Ministry

[225]

Spend less time sermonizing, more in personal ministry—There is need of coming close to the people by personal effort. If less time were given to sermonizing, and more time were spent in personal ministry, greater results would be seen. The poor are to be relieved, the sick cared for, the sorrowing and the bereaved comforted, the ignorant instructed, the inexperienced counseled. We are to weep with those that weep, and rejoice with those that rejoice. Accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, the power of the love of God, this work will not, cannot, be without fruit.—[The Ministry of Healing, 143.](#)

Accomplish tenfold more by visiting and conversing with your people—It is not enough to preach to men; we must pray with them and for them; we must not hold ourselves coldly aloof from them, but come in sympathy close to the souls we wish to save, visit and converse with them. The minister who conducts the work outside the pulpit in a proper manner will accomplish tenfold more than he who confines his labor to the desk.—[The Review and Herald, August 8, 1878.](#)

Members trained to rely on preaching, do little for Christ—And the minister's work does not end with the presentation of truth from the pulpit. He is to do earnest, personal, house-to-house work, studying the Scriptures with the people, and praying with them. Thus many will be brought to a knowledge of God. Souls ready to perish will be imbued with the Spirit of Christ. But this work has been neglected; and therefore the churches are lacking in power. There are many ordained ministers who have never yet exercised

a shepherd's care over the flock of God, who have never watched for souls as they that must give an account. The Church, instead of developing, is left to be a weak, dependent, inefficient body. The members of the Church, trained to rely upon preaching, do little for Christ. They bear no fruit, but rather increase in selfishness and unfaithfulness. They put their hope in the preacher, depending on his efforts to keep alive their weak faith. Because the church-members have not been properly instructed by those whom God has placed as overseers, many are slothful servants, hiding their talents in the earth, and still complaining of the Lord's dealing toward them. They expect to be tended like sick children.—[The Review and Herald, January 21, 1902.](#)

[226] **Rest after preaching, then visit**—Ministers have all that they ought to do to preach the Word, and after they have urged solemn truth upon the people they should maintain a humble dignity as the preachers of exalted truth and as representatives of the truth presented to the people. After their labored effort they need rest.... If there are those who still have a reserve force and can be taxed without injury to themselves, there is important work for them to do, and it has but just commenced when they have spoken the truth to the people. Then come the exemplary preaching, the watchful care, the seeking to do good to others, the conversation, and visiting at the fireside from house to house, entering into the condition of mind and the spiritual state of those who listened to the discourse from their lips; exhorting this one, reproving that one, rebuking another, and comforting the afflicted, suffering, and desponding. The mind should be as free from weariness as possible that they may be minutemen, “instant in season, out of season.” They should obey the injunction given by Paul to Timothy: “Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them.”—[Testimonies for the Church 1:472.](#)

Members and Personal Ministry

Education of membership is essential—Our work is incomplete if we do not educate others to be laborers together with God, visiting and praying with families, showing to the world what Jesus has done for us. God's Word declares, “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.” These words are spoken to every follower of Christ. Not only the minister, but every soul connected with Him, is to be a worker in His vineyard. “Herein is My Father glorified,” Christ said, “that ye bear much fruit.” By His own life Christ has paid for your earnest, hearty cooperation. If you do not work as faithful missionaries, you are untrue to your trust, and you disappoint your Saviour.—[The Signs of the Times, December 27, 1899.](#)

Training contributes to church growth notwithstanding the pastor’s administrative responsibilities—From the time that converts come together in church capacity, they should be educated to take up such lines of work as will not only benefit their own souls, but the souls of others. “The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.” The Lord has given to His followers talents of intellect and energy and means. Those who are known to be men of well-balanced minds, who have the love and fear of God before them, should be appointed as elders and deacons; and through the exercise of the ability God has given them, they may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. They may plan wisely, and educate the individual members of the church to act their part in trading with their Lord’s talents. By a right use of their talents they may increase their efficiency in the cause of God. The church may be visited only occasionally by a minister, and yet be a growing church; for Jesus is our minister, and we are never to think that we are left alone. Jesus never forsakes the flock of His pasture. “This man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood.”—[The Review and Herald, January 17, 1893.](#)

The work requires the resources of ministers and members—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.... It is training, education, that is needed. Those who labor in visiting the churches should give the brethren and sisters instruction in practical methods of doing missionary work.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:117.](#)

[227]

Visitors to be trained—There are those who have some experience who should, with every effort they make in dying churches as well as in new places, select young men or men of mature age to assist in the work. Thus they will be obtaining knowledge by interesting themselves in personal effort, and scores of helpers will be fitting for usefulness as Bible readers, as canvassers, and as visitors in the families.—[Evangelism, 470](#).

Chapter 40—Visitation of Special Member Groups

[228]

[229]

Family

Family visitation may be the most profitable work a minister does—This part of the pastoral work is not to be neglected or shifted upon your wives or some other person. You must educate and train yourselves to visit every family that you can possibly get access to. The results of this work will testify that it is the most profitable work a gospel minister can do.—[Evangelism, 440](#).

The way to measure the effectiveness of your preaching is through visiting with families to whom you preached—How are you to know that the word spoken in the desk has been a savor of life unto life unless you visit in families, praying with them, and drawing out the true state of their minds, the real condition of their experience, that you may point them to the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world? There is need that the breath of God should blow upon them, and give them spiritual life. The churches need to be enlightened in regard to practical religion in the home life.—[Address To Ministers, 17 \(Ph 118\)](#).

Speaking helpful, encouraging words in the home is far more effective than preaching—This is home missionary work,—work that God’s ministers are to strive faithfully to do. They are not only to preach; they are to minister by going from house to house, becoming acquainted with the different families in the church, some of whom may be converted, while others are still without God and without hope in the world. It is possible to preach many sermons without accomplishing the work essential for the well-being of the people of God. The discourses given are to be followed with personal labor. A work may be done by visiting people in their homes, and speaking helpful, encouraging words to them, which will be far more effective than the work done by preaching.—[The Review and Herald, January 31, 1899](#).

When visiting aim to converse with all family members, whether they profess the truth or not—Visiting from house to house forms an important part of the minister's labors. He should aim to converse with all the members of the family, whether they profess the truth or not. It is his duty to ascertain the spiritual condition of all; and he should live so near to God that he can counsel, exhort, and reprove, carefully and in wisdom. He should have the grace of God in his own heart and the glory of God constantly in view. All lightness and trifling is positively forbidden in the word of God. His conversation should be in heaven, his words seasoned with grace.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:338](#).

Prayer should be a part of each family visit—But there is another point that I had almost forgotten. It is the influence which the preacher should exert in his ministry. His work is not merely to stand in the desk. It is but just begun there. He should enter the different families, and carry Christ there, carry his sermons there, carry them out in his actions and his words. As he visits a family he should inquire into their condition. Is he the shepherd of the flock? The work of a shepherd is not all done in the desk. He should talk with all the members of the flock, with the parents to learn their standing, and with the children to learn theirs. A minister should feed the flock over which God has made him overseer. It would be agreeable to go into the house and study; but if you do this to the neglect of the work which God has commissioned you to perform, you do wrong. Never enter a family without inviting them together, and bowing down and praying with them before you leave. Inquire into the health of their souls. What does a skillful physician do? He inquires into the particulars of the case, then seeks to administer remedies. Just so the physician of the soul should inquire into the spiritual maladies with which the members of his flock are afflicted, then go to work to administer the proper remedies, and ask the Great Physician to come to his aid. Give them the help that they need. Such ministers will receive all that respect and honor which is due them as ministers of Christ. And in doing for others their own souls will be kept alive. They must be drawing strength from God in order to impart strength to those to whom they shall minister.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:618](#).

Poor

Every minister should be a friend of the poor—Every gospel minister should be a friend to the poor, the afflicted, and the oppressed among God's believing people. Christ was always the poor man's friend, and the interests of the poor need to be sacredly guarded. There has too often been a wonderful dearth of Christ's compassion and loving interest in the poor and afflicted. Love, sacred, refined love, is to be exercised in behalf of the poor and unfortunate.—

Discouraged

Nothing gives greater spiritual strength than ministering to the sick and desponding—Nothing will give greater spiritual strength and a greater increase of earnestness and depth of feeling than visiting and ministering to the sick and the desponding, helping them to see the light and to fasten their faith upon Jesus. There are disagreeable duties that somebody must do or souls will be left to perish. Christians will find a blessing in doing these duties, however unpleasant they may be. Christ took the disagreeable task upon Himself of coming from the abode of purity and unsurpassed glory, to dwell, a man among men, in a world seared and blackened by crime, violence, and iniquity. He did this to save souls; and shall the objects of such amazing love and unparalleled condescension excuse their lives of selfish ease? shall they choose their own pleasure, follow their own inclinations, and leave souls to perish in darkness because they will meet with disappointment and rebuffs if they labor to save them? Christ paid an infinite price for man's redemption, and shall he say: My Lord, I will not labor in Thy vineyard; I pray Thee have me excused"?—[Testimonies for the Church 4:75](#).

[231]

Minister especially to those made despondent by guilt—Ministry does not consist alone in preaching. Those minister who relieve the sick and suffering, helping the needy, speaking words of comfort to the desponding and those of little faith. Nigh and afar off, souls are weighed down by a sense of guilt. It is not hardship, toil, or poverty that lowers and degrades humanity. It is guilt, wrong-doing. This brings unrest and dissatisfaction. Jesus would have His children

minister to sin-sick souls. Those that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak until they become strong.—[The Review and Herald, July 19, 1898.](#)

When visiting the discouraged, bring a cheerful countenance, hopeful words, and the grasp of your hand—The mission of Christ was to heal the sick, encourage the hopeless, bind up the brokenhearted. This work of restoration is to be carried on among the needy, suffering ones of humanity. God calls not only for your benevolence, but your cheerful countenance, your hopeful words, the grasp of your hand. Relieve some of God's afflicted ones. Some are sick, and hope has departed. Bring back the sunlight to them. There are souls who have lost their courage; speak to them, pray for them. There are those who need the bread of life. Read to them from the Word of God. There is a soul sickness no balm can reach, no medicine heal. Pray for these, and bring them to Jesus Christ. And in all your work, Christ will be present to make impressions upon human hearts.—[Welfare Ministry, 71.](#)

The darkness of discouraged members may be dispelled if they are led to work for those more needy than themselves—Our ministers may visit our churches, and may offer public prayer to God for the comfort of the sorrowing, asking Him to dispel doubt from their minds, and shed light into their darkened hearts. But this will not be so effective in helping these sorrowful, doubting, [232] sin-burdened ones, as to lead them to work for those more needy than themselves. The darkness will be dispelled if they can be led to help others.—[The Review and Herald, May 5, 1904.](#)

Sick

Ministering to the afflicted is part of the minister's work—To take people right where they are, whatever their position or condition, and help them in every way possible—this is gospel ministry. Those who are diseased in body are nearly always diseased in mind, and when the soul is sick, the body also is affected. Ministers should feel it a part of their work to minister to the sick and the afflicted whenever opportunity presents itself. The minister of the gospel is to present the message, which must be received if the people are to become sanctified and made ready for the coming of the Lord. This

work is to embrace all that was embraced in Christ's ministry.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:301](#).

Church members should be trained to visit the sick—The churches have been so trained that they feel no special responsibility to visit, to talk the truth, to pray with and for one another, to visit the sick, to encourage them, to give sympathy and love, and make it manifest that in Christ they are members one of another.—[Manuscript Releases 6:69](#).

As ministers of strong faith pray for the sick, humanity is brought in touch with divinity—With awakened conscience many a troubled soul, suffering bodily ailments as the result of continued transgression, cries out, “Lord, be merciful to me a sinner; make me Thy child.” It is then that the minister, strong in faith, should be ready to tell the sufferer that there is hope for the penitent, that in Jesus every one who longs for help and acceptance may find deliverance and peace. He who in meekness and love thus brings the gospel to the afflicted soul so much in need of its message of hope, is a mouthpiece for the One who gave Himself for mankind. As he speaks helpful, appropriate words, and as he offers prayer for the one lying on a bed of suffering, Jesus makes the application. God speaks through human lips. The heart is reached. Humanity is brought into touch with divinity.—[Gospel Workers, 213, 214](#).

Anointing and Divine Healing

Ministers should not only “preach the kingdom,” but also pray for the afflicted—When the Saviour sent the disciples out to preach the Word, He “gave them power ... to cure diseases.” They were “to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.” This was the two-fold command given them. To our ministers the same command is given. They are to offer prayer for the afflicted, that the Lord God of Israel may take these cases under His oversight. If His workers will cooperate with Him, if they will sense the sacredness of the work that Christ did, and the work He would have them do, their ministry will be marked by a sacredness that will give evidence of its heavenly inspiration.—[\(Australasian\) Union Conference Record, February 20, 1911](#).

[233]

Do not claim to be a miracle worker—Multitudes have heard me speak, and have read my writings, but no one has ever heard me claim to work miracles. I have at times been called upon to pray for the sick, and the Word of the Lord has been verified: “Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.” Christ is the great miracle-worker. To Him be all the glory.—[Manuscript Releases 19:372](#).

Anointing does not heal the sick. Jesus does—The question has been asked by some, “Has Sister White healed the sick?” I answer, “No, no; Sister White has often been called to pray for the sick, and to anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord Jesus, and with them she has claimed the fulfillment of the promise, ‘The prayer of faith shall save the sick.’” No human power can save the sick, but, through the prayer of faith, the Mighty Healer has fulfilled His promise to those who have called upon His name. No human power can pardon sin or save the sinner. None can do this but Christ, the merciful physician of body and soul.—[Selected Messages 3:295](#).

Anointing should not be requested for every little ailment—I understand the text in James is to be carried out when a person is sick upon his bed; if he calls for the elders of the church, and they carry out the directions in James, anointing the sick with oil, in the name of the Lord, praying over him the prayer of faith. We read, “The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he hath committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.”

It cannot be our duty to call for the elders of the church for every little ailment we have, for this would be putting a task upon the elders. If all should do this, their time would be fully employed,—they could do nothing else; but the Lord gives us the privilege of seeking Him individually in earnest prayer, of unburdening our souls to Him, keeping nothing from Him who has invited us, “Come unto me, all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” O how grateful we should be that Jesus is willing and able to bear all our infirmities and strengthen and heal all our diseases if it will be for our good and for His glory. Some died in the days of Christ

and in the days of the apostles because the Lord knew just what was best for them.—

Anointing should normally be offered only to commandment keepers—You inquire if we should pray for none that are sick except those in the third angel’s message, or pray for all that shall make application, et cetera. [James 5](#) is our rule to follow. “Is any sick among you? let him call,” et cetera. It is those that are among us. God had shown me those who keep God’s commandments are to have nothing to do [in anointing and special prayer] for the sick of those who are daily trampling them underfoot, unless it is in some special case where souls are convicted of the truth and are decided to move out upon it. The partition wall between commandment keepers and those who trample them underfoot should be kept.—[Letter 4, 1857](#) (Quoted in 1BIO 404.).

[234]

Ellen White performed the anointing service—Just as the meeting closed, Sister Meade, who had been afflicted with a slow fever, requested us to pray for her. We went into a room by ourselves, Brethren Holt, Wheeler, Stowell, James, and self. After I had anointed her with oil we prayed over her, and she was healed every whit and fell prostrate by the power of God. That night we got into a rowboat and went on the pond about one mile to Brother Meade’s. His sister was there with a very sick child. We anointed it with oil and prayed over it, and God heard our prayers.—[Manuscript Releases 5:239](#).

Section 7—Organization and Administration

[235]

41. Christian Education
42. Church Building
43. Church Social Life
44. Committees
45. Conference Departments
46. Finance
47. Pastoring a Multi-church District
48. Problem Solving and Conflict Resolution
49. Promotion
50. Adult Sabbath School
51. Youth Leadership
52. Jesus as Model Pastor

[236]

Chapter 41—Christian Education

[237]

Encourage youth to attend our schools—The youth are to be encouraged to attend our schools, which should become more and more like the schools of the prophets. Our schools have been established by the Lord; and if they are conducted in harmony with His purpose, the youth sent to them will quickly be prepared to engage in various branches of missionary work. Some will be trained to enter the field as missionary nurses, some as canvassers, some as evangelists, some as teachers, and some as gospel ministers.—[Fundamentals of Christian Education, 489.](#)

Christian education must be made available to all, not just to a privileged few—The church is asleep, and does not realize the magnitude of this matter of educating the children and youth. “Why,” one says, “what is the need of being so particular thoroughly to educate our youth? It seems to me that if you take a few who have decided to follow some literary calling, or some other calling that requires a certain discipline, and give due attention to them, that is all that is necessary. It is not required that the whole mass of our youth should be so well trained. Will not this answer every essential requirement?”—No, I answer, most decidedly not. What selection would we be able to make out of the numbers of our youth? How could we tell who would be the most promising, who would render the best service to God? In our human judgment we might do as did Samuel when he was sent to find the anointed of the Lord, and look upon the outward appearance.—[The Review and Herald, April 28, 1896.](#)

Purpose

Only those who cooperate with heaven know what true education is—When the Word of God is laid aside for books that lead away from God, and that confuse the understanding regarding the principles of the kingdom of heaven, the education given is a

perversion of the name. Unless the student has pure mental food, thoroughly winnowed from the so-called “higher education,” which is mingled with infidel sentiments, he cannot truly know God. Only those who co-operate with heaven in the plan of salvation can know what true education in its simplicity means.—[Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 15.](#)

Christian education should both fill the mind and teach to share—It is not enough to fill the minds of the youth with lessons of deep importance; they must learn to impart what they have received. Whatever may be the position or possession of any individual who has a knowledge of the truth, the Word of God teaches him that all he has is held by him in trust. It is lent him to test his character. His worldly business, his talents, his means, his opportunities for service, are all to be accounted for to Him to whom by creation and redemption he belongs. God bestows His gifts upon us that we may minister to others and thus become like Him. He who strives to obtain knowledge in order that he may labor for the ignorant and perishing is acting his part in fulfilling God’s great purpose for mankind. In unselfish service for the blessing of others he is meeting the high ideal of Christian education.—[Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 545.](#) [238]

Ministers have shown their want of wisdom, by introducing worldly elements into our schools—The object of God in bringing the college into existence has been lost sight of. Ministers of the gospel have so far shown their want of wisdom from above as to unite a worldly element with the college; they have joined with the enemies of God and the truth in providing entertainments for the students. In thus misleading the youth they have done a work for Satan. That work, with all its results, they must meet again at the bar of God. Those who pursue such a course show that they cannot be trusted. After the evil work has been done, they may confess their error; but can they as easily gather up the influence they have exerted? Will the “well done” be spoken to those who have been false to their trust? These unfaithful men have not built upon the eternal Rock. Their foundation will prove to be sliding sand. “Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”—[Testimonies for the Church 5:33.](#)

Teachers

Teachers can do a work of larger importance than even the minister—The teachers for our schools should be selected from the very best class. They should be experienced Christians who are balanced in mind, men and women who have learned the lesson of self-control. Then they can educate and do a work of larger importance than even the minister in preaching the Word. They can prepare the soil that the truth may have effect upon human hearts.—[Manuscript Releases 13:95, 96](#).

[239] **Christian teachers, knowing they sometimes break God's rules, should not be severe with students who break school rules**—I am alarmed for you at Battle Creek. Teachers are very exact in visiting with denunciation and punishments those students who violate the slight rules, not from any vicious purpose, but heedlessly; or circumstances occur which make it no sin for them to deviate from rules which have been made, and which should not be held with inflexibility if transgressed, and yet the person in fault is treated as if he had grievously sinned. Now I want you to consider, teachers, where you stand, and deal with yourselves and pronounce judgment against yourselves; for you have not only infringed the rules, but you have been so sharp, so severe upon students; and more than this, there is a controversy between you and God. You have not made straight paths for your feet lest the lame be turned out of the way. You have departed from safe paths. I say “teachers”; I do not specify names. I leave that to your own consciences to appropriate. The Lord God of Israel has wrought in your midst again and again. You have had great evidences of the stately steppings of the Most High. But a period of great light, of the wonderful revealings of the Spirit and power of God, is a period of great peril, lest the light shall not be improved. Will you consider [Jeremiah 17:5-10; 18:12-15](#)? For you are most surely coming under the rebuke of God. Light has been shining in clear and steady rays upon you. What has this light done for you? Christ, the Chief Shepherd, is looking upon you with displeasure, and is inquiring, “Where is the flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?”—[Fundamentals of Christian Education, 222](#).

School Building

The schoolroom is needed just as much as the church building—This is the work to be done in America, in Australia, in Europe, and wherever companies are brought into the truth. The companies that are raised up need a place of worship. Schools are needed where Bible instruction may be given to the children. The schoolroom is needed just as much as is the church building. The Lord has persons to engage in the work of establishing church schools as soon as something is done to prepare the way for them.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:109](#).

Members should consider it a privilege and a blessing for the church to have a school building—Brethren and sisters, what will you do to help build a church school? We believe that every one will regard it as a privilege and a blessing to have this school building. Let us catch the spirit of the work, saying, “We will arise and build.” If all will take hold of the work unitedly, we shall soon have a schoolhouse in which from day to day our children will be taught the way of the Lord. As we do our best, the blessing of God will rest upon us. Shall we not arise and build?—[Selected Messages 3:213](#).

Financing

Tuition should not be so low that schools run in debt—Our brethren say the plea comes from ministers and parents that there are scores of young people in our ranks who need the advantages of our training schools, who cannot attend unless tuitions are less. But those who plead for low tuitions should carefully weigh matters on all sides. If students cannot of themselves command sufficient means to pay the actual expense of good and faithful work in their education, is it not better that their parents, their friends, the churches to which they belong, or large-hearted, benevolent brethren in their conference, should assist them than that a burden of debt should be brought upon the school? It would be far better to let the many patrons of the institution share the expense than for the school to run in debt.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:212](#).

[240]

Financial responsibilities in our schools should not be laid on ministers—Too often ministers have been brought in to carry responsibilities which they were in no way fitted to bear. Lay these responsibilities upon men who have business tact, men who can give themselves to business, who can visit the schools and keep an account of the financial condition, and who can also give instruction regarding the keeping of the accounts. The work of the school should be inspected several times each year. Let the ministers act as counselors, but lay not on them the financial responsibilities.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:216](#).

Manual Labor

Students should be kept busy in useful labor—The influence for good that the manual training work has exerted over the students overbalances the financial loss, and would overbalance it were it ten times as large as it is. How many souls this work has helped to save, you will never know till the day of judgment. Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do. But when students are kept busy in useful labor, the Lord has opportunity to work with them.—[Manuscript Releases 2:216](#).

Chapter 42—Church Building

[241]

Truth loses much of its influence if the church meets in an undesirable place—We feel the need of a church very much. Had we moved out in faith, and started to build a church before now, it would have better, far better, for the success of the work. Such a movement would have given importance and character to our work. Having to come so great a distance from the road into the bush to get to the place of meeting, and then climb the stairs to the mill—often exposed to cold, and again to heat—and with surroundings of every conceivable kind of furniture and utensils, did not honor God or inspire the people with sacred ideas. The force of truth loses much of its influence on the mind because of the surroundings. I have seen this and deplored it, but the dearth of means has left us in perplexity.—[Manuscript Releases 13:407](#).

Our work in a new place is not perceived as permanent until a church is built—Now we must have a meeting house. The people are saying, “These people will soon go away and you have no church building, and then you will be scattered.” We want to see a building before we leave for America. I have carried the church in Maitland in my soul.—[Manuscript Releases 7:90](#).

Renting a church is an acceptable, but temporary, arrangement—As the large tent had been taken down, our people secured the use of the Congregational church, corner Eighteenth and Market Streets, for our Sabbath services. A few months ago our own church building in Oakland was sold, and our brethren and sisters are meeting in this rented church until some more permanent arrangement can be made.—[The Review and Herald, November 29, 1906](#).

Location

Secure land that is favorably situated—It is right that there should be a commodious house of worship in the city of Portland. Our brethren there have done well in securing a piece of land favor-

ably situated between the business part of the city and the great park called "The Deerings' Oaks."—[The Review and Herald, May 18, 1911](#).

[242] **Transportation should be considered when choosing a building site**—I must write to you regarding your proposed church building. I am pleased with the site you have selected. It is near to the street-railway, and thus very convenient for those who come from a distance.—[Manuscript Releases 21:93](#).

Do not build on too small a lot—Sunday we addressed the people again. Our meeting lasted over three hours, because the plans and designs for building the new chapel were fully discussed. We went to see the land chosen upon which to erect the church building. A small lot had been purchased, but this gave those who should purchase the adjoining lot the privilege to build close against the walls of the chapel, and thus shut out the very light and sunshine which they so much needed. We advised that the adjoining lot, also, be purchased, which situates them on a corner lot, and where no building can be erected anywhere near them.—[The Review and Herald, September 27, 1887](#).

Design

The church building should be simple and inexpensive, rather than stylish and costly—In Oakland we need a church building. Soon a simple and inexpensive place of worship should be erected. In this the brethren and sisters in Oakland are to show that they fear the Lord by refusing to build a stylish and costly church. We are living in perilous times; judgment is to follow judgment. Let us now reveal in our works that we believe that the time of God's judgments is come, that we are approaching the day when there will be no certainty regarding anything in this world. By our works as well as our testimony we are to tell that the end of all things is at hand.—[Manuscript Releases 6:320, 321](#).

Three things to be commended in a church building: beauty, Sabbath school facilities, and potential for enlargement—We were taken to have a hasty look at the church. Its appearance is good, with frontage of stone. Within is a pleasant auditorium for the people to assemble. The windows and front doors are ornamented

with stained glass, beautiful in appearance. Four chairs, such as are used in churches, are on the platform, which was well proportioned. The pulpit and highbacked chairs harmonized. Seats and arms are covered with red velvet of the material generally used. I did not spend much time taking in all the advantages of that church building, but I praise the Lord that every debt is paid. Much means have been invested besides the sum of the building as it stood, to make it what it should be—complete in repairs. It is now all finished. There are several rooms. One opens from the auditorium and is seated with chairs for Sabbath school. If the house should need enlarging, the partitions could be removed and thus the extension easily made. Washington within a short distance of the Capitol is a victory gained, and it comes to us in the order of the Lord, who has looked upon the necessities that must be supplied. I wanted to praise God aloud for this nice building, all ready now to be rededicated to the Lord, in which His people shall serve Him.—[Manuscript Releases 5:119](#).

[243]

Church buildings should be plain, neat, commodious, and of proper dimensions—The influence of a house of worship is greatly needed, not only in Melbourne, but in our other churches. A plain, neat, commodious building, of proper dimensions, would fill their hearts with gratitude, and would give those not of our faith an opportunity to come into our assemblies, and hear the words of life. There need be no costly organ, nothing for mere display; what is wanted is a house that can be dedicated to God, to which the people can come as their home, where there would be extempore preaching and prayer, and singing in which all the congregation would join, and where the surroundings would be entirely in harmony with the faith we profess.—[General Conference Daily Bulletin, January 28, 1893](#).

Construction

In building a church, money should not be spent unnecessarily, but neither should second-class work be done—While not one penny should be expended unnecessarily in the erection of this church building, no second-class work should be done. It is planned to use the basement of the church for church-school purposes. This is right, that provision may be made by which our children can be

guarded from the evils that prevail in the public schools. If this plan is carried out, the basement will have to be well finished; and this cannot be done without means.—[The Review and Herald, May 18, 1911.](#)

Sometimes community members can be successfully solicited to donate materials and labor to erect a house of worship—Before this work was finished, the problem of providing a meeting-house at Cooranbong arose. This problem proved to be a perplexing one. It seemed that we had done about all we could, and that it would be impossible to raise means sufficient for erecting a suitable house of worship. Finally, during a council meeting in which the matter was receiving consideration, I offered to go through our settlement, and try to secure gifts of labor and material. Accompanied by my secretary, I visited the workmen living for miles around, and solicited help. Just at this time it happened that several of the carpenters who had been laboring on the school buildings, were temporarily out of employment; and these men generously responded, offering to work on the proposed meeting-house at a very low wage,—less than one half the usual rate. Several worked for nothing a portion of the time.—[The Review and Herald, May 26, 1904.](#)

Financing

[244] **It is best to build a church building without debt**—In Hamilton, where the camp meeting was held, we contemplate building a meetinghouse. The ground is purchased but there must be no debt on the place. Therefore we wait for the Lord to open the way. He will do this. His promise is as good as a deed. A portion of the money is already raised. I gave fifty pounds to the Brisbane church and another fifty to the church in Hamilton. When we receive money we will commence to build a humble house of worship.—[Manuscript Releases 17:126.](#)

Members should be willing to work with their own hands to provide a church building—Whenever it is possible, let our church buildings be dedicated to God free of debt. When a church is raised up, let the members arise and build. Under the direction of a minister who is guided by the advice of his fellow-ministers, let the

newly converted ones work with their own hands, saying, “We need a meeting-house, and we must have it.” God calls upon His people to make cheerful, united efforts in His cause. Let this be done, and soon will be heard the voice of thanksgiving, “See what the Lord hath wrought!”—[Gospel Workers, 432](#).

In some cases it may be better to borrow than not to build—There are some cases, however, in which a young church may not be able at once to bear the whole burden of erecting a house of worship. In these cases let the brethren in other churches help them. In some cases it may be better to hire some money than not to build. If a man has money, and, after giving what he can, will make a loan, either without interest or at a low rate, it would be right to use the money until the indebtedness can be lifted. But I repeat: If possible, church buildings should be dedicated free of debt.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:101](#).

Maintenance

The house of worship should be scrupulously cared for—but not from tithe—The Lord instructed Moses, for Israel: “Thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always.” This was to be a continual offering, that the house of God might be properly supplied with that which was necessary for His service. His people today are to remember that the house of worship is the Lord’s property and that it is to be scrupulously cared for. But the funds for this work are not to come from the tithe.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:248](#).

Help Others Build

Sacrifices should be made to erect buildings worldwide—As a people we must practise self-denial and economy. Every soul should make a covenant with God by sacrifice. We should not expend money in extra expensive clothing, and rich furniture. We are pilgrims and strangers seeking a better country, even an heavenly. Time is short, and every dollar not necessary to be used in supplying positive wants, should be brought in as a thank offering to God. It is

the Lord's, and the Lord has presented to me that houses of worship, and schoolhouses should be erected through this country, and in the islands of the sea; that our leading men should not build for display, or to gratify ambition and pride. If the Lord has favoured them above their brethren in other countries, let them in true liberality assist those who greatly need to be helped to find a standing place, and give character to the work.—[Testimonies to Southern Africa, 63.](#)

Prosperous areas should not over-invest in buildings while poorer parts of the world have none—I wish to remind my brethren of the cautions and warnings that have been given me in reference to constantly investing means in Battle Creek in order to make a little more room, or to make things more convenient. New fields are to be entered; the truth is to be proclaimed as a witness to all nations. The work is hindered, so that the banner of truth cannot be uplifted, as it should be, in these new fields. While our brethren in America feel at liberty to invest means in buildings which time will reveal that they would do just as well and even better without, thousands of dollars are thus absorbed that the Lord called for, to be used in “regions beyond.” I have presented the warnings and the caution, as the Word of the Lord; but my heart has been made sad to see that, notwithstanding all these, means has been swallowed up to satisfy these supposed wants; building has been added to building, so the money could not be used in places where they have no conveniences, no building for the public worship of God or to give character to the work, no place where the banner of truth could be uplifted. These things I have set before you; and yet you have gone on just the same, absorbing means, God's means, in one locality, when the Lord has spoken that too much was already invested in one place, which meant that there was nothing in other places, where there should be buildings and facilities, to make even a beginning.—[Testimonies for the Church 8:48, 49.](#)

Chapter 43—Church Social Life

[246]

[247]

Christian social gatherings should lead souls to Christ—What has been your influence over those who assembled in your social gatherings? What has been said or done to lead souls to Christ? Have you been instant in season, out of season, to do your whole duty? Are you ready to meet at the bar of God those with whom you have mingled in your social gatherings, especially that class who have been thrown under your influence and who have died out of Christ? Are you prepared to say that your skirts are clear of their blood? I will mention one case, that of Q. Will no reproach fall upon you from her, upon you who were surrounded with good home influences, you who had every favorable opportunity to develop good Christian characters, but who have felt no burden for souls? Pride, vanity, and love of pleasure were fostered by you, and you acted your part in disgracing your profession and leading this poor soul, who had been tossed about and buffeted by Satan, to doubt the reality of the truth and the genuineness of the Christian religion.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:179](#).

Importance

People are easily reached through social avenues—People are easily reached through the avenues of the social circle.... It is highly important that a pastor should mingle much with his people, that he may become acquainted with the different phases of human nature, readily understand the workings of the mind, adapt his teachings to the intellect of his people, and learn that grand charity possessed only by those who closely study the nature and needs of men.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:266](#).

Sabbathkeepers tend to neglect needed recreation—I was shown that Sabbathkeepers as a people labor too hard without allowing themselves change or periods of rest. Recreation is needful to those who are engaged in physical labor and is still more essential for

[248] those whose labor is principally mental. It is not essential to our salvation, nor for the glory of God, to keep the mind laboring constantly and excessively, even upon religious themes. There are amusements, such as dancing, card playing, chess, checkers, etc., which we cannot approve, because Heaven condemns them. These amusements open the door for great evil. They are not beneficial in their tendency, but have an exciting influence, producing in some minds a passion for those plays which lead to gambling and dissipation. All such plays should be condemned by Christians, and something perfectly harmless should be substituted in their place.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:514](#).

It is the privilege and duty of Christians to seek innocent recreation—It is the privilege and duty of Christians to seek to refresh their spirits and invigorate their bodies by innocent recreation, with the purpose of using their physical and mental powers to the glory of God. Our recreations should not be scenes of senseless mirth, taking the form of the nonsensical. We can conduct them in such a manner as will benefit and elevate those with whom we associate, and better qualify us and them to more successfully attend to the duties devolving upon us as Christians. We cannot be excusable in the sight of God if we engage in amusements which have a tendency to unfit us for the faithful performance of the ordinary duties of life, and thus lessen our relish for the contemplation of God and heavenly things. The religion of Christ is cheering and elevating in its influence. It is above everything like foolish jesting and joking, vain and frivolous chit-chat. In all our seasons of recreation we may gather from the Divine Source of strength fresh courage and power, that we may the more successfully elevate our lives to purity, true goodness, and holiness.—[The Review and Herald, July 25, 1871](#).

Ellen White spoke approvingly to a group gathered for recreation at Lake Goguac in Michigan—But I believe that, while we are seeking to refresh our spirits and invigorate our bodies, we are required of God to use all our powers at all times to the best purpose. We may associate together as we do here today, and do all to the glory of God. We can and should conduct our recreations in such a manner that we shall be fitted for the more successful discharge of the duties devolving upon us, and that our influence shall be more beneficial upon those with whom we associate. Especially should

it be the case upon an occasion like this, which should be of good cheer to us all. We can return to our homes improved in mind and refreshed in body, and prepared to engage in the work anew, with better hope and better courage.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:586](#).

Problems

Some social gatherings are a disgrace to the church—But there has been a class of social gatherings in Battle Creek of an entirely different character, parties of pleasure that have been a disgrace to our institutions and to the church. They encourage pride of dress, pride of appearance, self-gratification, hilarity, and trifling. Satan is entertained as an honored guest, and he takes possession of those who patronize these gatherings. A view of one such company was presented to me, where were assembled those who profess to believe the truth. One was seated at the instrument of music, and such songs were poured forth as made the watching angels weep. There was mirth, there was coarse laughter, there was abundance of enthusiasm, and a kind of inspiration; but the joy was such as Satan only is able to create. This is an enthusiasm and infatuation of which all who love God will be ashamed. It prepares the participants for unholy thought and action. I have reason to think that some who were engaged in that scene heartily repented of the shameful performance.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 82](#).

[249]

Superficial Christians, always ready for pleasure or sport, may lead Bible Christians to conform—Satan has been multiplying his snares in Battle Creek; and professed Christians who are superficial in character and religious experience are used by the tempter as his decoys. This class are always ready for the gatherings for pleasure or sport, and their influence attracts others. Young men and young women who have tried to be Bible Christians are persuaded to join the party, and they are drawn into the ring. They did not prayerfully consult the divine standard, to learn what Christ had said in regard to the fruit to be borne on the Christian tree. They do not discern that these entertainments are really Satan's banquet, prepared to keep souls from accepting the call to the marriage supper of the Lamb; they prevent them from receiving the white robe of character, which is the righteousness of Christ. They become

confused as to what it is right for them as Christians to do. They do not want to be thought singular, and naturally incline to follow the example of others. Thus they come under the influence of those who have never had the divine touch on heart or mind.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 85.](#)

Take a balanced view of recreation—There are persons with a diseased imagination to whom religion is a tyrant, ruling them as with a rod of iron. Such are constantly mourning over their depravity and groaning over supposed evil. Love does not exist in their hearts; a frown is ever upon their countenances. They are chilled by the innocent laugh from the youth or from anyone. They consider all recreation or amusement a sin and think that the mind must be constantly wrought up to just such a stern, severe pitch. This is one extreme. Others think that the mind must be ever on the stretch to invent new amusements and diversions in order to gain health. They learn to depend on excitement and are uneasy without it. Such are not true Christians. They go to another extreme. The true principles of Christianity open before all a source of happiness, the height and depth, the length and breadth of which are immeasurable.—[The Adventist Home, 493.](#)

Chapter 44—Committees

[250]

[251]

Ministers should avoid long committee meetings—A minister cannot keep in the best spiritual frame of mind while he is called upon to settle little difficulties in the various churches. This is not his appointed work. God desires to use every faculty of His chosen messengers. Their mind should not be wearied by long committee meetings at night; for God wants all their brain power to be used in proclaiming the gospel as it is in Christ Jesus.—[Evangelism, 662](#).

Those who do not attend committee meetings tend to be critical later of how things are done—They say, “Oh, it is only a business meeting.” But all who have the mental capacity ought to be anxious and determined to understand how the business matters are managed. Some who have given up the faith have made very false statements in relation to the workings of the cause and the management of its business. Had these attended the business meetings, and listened attentively to the proceedings, they would have understood how the work was conducted in all its branches, and could have borne testimony to the strict integrity that characterizes every department. The enemy could not then have urged in the insinuation that there were things kept back that the people were not permitted to know. Those who take no interest in the business meetings, generally have no real interest in the cause of God, and these are the ones who are tempted to believe that the management of our various enterprises is not just what it should be.—[The Review and Herald, April 29, 1884](#).

Principles in Forming

The same persons should not serve for years on the same boards and committees—Piety is needed. Less self-confidence and far more humility must be seen. The work of God has come to be looked upon as a common thing. It would have been much better to have changed the men on boards and committees than to have

retained the very same men for years, until they supposed that their propositions were to be adopted without a question; and generally no voice has been lifted in an opposite direction.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers](#), 417.

[252]

Committees should not be made up of those who have no spirit of self denial—When our brethren keep on the board, men whose hearts are as hard as stone, men who have not hearts of flesh, what can you expect? How can these men know what those sacrificed in the building up of the work. They have no spirit of sacrifice themselves, and how can they understand the experience of those who dressed cheaply, and who denied self, who placed themselves in any position that the cause of God might prosper. They know nothing of this, it is Greek to them.—EGW'88 988.

Principles of Conducting

The committee meeting should be just as much under the dictation of the Spirit as the prayer meeting—I wish to say to you that the business which may be carried on at this meeting is just as much a part of the service of God as is prayer. The business meeting is to be just as much under the dictation of the Spirit as the prayer meeting. There is danger of our getting a sentimental, impulsive religion. Let the business transacted at this meeting stand forth in such sacredness that the heavenly host can approve of it. We are to guard most sacredly the business lines of our work. Every line of business carried on here is to be in accordance with the principles of heaven.—[Selected Messages 3:336](#).

When God's presence is recognized in committee meetings, it will safeguard against imprudent speeches and domineering attitudes—Let God be recognized as the supreme Ruler of His heritage. Let every man place himself under His control. Let Him be recognized in all our assemblies, in every business meeting, every council, every committee. He sees all that is done, and hears all that is said. "Thou God seest me." Let these words be kept ever in mind. They will be a safeguard against imprudent, passionate speeches, against all desire to domineer. They will repress words that should never be spoken, and resolutions that men have no right to make—

resolutions that restrict the liberty of human beings.—[Manuscript Releases 18:225](#).

Satan attends every committee meeting, trying to impress minds to make objections that will delay the work—The very thing that the Lord had impressed upon the minds of His servants that ought to be done has not been done at the right time, because these men advanced their own ideas under the suggestions the devil had put in their minds to hinder the work of God and to disgust those who would see the work of God move. There have been suggestions made by themselves which have carried, which God never put into their minds. Satan attends every board meeting, every business meeting, every committee meeting, and if he can impress anyone's mind to make objections or to throw in suggestions that will delay the work hours and weary out those who are called upon to attend these meetings, he is wonderfully pleased. He has had his way in the matter. And the business which should be pushed through with dispatch, yet in an intelligent manner, is made tedious and to drag along because of the human, unsanctified elements in the character of some who are placed in responsible positions, who do not have knowledge when to speak and when to keep silent.—[Manuscript Releases 12:23](#).

[253]

Only the church, not the board, disciplines members—“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.” Let the church take action in regard to its members.—[Testimonies for the Church 7:262](#).

[254]

Chapter 45—Conference Departments

[255]

Conferences should educate ministers, and together they should educate the churches—The president of a State Conference is, by his manner of dealing, educating the ministers under him, and together they can so educate the churches that it will not be necessary to call the ministers of the conference from the field to settle difficulties and dissensions in the church. If the officers in the conference will, as faithful servants, perform their Heaven-appointed duties, the work in our conferences will not be left to become entangled in such perplexities as heretofore. And in laboring thus, the workers will become solid, responsible men, who will not fail nor be discouraged in a hard place.—[Gospel Workers](#), 419.

Conference and Department Leaders

Respect treasurers, accountants, and bookkeepers—I was shown the great deficiency there is in keeping the accounts in the various departments of the cause. Bookkeeping is and ever will be an important part of our work, and those who have become intelligent in it are greatly needed in all our institutions.... This branch of the work has been neglected shamefully, and altogether too long. It is a shame to allow work of such magnitude to be done in a defective, bungling manner. God wants as perfect work as it is possible for human beings to do.... Bookkeeping is a subject that needs to be studied in order that it may be done with correctness and dispatch and without worry and taxation.—[Letter 63](#), 1886. (Quoted in [Ellen G. White in Europe](#) 249).

All departments of the cause should be conducted by those with the qualifications for the position—It is necessary that the same order and system should be maintained in the church now as in the days of the apostles. The prosperity of the cause depends very largely upon its various departments being conducted by men of

ability, who are qualified for their positions.—[The Spirit of Prophecy 3:293](#).

We should improve our ways of training departmental leaders—As a people who claim to have advanced light, we are to devise ways and means by which to bring forth a corps of educated workmen for the various departments of the work of God. We need a well-disciplined, cultivated class of young men and women in our sanitariums, in the medical missionary work, in the offices of publication, in the conferences of different states, and in the field at large. We need young men and women who have a high intellectual culture, in order that they may do the best work for the Lord. We have done something toward reaching this standard, but still we are far behind where we should be.—[Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students, 42](#).

[256]

Cooperation Between Departments

Do not work independently of the various departments of the work—One point will have to be guarded, and that is individual independence. As soldiers in Christ's army, there should be concert of action in the various departments of the work.... Each laborer should act with reference to the others. Followers of Jesus Christ will not act independently one of another. Our strength must be in God, and it must be husbanded, to be put forth in noble, concentrated action. It must not be wasted in meaningless movements.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:534](#).

Come into close relationship with those in the departments—You have been too reserved. You have not come into close relation with men engaged in the different departments of the work; you have not consulted with them as familiarly as you should to move understandingly. Had you done this you might have been a more efficient helper. You have moved too much according to your own judgment and carried out your own ideas and plans. There has been a lack of harmonious connection between the workers. Those who might have helped you have been reluctant to impart their knowledge to you on account of this lack of familiarity on your part, and also because you move so much from impulse and

feeling that they have dreaded to approach you.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:219](#).

Be interested in all departments, rather than concentrating on just one area—Ministers should be guarded, lest they thwart the purposes of God by plans of their own. They are in danger of narrowing down the work of God, and confining their labor to certain localities, and not cultivating a special interest for the work of God in all its various departments. There are some who concentrate their minds upon one subject, to the exclusion of others which may be of equal importance.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:34](#).

[257] **Too often ministers have given poor support to health and medical missionary departments**—The work of educating in medical missionary lines is an advance step of great importance in awakening man to his moral responsibilities. Had the ministers taken hold of this work in its various departments in accordance with the light which God has given, there would have been a most decided reformation in eating, drinking, and dressing. But some have stood directly in the way of the advance of health reform. They have held the people back by their indifference or condemnatory remarks, or by pleasantries and jokes. They themselves and a large number of others have been sufferers unto death, but all have not yet learned wisdom.—[Testimonies for the Church 6:377](#).

Ministers should not take all the work of the various departments upon themselves—God's cause has not advanced as it should have done, for the very reason that ministers and leading men have felt that they must do everything themselves. They have tugged and toiled to keep the wheel rolling, and are weighed down with responsibilities and burdens in the various departments of church-work, in the Sabbath-school, and in every other branch of the cause. They think they must do all this or it will not be done; and truly it would not be done, because they have failed to take others into their counsel and to train them to work.—[The Review and Herald, July 24, 1883](#).

Chapter 46—Finance

[258]

[259]

Adventists give generously if they see results—When the church sees that the ministers are all aglow with the spirit of the work, that they feel deeply the force of the truth, and are seeking to bring others to the knowledge of it, it will put new life and vigor into them. Their hearts will be stirred to do what they can to aid in the work. There is not a class of people in the world who are more willing to sacrifice of their means to advance the cause than are Seventh-day Adventists. If the ministers do not utterly discourage them by their indolence and inefficiency, and by their lack of spirituality, they will generally respond to any appeal that may be made that commends itself to their judgment and consciences. But they want to see fruit.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:49](#).

Giving wins converts, who in turn give to win more converts—All our church members should feel a deep interest in home and foreign missions. Great spiritual blessing will come to them as they make self-sacrificing efforts to plant the standard of truth in new territory. The money invested in this work will bring rich returns. New converts, rejoicing in the light received from the Word, will in their turn give of their means to carry the light to others.—[Testimonies for the Church 9:49](#).

Some preach only that part of the truth that pleases people, and neglect stewardship—Are you, brethren, preaching that part of the truth that pleases the people, while other parts of the work are left incomplete? Will it be necessary for some one to follow after you, and urge upon the people the duty of faithfully bringing all the tithes and offerings into the Lord's treasury? This is the work of the minister, but it has been sadly neglected. The people have robbed God, and the wrong has been suffered because the minister did not want to displease his brethren. God calls these men unfaithful stewards.—[The Review and Herald, July 8, 1884](#).

Stewards

God has placed in our hands the means to carry forward His work—God is constantly bestowing upon you the blessings of this life; and if He asks you to dispense His gifts by helping the various branches of His work, it is for your own temporal and spiritual interest to do so, and thus acknowledge God as the giver of every blessing. God, as the Master-worker, co-operates with men in securing the means necessary for their sustenance; and He requires them to co-operate with Him in the salvation of souls. He has placed in the hands of His servants the means wherewith to carry forward His work in home and foreign missions. But if only half the people do their duty, the treasury will not be supplied with the necessary funds, and many parts of the work of God must be left incomplete.—[The Review and Herald, December 23, 1890.](#)

Satan seeks to control the church by controlling money—[Satan to his angels:] Go, make the possessors of lands and money drunk with cares. If you can make them place their affections upon these things, we shall have them yet. They may profess what they please, only make them care more for money than for the success of Christ's kingdom, or the spread of the truths we hate. Present the world before them in the most attractive light, that they may love and idolize it. We must keep all the means in our ranks we can. The more means they have, the more will they injure our kingdom by getting our subjects. And as they appoint meetings in different places, then we are in danger. Be very vigilant then. Cause all the distraction you can. Destroy love for each other. Discourage and dishearten their ministers; for we hate them. Hold up every plausible excuse to those that have means, lest they hand it out. Control the money matters if you can, and drive their ministers to want, and distress. This will weaken their courage and zeal. Battle every inch of ground. Make covetousness and love of earthly treasures the ruling traits of their character. As long as these traits rule, salvation and grace stand back. Crowd all you can around them to attract them, and they will be surely ours. Not only are we sure of them, but their hateful influence will not be exercised toward others to lead them to heaven. And those who shall attempt to give, put within them a grudging disposition, that it may be sparingly.—[Early Writings, 266, 267.](#)

Tithes and offerings must not be withheld by givers even if they are not in harmony with what the Conference does—You who have been withholding your means from the cause of God, read the book of Malachi, and see what is spoken there in regard to tithes and offerings. Cannot you see that it is not best under any circumstances to withhold your tithes and offerings because you are not in harmony with everything your brethren do? The tithes and offerings are not the property of any man, but are to be used in doing a certain work for God. Unworthy ministers may receive some of the means thus raised, but dare any one, because of this, withhold from the treasury, and brave the curse of God? I dare not. I pay my tithes gladly and freely, saying, as did David, “Of thine own have we given thee.” A selfish withholding from God will tend to poverty in our own souls. Act your part, my brethren and sisters. God loves you, and He stands at the helm. If the Conference business is not managed according to the order of the Lord, that is the sin of the erring ones. The Lord will not hold you responsible for it, if you do what you can to correct the evil. But do not commit sin yourselves by withholding from God his own property. “Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently,” or deceitfully.—[Sermons and Talks, 2:74, 75.](#)

[261]

World Church

Support offerings for imperiled institutions—When the Lord places before us an appeal to be responded to, just at the time when offerings are to be made by our people, let the ministers and church officers take up the matter earnestly and vigorously. Let them as stewards of God decide what is to be done, and then do it. This is absolutely necessary when our institutions are in so great peril.—[The Review and Herald, March 19, 1901.](#)

Holiday gifts should be given to foreign missions—Every dollar and every dime that we can spare is needed now, to aid in carrying the message of truth to other lands. At the holiday season much is spent by our own people upon gifts and various gratifications which are not only useless but often hurtful. Appetite is indulged, pride and self-love are fostered, and Christ is forgotten. If the money usually devoted to these objects were all brought into the mission

treasury, our foreign missions would be lifted above embarrassment. Shall we not this year consecrate to God not merely a part but all our holiday gifts for the relief of His cause, which is in so great need? How can we more appropriately celebrate the coming Christmas, how better express our gratitude to God for the gift of His dear Son, than by offerings to send to all the world the tidings of His soon coming?—[The Review and Herald, December 6, 1887.](#)

Local Church

Tithe is not to be used to care for the house of worship—“Thou shalt command the children of Israel that they bring thee pure olive oil, beaten, for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always.” This was to be a continual offering that the house of God might be properly supplied with that which was necessary for His service. His people today are to remember that the house of worship is God’s property and that it is to be scrupulously cared for. But the funds for this work are not to come from the tithe. The tithe is to be used for one purpose—to sustain the ministers whom the Lord has appointed to do His work. It is to be used to support those who speak the words of life to the people, and carry the burden of the flock of God.—[Manuscript Releases 7:135.](#)

[262] **Israelites contributed to “church expense”**—Provision was also made to support the public worship of God. In addition to the tithe the congregation pledged themselves to contribute yearly a stated sum for the service of the sanctuary.—[Prophets and Kings, 667.](#)

Ministers Need Some Financial Ability

Ministers need business ability if they are to deal wisely with their churches—A man who has no business tact may make a minister, but he will lack qualifications that every minister must possess in order to deal wisely in the church and build up the cause. But when a minister is good in the pulpit, and, like Elder Hull, fails in management, he should never go out alone. Another should go with him to supply his lack and manage for him.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:441.](#)

To win souls, ministers should show their ingenuity in business lines—There is a necessity of ministers using their powers of ingenuity, that they may not be unskillful in the Word, and may show their ingenuity in devising and planning in business lines. These faculties should be used in the service of God to win souls to the truth. Real planning and devising are required to bring the sinner out of darkness into the light of truth.—[Manuscript Releases 19:25](#).

Ministers Not Specialists in Finance

Ministers carrying too many financial burdens neglect to fulfill their gospel commission—Ministers are not to be called hither and thither to attend board meetings for the purpose of deciding common business questions. Many of our ministers have done this work in the past, but it is not the work in which the Lord wishes them to engage. Too many financial burdens have been placed on them. When they try to carry these burdens, they neglect to fulfill the gospel commission. God looks upon this as a dishonor to His name.—[Testimonies for the Church 7:255](#).

Ministers are not set apart to do business or attend committees—Not a few ministers are neglecting the very work that they have been appointed to do. Why are those who are set apart for the work of the ministry placed on committees and boards? Why are they called upon to attend so many business meetings, many times at great distance from their fields of labor? Why are not business matters placed in the hands of business men? The ministers have not been set apart to do this work. The finances of the cause are to be managed by men of ability; but ministers are set apart for another line of work.—[Manuscript Releases 9:171](#).

Chapter 47—Pastoring a Multi-Church District

Little companies may learn to rely more wholly upon God—I would encourage those who assemble in little companies to worship God. Brethren and sisters, be not disheartened because you are so few in number. The tree that stands alone upon the plain, strikes its roots deeper into the earth, spreads out its branches farther on every side, and grows stronger and more symmetrical while wrestling singly with the tempest or rejoicing in the sunshine. So the Christian, cut off from earthly dependence, may learn to rely wholly upon God, and may gain strength and courage from every conflict.—[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 259.](#)

God promises divine guidance to little companies that seldom have preaching—Let these little companies who seldom have preaching cling more firmly to Jesus. Let them settle this point first of all, that they are willing to walk in the narrow, cross-bearing path where Jesus has traveled before them. Then let them appropriate to themselves God's promises of divine guidance.—[The Review and Herald, September 27, 1887.](#)

Develop Church Talent

New Testament ministers were not to settle over one church—The minister should develop the talent in the church, that meetings may be profitably kept up. Timothy was commanded to go from church to church, as one who should do this kind of work, and build up the churches in the most holy faith. He was to do the work of an evangelist, and this is an even more important work than that of the ministers. He was to preach the Word, but he was not to be settled over one church.—[The Review and Herald, September 28, 1897.](#)

Hold little companies together by helping them become soul-winners—There are many who have never heard from the Word the reasons for our faith; and yet some of our ministers feel a burden

to hover over little companies of believers in an effort to hold them together. The best way to hold them together is to induce them to maintain a living connection with God, and to exert their influence in seeking to draw others to Him.—[The Review and Herald, July 16, 1908.](#)

True representatives of Christ try to supply the place of the minister they cannot have—Our religion requires self-denial, self-sacrifice, at every step. Jesus came down from Heaven to teach us how to live; and while on earth He went about doing good. Those who are really representatives of Christ are working for the good of others. They delight in advancing the cause of God both at home and abroad. They are seen and heard, and their influence is felt, at the prayer-meeting. They will try to supply the place of the minister, whose labors they cannot have.—[The Review and Herald, September 6, 1881.](#)

[264]

A good overseer does not do the work, but keeps others working—The minister should not feel that it is his duty to do all the talking and all the laboring and all the praying; but he should make it a part of his work to educate workers in every church. Let different ones take turns in leading the meetings, and in giving Bible readings, and in so doing you will be calling into use the talents which God has given you, and at the same time educating workers. I read of a man who had a company of workmen over whom he placed an overseer, whose duty it was to see that the work was done to the best advantage. One day he came along to where his overseer, in charge of twelve men, was digging a trench. He found the overseer down in the trench digging away, with the sweat dropping from his brow; but the twelve men were above, watching him in his labor. The overseer was called up and asked what he was doing there. “I ordered you,” said the man, “to keep twelve men at work; why have you not done this? There you are, doing the work of one man, while twelve are idle. Here are your wages.”—[The Review and Herald, November 6, 1888.](#)

Little companies are greatly weakened when efficient helpers move to larger centers—From nearly all our churches in Michigan, and, to some extent, from other states, our brethren and sisters have been crowding into Battle Creek. Many of them were efficient helpers in smaller churches, and their removal has greatly

weakened those little companies; in some cases the church has thus been completely disorganized.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:184](#).

Worship Service When No Pastor Present

Long, prosy talk does more harm than good—The same course is frequently pursued in the Sabbath meetings. When there is no preacher present, the one who is appointed to lead the meeting feels it his duty to try to supply the lack as best he can, and starts out with a long, prosy talk that kills the meeting on the start. And yet he is often distressed because there is so little interest manifested by those who attend these meetings. He sees that the interest is waning, and he begins to inquire what he shall do. To such I would say, Cease your efforts to sermonize. Many love to talk; but their speeches are long and dry; there is none of the heavenly moisture in them. I can but sympathize with the listeners when such a one has charge of the meeting. He thinks that so much talking ought to do a great amount of good, but it is a positive injury.—[Sabbath-School Worker, October 1, 1885](#).

Having a minister present is not a prerequisite to having a meaningful worship service—Let not the little companies think that they can have no meeting when they have no minister. Let them not think that one of their members must stand in the pulpit and preach to them. The time and season are very precious. The assembled believers are in the audience chamber of the universe of Heaven. They are to witness for God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave His life for the world. The little company are to do service to God by offering to Him spiritual worship. When there is no delegated minister to speak to the little companies, let each one witness to the truth, and be faithful to speak often one to another of the love of God, and thus train and educate the soul. Let each one seek to become an intelligent Christian, bearing his responsibility, and acting his personal part to make the meeting interesting and profitable.—[The Review and Herald, September 10, 1895](#).

When little companies meet to worship, let several take part—Let the praise of God be upon your lips when you meet together in little companies to worship God. Let not one man do

much of the talking. Let several take part.—[Manuscript Releases 15:153](#).

A Bible class approach is sometimes more helpful than preaching—Our people should not be made to think that they need to listen to a sermon every Sabbath. Many who listen frequently to sermons, even though the truth be presented in clear lines, learn but little. Often it would be more profitable if the Sabbath meetings were of the nature of a Bible class study. Bible truth should be presented in such a simple, interesting manner that all can easily understand and grasp the principles of salvation.—[Evangelism, 348](#).

[266]

Chapter 48—Problem Solving and Conflict

[267]

Resolution

Understanding the perversity of human nature, Jesus gave explicit rules for our dealing with one another—Our Redeemer understood the perversity of human nature; and in order to save the souls for whom He sacrificed His life, and establish His church in unity and prosperity upon the earth, He has given explicit rules for church-members to follow in dealing with one another. Hear what He says: “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, Thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.”—[The Review and Herald, April 15, 1880.](#)

Value the gift of peacemaking—Where are those who do not stint or measure their loving labor for the Master? Who are striving to quell every dissension in the church, being peace-makers in Christ’s name? Who are seeking to answer the prayer of Christ, “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us; ... 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”? Could our Lord speak these words, so gracious, so full of meaning, of the churches in their present state of feeble love, of dissension and petty trial,—churches that are calling ministers from important work to settle their little manufactured difficulties, thus showing that they have no connection with God?—No. The members of the church must come into unity; and in order to do this, they must have less of self, and more of Jesus. They must learn of Christ. They must be meek and lowly of heart. Their selfish pride must die. Then their

mountains of difficulty will be reduced to mole-hills.—[The Review and Herald, January 6, 1891.](#)

When united with Christ, members will solve church problems with sympathy, tenderness, and love—The Bible sets before us a model church. They are to be in unity with each other, and with God. When believers are united in Christ the living vine, the result is that they are one with Christ, full of sympathy and tenderness and love.—[Selected Messages 3:18.](#)

[268]

Problems are solved when we approach others in a spirit of meekness, kindness, and mercy—Never question the motives of your brethren; for as you judge them, God has declared you will be judged. Open your hearts to kindness, to the cheering rays of the Sun of Righteousness. Encourage kindly thoughts and holy affections. Cultivate the habit of speaking well of your brethren. Let not pride or selfish righteousness prevent you from making a frank and full confession of your wrong-doings. If you do not love those for whom Christ has died, you have no genuine love for Christ, and your worship will be as a tainted offering before God. If you cherish unworthy thoughts, misjudging your brethren and surmising evil of them, God will not hear your self-sufficient, self-exalted prayers. When you go to those who you think are doing wrong, you must have the spirit of meekness, of kindness, and be full of mercy and good fruits. Do not show partiality to one or more, and neglect other of your brethren because they are not congenial to you. Beware lest you deal harshly with those who you think have made mistakes, while others, more guilty and more deserving of reproof, who should be severely rebuked for their unChristlike conduct, are sustained and treated as friends.—[The Review and Herald, March 12, 1895.](#)

Solve problems by counseling together—The Spirit of Christ is grieved when any of His followers give evidence of possessing a harsh, unfair, or exacting spirit. As laborers together with God, each should regard the other as part of God's great firm. He desires that they shall counsel together. There is to be no drawing apart, for the spirit of independence dishonors the truth we profess. One special evidence that the Spirit of Christ is abiding in His church is the unity and harmony which exist among its members. This is the brightest witness to the possession of true religion; for it will

convert and transform the natural man, and fashion him after the divine similitude.—[The Review and Herald, February 18, 1909.](#)

An accusing spirit prevents the solving of problems—There are some who imagine that it is their duty to be church tinkers. It is agreeable to their natural feelings to be seeking spot and stain in others; they watch diligently for something to reprove, and they become narrower and narrower in their ideas, until they are ready to make one an offender for a word. In the Sabbath meetings, when all should be individually engaged in the worship of God, an accusing spirit is allowed to come in, and one bears testimony against another. This spirit is wholly unlike Christ, and leads to dissension and wrangling. God no more accepts such worship than He accepted Cain's offering. There is no more effectual hindrance to growth in grace than this disposition to criticize and condemn others. We have in our experience seen this accusing spirit gradually enter the hearts of church-members until it had leavened nearly the entire church, and the result was that little of real godliness or of the spirit of Christ remained.—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 212, 213.](#)

Unity

Unity in the church reveals Christ more than do sermons and arguments—Wherever severity, harshness, and want of affection and love are exhibited in the sacred circle of the home, there will most assuredly be a failure in the plans and management in the church. Unity in the home, unity in the church, reveals Christ's manner and grace more than sermons and arguments.—[Evangelism, 342.](#)

Satan works to prevent harmony in the church, because bickering causes people to become disgusted with Christianity—The evidence that the world cannot withstand and controvert, that God has sent Jesus into the world as its Redeemer, is in the oneness of the church. Their unity and harmony is the convincing argument. Satan is therefore constantly at work to prevent this harmony and union, that in witnessing the bickerings, strifes, and dissension, unbelievers shall become disgusted with Christianity, and fastened in unbelief and infidelity. God is dishonored by those who

profess the truth while they are at variance with one another.—[The Upward Look, 63.](#)

Those united to Christ will have true, sincere love for one another—My brethren are well aware that the Word of God presents the matter of church unity as a principle; those who are united to Christ by the truth of heavenly origin should have strong friendship for one another.... If the branches of the vine are united to the parent stock, the same life dwells in them all. In Christ Jesus there is love, and those who are united to Christ will not have merely a tame, common regard as acquaintances, but true, sincere love for one another, because they are endued with the spirit of Christ. This drawing off from one another is not Christ-like, but it is after Satan's order.—EGW'88 1141, 1142.

When there is harmonious action among members, there will be proportionate power in their work—The success of our work depends upon our love to God and our love to our fellowmen. When there is harmonious action among the individual members of the church, when there is love and confidence manifested by brother to brother, there will be proportionate force and power in our work for the salvation of men. Oh, how greatly we need a moral renovation! Without the faith that works by love, you can do nothing. May the Lord give you hearts to receive this testimony.—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, 188.](#)

[270]

Chapter 49—Promotion

[271]

Do not act the part of a salesman in the house of God—I was shown that if the moral and intellectual faculties had not been clouded by wrong habits of living, ministers and people would have been quick to discern the evil results of mixing sacred and common things. Ministers have stood in the desk and preached a most solemn discourse, and then by introducing merchandise, and acting the part of a salesman, even in the house of God, they have diverted the minds of their hearers from the impressions received, and destroyed the fruit of their labor.—[Testimonies for the Church 1:472](#).

Ministers are to promote missionary work in all lands—No one who has given his life to God's work as His minister, lives for self. His work is to follow Christ, to be a willing agent and co-worker with the Master, receiving His Spirit day by day, and working as the Saviour worked, neither failing nor being discouraged. He is chosen of God as a faithful instrument to promote missionary work in all lands, and he must ponder well the path he follows.—[Gospel Workers, 451](#).

Publications

All can aid the cause by giving means for the publication of periodicals—But all cannot be teachers of the word in the pulpit. The individual duties of different persons vary, but there is work for all to do. All can aid the cause by giving unselfishly of their means to help the various branches of the work, to furnish means for the publication of tracts and periodicals to scatter among the people, and disseminate the truth.—[The Review and Herald, January 9, 1883](#).

Churches should realize it is their duty to obtain subscriptions for our periodicals—We now have great facilities for spreading the truth; but our people are not coming up to the privileges given them. They do not in every church see and feel the necessity of using their abilities in saving souls. They do not realize their

duty to obtain subscribers for our periodicals, including our health journal, and to introduce our books and pamphlets.—[The Publishing Ministry, 368.](#)

Those who feel they cannot afford church papers, do manage to afford secular papers—There are those who profess to be brethren who do not take the *Review*, *Signs*, *Instructor*, or *Good Health*, but take one or more secular papers. Their children are deeply interested in reading the fictitious tales and love stories which are found in these papers, and which their father can afford to pay for, although claiming that he cannot afford to pay for our periodicals and publications on present truth.—[The Publishing Ministry, 350.](#)

[272]

Every family should have the Review, even if the church must provide the subscription to poor families—The *Review and Herald* and the *Signs of the Times* are cheap papers at the full price. The *Review* is a valuable paper; it contains matters of great interest to the church and should be placed in every family of believers. If any are too poor to take it, the church should, by subscription, raise the amount of the full price of the paper and supply the destitute families.—[The Publishing Ministry, 350.](#)

Ingathering

Ingathering follows the example of Nehemiah, who solicited from non-Israelites able to give—Letters of inquiry have come to me regarding the advisability of carrying out the Harvest Ingathering plan. In answer, I would refer all to the example of Nehemiah. When about to journey to Jerusalem with the hope of restoring the walls about the stricken city of his fathers, he frankly told King Artaxerxes of the work he contemplated doing, and requested help to insure the success of the enterprise. He obtained a letter to the keeper of the king's forest in the mountains of Lebanon, directing him to furnish such timber as would be needed for the wall of Jerusalem, and the buildings that were to be erected. And the means which he lacked, he solicited from those who were able to bestow.—[East Michigan Banner, September 29, 1909.](#)

Ingathering can both help missions and win to the truth those who give—In the providence of God, those who are bearing the burden of His work have been endeavoring to put new life

into old methods of labor, and also to invent new plans and new methods of awakening the interest of church members in a united effort to reach the world. One of the new plans for reaching unbelievers is the Harvest Ingathering campaign for missions. In many places, during the past few years, this has proved a success, bringing blessing to many, and increasing the flow of means into the mission treasury. As those not of our faith have been made acquainted with the progress of the third angel's message in heathen lands, their sympathies have been aroused, and some have sought to learn more of the truth that has such power to transform hearts and lives. Men and women of all classes have been reached, and the name of God has been glorified.—[Evangelism, 252](#).

Sabbath school work to bear fruit—Consecrate yourself and your all to the service of Him who hath loved you, and hath given Himself for you. Jesus says, “Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples.” This means in the Sabbath school work as much as in the work of the minister. Now is the golden opportunity to sow precious seed that will spring up and bear fruit unto eternal life.—[Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 181.](#)

Ministers should not be burdened down with doing the work of the Sabbath school—God’s cause has not advanced as it should have done, for the very reason that ministers and leading men have felt that they must do everything themselves. They have tugged and toiled to keep the wheel rolling, and are weighed down with responsibilities and burdens in the various departments of church-work, in the Sabbath-school, and in every other branch of the cause. They think they must do all this or it will not be done; and truly it would not be done, because they have failed to take others into their counsel and to train them to work.—[The Review and Herald, July 24, 1883.](#)

Through the Sabbath school, ministers should teach their members how to work—There is much to be done in the Sabbath school work also in bringing the people to realize their obligation and to act their part. God calls them to work for Him, and the ministers should guide their efforts.—[Testimonies for the Church 5:256.](#)

Ministers should see that their churches are given instruction in the conducting of Sabbath school—Instruction in regard to conducting the Sabbath-school should, to a large degree, be given in the home churches; for the labor can be made more direct and the results will be more permanent if instruction is given at home. This work does not require the services of the ministers; they should be free to attend to the spiritual interests of the people. They are to

teach others what to do. They must instruct the people as to how to come to the Lord and how to lead others to Him.—[Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 185.](#)

[274]

Value of Small Group Bible Study

Little groups that meet together for Bible study receive spiritual muscle—Let little companies meet together to study the Scriptures. You will lose nothing by this, but will gain much. Angels of God will be in your gathering, and as you feed upon the Bread of Life, you will receive spiritual sinew and muscle. You will be feeding, as it were, upon the leaves of the tree of life. By this means only can you maintain your integrity.—[This Day With God, 11.](#)

Sabbath School Teachers

Those satisfied with following a dry order will miss the mark as Sabbath school teachers—Those who are satisfied with following a certain dry order, of going through a round, will miss the mark, and fail of the work that should be done by a Sabbath-school teacher; but if those who engage in this important branch of God's cause are Christians in the full sense of the word, doing the work given them of God in His fear, working with love for souls for whom Christ died, they will be laborers together with God.—[Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 104.](#)

Sabbath school teachers should keep growing even if their minister does not—Let not the teacher in Sabbath school follow the example of those who do not grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, even though those who minister in the sacred desk have given them such an example. He who would be accepted as a laborer together with God must not be found imitating the tone, manners, or ideas of any other man. He must learn of God, and be endowed with heavenly wisdom. God has given the gift of reason and intellect to one worker the same as He has to another; and according to your ability, you are to put your talents out to the exchangers. The Lord would not have any worker a mere shadow of another whom he admires. The teacher must grow up into the measure of the stature of Christ, not to the measure of some finite

erring mortal. You are to “grow in grace,” and where is grace to be found?—Only in Christ, the divine Pattern.—[Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 105, 106.](#)

Chapter 51—Youth Leadership

Form a happy acquaintance with your youth—Very much has been lost to the cause of God because of inattention to the young. Ministers of the gospel should form a happy acquaintance with the youth of their congregations. There is a great reluctance on the part of many to become acquainted with the youth, but it is accounted of Heaven a neglect of duty, a sin against souls for whom Christ died. The youth are objects of Satan's special attacks; and the manifestation of kindness, courtesy, tender sympathy, and love, will often work the salvation of those who are under the temptations of the evil one. The love of Jesus will win you an entrance into the hearts of the young; and when you have obtained the confidence of the youth, they will listen to your words and take your counsel. You should bind them to your heart by the cords of love, and then instruct them how to labor in the cause of God. The youth may labor for their young companions in a quiet, unpretending way. This branch of God's work must not be neglected. Our churches are not doing what they might do for the youth. There seems to be no burden for souls for whom Christ died. Why should this labor for the youth in our borders not be thought the highest of missionary work? Why do the ministers leave the young without endeavoring to win them to Christ? Why do they not urge the young to give their hearts to God? This work will require the most delicate tact, the most thoughtful consideration, the most earnest prayer that heavenly wisdom may be imparted; for connected with the church are those who are not ignorant of our faith, yet whose hearts have never been touched by the power of divine grace.—[The Review and Herald, March 24, 1891.](#)

Love will reach the hearts of even apparently hopeless youth—The Lord is not glorified when the children are neglected and passed by. They are to be educated, disciplined, and patiently instructed. They require more than casual notice, more than a word of encouragement. They need painstaking, prayerful, careful labor.

The heart that is filled with love and sympathy will reach the hearts of the youth who are apparently careless and hopeless.—[Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 77.](#)

Christ is grieved with every harsh, severe, and inconsiderate word spoken to children—Let the kindness and courtesy of the minister be seen in his treatment of children. He should ever bear in mind that they are miniature men and women, younger members of the Lord's family. These may be very near and dear to the Master, and, if properly instructed and disciplined, will do service for Him, even in their youth. Christ is grieved with every harsh, severe, and inconsiderate word spoken to children. Their rights are not always respected, and they are frequently treated as though they had not an individual character which needs to be properly developed, that it may not be warped and the purpose of God in their lives prove a failure.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:397.](#)

[276]

In every sermon, let a little corner be left for children—In His charge to Peter, the Saviour first bade him, "Feed My lambs," and afterward commanded, "Feed My sheep." In addressing the apostle, Christ says to all His servants, "Feed My lambs." When Jesus admonished His disciples not to despise the little ones, He addressed all disciples in all ages. His own love and care for children is a precious example for His followers. If teachers in the Sabbath school felt the love which they should feel for these lambs of the flock, many more would be won to the fold of Christ. At every suitable opportunity, let the story of Jesus' love be repeated to the children. In every sermon let a little corner be left for their benefit. The servant of Christ may have lasting friends in these little ones, and his words may be to them as apples of gold in pictures of silver.—[Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 76.](#)

Children should be in attendance at Sabbath worship—Fathers and mothers should make it a rule that their children attend public worship on the Sabbath, and should enforce the rule by their own example. It is our duty to command our children and our household after us, as did Abraham. By example as well as precept we should impress upon them the importance of religious teaching. All who have taken the baptismal vow have solemnly consecrated themselves to the service of God; they are under covenant obligation to place themselves and their children where they may obtain all

possible incentives and encouragement in the Christian life.—[Child Guidance, 530](#).

Pastor-Parent Team

[277] **Parents criticize the minister for their own neglect**—Your sons and daughters are corrupted by your own example and lax precepts; and, notwithstanding this lack of domestic training, you expect the minister to counteract your daily work and accomplish the wonderful achievement of training their hearts and lives to virtue and piety. After the minister has done all he can do for the church by faithful, affectionate admonition, patient discipline, and fervent prayer to reclaim and save the soul, yet is not successful, the fathers and mothers often blame him because their children are not converted, when it may be because of their own neglect. The burden rests with the parents; and will they take up the work that God has entrusted to them and with fidelity perform it? Will they move onward and upward, working in a humble, patient, persevering way to reach the exalted standard themselves and to bring their children up with them?—[The Adventist Home, 188](#).

Pastors need the help of parents in converting the youth—Many seem to think that the declension in the church, the growing love of pleasure, is due to want of pastoral work. True, the church is to be provided with faithful guides and pastors. Ministers should labor earnestly for the youth who have not given themselves to Christ, and also for others who, though their names are on the church roll, are irreligious and Christless. But ministers may do their work faithfully and well, yet it will amount to very little if parents neglect their work. It is to a lack of Christianity in the home life that the lack of power in the church is due. Until parents take up their work as they should, it will be difficult to arouse the youth to a sense of their duty. If religion reigns in the home, it will be brought into the church. The parents who do their work for God are a power for good. As they restrain and encourage their children, bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, they bless the neighborhood in which they live. And the church is strengthened by their faithful work.—[Child Guidance, 550](#).

Some parents are active in Christian work outside the home while their own children are strangers to the Saviour—There are fathers and mothers who long to labor in some foreign mission field; there are many who are active in Christian work outside the home, while their own children are strangers to the Saviour and His love. The work of winning their children for Christ many parents trust to the minister or the Sabbath school teacher, but in doing this they are neglecting their own God-given responsibility. The education and training of their children to be Christians is the highest service that parents can render to God. It is a work that demands patient labor, a lifelong diligent and persevering effort. By a neglect of this trust we prove ourselves unfaithful stewards. No excuse for such neglect will be accepted by God.—[Christ's Object Lessons, 195](#).

Ministers and members should second the efforts of parents—Let the church take a special care of the lambs of the flock, exerting every influence in their power to win the love of the children and to bind them to the truth. Ministers and church members should second the efforts of parents to lead the children into safe paths. The Lord is calling for the youth, for He would make them His helpers to do good service under His banner.—[The Adventist Home, 358, 359](#).

Successful parents should minister to other youth in the church—Christians take a heartfelt interest in the children that are about them, who, through the subtle temptations of the enemy, are ready to perish. Fathers and mothers, if you have guarded your own children from the wiles of the foe, look about you to save the souls of the children who have not such care.—[Our High Calling, 121](#).

[278]

Train to Serve

Youth, rightly instructed, will be earnest workers for the Master—Young men and women should be educated for service in the cause of God. The Lord chooses the young because they are strong in body and vigorous in mind; and if the youth are rightly instructed, they will be earnest workers for the Master. God will be the counselor of the young if they put their trust in Him; He will accept them, and exalt them to be co-laborers with Himself, if they

will yield themselves in submission to His will.—[The Review and Herald, March 24, 1891.](#)

Ministers or older members cannot have one-half the influence over young people as do other youth—Young friends, if you take hold of the work right where you are at the present time, doing what you can, be sure that you will have the help of Jesus. Begin the work by laboring for your companions. Ministers, or church-members advanced in years, cannot have one-half the influence over your young associates that you are capable of exerting; and you ought to feel that a responsibility rests upon you to do all you can for their salvation.—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 288.](#)

When young people work for the church a door is closed against temptation—Why do not the overseers of the church have councils to devise ways whereby young men and women may be trained to put to use their intrusted talents? Why do not the older members of the church seek to do good, earnest, compassionate work for the children and youth? Many have embraced the truth, and yet they have not been educated as to how they may serve the cause of God, and thereby grow in spiritual muscle and sinew. By employing the faculties of the mind and body of our youth in the service of God, a door is closed against the temptations of the enemy, and Satan has not as favorable an opportunity for training the children and youth for his service.—[The Review and Herald, March 7, 1893.](#)

Children's Sabbath School

Teachers in children's Sabbath schools need aptitude, will, and perseverance in prayer—In some Sabbath-schools, positions are given to persons who have no aptitude to teach. They have no earnest love for souls. They do not half understand the practical bearings of the truth themselves. How, then, can they lead the children and youth to the living Fountain. Let the teachers themselves drink deep of the water of salvation, and the angels of God will minister to them, and they will know just what course the Lord would have them take to win the precious youth to Jesus. It requires aptitude, a will, perseverance, a spirit such as Jacob had when he wrestled in prayer, and exclaimed, "I will not let Thee go except

Thou bless me.” When the blessing of God rests upon the teachers, it can but be reflected to those under their charge. Never place the youth under individuals who are spiritually indolent, who have no high, elevated, holy aspirations; for the same mind of indifference, Pharisaism, of form without the power, will be seen in both teachers and scholars.—[Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 116, 117.](#)

Ministers should be able to speak interestingly and understandably to Sabbath school children—There was a general superintendent of Sabbath schools who, while addressing a Sabbath school upon one occasion, was very dry, lengthy, and uninteresting. A mother asked her daughter of ten years if she enjoyed the exercise, and also, “What did the minister say?” Said the little girl “He said, and he said, and he said, and he didn’t say anything.” Now, we do not want any such account of our labor as that. We want the very best of training for the work that we can possibly have ourselves, so that we can make a success in teaching others the things that we have learned.—[Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 169.](#)

Too many children trained in the Scriptures at Sabbath school, still have no interest in religion—Many of the children of believing parents, children who have been trained in the Sabbath school, and are familiar with the Scriptures, have yet no interest in religion. Under the most powerful appeals of the Holy Spirit, they seem as unmoved as if chiseled out of stone. What can be done to break the spell which Satan has cast upon these souls? I can see no help, except as parents shall present their children at the throne of grace, in humble, earnest, believing prayer, entreating the Lord to work with their efforts and the efforts of their ministers, until conviction and conversion shall be the result.—[The Signs of the Times, March 16, 1882.](#)

Children’s Sabbath school should not replace their attending the worship service—The Sabbath school at _____ was made the one great theme of interest with Brother E. It absorbed the minds of the young, while other religious duties were neglected. Frequently, after the Sabbath school was closed, the superintendent, a number of teachers, and quite a number of scholars, would return home to rest. They felt that their burden for the day was ended, and that they had no further duty. When the bell sounded forth the hour for public service, and the people left their homes for the house of

[280] worship, they would meet a large portion of the school passing to their homes. And, however important the meeting, the interest of a large share of the Sabbath school could not be awakened to take any pleasure in the instruction given by the minister upon important Bible subjects. While many of the children did not attend public service, some that remained were not advantaged by the word spoken, for they felt that it was a wearisome tax.—[Counsels on Sabbath School Work, 183.](#)

Compilers' note: Jesus never pastored a church congregation such as we have today. But, like today's pastors, He did preach and teach, and minister both to large groups and to individuals. It is helpful to pastors of small churches to realize that the closest He came to pastoring a specific congregation was his ongoing ministry to a tiny group of twelve. It should be encouraging to pastors who sometimes feel their failure, to realize that even Jesus could not keep one of those twelve from apostasy. In the Ellen White quotations below, it is noteworthy how often Jesus is called the Chief Shepherd, and ministers to His under-shepherds. He is the minister's model.

Christ, the chief Shepherd, provides the perfect model for His undershepherds—Christ is the Chief Shepherd. He has intrusted the care of His flock to under shepherds. He requires these shepherds to have the same interest for His sheep which He has ever manifested, and to ever feel the responsibility of the charge He has intrusted to them. Ministers, who are called of God to labor in word and doctrine, are Christ's shepherds. He has appointed them under Himself to oversee and tend His flock. He has solemnly commanded these to be faithful shepherds, to feed the flock with diligence, to follow His example, to strengthen the weak, nourish the fainting, and to shield them from devouring beasts. He points them to His example of love for His sheep. To secure their deliverance, He laid down His life for them. If they imitate His self-denying example, the flock will prosper under their care.—[Spiritual Gifts 3:123](#).

Not one minister in twenty knows the real essence of Christ's ministry—Divine knowledge may become human knowledge. Every minister should study closely the manner of Christ's teaching. They must take in His lessons. There is not one in twenty who knows the beauty, the real essence, of Christ's ministry. They are to find it out. Then they will become partakers of the rich fruit of his teachings. They will weave them so fully into their own life and practice, that the ideas and principles that Christ brought into His

[282]

lessons will be brought into their teaching. The truth will blossom and bear the noblest kind of fruit. And the worker's own heart will be warmed; yea, it will burn with the vivifying spiritual life which they infuse into the minds of others. Then all this tame sermonizing will come to an end; for frequently this is an exhibition of self, rather than the fruit that the teacher bears who has been at the feet of Jesus and learned of Him.—[Manuscript Releases 6:72](#).

Every feature in the life of the great Example should be studied with care—The more that the minister of Christ associates with his Master, through contemplation of His life and character, the more closely will he resemble Him, and the better qualified will he be to teach His truths. Every feature in the life of the great Example should be studied with care, and close converse should be held with Him through the prayer of living faith. Thus will the defective human character be transformed into the image of His glorious character. Thus will the teacher of the truth be prepared to lead souls to Christ.—[The Spirit of Prophecy 3:244](#).

Devotional Life

Prayer was central to Christ's ministry—Christ is our example. His life was a life of prayer. Yes, Christ, the Son of God, equal with the Father, Himself all-sufficient, the storehouse of all blessings, He whose voice could rebuke disease, still the tempest, and call the dead to life, prayed with strong crying and many tears. He often spent whole nights in prayer. While the cities were hushed in slumber, angels listened to the pleadings of the Redeemer. See the Saviour bowed in prayer, His soul wrung with anguish. He is not praying for Himself, but for those whom He came to save. In the mountains of Galilee and in the groves of Olivet the Beloved of God prayed for sinners. Then He came forth to minister to them, His tongue touched anew with living fire.—[The Signs of the Times, September 5, 1900](#).

Jesus replenished His soul through prayer before setting out to minister—To the believing Jews in Jerusalem in the time of Christ, Olivet was a frequent resort for devotion. The hills and valleys about Jerusalem, now so bleak and bare, were then studded with olive-groves and orchards, and here the faithful in Israel would often

go to search the Scriptures and to pray. The Garden of Gethsemane was among the places thus frequented. It was to this place, when the city of Jerusalem was hushed in the silence of midnight, that Jesus often repaired for communion with His Father. When those to whom He had ministered all the day went every man to his house, Jesus, we read, “went unto the Mount of Olives.” He would sometimes take His disciples with Him to this place of retirement, that they might join their prayers with His. In prayer Christ had power with God, and prevailed. Morning by morning, and evening by evening, He received grace that He might impart to others. Then, His soul replenished with grace and fervor, He would set forth to minister to the souls of men.—[The Signs of the Times, July 15, 1908.](#)

Jesus prayed principally for others—Christ was continually receiving from the Father, that He might communicate to us. “The word which ye hear,” He said, “is not Mine, but the Father’s which sent Me.” “The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.” Not for Himself, but for others, He lived and thought and prayed. From hours spent with God He came forth morning by morning, to bring the light of heaven to men. Daily He received a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the early hours of the new day the Lord awakened Him from His slumbers, and His soul and His lips were anointed with grace, that He might impart to others.—[The Review and Herald, August 11, 1910.](#)

[283]

Christ’s example shows ministers how to handle buffeting—Are the ministers of Christ tempted and fiercely buffeted by Satan? so also was He who knew no sin. Christ, our example, turned to His Father in these hours of distress. He came to earth that He might provide a way whereby we could find grace and strength to help in every time of need, by following His example in frequent, earnest prayer. If the ministers of Christ will imitate this pattern, they will be imbued with His spirit, and angels will minister unto them.—[The Review and Herald, May 19, 1885.](#)

Love for People

Christ identified Himself with His people—Christ identified Himself with the necessities of His people. Their needs and their sufferings were His. He says: “I was an hungered, and ye gave Me

meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.” God’s servants should have hearts of tender affection and sincere love for the followers of Christ. They should manifest that deep interest that Christ brings to view in the care of the shepherd for the lost sheep; they should follow the example given by Christ and exercise the same compassion and gentleness, and the same tender, pitying love that He has exercised toward us.—[Testimonies for the Church 3:186](#).

Love, mercy, and compassion were displayed in every act of Jesus ministry—In describing His earthly mission, Jesus said, “The Lord hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.” This was His work. He went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by Satan. There were whole villages where there was not a moan of sickness in any house; for He had passed through them, and healed all their sick. His work gave evidence of His divine anointing. Love, mercy, and compassion were displayed in every act of His life. His heart went out in tender sympathy to the children of men. He took man’s nature, that He might reach man’s wants. The poorest and humblest were not afraid to approach Him. Even little children were attracted to Him. They loved to climb upon His knees, and gaze into that pensive face, benignant with love.—[Bible Training School, January 1, 1909](#).

[284]

Shepherds who work under the Chief Shepherd are to be ever interested in others—The Good Shepherd came to seek and to save that which was lost. He has manifested in His works His love for His sheep. All the shepherds who work under the Chief Shepherd will possess His characteristics; they will be meek and lowly of heart. Childlike faith brings rest to the soul and also works by love and is ever interested for others. If the Spirit of Christ dwells in them, they will be Christlike and do the works of Christ.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:377](#).

Servant Leader

To succeed as Jesus succeeded, lead humbly as Jesus led—Jesus, the dear Saviour, has given marked lessons in humility to all, but especially to the gospel minister. In His humiliation, when His work upon earth was nearly finished and He was about to return to His Father's throne whence He had come, with all power in His hands and all glory upon His head, among His last lessons to His disciples was one upon the importance of humility. While His disciples were contending as to who should be greatest in the promised kingdom, He girded Himself as a servant and washed the feet of those who called Him Lord and Master.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:373](#).

Ministers unappreciated by those they serve, should remember Jesus was too—Angels ministered to Jesus, yet their presence did not make His life one of ease and freedom from severe conflict and fierce temptations. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. If ministers, while engaged in the work which the Master has appointed them to do, have trials and perplexities and temptations, should they be discouraged, when they know that there is One who has endured all these before them? Should they cast away their confidence because they do not realize all that they expect from their labors? Christ labored earnestly for His own nation; but His efforts were despised by the very ones He came to save, and they put to death Him who came to give them life.—[Testimonies for the Church 2:509](#).

Soul Winner

Christ came to give a correct example of a soul winning minister—He came to give a correct example of a gospel minister. He labored constantly for one object; all His powers were employed for the salvation of men, and every act of His life tended to that end. He traveled on foot, teaching His followers as He went. His garments were dusty and travel-stained, and His appearance was uninviting. But the simple, pointed truths which fell from His divine lips soon caused His hearers to forget His appearance, and to be charmed, not with the man, but with the doctrine He taught.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:373](#).

Good shepherds seek wandering sheep diligently and welcome them home warmly—I have a message to those who labor in the ministry. The Lord is not pleased with the work you have given Him, and He does not accept it at your hands, because you neglect the very part of the work that is most essential to the salvation of souls and to the health of the church. The minister is to be a shepherd.... He leaves the ninety and nine within the fold; however dark and tempestuous the night, however perilous and unpleasant the way, however long and tedious the search, he does not weary, he does not falter, until the lost is found. But when it is found, does he act indifferently? Does he call the sheep, and command the straying one to follow him? Does he threaten and beat it, or drive it before him, recounting the bitterness and discomfiture and anxiety that he has had on its account? No; he lays the weary, exhausted, wandering sheep on his shoulder, and with cheerful gratitude that his search has not been in vain, he returns it to the fold. His gratitude finds expression in melodious songs of rejoicing, and heavenly choirs respond to the shepherd's note of joy. When the lost is found, heaven and earth unite in rejoicing and thanksgiving.—[The Review and Herald, August 23, 1892.](#)

Preacher-Teacher

Jesus' ministry consisted not merely in sermonizing, but in educating the people—We should seek to follow more closely the example of Christ, the great Shepherd, as He worked with His little company of disciples, studying with them and with the people the Old Testament Scriptures. His active ministry consisted not merely in sermonizing but in educating the people. As He passed through villages, He came in personal contact with the people in their homes, teaching, and ministering to their necessities. As the crowds that followed Him increased, when He came to a favorable place, He would speak to them, simplifying His discourses by the use of parables and symbols.—[Evangelism, 203.](#)

Christ's preaching was simple and direct—His words were simple and direct, and no one need look in the dictionary to ascertain His meaning. A child could comprehend His teaching. And as He

did His work, so are we to do ours, following His example.—[The Signs of the Times, July 8, 1889.](#)

Jesus sought to meet the minds of the common people—We may do much in a short time if we will work as Christ worked. We may reflect with profit upon His manner of teaching. He sought to meet the minds of the common people. His style was plain, simple, comprehensive.—[Evangelism, 565.](#)

[286]

None who listened to Jesus could feel neglected or forgotten—Jesus sought an avenue to every heart. By using a variety of illustrations, He not only presented truth in its different phases, but appealed to the different hearers. Their interest was aroused by figures drawn from the surroundings of their daily life. None who listened to the Saviour could feel that they were neglected or forgotten. The humblest, the most sinful, heard in His teaching a voice that spoke to them in sympathy and tenderness.—[Christ's Object Lessons, 21.](#)

Christ broke up His listeners' train of thought as little as possible—As Christ presented these truths to minds, He broke up their accustomed train of thought as little as possible. Nevertheless a new and transforming economy of truth must be woven into their experience. He, therefore, aroused their minds by presenting truth through the agency of their most familiar associations. He used illustrations in His teaching which called into activity their most hallowed recollections and sympathies, that He might reach the inner temple of the soul. Identifying Himself with their interests, He drew His illustrations from the great book of nature, using objects with which they were familiar.—[Manuscript Releases 1:22.](#)

Jesus' illustrations constantly repeated His lessons—The educated were charmed with Christ's teaching, and the uneducated were always profited; for He appealed to their understanding. His illustrations were taken from the things of daily life, and although they were simple, they had in them a wonderful depth of meaning. The fowls of the air, the lilies of the field, the seed, the shepherd and the sheep,—with these objects, Christ illustrated immortal truth; and ever afterward, when His hearers chanced to see these things of nature, they recalled His words. Christ's illustrations constantly repeated His lessons.—[The Review and Herald, May 18, 1897.](#)

Under-shepherd's Shepherd

The True Shepherd superintends His work through His under-shepherds—While Christ is the minister in the sanctuary above, He is also, through His delegates, the minister of His church on earth. He speaks to the people through chosen men, and carries forward His work through them, as when, in the days of His humiliation, He moved visibly upon the earth. Although centuries have passed, the lapse of time has not changed His parting promise to His disciples. “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” From Christ’s ascension to the present day, men ordained of God, deriving their authority from Him, have become teachers of the faith. Christ, the True Shepherd, superintends His work through the instrumentality of these under-shepherds. Thus the position of those who labor in word and doctrine becomes very important. In Christ’s stead they beseech the people to be reconciled to God.—[Testimonies for the Church 4:493](#).