

Ellen G. White Estate

THE PRESENT TRUTH (UK)

1885-1893

PERIODICAL ARTICLES

ELLEN G. WHITE

The Present Truth (UK)

Ellen G. White

1885

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About the Author

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

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Contents

Information about this Book	i
November 3, 1885	v
The Sabbath Reform.	v
November 19, 1885	xi
The Sufferings of Christ	xi
December 3, 1885	xvii
The Sufferings of Christ	xvii
December 17, 1885	xxi
The Sufferings of Christ	xxi
January 7, 1886	xxv
The Sufferings of Christ	xxv
January 21, 1886	xxix
The Sufferings of Christ	xxix
February 4, 1886	xxxiii
The Sufferings of Christ	xxxiii
February 18, 1886	xxxvii
The Sufferings of Christ	xxxvii
November 4, 1886	xliii
“Ye are the Light of the World”	xliii
January 30, 1890	xlix
How Shall We Draw Near to God?	xlix
August 11, 1892	lvii
Christ in the Garden	lvii
December 29, 1892	lxiii
Abiding in Christ	lxiii
January 12, 1893	lxvii
Witnessing for Christ	lxvii
January 26, 1893	lxxi
“Knit Together in Love”	lxxi
September 21, 1893	lxxv
Seeking to Save	lxxv
August 16, 1894	lxxix
The Christian’s Privilege	lxxix
February 14, 1895	lxxxix

“Acquainted With Grief”	lxxx
May 30, 1895	lxxxvii
The Eternal Presence	lxxxvii
June 13, 1895	xc
Knowing and Obeying the Lord	xc
August 15, 1895	xciii
Deal Truly With the Soul	xciii
November 7, 1895	xcv
The Only Safeguard	xcv
The Lord’s Forewarnings	xcvi
God Alone the Guide	xcvii
April 9, 1896	xcix
The Simplicity of the Lord’s Work	xcix
April 16, 1896	ciii
The Life-Giving Spirit	ciii
January 7, 1897	cvii
The True Light	cvii
March 4, 1897	cx
The Perils of the Last Days	cx
May 13, 1897	cxv
Honour the Lord With Thy Substance	cxv
January 12, 1899	cxix
The Blessing of Obedience	cxix
February 2, 1899	cxxiii
Condemned By the Jews	cxxiii
May 25, 1899	cxxix
Christ’s Mission	cxxix
June 1, 1899	cxxxv
“For Our Sakes He Became Poor”	cxxxv
June 8, 1899	cxxxix
The First and the Second Advent	cxxxix
June 15, 1899	cxlv
Christ’s Denunciation of the Pharisees	cxlv
June 29, 1899	cli
The Parable of the Ten Virgins	cli
August 31, 1899	clvii
“Even Your Sanctification”	clvii
September 7, 1899	clxi

“Give Unto the Lord the Glory Due Unto His Name” . . .	clxi
September 14, 1899	clxv
“Give Unto the Lord the Glory Due Unto His Name” . . .	clxv
November 2, 1899	clxix
The Gift of the Holy Spirit	clxix
April 26, 1900	clxxv
God’s Word Our Study Book	clxxv
October 4, 1900	clxxvii
God’s Temple	clxxvii
October 18, 1900	clxxix
Offer Unto God Thanksgiving	clxxix
November 14, 1901	clxxxiii
The Blessing of Labour	clxxxiii
November 28, 1901	clxxxv
What Shall It Profit?	clxxxv
June 30, 1904	clxxxix
Rejoice in the Lord Always.	clxxxix
August 25, 1904	cxcii
Seeking the Lost.	cxcii
October 13, 1904	cxcvii
Faithfulness in Service.	cxcvii

November 3, 1885

The Sabbath Reform.

[From a sermon preached in the Mission Rooms at Grimsby,
August 23, 1885.]

EGW

Text: “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.” [Revelation 3:7, 8](#).

Thank God today that there is an open door which Satan and his agents may seek in vain to close. The arm of Almighty Power has opened this door, and no other power can close it. John in holy vision saw a door opened in heaven. “And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament.” Looking down the stream of time, the prophet sees a people whose attention is directed to that open door, and then to the ark within, which contains the commandments of God. The third angel of [Revelation 14](#) is represented as flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” This angel presents a message that is to be proclaimed to the world just before Christ comes in the clouds of heaven to take his elect to himself. Just prior to this event, then, the attention of the people is to be called to the trampled-down law of God.

The open door in heaven reveals the temple of God, in the most holy place of which is the ark, and in this ark is the law of ten commandments written with the finger of God on tables of stone. The light that shines forth from the open door attracts the attention of the people of God, and they begin to see what that ark contains,—the law of ten commandments. They are seeking for light, and as they trace down that law, precept by precept, they find right in the bosom of the decalogue the fourth commandment as it was instituted in Eden and proclaimed in awful grandeur from Sinai's mount, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." They then see that instead of observing the seventh day, the day that God sanctified and commanded to be observed as the Sabbath, they are keeping the first day of the week as the Sabbath. But they honestly desire to do God's will, and they begin to search the Scriptures to find the reason for the change. Failing to find this, the question arises, Shall we accept a truth that has become unpopular, and obey the commandments of God? or, shall we continue with the world, and obey the commandments of men? With open Bibles they weep, and pray, and compare scripture with scripture, until they are convinced of the truth, and conscientiously take their stand as commandment-keepers.

I have been connected from the first with those who accepted the light that shone upon the law of God through the open door of the temple in heaven, and I can testify with what burdened hearts they searched the Scriptures to know the truth. And as the Scriptures were opened to these humble seekers for truth, they saw what their work must be. "And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine

own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”

Many and determined efforts were made to overthrow the faith of those who would build up the old waste places, and heal the breach which had been made in the law of God. How hard Satan and men tried to close the door which had been opened into the sanctuary where Jesus had entered to make atonement for his people, and where the humble, faithful ones followed him by faith. Christ had opened the door, or ministration, of the most holy place, and light was shining from the open door that all who desired might see the claims of the fourth commandment, and believe. God had established his law, and not one jot or tittle of it was to be annulled.

As those who had received the light of truth went forth to present it to others still in the darkness of error, they learned what trials and sufferings were. They met opposition on every hand. They knew what it was to have their names cast out as evil. They suffered privation and want, and yet they could not cease their labors; the message must be given to the world. From the first the work has moved steadily forward. Thousands have accepted the truth in America, and it has been carried to all parts of the world; people of all tongues and nations are taking their stand upon it. It has reached you here in Grimsby. This doctrine may seem strange to many, but we do not ask you to take our word; we want you to search the Scriptures for yourselves, with heart and will in perfect submission to the will of God.

The work is still in its infancy in Europe. Many more will accept the truth, but we must not expect many of the great men of earth to obey; the cross is too heavy for such to lift. How was it in Christ's day? Many of the chief rulers believed his teaching, but they would not acknowledge it for fear of being thrust out of the synagogue. Christ said that they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. The same spirit exists today; the prejudice against the truth is just as strong, the opposition just as decided, as in Christ's day; and that which prevented the chief rulers from confessing the truth will prevent many from confessing it now.

Many obstacles will arise in this country to prevent people from accepting the truth, and entering the service of Christ, but the questions to be settled are, What is truth? and What is your aim in life? If your object is to meet the world's standard, to believe what they believe, and practice what they practice, my words will have little weight. But if you have an earnest desire to answer the claims that God has upon you, if your aim is to reach the highest round of the ladder of progress, to be connected with God and become his children, then, when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him. But you must have some definite object before you, some standard that you earnestly desire to reach. No one has power to place you on the topmost round of the ladder. It is your own efforts, through Christ, which will bring you perfection of Christian character. When a path of duty is opened before you, you are not to consult your own convenience, but by living faith you are to walk in the path of humble obedience. All who enter heaven will do so as conquerors. You will have a battle to fight; you will have to overcome difficulties by strong, determined effort. But eternal life is worth a life-long, persevering effort.

We are not at liberty to cast our souls away; we are not at liberty to place ourselves under Satan's power, and become slaves to his will. We are God's property. "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price," even the precious blood of the Son of God; "therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." God has claims upon us which we cannot throw off; we may ignore them, we may refuse to yield to his wise requirements, but they are nevertheless binding upon us. Says the True Witness, "I know thy works." We have a work to do every day of our lives in improving our God-given abilities. He has given to us reasoning powers, and we cannot in any way weaken those powers without being called to an account by the righteous Judge of all the earth. He has given us talents, which, if rightly employed, will increase our ability to work for the Master.

If we succeed in becoming men and women of God, it will be by determined efforts. And when the light of truth shines upon our path, and conscience is convicted, shall we turn away from the Heaven-sent warnings because all the world will not heed them? Shall we ask our friends and acquaintances whether it is best for us

to obey the invitations of the Spirit of God? They may be the chosen instruments of the enemy of souls to turn our attention from things that concern our eternal interest, and when the work shall be brought in review before God, it may stand registered against them that they turned our feet from the path of duty and obedience. But will this excuse us? No; those who made us err cannot pay a ransom for our souls.

None are forced to accept of Jesus and his truth, but all are invited to do so. Life and death are placed before them, and it is for them to choose which they will have. I am so thankful that a few have accepted the truth here in Grimsby. To you the exhortation is given, "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." The mighty cleaver of truth has taken you out of the quarry of the world and placed you in the workshop of God, where you must submit to be hewed, and squared, and polished, if you would be fitted for the heavenly building. A great work must be done for us all before we will have perfection of Christian character. The law of God is the standard of righteousness. This is the mirror into which we are to look to discern the defects of our character. When we look in a common mirror, it points out to us the defects upon our person, but it does not remove one stain; we must go and wash if we would become clean. So it is with the law of God. It is God's great mirror, or moral detector of sin; but there is no saving quality in law; it has no power to pardon the transgressor. There is a provision made for the sinner: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Then what is the work before the sinner? It is to exercise repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. In his precious blood the stains of sin may all be washed away. There is a fountain open for Judah and Jerusalem, and the defilement of sin may be removed if they will only wash in this fountain.

Dear friends, you each have a case pending in the court of Heaven. Have you secured an advocate to plead in your behalf? Jesus is man's intercessor, and we must make him our friend or we shall lose the case. Now is the time for us to walk humbly with God, to watch unto prayer, and be diligent students of the Scriptures, that we may know the truth and obey it.

November 19, 1885

The Sufferings of Christ

EGW

In order to realize the value of redemption, it is necessary to understand what it cost. We should take broader and deeper views of the life, sufferings, and death of God's dear Son. A limited idea of the sacrifice made in our behalf leads many to place a low estimate upon the great work of the atonement.

The glorious plan of man's salvation is a manifestation of the infinite love of God the Father. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The love of God in giving his Son to die for a fallen race, amazed the holy angels. The Saviour was the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. He possessed divine majesty and perfection. "It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

Christ consented to die in the sinner's stead that man, by a life of obedience, might escape the penalty of the law of God. The death of Christ did not slay the law, lessen its holy claims, or detract from its sacred dignity. He himself declared that he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill. While the system of sacrificial offerings which prefigured the death of Christ was to expire with him, the moral

law remained unchanged. Jesus proclaimed the justice of God in punishing the transgressors of his law, in that he took the penalty upon himself, in order to shield fallen man from its curse. Only by the sacrifice of Christ could man be redeemed, and the authority of the Divine law be maintained. The death of God's dear Son shows the immutability of his Father's law.

In Christ were united the Divine and the human. The Son of God took upon himself man's nature, that with his human arm he might encircle the children of Adam in a firm embrace, while with his Divine arm he grasped the throne of the Infinite, thus uniting earth to heaven, and man to God. Angels who were unacquainted with sin, could not sympathize with man in his peculiar trials; but by taking upon himself human nature, Christ was prepared to understand our temptations and our sorrows. Our Redeemer "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin;" and "in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Oh, matchless condescension! The King of glory subjects himself to man's infirmities, and takes upon himself the burden of man's sins, that he may open the door of hope to a ruined race. Here, indeed, is love that "passeth knowledge."

Let those who would, in some faint degree, appreciate the price paid for our redemption, follow the Son of God in the crowning acts of his great sacrifice.

In The Garden

Often had Jesus, with the twelve, resorted to Gethsemane for meditation and prayer, but never had he visited the spot with a heart so full of sorrow as upon the night of his betrayal. He had been earnestly conversing with his disciples; but as he neared the garden he became strangely silent. The disciples were perplexed, and anxiously regarded his countenance, hoping there to read an explanation of the change that had come over their Master. They had frequently seen him depressed, but never before so utterly sad and silent. As he proceeded, this strange sadness increased; yet they dared not question him as to the cause. His form swayed as if he was about to fall. The disciples looked anxiously for his usual place of retirement, that their Master might rest.

Upon entering the garden, he said to his companions, "Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder." Selecting Peter, James, and John to accompany him, he proceeded farther into the recesses of the garden. He had been accustomed to brace his spirit for trial and duty by fervent prayer in this retreat, and had frequently spent the entire night thus. On these occasions his disciples, after a little season of watching and prayer, would sleep undisturbed at a little distance from their Master until he awoke them in the morning to go forth and labor anew. So this act of Jesus called forth no remark from his companions.

Every step that the Saviour now took was with labored effort. He groaned aloud as though suffering under the pressure of a terrible burden; yet he refrained from startling his three chosen disciples by a full explanation of the agony which he was to suffer. Twice they prevented him from falling to the ground. Jesus felt that he must be still more alone, and he said to the favored three, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with me." His disciples had never before heard him utter such mournful tones. His frame was convulsed with anguish, and his pale countenance expressed a sorrow past all description.

He went a short distance from his companions, not so far but that they could both see and hear him, and fell prostrate with his face upon the earth. He was overpowered by a terrible fear that God was removing his presence from him. He felt himself being separated from his Father by a gulf of sin, so broad, so black and deep, that his spirit shuddered before it. He clung convulsively to the cold, unfeeling ground, as if to prevent himself from being drawn still farther from God. The chilling dews of night fell upon his prostrate form, but the Redeemer heeded it not. From his pale lips wailed the bitter cry, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."

It was not a dread of the physical suffering he was soon to endure that brought this agony upon the Son of God. He was bearing the penalty of man's transgression, and shuddering beneath the Father's frown. He must not exert his Divine power to escape this agony, but, as a man, he must bear the consequences of man's sin and the Creator's displeasure toward his disobedient subjects, and he feared that in his human nature he would be unable to endure the coming

conflict with the prince of the power of darkness; in that case the human race would be hopelessly lost, Satan would be victor, and the earth would be his kingdom. The sins of the world weighed heavily upon the Saviour, and bowed him to the earth; and the wrath of God in consequence of sin seemed crushing out his life.

In the conflict of Christ with Satan in the wilderness of temptation, the destiny of the human race had been at stake. But the Son of God had conquered, and the tempter left him for a season. He had now returned for the last fearful conflict. During the three years of Christ's ministry, Satan had been preparing for this final trial. Everything was at stake with him. If he failed here, his hope of mastery was lost; the kingdoms of the earth would finally become Christ's, who would "bind the strong man", Satan, and cast him out.

During this scene of the Saviour's anguish, the disciples were at first much troubled to see their Master, usually so calm and dignified, wrestling with a sorrow that exceeded all utterance; but they were very weary, and finally dropped asleep, leaving him to agonize alone. At the end of an hour, Jesus, feeling the need of human sympathy, rose with painful effort, and staggered to the place where he had left his companions. But no sympathizing countenance greeted him after his long struggle; the disciples were fast asleep. Ah! if they had realized that this was their last night with their beloved Master while he lived a man upon earth, if they had known what the morrow would bring him, they would not thus have yielded to the power of slumber.

The voice of Jesus partially aroused them. They discerned his form bending over them, his expression and attitude indicating extreme exhaustion. They hardly recognized in his changed countenance the usually serene face of their Master. Singling out Simon Peter, he addressed him: "Simon, sleepest thou? couldst thou not watch one hour? O Simon, where is now thy boasted devotion? Thou who didst but lately declare thou couldst go with thy Lord to prison or to death, hast left him in the hour of his agony and temptation, and sought repose in sleep!"

John, the loving disciple who had leaned on the breast of Jesus, was also sleeping. Surely the love of John for his Master should have kept him awake. His earnest prayers should have mingled with those of his Saviour in the time of his supreme sorrow. The self-sacrificing

Redeemer had passed entire nights in the cold mountains or in the groves, praying for his disciples that their faith might not fail them in the hour of their temptation. Should Jesus now put to James and John the question he had once asked them, "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" they would not have ventured to answer, "We can."

(To be continued.)

December 3, 1885

The Sufferings of Christ

(Continued from page 298.)

EGW

This important night-watch should have been spent by the disciples in noble mental struggles and prayers, which would have brought them strength to witness the terrible agony of the Son of God. It would have prepared them, as they should behold his sufferings upon the cross, to understand in some degree the nature of the overpowering anguish which he endured. They would then have been better able to recall the words he had spoken to them in reference to his sufferings, death, and resurrection; and amid the gloom of that trying hour, some rays of hope would have lighted up the darkness, and sustained their faith. Christ had told them before that these things would take place. He knew the power which the prince of darkness would use to paralyze the senses of the disciples, and he therefore admonished them to watch.

But at the most critical moment, when Jesus was most in need of their sympathy and heartfelt prayers, his chosen companions had given themselves up to slumber. They lost much by thus sleeping. The Saviour's trial and crucifixion was to be a fiery ordeal to his disciples. Their faith needed to be sustained by more than human strength as they should witness the triumph of the powers of darkness. Christ designed to fortify them for this severe test. Had those hours in the garden been spent in watching with the dear Saviour and in prayer to God, the disciples would not have forsaken Jesus

in his hour of trial, and Peter would not have been left to his own feeble strength, to deny his Master.

The evidence of the weakness of his disciples excited the pity and sympathy of the Son of God. He questioned their strength to endure the test they must undergo in witnessing his betrayal and death. He did not sternly upbraid them for their weakness, but, in view of their coming trial, exhorted them, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Then, his spirit moving in sympathy with their frailty, he framed an excuse for their failure in duty toward him: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Again Jesus was seized with superhuman agony, and fainting and exhausted, staggered back to the place of his former struggle. Again he was prostrated to the earth. His suffering was even greater than before. The cypress and palm trees were the silent witnesses of his anguish. From their leafy branches dropped heavy dew upon his stricken form, as if nature wept over its Author wrestling alone with the powers of darkness.

A short time before he had stood like a mighty cedar, withstanding the storm of opposition that spent its fury upon him. Stubborn wills, and hearts filled with malice and subtlety, strove in vain to confuse and overpower him. He stood forth in divine majesty as the Son of God. But now he was like a bruised reed beaten and bent by the angry storm. A few hours before, he had poured out his soul to his disciples in noble utterances, claiming unity with the Father, and giving his elect church into his arms in the language of one who had divine authority. Now his voice uttered suppressed wails of anguish, and he clung to the cold ground as if for relief.

The words of the Saviour were borne to the ears of the drowsy disciples: "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." The anguish of God's dear Son forced drops of blood from his pores. Again he staggered to his feet, his human heart yearning for the sympathy of his companions, and he repaired to where they were sleeping. His presence roused them, and they looked upon his face with fear, for it was stained with blood, and expressed an agony of mind which was to them unaccountable.

He did not now address them, but, turning away, sought again his retreat and fell prostrate, overcome by the horror of great darkness.

The humanity of the Son of God trembled in that trying hour. The awful moment had arrived which was to decide the destiny of the world. The heavenly hosts waited the issue with intense interest. The fate of humanity trembled in the balance. Christ might even then refuse to drink the cup apportioned to guilty men. He might wipe the bloody sweat from his brow, and leave men to perish in their iniquity. Will the Son of the Infinite God drink the bitter potion of humiliation and agony? Will the innocent suffer the consequence of God's curse, to save the guilty? The words fall tremblingly from the pale lips of Jesus: "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done."

Three times has he uttered that prayer. Three times has humanity shrunk from the last crowning sacrifice. But now the history of the human race comes up before the world's Redeemer. He sees that the transgressors of the law, if left to themselves, must perish under the Father's displeasure. He sees the power of sin, and the utter helplessness of man to save himself. The woes and lamentations of a doomed world rise before him. He beholds its impending fate, and his decision is made. He will save man at any cost to himself. He accepts his baptism of blood, that perishing millions may through him gain everlasting life. He left the courts of heaven, where all was purity, happiness, and glory, to save the one lost sheep, the one world that had fallen by transgression, and he will not turn from the mission he has chosen. Having made the decision and reached the final crisis, he fell in a dying condition to the earth, from which he had partially risen. Where now were his disciples, to place their hands tenderly beneath the head of their fainting Master, and bathe that brow, marred indeed more than the sons of men? The Saviour trod the wine-press alone, and of all the people there was none with him. And yet he was not alone. He had said, "I and my Father are one." God suffered with his Son. Man cannot comprehend the sacrifice made by the Infinite God in giving up his Son to reproach, agony, and death.

The angels who had done Christ's will in heaven were anxious to comfort him; but it was beyond their power to alleviate his sorrow. They had never felt the sins of a ruined world, and they beheld with astonishment the object of their adoration subject to a grief beyond all expression. Though the disciples had failed to sympathize with

their Lord in the trying hour of his conflict, all heaven was full of sympathy and waiting the result with painful interest. When it was finally determined, an angel was sent from the throne of God to minister unto the stricken Redeemer.

(To be continued.)

December 17, 1885

The Sufferings of Christ

(Continued from page 306.)

EGW

The disciples were suddenly aroused from their slumber by a bright light shining upon and around the Son of God. They started up in amazement, and beheld a heavenly being, clothed in garments of light, bending over their prostrate Master. With one hand he lifted the head of the Divine sufferer upon his bosom, and with the other he pointed toward heaven. His voice was like the sweetest music, as he uttered soothing words presenting to the mind of Christ the grand results of the victory he had gained over the strong and wily foe. Christ was victor over Satan; and, as the result of his triumph, millions were to be victors with him in his kingdom.

The glorious vision of the angel dazzled the eyes of the disciples. They remembered the mount of transfiguration, the glory that encircled Jesus in the temple, and the voice of God issuing from the cloud. They saw the same glory here revealed, and had no further fear for their Master, since God had taken him in charge, and an angel was present to protect him from his foes. They were weary and heavy with sleep, and again they dropped into unconsciousness.

The Saviour arose and sought his disciples, and, for the third time, found them fast asleep. His words, however, aroused them: "Sleep on now, and take your rest; behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Even while these words were upon his lips, the footsteps of the mob that was in search of him were heard. Judas took the lead, and

was closely followed by the high priest. Jesus turned to his disciples, as his enemies approached, and said, "Rise, let us be going; behold, he is at hand that doth betray me." The countenance of the Saviour wore an expression of calm dignity; no traces of his recent agony were visible as he stepped forth to meet his betrayer.

He stood in advance of his disciples, and inquired, "Whom seek ye?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am he." As these words were uttered, the mob staggered back; and priests, elders, soldiers, and even Judas, dropped powerless to the ground. This gave Christ ample opportunity to escape from them if he had chosen to do so. But he stood as one glorified amid that coarse and hardened band. When he answered, "I am he," the angel who had lately ministered to him moved between him and the murderous mob, who saw a divine light illuminating the Saviour's face, and a dove-like form overshadowing him. Their wicked hearts were filled with terror. They could not for a moment stand upon their feet in the presence of this Divine glory, and they fell as dead men to the ground.

The angel withdrew; the light faded away; Jesus was left standing, calm and self-possessed, with the bright beams of the moon upon his pale face, and still surrounded by prostrate, helpless men, while the disciples were too much amazed to utter a word. When the angel departed, the Roman soldiers started to their feet, and, with the priests and Judas, gathered about Christ as though ashamed of their weakness, and fearful that he would yet escape from their hands. Again the question was asked by the Redeemer, "Whom seek ye?" Again they answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." The Saviour then said, "I have told you that I am he. If, therefore, ye seek me, let these go their way"—pointing to the disciples. In this hour of humiliation, Christ's thoughts were not for himself, but for his beloved disciples. He wished to save them from any further trial of their strength.

Judas, the betrayer, did not forget his part, but came close to Jesus, and took his hand as a familiar friend, and bestowed upon him the traitor's kiss. Jesus said to him, "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" His voice trembled with sorrow as he addressed the deluded Judas: "Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?" This most touching appeal should have roused the conscience of the betrayer, and softened his stubborn heart; but honor, fidelity, and human

tenderness had utterly forsaken him. He stood bold and defiant, showing no disposition to relent. He had given himself up to the control of Satan, and he had no power to resist him. Jesus did not reject the traitor's kiss. In this he gives us an example of forbearance, love, and pity, that is without a parallel.

Though the murderous throng were surprised and awed by what they had seen and felt, their assurance and hardihood returned as they saw the boldness of Judas in touching the person of Him whom they had so recently seen glorified. They now laid hold upon Jesus, and proceeded to bind those precious hands that had ever been employed in doing good.

When the disciples saw that band of strong men lying prostrate and helpless on the ground, they thought surely their Master would not suffer himself to be taken; for the same power that prostrated that hireling mob could cause them to remain in a state of helplessness until Jesus and his companions should pass unharmed beyond their reach. They were disappointed and indignant as they saw the cords brought forward to bind the hands of Him whom they loved. Peter, in his vehement anger, rashly cut off, with his sword, an ear of the servant of the high priest.

When Jesus saw what Peter had done, he released his hands, though held firmly by the Roman soldiers, and saying, "Suffer ye thus far," he touched the wounded ear, and it was instantly made whole. He then said to Peter, "Put up again thy sword into his place; for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Jesus then turned to the chief priests, and captains of the temple, who helped compose that murderous throng, and said, "Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and with staves to take me? I was daily with you in the temple teaching, and ye took me not; but the Scriptures must be fulfilled."

When the disciples saw that Jesus did not deliver himself from his enemies, but permitted himself to be taken and bound, they were offended that he should suffer this humiliation to himself and them. They had just witnessed an exhibition of his power in prostrating to

the ground those who came to take him, and in healing the servant's ear which Peter had cut off, and they knew that if he chose he could deliver himself from that murderous throng. They blamed him for not doing so, and, mortified and terror-stricken by his unaccountable conduct, they forsook him and fled. Alone, in the hands of the hooting mob, the Saviour was hurried from the garden.

(To be continued.)

January 7, 1886

The Sufferings of Christ

(Continued from page 314, Vol. 1.)

EGW

At the Cross

The Son of God was led to the judgment-hall of an earthly court to be derided and condemned to death by sinful men. “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities.” The Majesty of Heaven submitted to insult, mockery, and shameful abuse, “as a reproach of men, and despised of the people.” He “gave his back to the smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. He hid not his face from shame and spitting.”

Satan instigated the cruel abuse of the debased mob led on by the priests and rulers, to provoke, if possible, retaliation from the world’s Redeemer, or to drive him to deliver himself by a miracle from the hands of his persecutors, and thus break up the plan of salvation. One stain upon his human life, one failure of his humanity to bear the terrible test imposed upon it, would make the Lamb of God an imperfect offering, and the redemption of man would be a failure. But He who could command the heavenly hosts, and in an instant call to his aid legions of holy angels, one of whom could have immediately overpowered that cruel mob,—He who could have stricken down his tormentors by the flashing forth of his Divine majesty,—submitted with dignified composure to the coarsest insult and outrage.

“He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.” It was in the plan of redemption that he should suffer the scorn and abuse of wicked men, and he consented to all this when he became the Redeemer of man. In the character of humanity he was meekly to endure taunts and stripes, leaving to the children of men an example of patient forbearance.

Angels of God faithfully recorded every insulting look, word, and act directed against their beloved Commander; and the base men who scorned and spit upon the calm, pale face of Christ, were one day to look upon it in its glory, shining brighter than the sun. In that awful time they would pray to the rocks and the mountains: “Hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.”

Satan’s rage was great as he saw that all the cruelty which he had led the Jews to inflict upon Jesus had not forced from his lips the slightest murmur. Although he had taken upon himself the nature of man, he manifested a Godlike fortitude, and departed in no particular from the will of his Father.

Wonder, O Heavens! and be astonished, O Earth! Behold the oppressor and the oppressed! A vast multitude inclose the Saviour of the world. Mocking and jeering are mingled with the coarse oaths of blasphemy. His lowly birth and his humble life are commented upon by unfeeling wretches. His claim to be the Son of God is ridiculed by the chief priests and elders, and the vulgar jest and insulting sneer are passed from lip to lip. Satan has full control of the minds of his servants. In order to do this effectually, he commenced with the Jewish leaders, and imbued them with religious frenzy. This they communicated to the rude and uncultivated mob, until there was a corrupt harmony in the feelings of all, from the hypocritical priests and elders down to the most debased outcast in the throng.

Jesus, the Son of God, was delivered to the people to be crucified. With shouts of triumph they led the Saviour away toward Calvary. The news of his condemnation had spread through all Jerusalem, striking terror and anguish to thousands of hearts, but bringing a malicious joy to many who had been reproved by his teachings. The priests had been bound by a promise not to molest any of his

disciples if Jesus were delivered up to them; so all classes of people flocked to the scene of the outrage, and Jerusalem was left almost empty.

The disciples and believers from the region round about joined the throng that followed Jesus. His mother was also there, her heart stricken with unutterable anguish; yet she, with the disciples, hoped that the painful scene would change, and that Jesus would assert his power, and appear before his enemies as the Son of God. Then again her mother's heart would sink as she remembered words in which he had briefly referred to the things which were that day being enacted.

Jesus had hardly passed the gate of Pilate's house when the cross which had been prepared for Barabbas was brought out and laid upon his bruised and bleeding shoulders. Crosses were also placed upon the companions of Barabbas, who were to suffer death at the same time with Jesus. The Saviour had borne his burden but a few rods, when, from loss of blood and excessive weariness and pain, he fell fainting to the ground. As he lay beneath the heavy burden of the cross, how the heart of his mother longed to place a supporting hand beneath his wounded head, and bathe that brow that had once been pillowed upon her bosom. But, alas! that mournful privilege was denied her.

When Jesus revived, the cross was again placed upon his shoulders, and he was forced forward. He staggered on for a few steps, bearing his heavy load, then fell as one lifeless to the ground. The priests and rulers felt no compassion for their suffering victim; but they saw that it was impossible for him to carry the instrument of torture farther. They were puzzled to find any one who would humiliate himself to bear the cross to the place of execution.

While they were considering what to do, Simon, a Cyrenian, coming from an opposite direction, met the crowd, was seized at the instigation of the priests, and compelled to carry the cross of Christ. The sons of Simon were disciples of Jesus, but he himself had never been connected with him. This occasion was a profitable one for him. The cross he was forced to bear became the means of his conversion. His sympathies were deeply stirred in favor of Jesus; and the events of Calvary, and the words uttered by the Saviour caused him to acknowledge that he was the Son of God. Simon ever after felt grateful to God for the providence which placed him in a

position to receive evidence for himself that Jesus was the world's Redeemer.

A great multitude followed the Saviour to Calvary; many were mocking and deriding, but some were weeping and recounting his praise. Those whom he had healed of various infirmities, and those whom he had raised from the dead, declared his marvellous works with earnest voice, and demanded to know what Jesus had done that he should be treated as a malefactor. Only a few days before, they had attended him with joyful hosannas and the waving of palm-branches, as he rode triumphantly to Jerusalem. But many who had then shouted his praise, because it was popular to do so, now swelled the cry of "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

Upon the occasion of Christ's riding into Jerusalem, the disciples had been raised to the highest pitch of expectation. They had pressed close about their Master, and had felt that they were highly honoured to be connected with him. Now they followed him in his humiliation at a distance. They were filled with inexpressible grief and disappointed hopes. How were the words of Jesus verified: "All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." Yet the disciples still had faint hope that their Master would manifest his power at the last moment, and deliver himself from his enemies.

(To be continued.)

January 21, 1886

The Sufferings of Christ

(Continued from page 2.)

EGW

Upon arriving at the place of execution, the condemned were bound to the instruments of torture. While the two thieves wrestled in the hands of those who stretched them upon the cross, Jesus made no resistance. His mother looked on with agonizing suspense, hoping that he would work a miracle to save himself. Surely He who had given life to the dead would not suffer himself to be crucified. What torture wrung her heart as she witnessed the shame and suffering of her son, yet was not able to minister to him in his distress! How bitter her grief and disappointment! Must she give up her faith that he was the true Messiah? Would the Son of God allow himself to be cruelly slain? She saw his hands stretched upon the cross. And now the hammer and the nails were brought, and as the spikes were driven through the tender flesh and fastened to the cross, the heart-stricken disciples bore away from the cruel scene the fainting form of the mother of Christ.

Jesus made no murmur of complaint; his face remained pale and serene, but great drops of sweat stood upon his brow. There was no pitying hand to wipe the death-dew from his face, nor words of sympathy and unchanging fidelity to stay his human heart. He was treading the wine-press alone; and of all the people there was none with him. While the soldiers were doing their fearful work, and he was enduring the most acute agony, Jesus prayed for his enemies—“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” His mind

was borne from his own suffering to the crime of his persecutors and the terrible but just retribution that would be theirs. He pitied them in their ignorance and guilt. No curses were called down upon the soldiers who were handling him so roughly, no vengeance was invoked upon the priests and rulers who were the cause of all his suffering, and were then gloating over the accomplishment of their purpose; the Saviour uttered only a plea for their forgiveness—"for they know not what they do."

Had they realized that they were putting to torture one who had come to save the sinful race from eternal ruin, they would have been overwhelmed with horror and remorse. But their ignorance did not remove their guilt; for it was their privilege to know and accept Jesus as their Saviour. They rejected all evidence, and not only sinned against Heaven in crucifying the King of glory, but against the commonest feelings of humanity in putting to death an innocent man. Jesus was earning the right to become the Advocate for man in the Father's presence. That prayer of Christ for his enemies embraced the world, taking in every sinner who should live, until the end of time.

After Jesus was nailed to the cross, it was lifted by several powerful men, and thrust with great violence into the place prepared for it, causing him the most excruciating agony. And now a terrible scene was enacted. Priests, scribes, and rulers forgot the dignity of their sacred office, and joined with the rabble in mocking and jeering the dying Son of God, saying, "If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself." And some deridingly repeated among themselves: "He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he said, I am the Son of God." "And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself and come down from the cross."

These men, who professed to be the expounders of prophecy, were themselves repeating the very words which Inspiration had foretold they would utter upon this occasion; yet in their blindness they did not perceive that they were fulfilling prophecy. The dignitaries of the temple, the hardened soldiers, the vile thief upon the

cross, and the base and cruel among the multitude, all united in their abuse of Christ.

The thieves who were crucified with Jesus suffered like physical torture with him; but one was only hardened and rendered desperate and defiant by his pain. He took up the mocking of the priests, and railed upon Jesus, saying, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." The other malefactor was not a hardened criminal; his morals had been corrupted by association with the base, but his crimes were not so great as were those of many who stood beneath the cross reviling the Saviour.

In common with his nation, he had believed that Messiah was soon to come. He had heard Jesus, and been convicted by his teachings; but through the influence of the priests and rulers he had turned away from him. He had sought to drown his convictions in the fascinations of pleasure. Corrupt associations had led him farther and farther into wickedness, until he was arrested for open crime, and condemned to die upon the cross. During that day of trial he had been in company with Jesus in the judgment-hall and on the way to Calvary. He had heard Pilate declare him to be a just man; he had marked his god-like deportment and his pitying forgiveness of his tormentors. In his heart he acknowledged Jesus to be the Son of God.

When he heard the sneering words of his companion in crime, he "rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss." Then, as his heart went out to Christ, heavenly illumination flooded his mind. In Jesus, bruised, mocked, and hanging upon the cross, he saw his Redeemer, his only hope, and appealed to him in humble faith: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee today, shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

Jesus did not promise the penitent thief that he should go with him, upon the day of their crucifixion, to Paradise; for he himself did not ascend to his Father until three days afterward. See [John 20:17](#). But he declared unto him, "I say unto thee *today*," meaning to impress the fact upon his mind, that at *that time*, while enduring ignominy and persecution, he had the power to save sinners. He was

man's Advocate with the Father, having the same power as when he healed the sick and raised the dead to life; it was his Divine right to promise *that day* to the repentant, believing sinner, "Thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

The Saviour, lifted upon the cross, enduring pain and mockery, is sought by a guilty, dying soul with a faith discerning the world's Redeemer in him who is crucified as a malefactor. While the leading Jews deny him, and even the disciples doubt his Divinity, the poor thief, upon the brink of eternity, at the close of his probation, calls Jesus his Lord! Many were ready to call him Lord when he wrought miracles, and also after he had risen from the grave; but none called him Lord as he hung dying upon the cross, save the penitent thief. Never during his entire ministry were words more grateful to the Saviour's ears, than was the utterance of faith from the lips of the dying malefactor, amid the taunts and blasphemy of the mob.

The enemies of Jesus awaited his death with impatient hope. That event they imagined would forever hush the rumours of his Divine power and the wonders of his miracles. They flattered themselves that they would then no longer tremble because of his influence. The unfeeling soldiers who had stretched the body of Jesus upon the cross, divided his clothing among themselves, contending over one garment, which was woven without seam. They finally decided the matter by casting lots for it. The pen of Inspiration had accurately described this scene hundreds of years before it took place: "Dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet." "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."

The mission of Christ's earthly life was now nearly accomplished. His tongue was parched, and he said, "I thirst." They saturated a sponge with vinegar and gall, and offered it him to drink; but when he had tasted it, he refused it. The Lord of life and glory was dying, a ransom for the race.

(To be continued.)

February 4, 1886

The Sufferings of Christ

(Continued from page 10.)

EGW

It was not the dread of death which caused the inexpressible agony of Jesus. To believe this would be to place him beneath the martyrs in courage and endurance; for many of those who have died for their faith, yielded to torture and death, rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake. Christ was the prince of sufferers; but it was not bodily anguish that filled him with horror and despair; it was a sense of the malignity of sin, a knowledge that man had become so familiar with sin that he did not realize its enormity, that it was so deeply rooted in the human heart as to be well-nigh impossible to eradicate. It was the guilt of sin, bringing the Father's wrath upon him as man's substitute, that broke the heart of the Son of God. Every pang that he endured upon the cross, the blood-drops that flowed from his head, his hands, and feet, the agony that racked his frame, and the unutterable anguish that filled his soul at the hiding of his Father's face, speak to man, saying, It is for love of thee that the Son of God consents to have these heinous crimes laid upon him; for thee he spoils the domain of death, and opens the gates of Paradise and immortal life. He who stilled the angry waves by his word, and walked the foam-capped billows, who made devils tremble, and disease flee from his touch, who opened the eyes of the blind, and raised the dead to life,—offers himself upon the cross as the all-sufficient sacrifice for man.

Satan, with his fierce temptations, wrung the heart of Jesus. Sin, so hateful to his sight, was heaped upon him till he groaned beneath its weight. No wonder that his humanity trembled in that fearful hour. Angels witnessed with amazement the despairing agony of the Son of God, so much greater than his physical pain that the latter was hardly felt by him. The hosts of heaven veiled their faces from the fearful sight.

Inanimate nature expressed sympathy with its insulted and dying Author. The sun refused to look upon the awful scene. Its full, bright rays were illuminating the earth at midday, when suddenly it seemed to be blotted out. Complete darkness, like a funeral pall, enveloped the cross and all the vicinity. There was no eclipse or other natural cause for this darkness, which was deep as midnight without moon or stars. It lasted three full hours. No eye could pierce the gloom that enshrouded the cross, and none could penetrate the deeper gloom that flooded the suffering soul of Christ. A nameless terror took possession of all who were collected about the cross. The silence of the grave seemed to have fallen upon Calvary. The cursing and reviling ceased in the midst of half-uttered sentences. Men, women, and children prostrated themselves upon the earth in abject terror. Vivid lightnings, unaccompanied by thunder, occasionally flashed forth from the cloud, and revealed the cross and the crucified Redeemer.

Priests, rulers, scribes, executioners, and the mob, all thought their time of retribution had come. After a while, some whispered to others that Jesus would now come down from the cross. Some attempted to grope their way back to the city, beating their breasts and wailing in fear.

At the ninth hour the terrible darkness lifted from the people, but still wrapt the Saviour as in a mantle. The angry lightnings seemed to be hurled at him as he hung upon the cross. Then "Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" As the outer gloom settled about Christ, many voices exclaimed, The vengeance of God is upon him! The bolts of God's wrath are hurled upon him because he claimed to be the Son of God! When the Saviour's despairing cry rang out, many who had believed on him were filled with terror; hope left them; if God had forsaken

Jesus, what was to become of his followers, and the doctrine they had cherished?

There, upon the cross, hung the spotless Lamb of God, his flesh lacerated with stripes and wounds; those loving hands, that had ever been ready to relieve the oppressed and suffering, extended upon the cross, and fastened by the cruel nails; those patient feet, that had traversed weary leagues in the dispensing of blessings and in teaching the doctrine of salvation to the world, bruised and spiked to the cross; that royal head wounded by a crown of thorns; those pale and quivering lips, that had ever been ready to respond to the plea of suffering humanity, shaped to the mournful words, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

In silence the people watch for the end of this fearful scene. Priests and rulers look toward Jerusalem, and lo, the dense cloud has settled upon the city, and over Judah's plains, and the fierce lightnings of God's wrath are directed against the fated city. Suddenly the gloom is lifted from the cross, and in clear, trumpet tones, that seem to resound throughout creation, Jesus cries, "It is finished," "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." A light encircled the cross, and the face of the Saviour shone with a glory like unto the sun. He then bowed his head upon his breast, and died.

The spectators stood paralyzed, and with bated breath gazed upon the Saviour. Again darkness settled upon the face of the earth, and a hoarse rumbling, like heavy thunder, was heard. This was accompanied by a violent quaking of the earth. The multitude were shaken together in heaps, and the wildest confusion and consternation ensued. In the surrounding mountains, rocks burst asunder with loud crashing, and many of them came tumbling down the heights to the plains below. The sepulchres were broken open, and the dead were cast out of their tombs. Creation seemed to be shivering to atoms. Priests, rulers, soldiers, and executioners were mute with terror, and prostrate upon the ground.

The darkness still hung like a pall over Jerusalem. At the moment in which Christ died, there were priests ministering in the temple before the veil which separated the holy from the most holy place. Suddenly they felt the earth tremble beneath them, and the veil of the temple, a strong, rich drapery that had been renewed yearly, was rent in twain from top to bottom by the same bloodless hand that wrote

the words of doom upon the walls of Belshazzar's palace. The most holy place, that had been entered by human feet only once a year, was revealed to the common gaze. God had ever before protected his temple in a wonderful manner; but now its sacred mysteries were exposed to curious eyes. No longer would the presence of God overshadow the earthly mercy-seat. No longer would the light of his glory flash forth upon, or the cloud of his disapproval shadow, the precious stones in the breastplate of the high priest.

When Christ died upon the cross of Calvary, a new and living way was opened to both Jew and Gentile. The Saviour was henceforth to officiate as Priest and Advocate in the heaven of heavens. Henceforth the blood of beasts offered for sin was valueless; for the Lamb of God had died for the sins of the world. The darkness upon the face of nature expressed her sympathy with Christ in his expiring agony. It evidenced to humanity that the Sun of Righteousness, the Light of the world, was withdrawing his beams from the once favoured city of Jerusalem. It was a miraculous testimony given of God, that the faith of after-generations might be confirmed.

Jesus did not yield up his life until he had accomplished the work which he came to do. The great plan of redemption was triumphantly carried out. Through a life of obedience the fallen sons of Adam could finally be exalted to the presence of God. When the Christian comprehends the magnitude of the great sacrifice made by the Majesty of Heaven, then will the plan of salvation be magnified before him, and to meditate upon Calvary will awaken the deepest and most sacred emotions of his heart. Contemplation of the Saviour's matchless love should absorb the mind, touch and melt the heart, refine and elevate the affections, and completely transform the whole character. The language of Paul the apostle is, "I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." And we may look toward Calvary and exclaim, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

(Concluded next number.)

February 18, 1886

The Sufferings of Christ

(Continued from page 18.)

EGW

The Conflict Ended

When Jesus cried out, "It is finished," all Heaven triumphed. The controversy between Christ and Satan in regard to the execution of the plan of salvation, was ended. Satan had fully manifested his enmity against the Son of God. It was the cruel cunning of the fallen foe that planned the betrayal, trial, and crucifixion of Christ. His diabolical hatred, carried out in the death of Jesus, placed Satan where his true character was revealed to all created intelligences that had not fallen by sin. The angels were horror-stricken that one who had been of their number could fall so low as to be capable of such cruelty. Every sentiment of sympathy or pity which they had ever felt for Satan in his exile was quenched in their hearts.

Satan had put forth the strongest efforts against Christ from the time when he appeared as a babe in Bethlehem. He had sought in every possible manner to prevent him from developing an unblemished childhood, a true manhood, a holy ministry, and a perfect sacrifice in yielding up his life, without a murmur, for the sins of men. But Satan had been unable to discourage him, or to drive him from the work which he had come on earth to do. The storm of Satan's wrath beat upon him from the desert to Calvary; but the more mercilessly it fell, the more firmly did the Son of God cling to the hand of his Father, and press on in the blood-stained path before him. All the efforts of

this mighty foe to oppress and overwhelm him, only brought out in a purer light the spotless character of Christ.

The justice of God was now fully vindicated in his act of banishing from heaven the fallen angel who had once been exalted next to Christ. All Heaven, and the worlds that had not fallen by sin, had been witnesses to the controversy between Christ and Satan. With intense interest had they followed the closing scenes of the conflict. They had beheld the Saviour enter the garden of Gethsemane, his soul bowed down by a horror of darkness that he had never before experienced. An overmastering agony had wrenched from his lips the bitter cry for that cup, if possible, to pass from him. A terrible amazement had filled his Divine spirit with shuddering dread, as he felt his Father's presence removed from him. He was sorrowful, with a bitterness of sorrow exceeding that of the last great struggle with death; the sweat of blood was forced from his pores, and fell in drops upon the ground. Thrice the prayer for deliverance had been wrung from his lips. Heaven had been unable to longer endure the sight, and had sent a messenger of consolation to the prostrate Son of God, fainting and dying under the accumulated guilt of the world.

Heaven had beheld the victim betrayed and hurried, with mockery and violence, from one earthly tribunal to another. It had heard the sneers of his persecutors because of his lowly birth, and the denial with cursing and swearing by one of his best-loved disciples. It had seen the frenzied work of Satan, and his power over the hearts of men. Oh, fearful scene! the Saviour seized at midnight in Gethsemane as a criminal, dragged to and fro from palace to judgment hall, arraigned twice before the Sanhedrim, twice before Pilate, and once before Herod, mocked, scourged, and condemned, led out to be crucified, bearing the heavy burden of the cross amid the wailing of the daughters of Jerusalem and the jeering of the crowd!

Heaven had viewed with grief and horror Christ hanging upon the cross, blood flowing from his wounded temples, and sweat tinged with blood standing upon his brow. From his hands and feet the blood had fallen, drop by drop, upon the rock drilled for the foot of the cross. The wounds made by the nails had gaped as the weight of his body dragged upon his hands. His laboured breath had grown quick and deep, as his soul panted under the burden of the sins of the world. All Heaven had been filled with amazement when the prayer

of Christ was offered in the midst of his terrible suffering,—“Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”

Christ was the embodiment of God himself. The plan and execution of man’s salvation was a demonstration of Divine wisdom and power. The unfathomable love of God for the human race in giving his Son to die for them, was made manifest. Christ was revealed in all his self-sacrificing love and purity. When the justice of God was expressed in judicial sentence, declaring the final disposition of Satan, that he should be utterly consumed with all those who ranked under his banner, all heaven rang with hallelujahs.

In the death of Christ upon the cross, angels had seen the pledge of final victory over the powers of darkness. In the slain Saviour sleeping in Joseph’s tomb, angels beheld the mighty Conqueror. Angels guarded the sepulchre of Christ, and acted a part in his resurrection. While Roman sentinels were keeping their watch beside the Saviour’s tomb, an angel of the most exalted order was sent from heaven. His countenance was like the lightning, and his garments white as snow. He parted the darkness from his track, and the whole heavens were lit with his resplendent glory. The earth trembled and heaved; soldiers, officers, and sentinels, all fell as dead men prostrate upon the earth. The evil angels, who had triumphantly claimed the body of Christ, fled in terror from the place. Then the mighty angel, with a voice that caused the earth to quake, was heard: Jesus thou Son of God, thy Father calls thee! And He who had earned the power to conquer death and the grave came forth, with the tread of a conqueror, from the sepulchre, amid the reeling of the earth, the flashing of lightning, and the roaring of thunder.

Jesus was the first-fruits of them that slept. When he came forth from the tomb, he called a multitude from the dead, thus settling forever the long-disputed question of the resurrection. In raising this multitude of captives from the dead, he gave evidence that there will be a final resurrection of those who sleep in Jesus.

Satan was bitterly incensed that his angels had fled from the presence of the heavenly angels, and that Christ had conquered death, and shown by this act what his future power was to be. All the triumph that the tempter had experienced in witnessing his own power over men, which had urged them on to insult and murder the Son of God, vanished before this exhibition of the Divine power of Christ.

He had dared to hope that Jesus would not take up his life again; but his courage failed him when the Saviour came forth, having paid the full ransom of man, thus enabling him to overcome Satan in his own behalf in the name of Christ, the Conqueror. The archenemy now knew that he must eventually die, and that his kingdom would have an end.

At the death of Jesus the earth was wrapped in profound darkness at midday; but at the resurrection the brightness of the angels illuminates the night, and the inhabitants of heaven sing with great joy and triumph: Thou hast vanquished Satan and the powers of darkness! Thou hast swallowed up death in victory! "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God, day and night."

With joy unutterable, all Heaven welcomed the hour when the Saviour, at the close of his earthly mission, ascended to the celestial courts. As a mighty Conqueror he led the way upward, and the multitude of captives whom he had raised from the dead at the time when he came forth from the tomb, followed him. With songs of joy and triumph, the heavenly host escorted him upward. At the portals of the city of God an innumerable company of angels awaited his coming. As they approached the gates of the city, the angels who were escorting the Majesty of Heaven, in triumphant tones addressed the company at the portals: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in!"

The waiting angels at the gates of the city inquire in rapturous strains, "Who is this King of glory?" The escorting angels joyously reply in songs of triumph, "The Lord, strong and mighty! The Lord, mighty in battle! Lift up your heads, O ye gates, even lift them up ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in!" Again the waiting angels ask, "Who is this King of glory?" and the escorting angels respond in melodious strains. "The Lord of hosts! He is the King of glory!" Then the portals of the city of God are widely opened, and the heavenly train pass in amid a burst of angelic music. All the heavenly host surround their majestic Commander as he takes his position upon the throne of the Father.

The Saviour presents the captives he has rescued from the bonds of death, at the price of his own life. His hands place immortal crowns upon their brows; for they are the representatives and samples of those who shall be redeemed by the blood of Christ from all nations, tongues, and people, and come forth from the dead, when he shall call the just from their graves at his second coming. Then shall they see the marks of Calvary in the glorified body of the Son of God. Their greatest joy will be found in the presence of Him who sitteth on the throne; and the enraptured saints will exclaim, My beloved is mine, and I am his! He is the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely!

With the deepest joy and adoration, the hosts of angels bow before him, while the glad shout rings through the courts of heaven: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour and glory, and blessing!" Songs of triumph mingle with music from angelic harps, till heaven seems to overflow with joy and praise. The Son of God has triumphed over the prince of darkness, and conquered death and the grave. Heaven rings with voices proclaiming in lofty strains, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever!"

November 4, 1886

“Ye are the Light of the World”

EGW

The world is represented as morally dark, and the object of God is the manifestation of his glory to shine amid the moral darkness and attract men and women to the light. The great and constant work of heavenly intelligences is to manifest God to the world, to dispel doubts from human minds, to enlarge and elevate man's conceptions of God, to reveal the unity of the Son with the Father, and to develop the great plan of salvation to human intelligences.

To recognize God in his works, is true science; to become acquainted with God in his providence, is the soul of religion; and to know Christ as the world's Redeemer, is to lay hold on eternal life as set forth in the gospel. Yet the world in its wisdom knows not God. There is much worldly wisdom among men, but they recognize not God as the first great cause. They behold not his beauty and majesty, his goodness and love in laying the foundations of the earth and establishing the heavens. The footsteps of God can be traced in the works of his hands on all around us. But men who enjoy the benefits and blessings of God see not God in his created works, hear not his Divine and stately steppings, therefore they are in moral darkness, and there is a necessity for channels of light to open the blind eyes, to unclothe the senses, to unveil his attributes with messages from his oracles, that men shall not remain in ignorance of God and his majesty.

God says to his messengers and to every individual member of his church, “Ye are the light of the world.” Then he uses a symbol to

show their true position. "A city set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Thus the injunction is written that Christ's followers are bound to make him manifest to the world. "Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people." Paul speaks of the darkness of this earth as pervading and overshadowing all human society. "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." "He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." Those who follow Jesus will no more walk in darkness, but will have the light of life. The church who walk in the light are radiant with the truth from God's Word. They are the mediums of heavenly illumination to the world, dispelling the moral darkness. The position of the church is to be the light of the world. Should any be pleased to enjoy the light of truth themselves, and feel indifferent in regard to the welfare of their neighbours, close by their own doors, and make no special effort to reveal to them the light of truth, then they are not obeying the injunctions of the Word of God; their light is hid under a bushel.

Noah, amid the moral darkness prevailing just before the deluge, was the light of the world. God employed him as a channel through which to transmit his light to future generations, to reveal to them the honour, authority, goodness, and fidelity of God. Abraham was a channel of light in his generation. His life and precepts and example reflected the light from God in bright, clear, strong rays, revealing to them the only living and true God, in holiness, in condescension, in goodness, in mercy, in love, and justice. Joseph was a medium of light, catching the heavenly rays and reflecting them upon a nation of gross idolaters. Moses was God's channel of communication to Pharaoh. The light of heaven was flashed upon the gross darkness of Egypt, revealing a greater than Pharaoh as sovereign of the heavens and the earth in the great "I AM." Israel's marching out of Egypt was a testimony that God rules. The Hebrew host was made a living channel of light to preserve a knowledge of God's law, and to show

forth the purposes of God, to establish and maintain a kingdom in the world against the power and craft of Satan; and when scattered in captivity among the idolatrous nations of the world, they were still God's witness—a light amid the moral darkness.

Elijah was a light, blazing forth amid the moral darkness, and testifying to Israel that there was a living God, the only One to be revered and worshipped, the One who could control the heavens and the earth, the One who had power to open the windows of heaven in blessings, and to close them in his wrath. Mordecai was a witness for God in his age. Ezra and Nehemiah were lights shining brightly in the kingdoms of earth. Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel gathered rays of light from above, and flashed them upon the darkness of the world.

Daniel and his fellows in the captivity revealed the only One who is mighty in counsel. They gave to future generations an example that, when kings and rulers make laws in contradiction to the law of Jehovah, man must be true to the higher Power, and by precept and example exalt God as the only object of worship, the only power that is supreme. Here the bright light from God's witnesses sent its rays far and near, not only through the kingdom of Babylon, but to the godless nations throughout the world. God's law was acknowledged as authority over the consciences of men; the wiser acknowledged it as supreme. The light flashing from the throne of Heaven ever fulfils its mission. It irradiates even where it does not merit, and gives reverence to God's claims and moulds opinions when it fails to give permanent authority over the life and actions of men.

Daniel also was made a channel of light for generations to come to the end of time. He caught the light of God's purposes, hidden from the great men and the mighty potentates of earth and reflected this on the proud courts of kings and earth's greatest despots, and revealed to them, not only the majesty of God as supreme ruler in the heavens, and over the kingdoms of earth, but revealed truth that stretches far down the stream of time through successive generations to the end of the world. The light of heaven beamed out upon a blind and apostate race in clear, steady, living rays. And when the Light of the World, the Sun of Righteousness, had once risen, its illuminating rays were not only reflecting light to the future, but back through preceding generations, giving significance to the whole plan and

purpose of God from Adam's day down through all the patriarchs and prophets. The old ceremonies were lighted up. These luminaries which God had placed in the moral heavens were never more to grow dim, but were to shine with clearer, steadier rays as the light from the cross of Calvary flashed upon the prophetic past.

If the saints of the Old Testament were to be bright and shining lights to the world, we are bound to shine brighter than they, because we have all the light which they had flashing upon our pathway from the prophetic past and the additional light which has come to us in the life of Christ. Fuller prophecies reveal the true Jehovah to those upon whom the ends of the world are come. God has a special light in this age of the world, a special message to give in the proclamation of the third angel's message—the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Now in this age of moral darkness, of general spiritual declension, the words of Christ come with great force to every one who believes the message of mercy and the truth for this time, "Ye are the light of the world." The gospel as revealed in the Word of God becomes a living reality, and the faith, the doctrine, and the works will correspond. The truth as it is in Jesus will be developed in the character of the sincere followers of Jesus Christ, and this truth is intended of God to be the light that is to reflect its diffusive rays to the world. The light of God's Word is now shining: and ere long it will shine in the cabinets of kings and on the statute books of nations. Their institutions, customs, and practices will be laid beside the law of God's moral government.

The people who obey God's commandments are now the light of the world, the preserver of the Word of God in its purity, and they are elevating and exalting the law of God,—the only true, infallible standard of character in our world,—therefore every man and woman whom Heaven has intrusted with this most sacred truth are required to be active instruments to diffuse the light to others. The church who obeys God's law is to send forth her sons as missionaries and preachers, and her daughters as teachers. The Bible is to be opened and explained to those who are in the darkness of error. The great missionary work is to draw men to Christ. Every individual member of the church is under the claims of God to let this light shine to the world. God is drawing to himself the sinner who sees the way of

salvation, that he may communicate to him light, not to be placed under a bed or under a bushel, but to be put on a candlestick. The conversion of a soul is to glorify God by diffusing his light. All heaven looks on with intense interest to see what that soul will do. Whether he will selfishly shut up the light to himself or diffuse it to others. Your conversion disappointed Satan, but caused joy in heaven to your Heavenly Father, to Jesus your Redeemer, and to the angels of God. Now will that one soul go on shining brighter and brighter unto the perfect day? God made provision that your light should never grow dim, but that you should go on catching more and more the bright beams of light from the throne of God, and let it shine more upon the world of moral darkness. God has set each member in the church, not to be irresponsible agents, not to be neutral, but to be true lights, and as responsible beings to reflect light to others. All our natural abilities are capable of improvement. God has presented before us his truth that it may affect the life and transform the character. He designs that we should be sanctified through the truth, elevated, ennobled, and all our powers increased to do good.

Christ has bought his church and washed her with his own precious blood, clothing her with garments of salvation. He has made her the depository of his law, and he has transferred to her in a high and holy sense the work to be wrought in his name. That work which Christ did upon the earth through his teachings and miracles his followers are called upon to carry forward by earnest love for souls for whom he has paid an infinite price, by the power and beauty of holiness, by sacrifice, by positive obedience to all of God's commandments, by continual self-denial, and undying zeal. Thus they are to exemplify the life of Christ, and be as a city set on a hill which cannot be hid.

Will the workers see the indifference and carelessness of the world, who seem to be trying to forget that there is a God who has claims upon them, who would urge from their minds the thought of eternity? The workers may be disheartened, but their light is not to grow dim; for God designs that the light shining through his delegated agencies shall keep before the minds of the world God and the judgment. Every true Christian is a bright and shining light,

and irradiates the darkness, so that men cannot put God entirely out of their minds.

There is many a church in our land composed of men of intellect, men of power, men of wealth, and may be thought to be a strong church. Its members can do much in worldly enterprises; they can build churches, endow colleges, and do many great works; they may have imposing forms and ceremonies, but these do not emit light from the throne of God to the world. They dazzle, but do not illuminate. That church which does not heed God's Word is weak and dark, it receives not Heaven's light, therefore cannot reflect it to others.

Let all who claim to be united to Christ do their work for time and for eternity by leaving a bright track heavenward. We cannot let our light go out in darkness without being stumbling-blocks to others. Rightly related to the Light of the World, we can reflect His light upon those who are in darkness.

January 30, 1890

How Shall We Draw Near to God?

EGW

“Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.” There are many who profess to be the sons and daughters of God, but who are walking in the darkness of unbelief. They say, “I have no light. I do not know that God accepts me.” For years they have had a name to live, and ought to be far advanced in experience and in the knowledge of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. They ought to be able to bear a clear, decided testimony to the effect that they have been justified by faith in Christ. No man has power to save himself. If he is walking in the shadow of unbelief, he must look away from himself to Jesus, and trust in that name which is above every name.

When we yield to the temptations of Satan, and walk in darkness, we say to the world that we have found Christ an insufficient Saviour; we say that the legions of evil angels that surrounded His cross in the hour of His fiercest agony, proved too strong for Him. To indulge in gloomy thoughts and to brood over doubts, will blunt the senses of men, until they have no power to perceive that the Saviour is faithful, and that in the conflict with the powers of darkness, He will work out a complete victory for those who trust in Him.

Satan claimed man as his rightful property, but the Saviour became a ransom, and with His own precious blood paid the penalty of man’s transgression. The great theme of redemption can be understood only as we eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of

God. It is only as we are partakers of the Divine nature that we can comprehend the great plan of salvation. But it is painfully apparent that the higher truths of God's Word are not comprehended by the majority of those who profess to be followers of Christ. It is not a belief in a theory of the atonement that will save the soul; it is faith in the fact that Jesus died for our transgressions, that melts and subdues the heart. When we believe that Christ is our personal Saviour, we realize that His love has a constraining power over us. It is when we behold a dying Redeemer that we can say "He is my trust, my sanctification, my righteousness."

We are not to walk in sparks of our own kindling; for if we do, we shall lie down in darkness. If we look away from self to Jesus, abiding continually in Him, gladly and willingly becoming doers of His Word, we shall walk in the light as He is in the light. But if we fail to do the things that are pleasing in His sight, we cannot expect to be cheered by the enlivening influence of the Holy Spirit, and we cannot say, with assurance, "Christ is my strength and my portion for ever."

Are there any among our readers to whom these words apply? any "that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light?" To you are addressed the words, "Let him trust in the name of the Lord." I hope there are none who are unwilling to be helped to the platform of faith in God. I have met persons who seemed to feel that it was a virtue to be found mourning, and complaining of their darkness and spiritual misery. O that God would enlighten them, that they might see how faith in a dying Saviour is the stimulating power of the Christian's life! The broken body, the shed blood, of Him who died on Calvary, will avail for him who feels his lost condition. O that those who are in darkness might see the love, the forbearance, the goodness, of our heavenly Father! I would repeat these precious promises that are full of comfort, light, and hope.

Jesus is the only hope of the soul. By faith every soul may say with the Psalmist, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee." The moment the sinner lays hold of Christ by faith, his sins are no longer upon him. Christ stands in the sinner's place, and declares, "I have borne his guilt, I have been punished for his transgressions, I have taken his sins,

and put My righteousness upon him.” In Christ the sinner stands guiltless before the law. But how vain is the hope of entering heaven if we have no present faith in Christ, no delight in spiritual things, no joy in anticipating the joys of heaven. The child of God finds his comfort and peace in Christ. He delights to dwell upon the holiness of his future, immortal home. The Lord commands, “Be ye holy, for I am holy.” The Christian’s constant endeavour should be to come into perfect conformity to the life of Christ; we must look away from the darkness, and face the light. Do not, by your attitude of unbelief, charge God with partiality or unfaithfulness. Your doubt casts reflections upon the verity of His promises. When in living faith you come to Jesus, and become doers of His Word, you will taste and see that the Lord is good. You will say to all, “By His stripes we are healed.” You will think of Jesus, you will talk of Jesus, as One who is willing and able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him. If you believe in Christ as your Saviour, His perfect obedience is set to your account. You are pardoned as you look to Jesus as your substitute and surety. The promise of God is, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

If you fail to come to Jesus because you are sinful, you will always remain sinful, and will die in your sins. You cannot feel His cleansing power unless you rely upon Him with implicit faith. You can do nothing yourself to remove one stain of sin. Jesus alone is able to make you clean. Will you come to Christ and be made whole, or will you remain away in unbelief, and still mourn over your wretched state? Look and live. By beholding, we become changed into His image. When you look at the darkness, and talk of the darkness, you are scattering seeds of evil. Words of discouragement and complaint are like tares sown in a field. They fall into other minds, and spring up and bear a harvest after their kind; and souls may be lost through your suggestions of unbelief. Long after your period of darkness and temptation has passed, the words forgotten by yourself will live in the memory of others, and when temptation comes upon them, the fruit of the seed sown will appear.

An infinite sacrifice has been made for us; a dear price has been paid. Let us show that we appreciate the great gift bestowed upon us through the merits of Him who shed His blood on the cross of

Calvary, and let us permit the Lord to do all that His love has made possible for the sanctification of the soul. We should remember the words of the apostle, "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? for ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." The purchase money has been paid for us, even if we perish. We may degrade the soul by sin, we may enslave the body by lust, but soul and body belong to God. Why not bring to God His own? Why not love Him with undivided affection, and be clothed with His salvation? Why not educate the tongue to praise God, the soul to make melody unto Him?

We claim to belong to the people of God; then why not show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light? Never by thought, or word, or action, cast reflection upon God. Tell of His goodness, sing of His matchless love. Never let Satan hear you utter one word of distrust. Never say before him, "My sins are so great the Lord cannot forgive me." Satan delights to have those for whom Christ died, doubt the benefits of Divine grace, and by so doing bring in a testimony of unbelief in the efficacy of the infinite sacrifice made on Calvary. Is God pleased or honoured to have you remain under a cloud, failing to appropriate His rich promises, and saying by your despair that there has not been a sufficient offering made to avail in your case? What a terrible thing it is to bear such a testimony to the world! Away with your unbelief! Begin to work on the faith side of the question.

Many, instead of trusting in God, and resting in Him, are trusting in themselves. They make feeling their criterion. If their emotions are stirred they feel pleased, and build up their hopes upon their impulses. But when their feelings change, they become sad. Feeling is their god, but it will never work their sanctification; for they give evidence through this fact that they are trusting to their works for acceptance and salvation. When those who are walking in darkness take Christ as their Saviour, they will find peace and rest in a new life. Christ takes the place of self, and he who trusts in the Saviour, finds no longer a support in self. Jesus is his whole dependence. He can say with heart and soul, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:

and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

Every day we are to gather strength from Jesus until we have grown to be like him. Through His grace we can say, “We have feared the Lord, we have obeyed the voice of his servants, we have trusted in the name of the Lord, and stayed upon our God; we do not trust in our own righteousness, we do not boast in our holiness, but we trust in Christ’s merit. We accept by faith the robe of Christ’s righteousness, and are one with Christ. We are righteous, because He is righteous. We present to the Father the merits of the blood of a crucified and risen Saviour.”

Many say, “I am weak and ignorant and sinful. I must be in a different condition before I can come to Jesus.” I would say to such, Do not parley with the enemy one moment, but come; for the Spirit of the Lord is drawing you. The Saviour said, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me.” Christ draws the souls of men, and though many refuse and resist, He still continues to woo them by His tender Spirit, and some respond to His love. You may be ignorant, but Christ invites you to unite your ignorance with His wisdom, your weakness with His strength, your frailty with His enduring might. You must come to Jesus just as you are; it is His grace that will remove the defects from your character. Without His Divine grace you can never do the work of cleansing your heart. Yet there are steps necessary for you to take in order that you may receive the heavenly gift; for you are to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, as God works in you to will and to do of His good pleasure.

God co-operates with man in the work of his salvation, but He can do nothing for man unless man is willing to become a co-labourer with Heaven. We must put our will on the side of God’s will, but it is in the strength which Christ imparts, the grace which He gives, that the soul is strengthened and cleansed. If you have been jealous, if malice has had a place in your heart even toward those who have done you wrong, you must put it away, or you cannot come to God with pure desires, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting. It is sin that has hedged up the way; it is your own perverse will that has kept you from the favour of God.

We should endeavour to see our deficiencies, and escape from the control of sluggishness, envy, evil surmisings, jealousies, pride, and selfishness. The conscience must be fully aroused, that we may make decided efforts to clear the King's highway. We must not stand as stumbling-blocks to others, and thus hinder the work of God.

The Saviour has said, "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." There are many who do not follow this instruction, and this is why their prayers are not heard. They ask the Lord to do for them that which they are unwilling to do for others. They ask God to forgive, and then refuse forgiveness to him who has trespassed against them. These are in controversy with God. We must cherish a forgiving spirit in our hearts, or we cannot expect that our heavenly Father will forgive our trespasses.

Jesus says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." Brethren, Jesus says, "Come unto Me." He does not say, "Go unto your brethren, and lay your burden upon them." Do you follow the Lord's directions? Do you come with your load of care to the Burden-bearer? Do you lay it at His feet, and wear His yoke and carry His burden? How does His gracious promise of "rest unto your souls" harmonize with your complaints? Your experience of doubt and wretchedness does not agree in the least with this precious promise of rest. Has Jesus made a mistake in giving us such a blessed assurance, that if we will come to Him with our burdens, He will give us rest? The rest He promises is found in learning of Him who is meek and lowly in heart, in wearing His yoke and carrying His burden.

Many are impatient if they do not at once receive special evidences that God has heard their prayers. They will manifest gratitude if all their expectations are met immediately; but they repine and become fretful if they have to wait, and trust in God. The Lord Jesus is the great Teacher, and it is His providence to teach us lessons of patient trust. He does not propose to indulge us as some parents indulge spoiled children. The promises of God are sure, and they act

an important part in our spiritual training; but if the promise should be fulfilled in the very way that we had marked out, it might work our ruin. The promise which, if fulfilled when we desired, would work us injury, waits for fulfilment until we are further disciplined, that we may appreciate the blessing when God sees best to bestow it. Special mercies are often withheld for a time, that we may more earnestly supplicate the throne of grace. We must stay ourselves upon God, and not measure the time by our own finite fancies. Our impulses must not rule over us, but we must rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him, nor let our sunshine turn to darkness, our faith to distrust. The Psalmist says, "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart." Let not your hope languish; only believe that God is true. "The husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it," and shall not we have that patience and faith that will endure the test, and wait for the harvest of God's promises?

It is not best to mark out some special way in which God must work to fulfil your desires. Your ways, your plans, may not be God's ways or God's plans. The promise that you have thought suited to your need will be fulfilled in unlooked-for blessings, greater than you have asked or thought. Remember that you are not to doubt because you do not receive the very thing for which you asked. Paul requested that the troublesome thorn in the flesh might be removed, but the Lord gave that which was more valuable,—grace to endure it patiently. The strength of Jesus was made perfect in weakness, and Paul was able through Christ to bear about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus. Jesus prayed that if it were possible, the bitter cup might be removed, but He was not released from the obligation of drinking it. Strength was imparted to Him to drain its bitterest dregs. Jesus said, "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt." With these precious examples before us, let us trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon our God.

We do not glorify God when we walk in sadness and gloom, and complain that we have no light. "Thus saith the Lord, in an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them

that are in darkness, Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways, and their pastures shall be in all high places. They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them.”

With such blessed assurances as these, why do we doubt God? Why bring dishonour upon His holy name? Why bring shame and darkness upon our own souls? I repeat the words of the prophet for the comfort and instruction of those who have been bowed down in doubt and sorrow: “Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.”

August 11, 1892

Christ in the Garden

EGW

Often had Jesus, with the twelve, resorted to Gethsemane for meditation and prayer, but never had He visited the spot with a heart so full of sorrow as upon the night of His betrayal. He had been earnestly conversing with His disciples; but as He neared the garden He became unusually silent. The disciples were perplexed and anxiously regarded His countenance, hoping there to read an explanation of the change that had come over their Master. They had frequently seen Him depressed but never before so utterly sad and silent. As He proceeded, this strange sadness increased; yet they dared not question Him as to the cause. His form swayed as if He was about to fall. The disciples looked anxiously for His usual place of retirement, that their Master might rest.

Upon entering the garden, He said to His companions, "Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder." Selecting Peter, James, and John to accompany Him, He proceeded farther into the recesses of the garden. He had been accustomed to brace His spirit for trial and duty by fervent prayer in this retreat, and had frequently spent the entire night thus.

Jesus felt that He must be still more alone, and He said to the favoured three, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with Me." His disciples had never before heard Him utter such mournful tones. His frame was convulsed with anguish, and His pale countenance expressed a sorrow past all description.

He went a short distance from His companions, and fell prostrate with His face upon the earth. He was overpowered by a terrible fear that God was removing His presence from Him. He felt Himself being separated from His Father by a gulf of sin, so broad, so black and deep, that His spirit shuddered before it. He clung convulsively to the cold, unfeeling ground, as if to prevent Himself from being drawn still farther from God. The chilling dews of night fell upon His prostrate form, but the Redeemer heeded it not. From His pale lips wailed the bitter cry, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

It was not a dread of the physical suffering He was soon to endure that brought this agony upon the Son of God. He was bearing the penalty of man's transgression, and shuddering beneath the Father's frown. He must not exert His Divine power to escape this agony, but, as a man, He must bear the consequences of man's sin and the Creator's displeasure toward His disobedient subjects, and He feared that in His human nature He would be unable to endure the coming conflict with the prince of the power of darkness; in that case the human race would be hopelessly lost, Satan would be victor, and the earth would be his kingdom. The sins of the world weighed heavily upon the Saviour, and bowed Him to the earth; and the wrath of God in consequence of sin seemed crushing out His life.

In the conflict of Christ with Satan in the wilderness of temptation, the destiny of the human race had been at stake. But the Son of God had conquered, and the tempter left Him for a season. He had now returned for the last fearful conflict. During the ministry of Christ, Satan had been preparing for this final trial. Everything was at stake with him. If he failed here, his hope of mastery was lost; the kingdoms of the earth would finally become Christ's, who would "bind the strong man," Satan, and cast him out.

During this scene of the Saviour's anguish, the disciples were at first much troubled to see their Master, usually so calm and dignified, wrestling with a sorrow that exceeded all utterance; but they were very weary, and finally dropped asleep, leaving Him to agonize alone. Ah! if they had realized that this was their last night with their beloved Master while He lived a man upon earth, if they had known what the morrow would bring Him, they would not thus have yielded to the power of slumber.

The voice of Jesus partially aroused them. They discerned His form bending over them, His expression and attitude indicating extreme exhaustion. They hardly recognized in His changed countenance the usually serene face of their Master. Singling out Simon Peter, He addressed him: "Simon, sleepest thou? couldst thou not watch one hour?" O Simon, where is now thy boasted devotion? Thou who didst but lately declare thou couldst go with thy Lord to prison or to death, hast left Him in the hour of His agony and temptation, and sought repose in sleep!

John, the loving disciple who had leaned on the breast of Jesus, was also sleeping. Surely the love of John for his Master should have kept him awake. His earnest prayers should have mingled with those of his Saviour in the time of His supreme sorrow. The self-sacrificing Redeemer had passed entire nights in the cold mountains or in the groves, praying for His disciples that their faith might not fail them in the hour of their temptation. Should Jesus now put to James and John the question He had once asked them, "Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" they would not have ventured to answer, "We can."

This important night-watch should have been spent by the disciples in noble mental struggles and prayers, which would have brought them strength to witness the terrible agony of the Son of God. It would have prepared them, as they should behold His sufferings upon the cross, to understand in some degree the nature of the overpowering anguish which He endured. They would then have been better able to recall the words He had spoken to them in reference to His sufferings, death, and resurrection; and amid the gloom of that trying hour, some rays of hope would have lighted up the darkness, and sustained their faith. Christ had told them before that these things would take place. He knew the power which the prince of darkness would use to paralyze the senses of the disciples, and He therefore admonished them to watch.

But at the most critical moment, when Jesus was most in need of their sympathy and heartfelt prayers, His chosen companions had given themselves up to slumber. They lost much by thus sleeping. The Saviour's trial and crucifixion was to be a fiery ordeal to His disciples. Their faith needed to be sustained by more than human strength as they should witness the triumph of the powers of dark-

ness. Christ designed to fortify them for this severe test. Had those hours in the garden been spent in watching with the dear Saviour and in prayer to God, the disciples would not have forsaken Jesus in His hour of trial, and Peter would not have been left to his own feeble strength to deny his Master.

The evidence of the weakness of His disciples excited the pity and sympathy of the Son of God. He questioned their strength to endure the test they must undergo in witnessing His betrayal and death. He did not sternly upbraid them for their weakness, but in view of their coming trial, exhorted them, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Then, His spirit moving in sympathy with their frailty, He framed an excuse for their failure in duty toward Him: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Again Jesus was seized with superhuman agony, and fainting and exhausted, staggered back to the place of His former struggle. Again He was prostrated to the earth. His suffering was even greater than before. The cypress and palm trees were the silent witnesses of His anguish. From their leafy branches dropped heavy dew upon His stricken form, as if nature wept over its Author wrestling alone with the powers of darkness.

A short time before He had stood like a mighty cedar, withstanding the storm of opposition that spent its fury upon Him. Stubborn wills, and hearts filled with malice and subtlety, strove in vain to confuse and overpower Him. He stood forth in Divine majesty as the Son of God. But now He was like a bruised reed beaten and bent by the angry storm. A few hours before, He had poured out His soul to His disciples in noble utterances, claiming unity with the Father, and giving His elect church into His arms in the language of one who had Divine authority. Now His voice uttered suppressed wails of anguish, and He clung to the cold ground as if for relief.

The words of the Saviour were borne to the ears of the drowsy disciples: "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done." The anguish of God's dear Son forced drops of blood from His pores. Again He staggered to His feet, His human heart yearning for the sympathy of His companions, and He repaired to where they were sleeping.

He did not now address them, but, turning away, sought again His retreat and fell prostrate, overcome by the horror of great darkness.

The humanity of the Son of God trembled in that trying hour. The awful moment had arrived which was to decide the destiny of the world. The heavenly hosts waited the issue with intense interest. The fate of humanity trembled in the balance. Christ might even then refuse to drink the cup apportioned to guilty men. He might wipe the bloody sweat from His brow, and leave men to perish in their iniquity. Will the Son of the Infinite God drink the bitter potion of humiliation and agony? Will the innocent suffer the consequence of God's curse, to save the guilty? The words fall tremblingly from the pale lips of Jesus: "O My Father, if this cup may not pass away from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done."

Though the disciples had failed to sympathize with their Lord in the trying hour of His conflict, all heaven was full of sympathy, and waiting the result with painful interest. When it was finally determined, an angel was sent from the throne of God to minister unto the stricken Redeemer.

The glorious vision of the angel dazzled the eyes of the disciples. They remembered the mount of transfiguration, the glory that encircled Jesus in the temple, and the voice of God issuing from the cloud. They saw the same glory here revealed, and had no further fear for their Master, since God had taken Him in charge, and an angel was present to protect Him from His foes. They were weary and heavy with sleep, and again they dropped into unconsciousness.

The Saviour arose and sought His disciples, and, for the third time, found them fast asleep. His words, however, aroused them: "Sleep on now, and take your rest; behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."

Even while these words were upon His lips, the footsteps of the mob that was in search of Him were heard. Judas took the lead, and was closely followed by the high priest. Jesus turned to His disciples, as His enemies approached, and said, "Rise, let us be going; behold, he is at hand that doth betray Me." The countenance of the Saviour wore an expression of calm dignity; no traces of His recent agony were visible as He stepped forth to meet His betrayer.

He stood in advance of His disciples, and inquired, "Whom seek ye?" They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus replied, "I am He." As these words were uttered, the mob staggered back; and priests, elders, soldiers, and even Judas, dropped powerless to the ground.

This gave Christ ample opportunity to escape from them if He had chosen to do so. But He stood as one glorified amid that coarse and hardened band.

Again the question was asked by the Redeemer, “Whom seek ye?” Again they answered, “Jesus of Nazareth.” The Saviour then said, “I have told you that I am He. If, therefore, ye seek Me, let these go their way”—pointing to the disciples. In this hour of humiliation, Christ’s thoughts were not for Himself, but for His beloved disciples. He wished to save them from any further trial of their strength.

When the disciples saw that Jesus did not deliver Himself from His enemies, but permitted Himself to be taken and bound, they were offended that He should suffer this humiliation to Himself and them. They had just witnessed an exhibition of His power in prostrating to the ground those who came to take Him, and in healing the servant’s ear which Peter had cut off, and they knew that if He chose He could deliver Himself from that murderous throng. They blamed Him for not doing so, and, mortified and terror-stricken by his unaccountable conduct, they forsook him and fled. Alone, in the hands of the hooting mob, the Saviour was hurried from the garden.

Mrs. E. G. White

December 29, 1892

Abiding in Christ

EGW

“Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples. As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love. If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love. These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is My commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.” “These things I command you, that ye love one another.”

In this scripture Christ has plainly taught that we must co-operate with God in the work of our salvation. We have something to do; and yet without Christ all our doing is valueless. Fruit-bearing, it is plainly stated, is the result of abiding in Christ. “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing.” We have read these words of instruction again and again, but have we taken them into our hearts? Are they practiced in our life, and revealed to all with whom we associate? Not a soul will be lost who will practice the principles of these words of Christ.

Jesus prayed for His disciples, “Sanctify them through Thy truth; Thy word is truth.” “I have given them Thy word.” It is through

the truth that the soul's sanctification is accomplished. In the fear and love of Christ, I would inquire, Do we hear, and do we receive into a good and honest heart these important words? and are we individually determined to know for ourselves what is truth? Do we know by experience what it is to abide in Christ as the branch abides in the parent stock? "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in Me." Have these words any weight in determining our course of action? Has not self been strangely mingled with all our service? Is not the chief reason why growth in religious experience is so dwarfed and sickly, to be found in the fact that our works are so largely of self, and so little of Jesus? Christ must be our guide, our counselor, our Alpha and Omega. He is all and in all to us, or He is nothing to us. Self must die if Christ abides with us; our very life is to be hid with Christ in God. We are to contemplate the great and important truths of His word, to feed upon them.

Let every soul make sure that the principles which Christ has taught in the words recorded by John are planted in his heart by the Holy Spirit. This instruction has been strangely neglected; and while the Lord's professed people feel so little responsibility to carry out His directions, how can they expect to have the peace of Christ and His love abiding in their hearts? How can the professed teacher of the truth impress upon the people the importance of this work, when the truth has not sufficient weight with him to sanctify his own character and life? Unless the truth is enthroned in the heart, and there is a thorough transition from darkness to light, even those who are attempting to teach the truth will be blind leaders of the blind, clouds without water, carried about of winds; they will be as trees whose fruit withereth, twice dead, to be plucked up by the roots. Let all feel the necessity of self-examination. Let us know for ourselves that we are abiding in Christ, and that His words are dwelling in us. As we near the close of this earth's history, Satan redoubles his efforts to cast his hellish shadow over us, that he may turn our eyes away from Christ. If he can prevent us from beholding Jesus, we shall be overcome; but we must not permit him to do this.

"We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." What is the glory of the Lord? Moses

prayed, "I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory." And the Lord said, "I will make all My goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy to whom I will show mercy." "And the Lord passed by before him and proclaimed, the Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty."

The glory of God is His character, and to us it is manifest in Christ. It is by beholding Him that we become changed,—by contemplating the character of Christ, learning His lessons, obeying His words. Enlightened by His Spirit, the believer sees no virtue or merit in himself. There is naught but deformity. But he beholds Jesus, and the glory of the Redeemer manifested in His atoning sacrifice, and His justifying righteousness, His fulness of grace, not only to pardon but to sanctify, fills his whole soul with admiration of the holiness and love of God; and in contemplating this goodness and mercy and love, he becomes transformed in character.

Jesus said, "The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one as we are one." On him who receives Christ, the glory of the Lord hath shined, the Sun of Righteousness has arisen, he rises from his low and worldly state, and shines by reflecting the light of Christ's glory. Thus by looking continually to Jesus, contemplating His beauty, the believer is more and more transformed into the child of light.

"Ye are the light of the world.... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." "Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples," God is glorified in His children as they in their character represent Christ. Jesus says, "He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." Good works are the fruit borne upon the Christian tree. It is impossible to be a disciple of Christ and be a fruitless branch. But the good works are wrought by Christ Himself through the human agent. And those who are doers of the words of Christ, will not only impart blessings of the highest order to others, but as they by their likeness and obedience to Christ represent His character, they bring joy to the heart of Christ and to all the holy ones of heaven.

Mrs. E. G. White

January 12, 1893

Witnessing for Christ

EGW

“Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord, of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.” Isaiah not only beheld the glory of Christ, but he also spake of Him. While David mused, the fire burned; then spake he with his tongue. While he mused upon the wondrous love of God, he could not but speak of that which he saw and felt. Who can by faith behold the wonderful plan of redemption, the glory of the only begotten Son of God, and not speak of it? Who can contemplate that unfathomable love expressed in dying upon the cross of Calvary, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life, and have no words to utter to extol the Saviour’s glory? Who can become partakers of His love, and not admire and reverence and adore?

As they behold Christ, those who love and fear the Lord will be led to assemble together and speak to one another in words that are full of fervour. “Yea, He is altogether lovely.” He is “the chiefest among ten thousand.” “In His temple doth every one speak of His glory.” The sweet singer of Israel praised Him upon the harp: “I will speak of the glorious honor of Thy majesty, and of Thy wondrous works.” “And men shall speak of the might of Thy terrible acts: and I will declare Thy greatness. They shall abundantly utter the memory

of Thy great goodness, and shall sing of Thy righteousness.... They shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom, and talk of Thy power; to make known to the sons of men His mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of His kingdom.” Such will be the conversation of those who are specified in the scripture, “They that feared the Lord spake often one to another.” And God is represented as listening to their words and writing them in a book.

The testimony of John the beloved disciple is, “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of Him and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.”

Surely, those who speak to one another of the goodness of the Lord are highly privileged. “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.” We have rich themes for thought and conversation, themes that it will interest and encourage and uplift the soul to dwell upon; and if God’s witnesses, those who are the subjects of His grace, upon whom the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness are shining, should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. God will be glorified.

If the members of the church are one with Christ, they will be in union with one another. And this unity of believers will be a living testimony to the world of the power of the Gospel. United in one, they receive bright beams of light from the Sun of Righteousness, and diffuse this light to a world in darkness. Oh, why cannot we see from the lessons and especially from the prayer of Christ, how Christians may be perfect in one, and thus represent the glory of their Redeemer? If those who believe the truth would bring the prayer of Christ into their practical life, they would grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. They would grow up unto the full stature of

men and women in Christ Jesus. As believers in Christ, "they are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit."

The believer in Christ needs to understand the working of the powers of darkness to bring dissension and division into the church, that its members may not present the oneness for which Christ prayed. God's people have greatly dishonoured His name, and misrepresented the truth by their alienation, their lack of love for one another. As love for God has grown cold, they have lost the childlike simplicity that knit heart to heart in love and tenderness. Hardheartedness has come in. There is a drawing away from one another. Many are saying by their actions I care not for the prayer of Christ. They feel under no special obligation to love one another as Christ has loved them. Jesus can do little for these souls; for His words and Spirit are not permitted to enter into the heart.

Many are in darkness, and know not the cause. They are not at peace with God, they are not one with Christ, nor in unity with one another. They seem to think they are at liberty to act out the natural feelings of the heart. Words and actions testify that they do not desire to be in union with those who do not exactly meet their minds, even among believers. Now all who entertain these ideas and cherish these feelings need to be converted. They need to live by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. The religion of Christ is not to be controlled by impulse.

Love for one another is not to be manifested in praise and flattery, but in true fidelity. If we see one in danger, we should tell him plainly, kindly, even at the risk of his displeasure. We must lean wholly upon God; we need to pray much. We should hold the truth with firmness, but we are to hold it in righteousness. While we speak the truth with fidelity, we should speak it in love.

Mrs. E. G. White

January 26, 1893

“Knit Together in Love”

EGW

“A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another.” How much? “As I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” Do we regard this commandment sufficiently, so that we permit it to control mind and heart, and mould the character? “By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.” Thus believers may bear to the world the credentials testifying that they are indeed children of God. Jesus says, “The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one even as we are one. I in them and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.”

What can I present before my brethren and sisters more important for their study and practice than the prayer of Christ? The entire seventeenth chapter of John is full of marrow and fatness. Are there not urgent reasons why we should take heed to these words of Christ? Is it not time we sought for the unity for which the Saviour prayed? Shall we open our hearts to the melting love of Jesus? Shall we let that love take the place of the coldness and hardness that have been revealed in our characters? May the Lord have compassion upon us; may He forgive our perversity, and heal our backslidings, and unite the hearts of all that believe the truth in that oneness for which Christ prayed, that which exists between the Father and the Son.

The Gospel has little to fear from open opponents. It is the pretended friends of Christ, those who say, “I go,” but do not go,

who are its most dangerous foes. They profess to love the Lord Jesus, but through the deceptions of Satan they work against Christ because they fail to be doers of His word.

He who carefully studies the word of God and brings its holy principles into his daily life, making every thought, word, and deed subject to its control will be a man of discernment; he has spiritual eyesight; he is not ignorant of Satan's devices. The love of God is in his heart, and he loves his fellow-men. Who can measure the loss we individually sustain by neglecting to obey the words of Christ? He is life to the dead, and wisdom to the ignorant. It is by His righteousness we are connected with God, and why do we treat so indifferently the prayer of Christ that His disciples may be one as He is one with the Father? Why do we not make most earnest efforts to answer this prayer?

The Saviour says to His professed people, "I have somewhat against thee because thou hast left thy first love." If ever a people needed to repent because they had lost their first love, it is those who have had so great light. You can never understand what the loss means, until you repent of having given so little heed to the words of Christ. "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." There is need of repentance because of the lack of love to God. He has not been loved with the whole heart, with the whole soul, with the undivided affections; and the second commandment has not been obeyed, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

In view of the wonderful manifestation of the love of Christ for fallen man, it is a great sin to misrepresent His character, as it has been misrepresented by every soul who has left the first love. Shall we not repent of this sin? Shall we take these things to heart, and make diligent work? God grant that the precious illumination of His Spirit may no longer be withheld from us.

The word of God cannot bend to men's liking. It requires obedience full and free. Will the church that professes to keep the commandments of God keep them in truth? Shall we be able to select a better guide, a better standard than is given us in the word of God? Why then do we kindle a fire, and walk in the sparks of our own kindling? The Eternal has opened up a path for us to travel

which leads to the open gates of Paradise. Can we by following our own will and choosing to walk in our own way find a pleasanter path? What can spread sunshine through the soul as does the sense of sins forgiven? What can impart true nobility, if not restoration to the favour of God? Pure and undefiled religion means to love God supremely and our neighbour as ourselves. Could we understand the great loss we sustain in not following the Lord fully as directed in the wonderful prayer of Christ, so full of mercy and truth, we would make haste and repent, and be converted. To disregard this prayer is to quench the love of God in our hearts.

If those who profess to believe the present truth loved God supremely, and their neighbour as themselves, would there be so little done in presenting the truth to those about us? Every soul is to seek to be a blessing to others. Souls are perishing for the word of life, but the loss of her first love has left the church in blindness, and destitute of the blessings it is her privilege to enjoy. Lacking the power of God, he fails to accomplish the work of God. When we gather about the great white throne, before the Judge of the living and the dead, what excuse can we render to God for having failed to obey His word, failed to represent Christ before the world?

The man whose religion is planted in the heart is not guided by human opinions but by the verdicts of the unchanging One. In the judgment day it will be found that no one is able to cancel or revise the decisions of God; man cannot judge the word, but the word judges him. Every talent entrusted to men was given that it might be devoted to the work of saving the souls of the lost. If the talents have not been improved, if precious opportunities of enlightening others have been passed by unheeded, then the Lord's gifts have been wasted. To every man are committed talents, and if these are not improved, he will be treated as was the unprofitable servant in the parable.

Let us put away every idol. Let us seek God earnestly, and with the spirit of a little child take hold of our long-neglected work, and redeem the time. When we have less of self, and more of Jesus, we shall view these things in the right light. Let selfishness be uprooted, let the love of Jesus reign in the heart, and many souls will be saved as the result. In the past many have been repulsed, lost to God, lost to His cause, because of the unchristlike spirit and conduct which

made it manifest that His professed people had left their first love. May God pity the church; for a great work must be done for its members or they are lost.

Mrs. E. G. White

September 21, 1893

Seeking to Save

EGW

“Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. And He spake this parable unto them, saying, What man of you having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance.”

Jesus received publicans and common sinners, and ate with them. The Pharisees murmured. In their self-righteousness they despised these poor sinners who gladly heard the words of Jesus. To rebuke this spirit in the scribes and Pharisees, and leave an impressive lesson for all, the Lord gave the parable of the lost sheep. Notice in particular the following points:

The ninety and nine sheep are left, and diligent search is made for the one that is lost. The entire effort is made for this unfortunate sheep. So should the effort of the church be directed in behalf of those members who are straying from the fold of Christ. And if they have apostatized far away, do not wait till they return before you try to help them, but go in search of them.

When the lost sheep was found, with joy it was borne home, and much rejoicing followed. This illustrates the blessed joyful work of labouring for the erring. That church that engages successfully in this work, is a happy church. That man or that woman whose soul is drawn out in compassion and love for the erring, and labours to bring them to the fold of the Great Shepherd, is engaged in a blessed work. And oh! what a soul-rapturing thought, that when one sinner is thus reclaimed, there is more joy in Heaven than over ninety and nine just persons. These selfish, exclusive, exacting souls, who seem to fear to help those in error, as though they would become polluted by so doing, do not taste of the sweets of this missionary work. And that blessedness which fills all Heaven with rejoicing upon the rescue of one who has apostatized more or less, they do not feel. They are shut up to their narrow views and feelings, and are becoming as dry and as unfruitful as the mountains of Gilboa, upon which there was neither dew nor rain.

Take a strong man and shut him away from labour, and he becomes feeble. That church, or those persons who shut themselves away from bearing burdens for others, who shut themselves up to themselves, will soon suffer spiritual feebleness. It is labour that keeps the strong man strong. And spiritual labour, toil, and burden-bearing, is what will give strength to the church of Christ.

We are not all organised alike. Some have not been educated aright. Their education has been deficient. Some have transmitted to them a quick temper, and their education in childhood has not taught them self-control. With this fiery temper is frequently united envy and jealousy. Others are faulty in other respects. They are dishonest in deal, overreaching in trade. Others are arbitrary in their families—loving to rule. Their lives are far from being correct. Their education was all wrong, and evil fruits were manifested without their being told the sin of being thus controlled. Therefore sin does not appear so exceedingly sinful. Others, whose education has not been so faulty, who have had better training, have developed a much less objectionable character. The Christian life of all is very much affected for good or for evil by their previous education.

Jesus, our advocate, is acquainted with all the circumstances with which we are surrounded, and deals with us according to the light we have had, and the circumstances in which we are placed. Some have

a much better organisation than others; while some are continually harassed and afflicted, and in trouble because of the unhappy traits in their character, having to war with internal foes and the corruption of their nature. Others have not half so much to battle against. They pass along almost free from the difficulties their brethren and sisters are labouring under who are not so favourably organised. They do not, in very many cases, labour half as hard to overcome and live daily the life of a Christian as some of those unfortunate ones I have mentioned. The latter appear to disadvantage almost every time, while the former appear much better, because it is natural for them so to do. They may not labour half as hard to watch and keep the body under, yet at the same time they make a comparison of their lives with the lives of others who are unfortunately organised, and badly educated, and flatter themselves with the contrast. They talk of the errors, the wrongs, the failings, of the unfortunate, but do not feel that they have any burden in the matter farther than to dwell upon those wrongs, and shun those who are guilty of them.

We should labour to help those who stand most in need of help—those who are less favourably situated, who are erring and faulty, and who may have injured us and tried our patience to the utmost. It is just such ones whom Jesus pities, because Satan has more power over them, and is constantly taking advantage of their weak points, and driving his arrows to hit them where they are least protected. Jesus exercises His power and mercy for just such pitiable cases. Jesus did not shun the unfortunate, helpless, and weak, but he helped such as needed help. Jesus did not confine His visits and labours to a class more intelligent and less faulty, to the neglect of the unfortunate. He did not inquire whether it was agreeable or pleasant for him to be a companion of the poorest, the most needful. These are the ones whose company He sought—the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Mrs. E. G. White

August 16, 1894

The Christian's Privilege

EGW

Oh, why does not the church of Christ arise, and put on her beautiful garments? Why does she not shine? The great reason of such feeble Christianity is that those who claim to believe the truth have so little knowledge of Christ, and so low an estimate of what He will be to them, and what they may be to Him. We have the most solemn, weighty truths ever committed to mortals. Were our words, our thoughts, our actions purer and elevated, more in accordance with the holy faith we profess, we should view our responsibilities in a far different light. How solemn, how sacred, they would appear! We should have a deeper sense of our obligations, and should make it our constant aim to perfect holiness in the fear of God. Earthly, temporal things would be subordinate to the heavenly and eternal.

The language of the heart and lips would be, as expressed by the Psalmist, "How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even Thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my king and my God. Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house; they will be still praising Thee. Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee: in whose heart are the ways of them. Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well . . . They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God. . . . Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of Thine anointed. For a day in Thy

house is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.”

Mrs. E. G. White.

February 14, 1895

“Acquainted With Grief”

EGW

The sufferings of humanity ever touched the heart and called forth the sympathy and love of Christ. He exercised pity and compassion toward those who were afflicted in soul or body. His example in the matter of treating the suffering and afflicted should teach us how to have compassion and pity for the sufferings of His creatures.

Christ had suffered in the flesh. He had clothed His Divinity with humanity, and in every period of His life, through infancy, childhood, youth, and manhood, He had suffered every phase of trial and temptation with which humanity is beset. He knew what it was to suffer keen pangs of hunger, and He has given special lessons in regard to feeding the hungry and caring for the needy poor, and has declared that in ministering to the needy we are ministering unto Himself in the person of His saints. He says, “I was an hungered and ye gave Me meat.” He knew the discomfort and suffering of thirst, and He declared that a cup of cold water given in His name to any of His disciples should not lose its reward.

He was often weary, oppressed with poverty, and He experienced the taxation of acting His part to support the family of which He was a member. He suffered reproach, and experienced the bitter hostility of those who knew Him not. In His own home He was made to suffer the discomfort and sorrow that result from envy and jealousy. His brethren thought that it was their privilege to exercise authority over Him, and to presume to dictate to Him what should be His course. The misapprehension of His relatives was most painful

to Him, because His own heart was full of kindness and love, and He appreciated tender regard in the family relation. But His own brethren often wounded and grieved His heart. They desired that He should concede to their wishes and ideas when such a course would be utterly out of harmony with His Divine mission. The statement is made in the Scriptures, "Neither did His brethren believe on Him."

Oh, if His brethren, the members of His own family, had been His friends, what a comfort they might have been to Him! The life of Christ was far superior to that of His home relations. They were not all converted, and they looked upon Christ as one in need of their advice and counsel. They judged Him from their human standpoint, and they thought that if He would only be advised by them, and speak only such things before the scribes and Pharisees as would not arouse their hostility, He would avoid all the disagreeable controversy that His words aroused. They charged Him with blame for many things that He said, and declared that He ought to have left them unsaid.

They could not fathom by their short human measuring line the Divine mission which He came to fulfil, and therefore could not be partakers with Him of His trials. Their coarse, unappreciative words revealed the fact that they had no conception of the fine texture of His character, and did not discern that the Divine blended with the human. They often saw Him full of grief, but instead of comforting Him, their spirit and words only grieved His heart. His sensitive nature was tortured, His motives misunderstood, His work uncomprehended. So pained was Christ by the atmosphere of misapprehension in His own home, that He felt relieved when He could be in a place where it did not exist, and where His spirit could rest. He loved to visit the home of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary. Here His spirit found rest, and His motives and words were not misconstrued and misapprehended.

His brethren often brought forward the philosophy of the Pharisees, which was hoary with age and threadbare, and presumed to think that they could teach Him who understood all truth and comprehended all mysteries. He was the Author of truth, and His soul was wearied and distressed. He found relief in being alone, and in communing with His Heavenly Father. His brethren thought their wisdom was far superior to that of Jesus, and did not apprehend that

He was the fountain of all wisdom and knowledge. They freely condemned that which they could not understand, and their reproaches probed Him to the quick, they avowed faith in God, and thought they were vindicating God, when God was with them in the flesh, and they knew Him not. These things made His path a thorny one to travel.

From the manger to Calvary, His life was one continual experience of disappointment and suffering. Christ was the only begotten of the Father, and yet He was pressed with grief; but His suffering in the garden of Gethsemane was an awful anguish that must ever remain a terrible mystery to the human family. The record says, "Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto His disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy." With what awe, with what reverence, should the disciples have regarded the sufferings of the Son of God! As He drew nigh to the centre of the garden, the agony of the sins of the world was weighing upon His Divine soul. The curse of the world's iniquity was shadowing the light of His Father's face from His vision. Oh, how could He escape from it? How avoid, standing under the curse that sin had wrought, and being alienated from His beloved Father? He turned to His disciples and said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with Me."

At the thought of the grievous character of the guilt of the world, Christ felt that He must go apart, and be alone. The hosts of darkness were there to make sin appear as extensive, deep, and horrible as possible. In his hatred of God, in falsifying His character, in manifesting irreverence, contempt, and hatred toward the laws of His government, Satan had made iniquity reach unto the heavens, and it was his purpose to swell iniquity to such great proportions, that atonement should seem impossible; so that the Son of God, who sought to save a lost world, should be crushed beneath the curse of sin. The working of the vigilant foe in presenting to Christ the vast proportions of transgression, caused such poignant pain, that He felt that He could not remain in the immediate presence of any human being. He could not bear that even His disciples should witness His agony as He contemplated the woe of the world. Even His most

dearly loved friends must not be in His companionship. The sword of justice was unsheathed, and the wrath of God against iniquity rested upon man's substitute, Jesus Christ, the only begotten of the Father.

In the garden of Gethsemane Christ suffered in man's stead, and the human nature of the Son of God staggered under the terrible horror of the guilt of sin, until from His pale and quivering lips was forced the agonising cry, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me;" but if there be no other way by which the salvation of man may be accomplished, then "not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Human nature would then and there have died under the horror of the sense of sin, had not an angel from heaven strengthened Him to bear the agony. The power that inflicted retributive justice upon man's substitute and surety, was the power that sustained and upheld the suffering One under the tremendous weight of wrath that would have fallen upon a sinful world. Christ was suffering the death that was pronounced upon the transgressors of God's law.

It is a fearful thing for the unrepenting sinner to fall into the hands of the living God. This is proved by the history of the destruction of the old world by a flood, and by the record of the fire which fell from heaven and destroyed the inhabitants of Sodom. But never was this proved to so great an extent as in the agony of Christ, the Son of the infinite God, when He bore the wrath of God for a sinful world. It was in consequence of sin, the transgression of God's law, that the garden of Gethsemane has become pre-eminently the place of suffering to a sinful world.

No sorrow, no agony, can measure with that which was endured by the Son of God. Man has not been made a sin-bearer, and he will never know the horror of the curse of sin which the Saviour bore. No sorrow can bear any comparison with the sorrow of Him upon whom the wrath of God fell with overwhelming force. Human nature can endure but a limited amount of test and trial. The finite can only endure the finite measure, and human nature succumbs; but the nature of Christ had a greater capacity for suffering; for the human existed in the Divine nature, and created a capacity for suffering to endure that which resulted from the sins of a lost world. The agony which Christ endured, broadens, deepens, and gives a more extended conception of the character of sin, and of the retribution

which God will bring upon those who continue in sin. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ to the repenting, believing sinner.

Mrs. E. G. White.

May 30, 1895

The Eternal Presence

EGW

I AM means an eternal presence; the past, present, and future are alike with God. He sees the most remote events of past history, and, the far distant future with as clear a vision as we do those things that are transpiring daily. We know not what is before us, and if we did, it would not contribute to our eternal welfare. God gives us an opportunity to exercise faith and trust in the great I AM. The Lord must keep the city, or the watchmen labour in vain. This wonderful truth was revealed by Christ during His mission on earth.

Our Saviour says, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day; and he saw it and was glad." Fifteen hundred years before Christ laid off His royal robe and kingly crown, and left His position of honour in the heavenly courts, assumed humanity and walked a man among the children of men, Abraham saw His day and was glad. "Then said the Jews unto Him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast Thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I AM. Then took they up stones to cast at Him; because of that saying."

Christ was using the great name of God that was given to Moses to express the idea of the eternal presence. Isaiah also saw Christ, and his words are full of significance. He says, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

Speaking through Him, the Lord says, “I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour; I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in My sight, thou hast been honourable and I have loved thee; therefore I will give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not: for I AM with thee; I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring My sons from far, and My daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by My name; for I have created him for My glory; I have formed him; yea, I have made him. Bring forth the blind people that have eyes, and the deaf that have ears. Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled. Who among them can declare this, and show us former things? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified. Or let them hear and say, It is truth. Ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, and My servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me. I even I, am the Lord; and beside Me there is no saviour, I have declared, and have saved, and I have showed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are My witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God. Yea, before the day was I AM He; and there is none that can deliver out of Mine hand. I will work, and who shall let [hinder] it? . . . I am the Lord, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King.” [Isa. xliii. 3-15](#).

The Pharisees were horrified at this declaration of Christ’s, “Before Abraham was, *I AM*.” They were beside themselves with rage that He should express such awful blasphemy, claiming to be the *I AM*. They would have stoned Him then and there, but the *I AM* blinded their eyes that they should not see Him, although He went out of the temple, passing through the very midst of them. As Jesus passed through the multitude, He saw a man who had been blind from his birth, and healed him.

When Jesus came to our world, He proclaimed Himself, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by Me.” “Hereafter ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”

Although our Lord ascended from earth to heaven, the Holy Spirit was appointed as His representative among men. “If ye love

Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless.” Cumbered with humanity, Christ could not be in every place personally; therefore it was altogether for their advantage that He should leave them, go to His Father, and send the Holy Spirit to be His successor on earth. The Holy Spirit is Himself, divested of the personality of humanity, and independent thereof. Christ would represent Himself as present in all places by His Holy Spirit,—as the Omnipresent. “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall [although unseen by you] teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. . . . Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you.”

Mrs. E. G. White.

June 13, 1895

Knowing and Obeying the Lord

EGW

How can one who is in fellowship with Christ's sufferings refuse to obey His will and do His work? They know the terms of salvation which are plainly revealed in the Word of God. They listen to the message which the Lord sends through His delegated servants, but although they assent to the truth, they will not obey. They have not genuine faith to appropriate God's promises to themselves. They do not regard Him as their personal Saviour, in whom they may trust as a child trusts its loving parents. They do not regard God as a loving Heavenly Father, who has provided for them a perfect Saviour, a never failing friend, an infallible guide and teacher.

It is surprising that they can read all the promises in the Word of God, the gracious calls to the heavenly feast, and yet refuse to accept them. Holding themselves aloof from the source of their strength and efficiency, they are as sapless branches. Not having become united with the living Vine, can we suppose that they will have spiritual eyesight to discern the exalted privilege of those who serve God, and the unfavourable position those are placed in who fail to follow Him?

Oh, so many have not the real faith that works by love and purifies the soul; therefore they choose to labour for the approbation of men rather than of God. No real heavenly brightness is brought into their religious life, and the future is devoid of the assurance which leads them to trust and hope. Many are living in transgression and rebellion against God. They choose to indulge their carnal impulses

rather than to yoke up with Christ, lift the cross, and follow Jesus. There is a cross to lift, and self-denial to practise in all the ways of practical godliness. It is through care and helpfulness for others that we learn the precious lessons God designs for us. The great sacrifice of love made by the only begotten Son of God, won the victory on our behalf. When will the people of God become pure, and true, and Christ-like? When will they come out from the world and be separate? When will they open the door of their hearts and welcome the heavenly Guest?

We cannot overestimate the value of simple faith and unquestioning obedience. It is by following in the path of obedience in simple faith that the character attains perfection. Adam was requested to render strict obedience to God's commandments, and no lower standard is presented to those who desire salvation in 1895. Christ has promised us sufficient power to reach this high standard. He says, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it. If ye love Me keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter that He may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive."

Why cannot the world receive the truth? "Because *it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him.*" The world is leagued against the truth, because it does not desire to obey the truth. Shall I, who perceive the truth, close my eyes and heart to its saving power because the world chooses darkness rather than light? Shall I bind myself up with the bundles of tares because my neighbours refuse to be bound up with the wheat? Shall I refuse light, the evidence of truth which leads to obedience, because my relations and friends choose to follow in the path of disobedience which leads away from God? Shall I close my mind against the knowledge of the truth because my neighbours and friends will not open their understanding to discern the truth as it is in Jesus? Shall I refuse to grow in the grace and knowledge of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ because my neighbours choose to remain dwarfs spiritually? "Be ye perfect," said Christ, "even as your Father in heaven is perfect."

Mrs. E. G. White.

August 15, 1895

Deal Truly With the Soul

EGW

“Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart,” the human heart, with its conflicting emotions of joy and sorrow,—the wandering, wayward heart, which is the abode of so much impurity and deceit. He knows its motives, its very intents and purposes. Go to Him with your soul all stained as it is. Like the Psalmist, throw its chambers open to the All-seeing Eye, exclaiming, “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

Many accept an intellectual religion, a form of godliness, when the heart is not cleansed. Let it be your prayer, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” Deal truly with your own soul. Be as earnest, as persistent, as you would be if your mortal life were at stake. This is a matter to be settled between God and your own soul,—settled for eternity. A supposed hope, and nothing more, will prove your ruin.

Study the Word of God prayerfully. That Word presents before you, in the law of God and the life of Christ, the great principles of holiness, without which “no man shall see the Lord.” [Heb. xii. 14](#). It convicts of sin; it plainly reveals the way of salvation. Give heed to it, as the voice of God speaking to your soul.

As you see the enormity of sin, as you see yourself as you really are, do not give up to despair. It was sinners that Christ came to save. We have not to reconcile God to us, but—O wondrous love!—God

in Christ is “reconciling the world unto Himself.” He is wooing by His tender love the hearts of His erring children. No earthly parent could be as patient with the faults and mistakes of his children as is God with those He seeks to save. No one could plead more tenderly with the transgressor. No human lips ever poured out more tender entreaties to the wanderer than does He. All His promises, His warnings, are but the breathing of unutterable love.

When Satan comes to tell you that you are a great sinner, look up to your Redeemer, and talk of His merits. That which will help you is to look to His light. Acknowledge your sin, but tell the enemy that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,” and that you may be saved by His matchless love. Jesus asked Simon a question in regard to two debtors. One owed his lord a small sum, and the other owed him a very large sum; but he forgave them both, and Christ asked Simon which debtor would love his lord most. Simon answered, “He to whom he forgave most.” We have been great sinners; but Christ died that we might be forgiven, and restored to harmony with Heaven. His righteousness alone could give us power to become children of God. Those to whom He has forgiven most will love Him most, and will stand nearest His throne to praise Him for His great love and infinite sacrifice. It is as we comprehend the love of God that we realise the sinfulness of sin. When we see the length of the chain that was let down for us, when we understand something of the infinite sacrifice that Christ has made in our behalf, the heart is melted into tenderness and contrition.

Mrs. E. G. White.

November 7, 1895

The Only Safeguard

EGW

“To the law and to the testimony. If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them.” [Isa. viii. 20](#). The people of God are directed to the Scriptures as their safeguard against the influence of false teachers and the delusive power of spirits of darkness. Satan employs every possible device to prevent men from obtaining a knowledge of the Bible; for its plain utterances reveal his deceptions.

At every revival of God’s work, the prince of evil is aroused to more intense activity; he is now putting forth his utmost efforts for a final struggle against Christ and His followers. The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvellous works in our sight. So closely will the counterfeit resemble the true, that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the Holy Scriptures. By their testimony every statement and every miracle must be tested.

Those who endeavour to obey all the commandments of God will be opposed and derided. They can stand only in God. In order to endure the trial before them, they must understand the will of God as revealed in His Word; they can honour Him only as they have a right conception of His character, government, and purposes, and act in accordance with them. None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last great conflict. To every soul will come the searching test, Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are

our feet planted on the rock of God's immutable Word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defence of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus[?]

The Lord's Forewarnings

Before His crucifixion, the Saviour explained to His disciples that He was to be put to death, and to rise again from the tomb; and angels were present to impress His words on minds and hearts. But the disciples were looking for temporal deliverance from the Roman yoke, and they could not tolerate the thought that He in whom all their hopes centred should suffer an ignominious death. The words which they needed to remember were banished from their minds; and when the time of trial came, it found them unprepared.

The death of Jesus as fully destroyed their hopes as if He had not forewarned them. So in the prophecies the future is opened before us as plainly as it was opened to the disciples by the words of Christ. The events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble, are clearly presented. But multitudes have no more understanding of these important truths than if they had never been revealed. Satan watches to catch away every impression that would make them wise unto salvation, and the time of trouble will find them unready.

When God sends to men warnings so important that they are represented as proclaimed by holy angels flying in the midst of heaven, He requires every person endowed with reasoning powers to heed the message. The fearful judgments denounced against the worship of the beast and his image ([Rev. xiv. 9-11](#)), should lead all to a diligent study of the prophecies to learn what the mark of the beast is, and how they are to avoid receiving it.

But the masses of the people turn away their ears from hearing the truth, and are turned unto fables. The Apostle Paul declared, looking down to the last days, "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." [2 Tim. iv. 3](#). That time has fully come. The multitudes do not want Bible truth, because it interferes with the desires of the sinful, world-loving heart; and Satan supplies the deceptions which they love.

God Alone the Guide

Satan is constantly endeavouring to attract attention to man in the place of God. He leads the people to look to bishops, to pastors, to professors of theology, as their guides, instead of searching the Scriptures to learn their duty for themselves. Then, by controlling the minds of these leaders, he can influence the multitudes according to his will.

When Christ came to speak the words of life, the common people heard Him gladly; and many, even of the priests and rulers, believed on Him. But the chief of the priesthood and the leading men of the nation were determined to condemn and repudiate His teachings. Though they were baffled in all their efforts to find accusations against Him, though they could not but feel the influence of the Divine power and wisdom attending His words, yet they encased themselves in prejudice; they rejected the clearest evidence of His Messiahship, lest they should be forced to become His disciples.

These opponents of Jesus were men whom the people had been taught from infancy to reverence, to whose authority they had been accustomed implicitly to bow. "How is it," they asked, "that our rulers and learned scribes do not believe on Jesus? Would not these pious men receive Him if He were the Christ?" It was the influence of such teachers that led the Jewish nation to reject their Redeemer.

The spirit which actuated those priests and rulers is still manifested by many who make a high profession of piety. They refuse to examine the testimony of the Scriptures concerning the special truths for this time. They point to their own numbers, wealth, and popularity, and look with contempt upon the advocates of truth as few, poor, and unpopular, having a faith that separates them from the world.

Notwithstanding the Bible is full of warnings against false teachers, many are ready thus to commit the keeping of their souls to the clergy. There are today thousands of professors of religion who can give no other reason for points of faith which they hold than that they were so instructed by their religious leaders. They pass by the Saviour's teachings almost unnoticed, and place implicit confidence in the words of the ministers. But are ministers infallible? How can we trust our souls to their guidance unless we know from God's

Word that they are light-bearers? A lack of moral courage to step aside from the beaten track of the world leads many to follow in the steps of learned men. But to all the Lord speaks in the simplicity of His Word: “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

Mrs. E. G. White.

April 9, 1896

The Simplicity of the Lord's Work

EGW

No man, no matter how high his calling or responsibility, can fully understand the Word of God unless he practises that Word in his daily life. If the truth is made practical, then he gives expression in his character to the comfort and peace of God that passeth understanding. A child in years may be able to comprehend the meaning of the practical lessons of Christ, when the most learned masters and teachers are ignorant of their significance. "Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

It is a dangerous thing for men to resist the Spirit of truth and grace and righteousness, because its manifestations are not according to their ideas, and have not come in the line of their methodical plans. The Lord works in His own way, and according to His own devising. Let men pray that they may be divested of self, and may be in harmony with heaven. Let them pray, "Not my will, but Thine, O God, be done." Let men bear in mind that God's ways are not their ways, nor His thoughts their thoughts: for He says, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts."

In the instruction that the Lord gave Gideon when he was about to fight with the Midianites,—that he should go out against his foes with an army of three hundred, blowing trumpets, and carrying empty pitchers in their hands, and shouting, "The sword of the Lord, and

of Gideon,” these precise, methodical, formal men would have seen nothing but inconsistency and confusion. They would have started back with determined protest and resistance. They would have held long controversies to show the inconsistencies and the dangers that would accompany the carrying on of the warfare in such an extreme way, and in their finite judgment they would have considered all such movements as utterly ridiculous and unreasonable.

How unscientific, how inconsistent, would they have thought the movements of Joshua and his armies at the taking of Jericho. “Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel. None went out, and none came in. And the Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho and the kings thereof, and the mighty men of valour. And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And the seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams’ horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a loud blast with the rams’ horns, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout: and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.”

Where were the scientific methods in this warfare? The Lord works in His own way in order that men shall not lift themselves up in pride of intellect, and take the credit and glory to themselves. The Lord would have every human being understand that His capabilities and endowments are from the Lord. God works by whom He will. He takes those whom He pleases to do His work, and He does not consult those to whom He will send His messenger as to what are their preferences concerning who and what manner of person they would like to bring the message of God to them.

God will use men who are willing to be used. The Lord would use men of the highest intelligence if they would permit Him to mould and fashion them, and to shape their testimony after his own order. Men high or low, learned or ignorant, had better let the Lord manage and take care of the safety of His own ark. The work of men is to obey the voice of God. Whoever has a connection with the work and cause of God, is to be continually under the discipline of God. “Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his

wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his strength, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord that exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.”

Mrs. E. G. White.

April 16, 1896

The Life-Giving Spirit

EGW

Truly convicted souls cannot be satisfied with forms, maxims, and traditions. The cry of the soul must be, "Give me the bread of life, lift up a full cup to my parched, spiritual nature, that I may be revived and refreshed. But do not intrude and interpose yourself between me and my Redeemer. Let me see Him as my helper, as the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Thou, O Lord, must be my helper. Thou wast wounded for my transgressions, bruised for my iniquities, the chastisement of my peace was upon Thee, and with Thy stripes I am healed."

Christ was crucified for our sins, and was raised from the rent sepulchre for our justification, and He proclaims in triumph, "I am the resurrection and the life." Jesus lives as our intercessor to plead before the Father. He has carried the sins of the whole world, and has not made one mortal man a sin-bearer for others. No man can bear the weight of his own sins. The crucified One bore them all, and every soul who believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

The disciple of Christ will be fitted by His grace for every trial and test as he strives for perfection of character. By looking away from Jesus to some other one or to something else, he may sometimes make mistakes; but as soon as he is warned of his danger, he again fastens his eyes upon Jesus in whom his hope of eternal life is centred, and he plants his feet in the footprints of his Lord, and travels on securely. He rejoices, saying, "He is my living intercessor

before God. He prays in my behalf. He is my Advocate, and clothes me with the perfection of His own righteousness. He is all I need to enable me to bear the cross, to endure shame and reproach for His name's sake. If He permits me to endure persecution, He will give me more grace, and the comfort of His presence, so that His name shall thereby be glorified."

There are souls famishing for the bread of life, thirsting for the waters of salvation, and woe unto that man who by pen or voice shall turn them aside into false paths. The Spirit of God is appealing to men, presenting to them their moral obligation to love and serve Him with heart, might, mind and strength, and to love their neighbours as themselves. The Holy Spirit moves upon the inner self until it becomes conscious of the Divine power of God, and every spiritual faculty is quickened to decided action. Jesus said, "I will send you another Comforter that He may abide with you for ever." A deep, thorough work is to be wrought in the soul which the world cannot see. Those who know not what it is to have an experience in the things of God, who know not what it is to be justified by faith, who have not the witness of the Spirit that they are accepted of Jesus Christ, are in need of being born again. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." What can the world know of Christian experience?—Verily nothing. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." The great Teacher explained this instruction, saying, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life."

In this age the Word of God is not considered reliable. The word of Christ that cut so directly across human desires and indulgences and condemned popular habits and practices, that Word which was made flesh and dwelt among us, is ignored and despised. The teachings and example of Christ are not made the criterion for the life of the professed follower of Christ. Many who name the name of Christ are walking in the light of the sparks of their own kindling rather than following in the footsteps of Him whom they profess to acknowledge as their Master. They do not represent the same character that Christ represented in His pure, sincere love to God

and His love for fallen man. They do not take God at His word and identify their interests with those of Jesus Christ. They do not form the habit of communing with Jesus, of taking Him as a guide and counsellor, and thus learn the trade of living a well-defined Christian life.

Those who not only hear but do the words of Christ make manifest in character the operation of the Holy Spirit. The result of His internal action is demonstrated in their outward conduct. The life of the Christian is hid with Christ in God, and God acknowledges those who are His, declaring, "Ye are My witnesses." They testify that Divine power is influencing their hearts and shaping their conduct. Their works give evidence that the Spirit is moving upon the inward man; those who are associated with them are convinced that they are making Jesus Christ their pattern.

Those who are in connection with God are channels for the power of the Holy Spirit. If one who daily communes with God errs from the path, if he turns a moment from looking steadfastly unto Jesus, it is not because he sins wilfully; for when he sees his mistake, he turns again and fastens his eyes upon Jesus, and the fact that he has erred does not make him less dear to the heart of God. He knows that he has communion with the Saviour, and when reproved for his mistake, in some matter of judgment, he does not walk sullenly, and complain of God; but turns the mistake into a victory. He learns a lesson from the words of the Master, and takes heed that he be not again deceived. Those who truly love God have internal evidence that they are beloved of God, that they have communion with Christ, that their hearts are warmed with fervent love toward Him. The truth for this time is believed with sound confidence. They can say with all assurance, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of His Majesty. . . . We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in your hearts."

The inner life of the soul will reveal itself in the outward conduct. Let the Word of God bear its testimony in behalf of the messenger whom God hath sent with a message in these last days to prepare a people to stand in the day of the Lord. "How beautiful upon

the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!” The wisdom of so-called intellectual men cannot be relied upon, unless they have learned, and are daily learning, lessons in the school of Christ. Men in their supposed wisdom may plan and devise theories and systems of philosophy, but the Lord calls them vain and foolish. The Lord says, “The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.”

No one has been created in Christ Jesus for mere self-enjoyment. He who lives to himself is not a Christian; for self-denial and cross-bearing are the portion of every true follower of Christ. We have been bought with a price in order that we may render willing service to our Master. Every hour that we have failed to acknowledge Christ as our personal Saviour, we have robbed God; for Christ purchased us by the ransom of His own blood. The Christian cannot serve the world, or yield to the claims of any power, relation, or society that will make him deny Christ, dishonour God, and prove disloyal to His holy law. The Christian is to surrender himself unreservedly to God. As His purchased possession God claims him for Himself, and will impart to the believer special favours, enabling him to be complete in Christ—more than conqueror through Him that loved him.

Mrs. E. G. White.

January 7, 1897

The True Light

EGW

Before sin entered our world through the transgression of God's law, it was the glory of Adam and Eve to obey God's requirements. They lived in perfect conformity to His will. Not a cloud rested upon their minds to obscure their view of God. There was no doubt or uncertainty in regard to their moral obligations, and all the strength of their affections was given to their heavenly Father. A beautiful soft light, proceeding from God, enshrouded the holy pair, and was reflected from every object upon which they looked. God was their teacher, and in the beauties of nature around them His lessons were repeated. The invisible things of God were clearly seen and understood by the things which He had made.

Had man remained true to God, the light of heaven would have continued to guide. But when sin entered, he severed his connection with Jehovah, and the light which had enshrouded him departed. Sin so defaced the image of God in him, so darkened his understanding, that it became necessary for God to send His only begotten Son to shine as the light of the world.

Ever since his fall from the purity of heaven, it has been the object of Satan to instil his spirit into the sons of men, and cause them to follow the same path that he travelled when he sought to become equal with God. He has led sinful, erring men, transgressors of God's law, to attach to their names "Reverend" and "Right Reverend,"—names which should be applied to none but God Himself. These are not following the example which Christ gave us in His life on earth.

He has said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." And He invites His followers, "Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with Him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Those who "follow on to know the Lord," will know that "His going forth is prepared as the morning."

Why is it that men to whom the Lord has given capabilities and talents, resist the drawing of Christ, refuse to wear His yoke, and bear His burdens? It is because they are proud of their knowledge and influence, "puffed up" with the favour and applause they receive because of their talents. They make their boast of science and philosophy, and place these above Christ, the God of science and true philosophy. Thus these worldly-wise men magnify themselves, seeking to eclipse by their flashing meteors the Light of the word. But are these men above Christ? Can the stars outshine the sun? Can the whole firmament of heaven do more than declare the glory of God?

The Lord calls these men fools because they place such value upon the gifts bestowed upon them, while they despise the fountain of supply, and reject the Source of all wisdom and light, who can make these gifts to constantly increase. The principle that prompts men to place their human ideas first leads to many false conjectures and delusions. Christ has made no man independent. He has given men talents that they may improve them by exercise, learning of Him how to use them wisely. He has said, "I am the Light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Reason was never given man to lead him to suppose that he can climb higher than the source from which that reason flows. God gave man his reasoning powers, and He can remove them, as in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, when they are not used to His glory. In Noah's day the inhabitants of the earth sought out many inventions. They were wise to do evil. The imagination of their hearts was only evil continually, and God swept them from the face of the earth.

Through His prophet the Lord exhorts us: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might,

let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord.”

The glory of God is seen in the life and character of Christ. In the pure, lofty piety exhibited in His life in humanity we have an example of what pure religion is. Perfection of character can be attained only through Jesus Christ. He alone is able to dispel the darkness that has gathered about the souls of men. He will lift fallen humanity into a pure and holy atmosphere, if men will believe on Him as their personal Saviour. He will inspire in their hearts and minds an enthusiasm that will make them noble, and mould them after the Divine similitude.

The Christian believer possesses the key to true philosophy. In connection with Christ, co-operating with Him in good works, he may shine amid the darkness of this world. Christ is the Truth, the Life, and the Light of the World, and by beholding Him His followers will be changed into the same Image, from glory to glory.

Satan would coat his shadows across our pathway, to prevent the light of heaven from shining into the chambers of the mind, into the soul temple; but the mists from beneath cannot dim the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness. The true light brightens beyond the clouds of doubt and unbelief.

The words, “I am the light of the world.” have been sounding down through the ages to the present time. They are no less true now than they were in Christ’s day, and today they have the same comfort for the follower of Christ, the same hope for those that sit in the darkness and shadow of death. God appeals to His children to uplift before the world the Man of Calvary, that with Him human nature may be lifted up. “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light.”

Mrs. E. G. White.

March 4, 1897

The Perils of the Last Days

EGW

“As it was in the days of Noah, so also shall it be in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.”

Christ sees the wickedness on the earth today. He sees that the sins of Noah’s and Lot’s time are being repeated. What terrible revelations of crime are being made. Everything seems to be stirred with an intense activity from beneath. Excitement is continually kept up. Feasting, buying, and selling, are brought into the churches. The watchman cries, “The morning cometh, and also the night.” The night symbolises prevalence of error, misinterpretation and misapplication of Scripture. Every species of delusion is now being brought in. The plainest truths of God’s Word are covered with a mass of man-made theories. Deadly errors are presented as the truth to which all must bow. The simplicity of true godliness is buried beneath tradition.

By traditions received from the Roman Catholic Church, the fourth commandment of the Decalogue is made of none effect. By their acceptance of a spurious sabbath, men have dishonoured God,

and have honoured the usurper, who thought to change times and laws. *Dan. vii. 20*. This is one of the lies forged in the synagogue of the enemy, one of the poisonous draughts of Babylon. "All nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

Night, dark and portentous, is enclosing the Christian world. Apostasy from God's commandment is evidence of this night, deep dark, and apparently impenetrable. Systems that make the truth of God of none effect are cherished. Men are teaching for doctrine the commandments of men; and their assertions are taken as truth. The people have received man made theories. So the Gospel is perverted, and the Scriptures misapplied. But before the Lord punishes men for their iniquity, He sends them messages of warning. Before He visits them with His judgments. He gives them a chance to repent. He remembered the sins of the antediluvian world, but He did not punish them without warning them. For one hundred and twenty years this warning was sounding in their ears; but they did not repent. The last year of their probation found them more stubborn and defiant than ever. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." "And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come up before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth."

Had these men placed themselves under the control of the Spirit of God, had they co-operated with the heavenly intelligences, what a world of beauty and happiness we would now look upon. Had these long-lived, mentally strong men been vitalised by the Holy Spirit, they would have been a power for God.

Man can be exalted only by laying hold of the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour. The finest intellect, the most exalted position, will not secure heaven. Satan had the highest education that could be obtained. This education he received under the greatest of all

teachers. When men talk of higher criticism, when they pass their judgment upon the Word of God, call their attention to the fact that they have forgotten who was the first and wisest critic. He has had thousands of years of practical experience. He it is who teaches the so-called higher critics of the world today.

The world's Redeemer warned his disciples against the false teaching which was and would continue to be the greatest obstacle to the progress of the truth. "There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before." The leaven of false doctrine will be accepted in preference to the truth. "Beware," writes Paul, "lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

Under whose banner are we standing? Where are we? and what is Christ to us? By our course of action we decide our own destiny. By the society we choose, we determine what influences shall mould our character. If we choose the world, earthly influences make their imprint upon our minds, and though we may not realise it, we sink lower and lower, for if we do not grow in grace, we must deteriorate.

It makes every difference with the future, eternal well-being of men whether they follow God's way or their own way. Their way may be entirely wrong. Are there many paths to heaven? If so, man may take any path that suits his fancy. But there is only one true way. Christ said to His disciples, "Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto Him, Lord, we know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto Him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me."

The Lord will uplift us if we will consent to be uplifted. He who recognises God in Christ, who receives Christ as the world's Redeemer, and his personal Saviour, enters in at the door. He does not climb over some other way. Of all such it is written, "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." The truth, the light, the life, shining into our hearts, sanctifies and elevates us. What greater elevation can earth present? What greater honour can earthly potentates bestow? Man is taken from his degradation, cleansed

from moral defilement, and made an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ. His life is hid with Christ in God, and when He who is his life shall appear, he also will appear with Him in glory. This glory will be revealed at the second appearing of Christ. Then the saints will be exalted indeed. They will sit with Christ on His throne, and with Christ they will judge the world.

“The day is far spent, the night is at hand.” The end is near. Soon the Lord will come with ten thousands of His saints, and Satan’s system, which has destroyed so many that Christ came to save, will be broken up. Despotism is now seeking to obtain a foothold in every clime, but, its day will soon be ended. “For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. . . Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.”

Satan is in controversy with Christ, and with all who follow in His footsteps. This conflict will continue until the voice is heard, saying, “It is done.” “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”

“The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night: in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up. . . Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware, lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

Mrs. E. G. White.

May 13, 1897

Honour the Lord With Thy Substance

EGW

The created works of God are a pictured history of ministry. The sun is doing its appointed work in ministering to all animate and inanimate nature. It causes the trees to grow, and yield their blessings in fruit. It causes vegetation to flourish for the benefit of man. The moon also has its mission. It makes light in the night-time for our happiness, and the stars also are marshalled in the heavens to minister to the enjoyment of the world. The appointment of these silent watchers we none of us can fully understand; but they all have their work of ministry.

The deep waters, too, have their place in God's great plan. The mountains and rocks are subjects for meditation, and contain lessons for the student. Everything in nature,—the humblest flower, and the grass that carpets the earth with its green velvet covering,—proclaims the goodness and love of God to man.

These things of God's creation have their foundation in the plans and methods of Deity. His thoughts and works are so connected the one with the other, that we can read in nature the great love of God for a fallen world. The universe contains one great masterpiece of infinite wisdom in the innumerable diversities of His great works which, in their matchless variety, form a perfect whole.

By close investigation, God's innumerable providences in the natural world are found to have connection one with another, and in tracing these links in the chain of providence, we are led to become better acquainted with the Great Centre. This is a truth worthy of

our careful study. Jesus Christ is the one great Unity; He possesses the attributes that harmonise all diversities. And He, the gift above all others, was given to our world to give expression to the mind and character of God, that every intelligent being, if he will, may see God in the revelation of His Son.

All these things were given by God to the human family. Have you considered these things? Have you looked upon God's created works as prepared by His hand to minister to the happiness of man? Out of His own fulness, God has ministered to you in providing you with food and clothing. He has given you all the blessings of life.

"How much owest thou unto my Lord?" Shall we receive every blessing from the hand of God, and yet make no returns to Him,—not even in giving Him our tithe, the portion which He has reserved unto Himself? It has become customary to turn everything out of the true line of self-sacrifice into the path of self-pleasing. But shall we continually receive His favours with indifference, and make no response to His love?

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts." Mal. iii. 8-11.

Will you, dear parents, become missionaries in your home? Will you make personal efforts for the salvation of your children? Will you, as you have never done before, teach them the precious lessons of making gifts to the Lord by putting into the treasury of that which He has freely given them to enjoy? Whatever we have received, let a portion be returned to the Giver as a gratitude offering. A part should also be put into the treasury for the missionary work to be done both at home and abroad.

The cause of God should lie very near our hearts. The light of truth which has been a blessing to one family, will, if communicated by parents and children, prove as great a blessing to other families

also. But when God's bounties, so richly and abundantly given, are withheld from Him, and selfishly bestowed upon ourselves, God's curse, in the place of His blessing, will surely be experienced; for this the Lord has declared. God's claim is to take the precedence of any other claim, and must be discharged first. Then the poor and needy are to be cared for. These must not be neglected, at whatever cost or sacrifice to ourselves.

"That there may be meat in Mine house." It is our duty to be temperate in all things, in eating, in drinking, and in dressing. Our buildings and the furnishing of our homes should be carefully considered, with the heart's desire to render to God His own, not only in tithes, but as far as possible, in gifts and offerings also. Very many might be laying up for themselves treasures in heaven, by keeping the Lord's storehouse supplied with the portion He claims as His own, and with their gifts and offerings.

Those who are honestly inquiring what God wants of them in regard to the property they claim as their own, should search the Old Testament Scriptures, and see what Christ, the invisible Leader of Israel in their long wilderness journey, directed His people to do in this respect. We should individually be willing to be put to any inconvenience, to be brought into any straits, rather than rob God of the portion that should come into His house. Those who are Bible readers and Bible believers will have an intelligent knowledge of "What saith the Lord" in this matter.

In that day when every man shall be judged according to the deeds done in the body, every excuse that selfishness may now make for withholding the tithe, the gifts, and offerings from the Lord, will melt away as the dew before the sun. If it were not for ever too late, how glad would many be to go back, and build their characters over again. But it will be too late then to change the record of the weekly, monthly, and yearly robbery that has been practised toward God. Their destiny is fixed, unalterably fixed. On such a year, the name of one is mentioned, and his record stands: The selfish heart considered self more than that which is due to his God, more than the souls for whom Christ has died.

Selfishness is a deadly evil. Self love, careless indifference to the specific terms of agreement between God and man, the refusal to act as His faithful stewards, has brought upon many His curse,

just as He declared, would be the case. These souls have separated themselves from God; by precept and example they have led others to disregard God's plain commandments, and He could not bestow His blessing upon them.

The Lord has specified: The tenth of all your possessions is Mine; your gifts and offerings are to be brought into the treasury, to be used to advance My cause, to send the living preacher to open the Scriptures to those who sit in darkness.

Then will anyone run the risk of withholding from God His own, doing as did the unfaithful servant who hid his Lord's money in the earth? Shall we, as did this man, seek to justify our unfaithfulness by complaining of God, saying, "Lord, I knew Thee that Thou art an hard man, reaping where Thou hast not sown, and gathering where Thou hast not strawed; and I was afraid, and went and hid Thy talent in the earth: lo, here Thou hast that is Thine"? Shall we not rather present our gratitude offerings to God?

Mrs. E. G. White.

January 12, 1899

The Blessing of Obedience

EGW

“And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, Which is the first commandment of all?”

Christ’s answer was direct and explicit. “The first of all the commandments,” He said, “is, Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment.” “The second is like unto the first,” Christ continued; for it flows out of it and is founded upon it: “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.”

“And the scribe said unto Him, Well, Master, Thou hast said the truth; for there is one God, and there is none other but He! and to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

This response from one of the scribes, the plain statement of his convictions, was more than the scribes and Pharisees thought to hear. Truth that condemned their own traditions and example had been expressed by Christ, and voiced by one of their own number.

When Jesus saw that the scribe had the moral courage to speak the truth before the frowning Pharisees, and that He answered discreetly, He said unto him, “Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask Him any questions.”

The law of God is not made up of so many separate precepts, some of which are of great importance, while others are of less importance, and may be ignored. Christ presents the commandments as a Divine whole. Under two heads, love to God, and love to our neighbour, all the precepts are bound together in a sacred unity. These two principles are immutable, as eternal as the throne of God. By them man's character is tested, and he is shown to be obedient or disobedient. Those who obey the first, loving God supremely, will pour out the riches of God's goodness in love and compassion to their fellow-men. They will do far more than merely acknowledge the truth; they will offer far more than a ceremonial worship. They will give to God the whole service required by Him; for supreme love to God is an evidence that the truth is an abiding principle in the heart.

But when man fell, the law of self was set up. This law harmonises with the will of sinful humanity. There is no strife between them. But when the word of God speaks to the conscience, telling of a higher than human will, even the will of God, man's will desires to go its own way, irrespective of consequences. The charm of obedience was broken by Adam's disobedience. A sense of the importance of obedience as an absolute necessity, ceased to exist in the mind. And now man thinks, If I choose, I can obey God: and if I choose, I can disobey Him.

Christ came to this earth to show the human race how to obey God. He might have remained in heaven, and from there given exact rules for man's guidance. But He did not do this. In order that we might make no mistake, He took our nature, and in it lived a life of perfect obedience. He obeyed in humanity, ennobling and elevating humanity by obedience. He lived in obedience to God, that not only by word of mouth, but by His every action, He might honour the law. By so doing, He not only declared that we ought to obey, but showed us how to obey.

Our only safety is in dying to self, and depending wholly on Christ. We need ever to keep before us the reality of Christ's humanity. When He became our Substitute and Surety, it was as a human being. He came as a man, to render obedience to the only true God. He came not to reveal God as wanting in power, but God in all His fullness. He came to show what God is willing to do and

what He has done that we might be made partakers of the Divine nature. While enduring the contradiction of sinners against Himself, our Saviour lived a perfect human life. This He did that we also might be perfect. He is everything to us, and He bids us look to Him; for “without Me,” He says, “ye can do nothing.”

The obedience that Christ rendered is exactly the obedience that God requires from human beings today. It was the obedience of a son. He served His Father in willingness and freedom, and with love, because it was the right thing for Him to do. “I delight to do Thy will, O My God,” He declared; “yea. Thy law is within My heart.” Thus we are to serve God. Our obedience must be heart service. It was always this with Christ. If we love Him, we shall not find it a hard task to obey. We shall obey as members of the royal family. We may not be able to see the path before us, but we shall go forward in obedience, knowing that all issues and results are to be left with God.

In keeping God’s commandments there is great reward, even in this life. If we are obedient, our conscience does not condemn us. Our hearts are not at enmity with God, but at peace with Him. “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandments of the Lord are pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever; the judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold, sweeter also than honey and the honey comb. Moreover by them is Thy servant warned, and in keeping of them there is great reward.” “The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children’s children, to such as keep His covenant, and to those that remember His commandments to do them.”

The grace of God is the line of demarcation between God’s children and the multitude that believe not. While one is brought into captivity to Christ, another is brought into captivity to the prince of darkness. The heart of the one who responds to the drawing of Christ glows with the Saviour’s love. He shows forth the praises of Him who has called him from darkness into marvellous light. He cannot help using his talent of speech to tell of the grace which has

been so abundantly bestowed on him: for he has enlisted with those who are striving to advance the glory of God, and has thus become a channel of light. Willing and obedient, he is one of the number called by Inspiration, “a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people.”

Mrs. E. G. White.

February 2, 1899

Condemned By the Jews

EGW

“Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound Him, and led Him away to Annas first; for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.”

“The high priest then asked Jesus of His disciples, and of His doctrine. Jesus answered him, I spoke openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou Me? ask them which heard Me, what I have said unto them; behold, they know what I said. And when He had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest Thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou Me?”

Simon Peter had followed Jesus, and so had another disciple. That disciple, John, “was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spoke unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.”

The look of dejection on Peter’s face suggested to the woman the thought that this was one of the disciples of Christ. Being one of the servants of Caiaphas’ household, she was curious to know, and she said to Peter, “Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.” Peter was

startled and confused; the eyes of the company instantly fastened upon him. He pretended not to understand her, but she was persistent, and said to those around her that this man was with Jesus. Feeling compelled to answer, Peter said angrily, "Woman, I know Him not." O Peter! so soon ashamed of thy Master! so soon to cowardly deny thy Lord ! The Saviour is dishonoured and deserted in His humiliation by one of His most zealous disciples.

Just previous to this, Peter had confidently asserted, "Though all men should forsake Thee, yet will not I." "I will go with Thee to prison and to death." Where now was the confidence of this self-assured disciple? where his loyalty to his Master? O Peter, this was the time when thou shouldest have confessed thy Lord, and that without shame or unwillingness. But another opportunity was to be given him.

The palace of the high priest surrounded an open court, into which the soldiers, the chief priests, and the crowd had gathered, and Peter took a place among the throng. Here attention was called to him the second time, and he was again charged with being a follower of Jesus. "This fellow was also with Jesus," said one. Peter now denied the accusation with an oath. The cock crew, but he heard it not; for he was now thoroughly intent upon carrying out the character he had assumed. One of the servants of the high priest, being a near kinsman of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked him, "Did I not see thee in the garden with Him?" "Surely thou art one of them; for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto."

At this Peter, to fully deceive his questioners, and to justify his assumed character, denied his Master with cursing and swearing. "And immediately the cock crew." Peter heard it then, and he remembered the words of Jesus, "Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny Me thrice."

Jesus was weary and faint from fasting when the words of denial reached Him. And while the degrading oaths were fresh on Peter's lips, and the shrill crowing of the cock was still ringing in his ears, the Saviour turned His face from the frowning judges, and looked full upon His poor disciple. At the same time Peter's eyes were involuntarily fixed upon his Master. That face pale with suffering, those quivering lips, seemed to speak to Peter saying, "Not know Me, Peter?" In that gentle countenance Peter read deep pity and

sorrow; but there was no anger there. That look of compassion and forgiveness pierced his heart like an arrow. He fled from the now crowded court, he cared not whither. At last he found himself in the garden of Gethsemane. In the very spot where Jesus had poured out His soul in agony to His Father, he fell on his face stricken and wounded, and wished that he might die there. He remembered with remorse that he was asleep when Jesus prayed through those fearful hours. His proud heart broke, and penitential tears moistened the sod so recently stained by the bloody sweat drops of God's dear Son.

“And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people, and the chief priests, and the scribes, came together, and led Him into their council, saying, Art Thou the Christ? tell us. And He said unto them, If I tell you, you will not believe. And if I also ask you, ye will not answer Me nor let Me go. Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. Then said they all, Art Thou then the Son of God? And He said unto them, Ye say that I am. And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of His own mouth. And the whole multitude of them arose, and led Him unto Pilate.”

But these priests, scribes, and rulers, so exact in regard to their own maxims and traditions, would not even enter the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled, and that they might eat the passover. The passover was a ceremony instituted by Christ Himself before His incarnation. But He who was the foundation of the whole Jewish economy was among them. Type was meeting antitype in the Son of God, and they had done unto Him as Satan had worked upon their hardened hearts to do.

The followers of Christ should bear in mind that the evil speeches made against Christ, the abuse He received, they also, as His followers, must endure for His sake. The piety of the church may professedly be of a high order; but when the truth of the Word of God is brought to bear upon the heart, and when conviction of truth is rejected and despised that men may keep in friendship with the majority, they place themselves on the side of the enemy.

“If the world hate you,” said Christ, “ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the

word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My sayings, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for My name's sake, because they know not Him that sent Me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin. He that hateth Me hateth My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now they have both seen and hated both Me and My Father. But this cometh to pass that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated Me without a cause."

These words of Christ have been fulfilled in the experience of those who have been loyal to the God of heaven according to the light received. "If they have persecuted Me," He said, "they will also persecute you: if they have kept My sayings, they will keep yours also." "All that will *live*, not merely profess to live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution." "And all these things will they do unto you because they have not known by an experimental knowledge, the Father nor Me."

As Christ was hated without cause, so will His people be hated because they are obedient to the commandments of God. If He who was pure, holy, and undefiled, who did good and only good in our world, was treated as a base criminal, and condemned to death, His disciples must expect but similar treatment, however faultless may be their life and blameless their character. Human enactments, laws manufactured by Satanic agencies under a plea of goodness and restriction of evil, will be exalted, while God's holy commandments are despised and trampled under foot. And all who prove their loyalty by obedience to the law of Jehovah must be prepared to be arrested, to be brought before councils that have not for their standard the high and holy law of God.

The same spirit that moved the priests and rulers had moved Cain to slay his brother. It is the apostasy from truth that works in the children of disobedience to silence the voice of those who are calling them to obedience. And today this spirit is manifested in the churches that are trampling upon the Word of God, transgressing His holy law. They know not what spirit they are of, nor the end of the dark tunnel through which they are passing. Deceived, blind,

deluded, they are hastening forward to the first and second death. The vast tide of human will and human passion is leading to things they did not dream of when they discarded the law of Jehovah for the inventions of men,—to cause oppression and suffering to human beings.

The churches have been converted to the world, and they show what they would do in this age of the world if they dared. If Christ were in the world today, many would have no more desire for Him than had the Jewish nation at His first advent. They would do as did the Jews. Were it in their power, they would crucify Christ because He tells them the truth. Many are being educated up to this point. Rulers and teachers,—who have caused souls to stumble over their perverted teachings—all people who might have understood the prophecies, but who did not read and search to see if they were applicable to this time, and concerned their individual selves, will be taken in the snare and suffer eternal loss. They will suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

Mrs. E. G. White.

May 25, 1899

Christ's Mission

EGW

Christ was the greatest missionary the world has ever known. How did He come? What was His message? John His forerunner lifted up his voice in the wilderness of Judea, crying, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is He which was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord." "Make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be laid low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

"O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into a high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God; behold, the Lord will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; He shall gather His lambs in His arms, and carry them in His bosom."

Christ bore the same message that John bore. "From that time," we read, "Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." But while John preached in the wilderness, Christ's work was done among the people. That He might reach sinners where they were, He encircled the race with His long human arm, while with His divine arm He grasped the throne of the Infinite,

uniting finite man to the infinite God, and connecting earth with heaven.

“Behold My servant, whom I uphold, Mine elect, in whom My soul delighteth; I have put My Spirit upon Him, He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the streets. A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench; He shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till He have set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for His law.”

“And Jesus walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren Simon, called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers. And He saith unto them, Follow Me; and I will make you fishers of men.” Thus Christ called His first disciples. They were not chosen from among the Pharisees, but from among humble fishermen. With these lowly men He could co-operate, educating and training them to do the highest work ever given to mortals.

“And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom.” Connected with this work was His ministry of healing. He went about “healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people, and His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought unto Him all the sick people that were taken with diverse diseases and torments, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy, and He healed them. And there followed Him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan.”

The warning must be given to the people, “The kingdom of God is at hand.” Nothing will so impress minds as the uplifting of the Saviour. “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.” In the wilderness the word was given, sounded by the trumpet, caught up by appointed men: and those who heard in faith and looked toward the uplifted symbol, were saved. Today those who are bitten by the serpent are to look and live. “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” All who look upon Him will live. Then the question, “What shall I do to be saved?” is answered.

The message that Jesus gave to the palsied man is given to us. "They brought to Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed." There was a crowd round the house in which Jesus was, and the sick man's friends sought means to bring him directly to Christ, that they might lay him before Him. And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in, because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus.

Christ saw that the man was suffering with bodily disease, and He saw also that he was suffering with a sin-sick soul. He knew that in order to heal bodily maladies He must bring relief to the mind and cleanse the soul from sin. He needed health of soul before he could appreciate health of body. The Saviour was not unmindful of the effort that had been made to bring the man to Him, and His heart of love and pity was moved. "He saw their faith," and it was enough. "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee," He said to the sick man. Many watched with bated breath every movement in this strange transaction, feeling that Christ's words were an invitation to them. Were they not soul sick? Were they not anxious to get rid of their burden of guilt?"

But the Pharisees could not conceal their anger. As though filled with holy horror, they began to reason, saying, "Who is this which speaketh blasphemies, Who can forgive sins but God alone?" But it was the Son of the living God who had uttered the words, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." Had not the Pharisees been blinded by prejudice, they would have seen that He who was before them was the Christ, and that He was in the Father, and the Father in Him. "I and My Father are one," He declared.

"When Jesus perceived their thoughts, He answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (He said unto the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy couch, and go into thine house. And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God." He was healed of the leprosy of sin, healed of the maladies that had afflicted his body, healed every whit. "And they were all amazed,

and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, Saying, We have seen strange things today.”

“And after these things He went forth, and saw a publican named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom; and He said unto him, Follow Me. And he left all, rose up, and followed Him.” Just such invitations must be given by Christ’s ambassadors. General invitations are given; but not enough definite and personal invitations. If more personal calls were made, more decided movements would be made to follow Christ.

“And Levi made Him a great feast in his own house.” He felt himself highly honoured by Christ’s call, and gave this expression to his feelings by making a feast and calling his friends. Jesus and His disciples were invited, and “many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples.” Jesus never refused invitations of this kind, because here He could ask and answer questions that would diffuse light. He never neglected an opportunity to sow the seeds of truth in human minds.

“But the scribes and Pharisees murmured against His disciples, saying, Why do ye eat with publicans and sinners? And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

This is a lesson for all. The Lord went into the busy thoroughfares of travel that He might speak words which would reach the hearts of sinners. They were sick, and needed a physician who could portray before them their true condition. Thus Christ reached to the very depths of human woe and misery.

Christ’s work was a marked work. With His teaching he mingled the work of healing. “When He had called unto Him His twelve disciples, He gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease.” “And as ye go,” He said, “preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses.” “And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the Gospel, and healing everywhere.”

This is the work that should be done today. The Lord has sent His people to different parts of the world that they may win souls

from darkness to light. Their first work is to bear the message, Christ the crucified One is our Saviour. They are to awaken an interest in Christ's willingness to forgive sins, bearing the message, "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent."

Christ gave His disciples an example of the work they were to do. On one occasion, we read, He "went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered in an house, and would have no man know it; but He could not be hid. "For a certain woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of Him, and came and fell at His feet: . . . and she besought Him that He would cast forth the devil out of her daughter. But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled; for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it unto the dogs." This was the sentiment of the disciples. "And she answered and said unto Him, Yes, Lord; yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs. And He said unto her, For this saying, go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter. And when she was come to her house she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed."

"And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, He came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis. And they bring unto Him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech. And they beseech Him to put his hand upon him. And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers into his ears, and He spit, and He touched his tongue; and looking up to heaven He sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain."

"And He charged them that they should tell no man, but the more He charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it; and were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well; He maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."

This was Christ's work. But the churches have not filled their place in cooperating with God in this work. Every position in life is permitted in the providence of God. Each sphere of action requires most thorough consecration to God. Those who are hid with Christ in God will become instruments in God's hands for the development of Christian virtue. All classes have a part to act. God's people are

to be labourers together with God. The Lord has given each one a work to do. No one will He excuse who cherishes the inclination to fold his hands and make self a centre. Truth is to be proclaimed, it is to go forth as a lamp that burneth. Not a thread of selfishness is to be woven into the work. We must see light in God's light.

Mrs. E. G. White.

June 1, 1899

“For Our Sakes He Became Poor”

EGW

Christ is the great missionary to the poor, the sick, and the suffering. “The poor have the Gospel preached unto them,” He declared. The King of heaven, He could have lived among the wealthiest, but He chose poverty, honouring it by making it His lot, redeeming it from its humiliation by consecrating Himself to a life of poverty, stripping from it for ever the reproach of scorn by blessing the poor, the inheritors of God’s kingdom. Poverty with Christ is wealth of the highest value. Such poverty is sanctified and blessed.

Poverty abounds in this world, and why?—Because of selfishness. Many are made poor by the dishonest stewardship of those who are trading on their Lord’s goods. Today crime of every kind is practised in order to obtain money. Selfishness, deceit, robbery, and bloodshed are making this world a veritable Sodom, and its inhabitants as the inhabitants of the old world. In the greed for possession, God’s law is transgressed but retribution will overtake the wrong doers. Riches cannot save one soul from death. He who gives himself up to work the works of Satan creates a force of evil that he cannot repress.

There is a false religion, endangering the souls of all who advance it, which teaches that selfish pleasure and enjoyment is the sum of happiness. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus shows us that this is false. It was the rich man’s duty to help Lazarus by giving him of his abundance. But he refused to do this, and gave himself up to intemperate, luxurious living. There came a time when

the rich man would have given all he possessed to have exchanged places with Lazarus, once poor, and covered with sores. He fell sick, and during his sickness he learned what suffering meant. He is represented as calling constantly upon Lazarus to relieve him in his burning fever. But he had no knowledge of God, and Abraham is represented as answering, "Between us and you there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence."

Christ took His position with the poor, that He might lift from poverty the stigma that the world has attached to it. He knows the danger of the love of riches. He knows that this love proves the ruin of many souls. It places those who are rich where they indulge every wish for grandeur. It develops the weakness of humanity, and shows that notwithstanding their abundance, many of the rich are not rich toward God. The man possessed of houses and lands, uplifted and deceived by the respect paid to him, looks down upon the poor man, who, nevertheless, may possess virtues that the rich man does not. When weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, the selfish, covetous rich man will be found wanting, while the poor man, who has depended only upon God for his goodness, will be pronounced heir to eternal riches.

God has made the rich man His steward, and if he walks in Christ's steps, maintaining a humble, godly life, he will become meek and lowly in heart. He will realise that his possessions are only lent treasures, and will feel that a sacred trust has been committed to him to help the needy and suffering. This work will bring its reward in rich treasures laid up beside the throne of God. Thus the rich man may make a success of life, as a faithful steward of his Lord's goods.

All suffering is not the result of a perverted life. Job is brought before us as a man whom the Lord permitted Satan to afflict. The enemy stripped him of all he possessed; his family ties were broken; his children were taken from him. For a time his body was covered with loathsome sores, and he suffered greatly. His friends tried to make him see that he was responsible, by his sinful course, for all his afflictions. But he denied the charge, declaring, "Miserable comforters are ye all." By seeking to prove Job guilty before God, and deserving of punishment, his friends brought a grievous test

upon him, and placed God in a false light; but Job did not swerve from his loyalty; and God rewarded his faithful servant.

There is a connection between the religion of Christ and poverty. Christianity is the solace of the poor. Christ has ever been the poor man's friend. In His humanity there are golden threads that bind the believing, trusting poor to His own soul of infinite love. He is the great Physician, the mighty healer of all diseases. While in our world, He bore our infirmities and carried our sorrows. He was poor, yet He was the source of all goodness, all blessings. He is a reservoir of power to all who consecrate themselves to the work He came to do.

Jesus the world's Redeemer possessed heaven's activity, heaven's ambition. He longed to extend His kingdom to all parts of the world. He endured the agony of the cross to accomplish this work, cheered by the prospect of a universal triumph. In dying for the sinful race, He destroyed him who had the power of death. The blood of the cross sealed the irrevocable covenant which ensures to our Redeemer the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession.

Christians have a sacred duty to perform in carrying forward the work that Christ came to accomplish. He declared, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." He longs to have men and women co-operate with Him. They may be ignorant, but if they are meek and lowly, He will make them vessels fit for the Master's use. They will be wholehearted, sincere disciples, who can comprehend God's great design in favour of a perishing race.

The Lord calls for volunteers who will be self-denying, who will endure hardness as good soldiers of the cross of Christ. He calls for workers who are willing to be labourers together with Him. We can do much to help the poor and brighten their lives, if we will but realise it. Those who work with unselfish hearts, who share Christ's sympathies, who strive earnestly to fulfil His purpose for humanity, will help to swell the tide of His joy, and will give honour, majesty, and praise to His name.

The last great battle in behalf of truth and righteousness is to be fought, and God would have His soldiers go forth in faith. Christians, do you discern the signs of the times? Can you with humble tread, put your feet in the footsteps of your Redeemer? Can you give yourselves heartily to a good work, a perilous undertaking? Verily, the Lord has need of armies of workers, and some of the most precious souls will be found in the pit of degradation. God calls upon us to do ministry to this class. Do not lose your purity because you are among the impure, but “building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference. And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever.”

Mrs. E. G. White.

June 8, 1899

The First and the Second Advent

EGW

At the first advent of Christ, which was in apparent obscurity, the angels of heaven could scarcely be restrained from pouring forth their glories to grace the birth of the Son of God. The glorious manifestations of heaven were not entirely restrained. The wonderful event was not without some attestations of a Divine character. That birth, so little prepared for on earth, was celebrated in the heavenly courts with praise and thanksgiving in behalf of man.

While the shepherds on the hills of Bethlehem watched their flocks by night, “the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men.” The message given, the angels swept back to heaven, and the light and glory of their presence was no longer seen.

He who came in human flesh, and submitted to a life of humiliation, was the Majesty of heaven, the Prince of life, and yet the wise men of the earth, the princes and rulers, and even His own nation, knew Him not. They did not recognise Him as the long-looked-for Messiah. Notwithstanding “mighty miracles did show forth them-

selves in Him,” notwithstanding He opened the eyes of the blind, and raised the dead to life, Christ suffered the hatred and abuse of the people He came to bless. They regarded Him as a sinner, and accused Him of casting out devils through the prince of the devils. The circumstances of His birth were mysterious, and these were remarked upon by the rulers. They charged Him with being born in sin. The Prince of heaven was insulted because of the corrupt minds and the sinful, blasphemous unbelief of men. What a baleful thing is unbelief. It originated with the first great apostate, and to what fearful lengths it will lead all who enter upon its path may be seen in the Jews’ rejection of their Messiah.

The leaders of the Jewish nation had the Old Testament scriptures, which plainly foretold the manner of Christ’s first advent. Through the prophet Isaiah God had described the appearance and mission of Christ, saying, “He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth.”

The leaders in Israel professed to understand the prophecies, but they had received false ideas in regard to the manner of Christ’s coming. Satan had deceived them, and all the glories of Christ’s second advent they applied to His first appearing. All the wonderful events clustering around His second coming, they looked for at His first. Therefore when He came they were not prepared to receive Him. The disciple John tells of the reception with which Christ met. He says, “He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.”

Between the first and the second advent of Christ a wonderful contrast will be seen. No human language can portray the scenes of

the second coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven. He is to come with His own glory, and with the glory of the Father, and of the holy angels. He will come clad in the robe of light which He has worn from the days of eternity. Angels will accompany Him. Ten thousand times ten thousand will escort Him on His way. The sound of the trumpet will be heard, calling the sleeping dead from the grave. The voice of Christ will penetrate the tomb, and pierce the ears of the dead, "and they that are in the graves shall come forth."

"And before Him shall be gathered all nations." The very One who died for man is to judge him in the last day; for the Father "hath committed all judgment unto the Son. . . And hath given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of man." What a day that will be, when those who rejected Christ will look upon Him whom their sins have pierced. They will then know that He proffered them all heaven if they would but stand by His side as obedient children, that He paid an infinite price for their redemption; but that they would not accept freedom from the galling slavery of sin. They chose to stand under the black banner of rebellion to the close of mercy's hour.

As they gaze upon His glory, there flashes before their minds the memory of the Son of man clad in the garb of humanity. They remember how they treated Him, how they refused Him, and pressed close to the side of the great apostate. The scenes of Christ's life appear before them in all their clearness. All He did, all He said, the humiliation to which He descended to save them from the taint of sin, rises before them in condemnation.

They behold Him riding into Jerusalem, and see Him break into an agony of tears over the impenitent city that would not receive His message. His voice, which was heard in invitation, in entreaty, in tones of tender solicitude, seems again to fall upon their ears. The scene in the garden of Gethsemane rises before them, and they hear Christ's amazing prayer, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me."

Again they hear the voice of Pilate saying, "I find in Him no fault at all." They see the shameful scene in the judgment hall, when Barabbas stood by the side of Christ, and they had the privilege of choosing the guiltless One. They hear again the words of Pilate, "Whom will ye that I release unto you, Barabbas, or Jesus, which is

called Christ?" They hear the response, "Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas." To the question of Pilate, "What shall I do then with Jesus?" the answer comes, "Let Him be crucified."

Again they see their Sacrifice bearing the reproach of the cross. They hear the loud, triumphant tones tauntingly exclaim, "If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." "He saved others, Himself He cannot save."

Now they behold Him, not in the garden of Gethsemane, not in the judgment hall, not on the cross of Calvary. The signs of His humiliation have passed away, and they look upon the face of God,—the face they spat upon, the face which priests and rulers struck with the palms of their hands. Now the truth in all its vividness is revealed to them. It is the wrath of the Lamb which they have to meet,—of Him who came to take away the sin of the world, of Him who had ever acted toward them with infinite tenderness, long-suffering patience, and inexpressible love. They realise that they have forfeited all the riches of His great salvation. As they look upon Him who died to take away their guilt, they cry to the rocks and mountains, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"

We are now amid the perils of the last days. The scenes of conflict are hastening on, and the day of days is just upon us. Are we prepared for the issue? Every deed, small and great, is to be brought into judgment. That which has been considered trivial here will then appear as it is. The two mites of the widow will be recognised. The cup of cold water offered, the prison visited, the hungry fed,—each will bring its own reward. And that unfulfilled duty, that selfish act, will not be forgotten. In the open court around the throne of God it will appear a very different thing from what it did when it was performed. The secret sin that appears as nothing now, when placed before men in the light of God's countenance, will appear grievous. It will be seen that these selfish pleasures and indulgences have made the human being a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God.

How stands our account in the books of heaven? Have we chosen to be partakers with Christ in His sufferings? Have we been learning in the school of Christ His meekness and lowliness of heart? Have

we stood by the side of Christ to bear His reproach? Have we taken His yoke upon us and lifted the cross in self-denial and self-sacrifice? Have we helped to bear His burdens, and co-operated with Him in His work?

Satan has come down with great power, working with all de-ceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; but it is not necessary for any to be deceived; and we shall not be if we have fully taken our stand with Christ to follow Him through evil as well as through good report. The serpent's head will soon be bruised and crushed. The glorious memorial of God's wonderful power is soon to be restored to its rightful place. Then paradise lost will be paradise restored. God's plan for the redemption of man will be complete. The Son of man will bestow upon the righteous the crown of everlasting life, and they shall "serve Him day and night in His temple; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Mrs. E. G. White.

June 15, 1899

Christs Denunciation of the Pharisees

EGW

When Christ came to the world, moral power was at a low ebb. The Jews as a people were not spiritually minded. Their hearts went out after idols,—supremacy, wealth, and worldly honour. The teachers of the nation interpreted the Scriptures according to their cherished ideas. They taught that the Messiah was to come as an earthly prince who would reign on David's throne and crush the heathen under Him. They led the people to believe that God would stretch out His arm in their behalf according to His promise, while they did not comply with the conditions of that promise. So far bad they separated themselves from God by their wicked works, by their pride and self-righteousness, their oppression of the poor and needy, their hatred and jealousy, that spiritual things were not discerned.

The angels did not announce the birth of Christ to those who claimed to have great light and knowledge. The rabbis who explained the law in the synagogue, those who above all others should have been intelligent in regard to the coming of the Messiah and the manner of His appearance—knew nothing of the Babe cradled in the manger. Had the angels appeared to them with the good tidings of great joy, telling them the wonderful story of the Babe of Bethlehem, they would have rejected the message with contempt. Such humble birth was not according to their lofty ideas. Therefore the Lord of glory passed by the self-exalted, the men intoxicated with self-love and worldly honour, and came to the men who were humble, who

would receive the heavenly messengers and the tidings that were to echo to earth's remotest bounds.

It was to the humble shepherds that the birth of Christ was first made known. While they were watching their flocks on the hills of Bethlehem, "Lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you, Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

The manner of Christ's first advent, and the condition of those to whom the joyful tidings came, is a lesson which we would do well to study. The Lord does not honour those who honour themselves. He does not give His precious light to those who will not make a right use of it,—who use it to honour themselves, in the place of exalting the Lord God of Israel. Those whom the Lord has blessed with great privileges are to be pure and humble and undefiled. The humility of the world's Redeemer is solemn and instructive. He was the Majesty of heaven, yet while on earth He was unhonoured and almost unknown. The Light of the world, the heir of glory, He was despised and rejected of men.

As we trace the course pursued by the scribes and Pharisees, and see the light and privileges granted to them, we are led to exclaim, How could those teachers read the Word of God without perceiving the truths which it taught? Upon these men was placed the responsibility of explaining the law in the synagogue, but Christ declared, "Ye know not the Scriptures, nor the power of God." "Ye teach for doctrine the commandments of men." The sayings of men coming down through the rabbis from age to age had moulded their religious worship. Traditions were constantly increasing which kept the mind in a state of questioning and controversy over the most trivial matters. New laws were constantly being enacted, and the people were taught to regard them as the requirements of God, until a mechanical service became the sum of their religion and their worship. Many of

these laws were not committed to writing, and exaction after exaction was added until a most unreasonable mass of maxims and fables was brought together. He who attempted to bring forward scriptures which conflicted with these laws and traditions was condemned as if he had refused to accept a "Thus saith the Lord." This education of the rabbis was well-pleasing to Satan, for through them he was preparing the way, so that when Christ should come to the world He would be rejected by His own nation.

Christ designed that His disciples should have an education altogether different from that which they had received from the scribes and Pharisees. He accused these men of teaching many things contrary to the law. "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat," He said: "all therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works, for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men; they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues. And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. . . . He that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased: and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted."

When the question was asked, "Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread," Christ answered them, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded saying, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; and honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoureth Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrine the commandments

of men.” Thus Christ showed the comparative value of the law of God and their traditions.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites,” Christ continued: “for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.” Do we not find just such teachers in our day, who will not obey the plainest statement of the Word, and who after they have turned from the light of God themselves, do their utmost to lead others into the same path? They manifest the same spirit towards those who keep God’s commandments that the scribes and Pharisees manifested toward Christ. How earnest are these transgressors of God’s law to hedge up the way of those who would accept Christ. They will not enter in themselves, and those who would enter in they hinder.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye devour widow’s houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.” There are many who claim to be sanctified, but who are not. Shall we receive their testimony? If they are holy, their testimony will be in accordance with the Divine will, their prayer will be the prayer of Christ, “Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth.”

What shall be the detector of character in these last days? Christ says, “Ye shall know them by their fruits.” “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” If men come to us, making void the law of God, we may know that their sanctification is worth just as much, when weighed in the balances of heaven, as were the long, pretentious prayers of the Pharisees.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him two fold more the child of hell than yourselves. . . . Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.”

These fearful denunciations were made upon the Jews, because, while teaching the law of God to the people, they were not doers of

the Word. Had they kept the law of God, they would have discerned Christ and His mission. So it is in our day. There are those who walk in darkness when light shines from every page of the written Word. They study the Scriptures that they may interpret them to suit themselves. They sink the Scriptures to their own perverted ideas. They are not honest. They doubt that which they have every reason to believe. They become reasoners in doubt, experts in finding fault. God's Word is misinterpreted, misstated, misapplied, and has no power upon the life and character.

If professed Christians really believe in God, they will not disregard His commandments. Christ says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets, I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, the same shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

Mrs. E. G. White.

June 29, 1899

The Parable of the Ten Virgins

EGW

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came: and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut.

“Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.”

When the ten virgins went forth to meet the bridegroom, their lamps were trimmed and burning. Apparently there was no difference between the five who were wise, and the five who were foolish. To outward appearance all were prepared, robed in white, and carrying their lighted lamps. But only five of these virgins were wise. These anticipated delay, and filled their flagons with oil, ready

for any emergency. Five of the number had not this foresight; they made no provision for disappointment or delay.

All the virgins are watching for the bridegroom. Hour after hour passes, and they are still anxiously looking for his appearing. But at last the weary, watching ones fall asleep. And at midnight, the darkest hour when their lamps are most needed, the cry is heard, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh: go ye out to meet him."

At the call, the sleeping eyes are opened, and everyone is aroused. They see the procession they are to join moving on, bright with torches and glad with music. They hear the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride. The five wise virgins trim their lamps, and go forth to meet the bridegroom.

The foolish virgins made no provision for their lamps, and when aroused from their slumbers, they found that their lights were going out. They now see the consequences of their carelessness, and plead with their companions for a supply of oil. "Give us of your oil," they say, "for our lamps are gone out." But the waiting five with their freshly-trimmed lamps have emptied their vessels. They have no oil to spare, and they answer, "Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you. But go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves." But while they went to buy, the procession moved on, and left them behind. The bridal train entered the house, and the door was shut. When the foolish virgins reached the banqueting hall, they received an unexpected denial. They were left outside in the blackness of the night.

This parable is not a representation of open sinners, but of those who profess Christ. The bride is the church who is waiting for the second appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In the proclamation of the first and second angels of Revelation 14, a special message has come to our world. Speaking of these messages John says, "I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come, and worship Him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

The first and second angels' messages are united and made complete in the third. John says, "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice. If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb."

Under the proclamation of these messages the cry was made, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh." The believers in these messages were compelled to go out from the churches because they preached the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven. The whole world was to hear the message, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him." Many who heard these messages thought they would live to see Christ come, but there was a delay in the coming of the Bridegroom in order that all might have an opportunity to hear the last message of mercy to a fallen world.

Had those who claimed to believe the truth acted their part as wise virgins, the message would ere this have been given to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. But five were foolish. The truth should have been proclaimed by the ten virgins, but only five had made the provision essential to join that company who walked in the light that had come to them.

The first, second, and third angels' messages are to be repeated. The call is to be given to the church: "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. . . . Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities."

Many who went forth to meet the Bridegroom under the messages of the first and second angels, refused the third, the last testing message to be given to the world, and a similar position will be taken when the last call is made.

Every specification of this parable should be carefully studied. We are represented either by the wise or by the foolish virgins. There are many who will not remain at the feet of Jesus, and learn of Him. They have not a knowledge of His ways; they are not prepared for His coming. They have made a pretence of waiting for their Lord. They have not watched and prayed with that faith which works by love and purifies the soul. They have lived a life of carelessness. They have heard and assented to the truth, but they have never brought it into their practical life. The oil of grace is not feeding their lamps, and they are not prepared to enter in to the marriage supper of the Lamb. The oil is the holy grace that is sent from heaven, and there must be an inward adorning with that grace, if we would stand when He appeareth.

The men of the world do not want the light of truth, and they are one in spirit with those who, while professing to be children of God, do not let their light shine in words of truth and deeds of holiness. Unconverted men who claim to be Christians only encourage the sinner to continue in his sin. In the place of seeking to save the souls that are ready to perish, they live for self. Their vessels are empty, and therefore they cannot keep their lamps replenished. To those Christ says, I know you not. You have not taken Me as your counsellor. You have not walked in the light of My Word. You have not come under My yoke. Your light is darkness, because you have walked in the sparks of the fire of your own kindling. Depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.

We are not to rest in the idea that because we are church members we are saved, while we give no evidence that we are conformed to the image of Christ, while we cling to our old habits, and weave our fabric with the thread of worldly ideas and customs. Christ declares: "Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say unto Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity."

This representation should call forth our earnest study in order that we may know what preparation to make that we may enter in

and partake of the marriage supper of the Lamb. "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

The ten virgins are watching in the evening of this earth's history. All claim to be Christians. All have a call, a name, a lamp, and all claim to be doing God service. All apparently watch for His appearing. But five are wanting. Five will be found surprised, dismayed, outside the banquet hall. There are many who cry, Peace, peace, when there is no peace. This is the most perilous belief that the human soul can entertain. Christ calls upon all who bear His name, who claim to be His followers, to eat His flesh and drink His blood, or they can have no part with Him.

Be not like the foolish virgins, who take for granted that the promises of God are theirs, while they do not follow the injunctions of Christ. Christ teaches us that profession is nothing. "He that will come after Me," He says, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me." "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, the same shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoso shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven."

When we stand the test of God in the refining, purifying process, when the furnace fire consumes the dross, and the true gold of a purified character appears, we may still say with Paul, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after; . . . This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Mrs. E. G. White.

August 31, 1899

“Even Your Sanctification”

EGW

“This is the will of God, even your sanctification.” The Lord demands all the powers of the being. It is His design that we should be conformed to Him in will, in temper, in spirit, that the soul may hold communion with Him who is full of love and peace and power. God would have us keep close to the heart of infinite wisdom and love. He has chosen us from eternity, that we may be holy, our consciences purged from dead works to serve the living God. The Lord gave Himself to die for us, that He might purify us from all iniquity. He will carry on His work of perfection for us if we will allow ourselves to be controlled by Him.

This work of righteousness cannot be carried forward unless we exercise implicit faith. We must move every day under the guidance of God’s mighty power. Every day we need to feel the deep working of the Spirit of God. We must have a faith that emanates from God. Not one thread of selfishness must be drawn into the fabric of our lives. When our faith works by love, the love that Christ revealed in His life, it will be of a firm texture. But not until self-dies can Christ live in us; not until self-dies can we possess the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Our faith must increase. We must know the sanctification of the Spirit. In earnest prayer we must seek God, that His Divine Spirit may control us. God will then be glorified by the example we set. We shall be workers together with Him. Sanctification of soul, body, and spirit, will surround us with the atmosphere of heaven.

Christ came to this world to enlighten men and women by His wisdom, by the shining of His righteousness. He came to reveal God's purpose for us. He was a wonderful teacher. His lessons were uttered in the language of independent goodness, and it is our privilege, by studying these lessons and beholding Him, to be changed into His likeness. It is His desire to commit Divine instruction to faithful stewards, who will both teach and practise the truth, who will live by every word proceeding from the mouth of God. Those who claim to know and teach the truth, and yet to not live by the Word, cannot be labourers together with God. Those who do not walk in the light bring in the opinions and practices of self. True conversion, true sanctification, will be the cause of a change in our views and feelings toward one another and toward God.

Christ declares, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." Again Christ says, "As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you; continue ye in My love. If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things have I spoken unto you that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is My commandment, That ye love one another as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are My friends, if ye do whatever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth, but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you. Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another."

This love goes beyond the expression of the command, "Thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself." Here men are required to love one another as Christ has loved them. The disciples did not then comprehend the significance of these words. They knew not the high, unselfish character of heavenly love. But after Christ had by His

death on the cross demonstrated His love for them, they understood His words.

This heaven-born love is not selfish and changeable. It is not a love dependent on human praise. The heart of him who drinks the blood of the Son of God overflows with a holy love for God and for those for whom Christ died. He does not love his fellow-creatures because they love and please him, because they appreciate his merits and rightly estimate his value, but because they are Christ's purchased possession.

What fulness is expressed in the words, "I am the Light of the world." "I am the Bread of life." "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." "I am the good Shepherd." "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." This life is what we must have, and we must have it *more abundantly*. God will breathe this life into every soul who dies to self and lives to Christ. But entire self-renunciation is required. Unless this takes place, we carry with us the evil that destroys our happiness.

"We have known and believed the love that God hath toward us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." We must take God at His word, and believe that He will do just as He has said. If He chastises us, it is that we may be partakers of the Divine nature. It is His purpose to carry on a daily sanctification in us.

A mere assent to truth is not enough. Daily we must live the truth. We must shut ourselves in with God, surrendering all to Him. To listen to the great and grand truths of the Word is not enough. We must ask ourselves the question, Does Christ dwell in my heart by faith? He alone can show us our necessity, and reveal the dignity and glory of the truth. At the altar of self-sacrifice,—the appointed place of meeting between God and the soul we receive from the hand of God the celestial torch, which searches the heart, revealing our great need of an abiding Christ.

When we feel our heart need, when we long after the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit, Christ draws nigh to us. Self is crucified. Christ lives in us, and the power of the Spirit attends our efforts. Then the soul is refined and elevated. Light from the heavenly sanctuary shines upon us, and we are enabled to exert an influence which is a savour of life unto life. By a union with Christ, by living

faith, we are privileged to enjoy the efficacy of His mediation. We are crucified with Christ, buried with Christ, risen with Christ, to walk in newness of life.

Mrs. E. G. White.

September 7, 1899

“Give Unto the Lord the Glory Due Unto His Name”

EGW

We are all living on probation. Those who have passed into their graves have been tested and tried, to see if they would realise their responsibility to serve God. A desire to glorify God should be to us the most powerful of all motives. It should lead us to make every exertion to improve the privileges and opportunities provided for us, to use wisely the Lord's goods. It should lead us to keep brain, bone, and muscle in the most healthful condition, that our physical strength and mental clearness may help us to be faithful stewards. Selfish interest must ever be held subordinate, for if given room to act, it contracts the intellect, hardens the heart, and weakens moral power. Then disappointment comes. The man has divorced himself from God, and sold himself to unworthy pursuits. He cannot be happy; for he cannot respect himself. He has lowered himself in his own estimation. He is an intellectual failure.

Daniel was regarded by the Lord as *a man*, because he was a steward who traded faithfully on his Lord's goods. He did not forget God, but placed himself in the channel of light, where he could commune with God in prayer. And we read that God gave Daniel and his fellows knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom.

Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon dreamed a dream which none of his wise men could interpret. The secret was revealed to Daniel in the night vision, and we read, “Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and over: for wisdom and might are His; and He changeth the times and the seasons; He removeth

kings, and setteth up kings; He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding; He revealeth the deep and secret things: He knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with Him. I thank Thee and praise Thee, O thou God of my fathers, who hast given me wisdom and might, and hast made known unto me now what we desired of Thee; for Thou hast now made known unto us the king's matter."

Daniel did not stand before king Nebuchadnezzar to glorify human power, to dishonour God by failing to acknowledge His goodness. Had he not acknowledged God as the source of his wisdom, he would have been an unfaithful steward. Those who follow the example set by Daniel will connect with the Lord. They will consult Him as a son consults a wise father. Not all human fathers possess wisdom; but God may always be trusted and depended on. With perfect assurance we may commit the keeping of our souls to Him as unto a faithful Creator.

Did Daniel's faithful recognition of God before kings, princes, and statesmen detract from his influence?—No. Read his firm, bold testimony, and then follow his example. Let the clear-cut testimony, like a sharp, two-edged sword, cut to the right and to the left. Make appeals that will bring foolish, wandering minds back to God.

After Daniel had given Nebuchadnezzar God's warning in regard to self-exaltation, he said to him, "Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable unto thee, and break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor; if it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity." Had the king heeded this counsel, the threatened evil might have been averted, but he went on with proud superiority until his reason was taken from him, and he became as the beasts of the field. God allowed him to suffer seven years of deplorable degradation, and then removed His chastening hand. Then the king acknowledged his sin. "At the end of the days," the record reads, "I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured Him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation. And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can slay

His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou? At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom mine honour and brightness returned unto me; and my counsellors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment; and those that walk in pride He is able to abase.”

Those who act a part in the work of God do good only because God is behind them, doing the work. Shall we then praise men, and give thanks to them, neglecting to recognise God? If we do, God will not co-operate with us. When man puts himself first and God second, he shows that he is losing his wisdom and righteousness. All that is ever done towards restoring the moral image of God in man is done because God is the efficiency of the worker. Christ in His prayer to His Father, declared, “This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent.”

Said the great Apostle Paul, “Let a man so account of us, as ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.” Let every steward understand that as he strives to advance the glory of God in our world, whether he stands before Christians or infidels, peasants or princes, he is to make God first, and last, and best in everything. Man cannot show greater weakness than by thinking he will find greater acceptance in the sight of men if he leaves God out of his assemblies. God must stand the highest. The wisdom of the greatest man is foolishness with Him. The true Christian will realise that he has a right to his name only as he uplifts Christ with a steady, persevering, and ever increasing force. No ambitious motive will chill his energy; for it comes from an inexhaustible Source,—“the Light of life.”

Mrs. E. G. White. (To be Continued.)

September 14, 1899

“Give Unto the Lord the Glory Due Unto His Name”

EGW

God will prepare the mind to recognise Him who alone can help the striving, struggling soul. All who stand under His banner He will educate to be faithful stewards of His grace. God has given man immortal principles, to which every human power must one day bow. He has given us truth in trust. The precious beams of this light are not to be hid under a bushel, but are to give light to all that are in the house. Truth, imperishable truth, is to be made prominent. Show those with whom you come in contact that the truth is of consequence to you. It means much to you to stand by the principles which will live through the eternal ages.

God has given every man talents, that His name may be exalted, not that man may be lauded and praised, honoured and glorified, while the Giver is forgotten. All have been entrusted with God's gifts, from the lowest and most poverty stricken, to the highest and wealthiest, who walk in haughty pride. To every man have been given physical, mental, and moral powers. Let none waste their God-given time in regrets that they have only one talent. Spend every moment in using the talents which you have. They are the Lord's, to be returned to Him. It is not your own property you are handling, but the Lord's. One day He will come, to receive His own with usury. Faithfully fulfil your appointed stewardship, that you may meet Him in peace.

Have we consecrated all our talents to God? We cannot be excused in withholding one from Him. Reason is a precious gift.

Do not abuse it; for God can remove it. The gift of speech is a valuable talent. Never despise or undervalue this gift. Thank God for entrusting it to you. It is a precious gift, to be sanctified, elevated, and ennobled.

As a sacred trust the voice should be used to honour God. It should never utter harsh, impure words, or words of fault-finding. The Gospel of Christ is to be proclaimed by the voice. With the talent of speech we are to communicate the truth as we have opportunity. It should ever be used in God's service; but this talent is grievously abused. Words are spoken which do great harm. Christ declared, "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

Money is a talent, which is to be placed in God's treasury, for investment in His cause. Are we as individuals searching the Word of God carefully and prayerfully, lest we shall depart from its precepts and requirements? The Lord will not look upon us with pleasure if we withhold anything, small or great, that should be returned to Him. If we desire to spend money to gratify our own inclinations, let us think of the good we might do with that money. If we spend selfishly the means so much needed, the Lord does not, cannot bless us with His commendation.

God keeps a faithful account with every human being in our world. And when the day of reckoning comes, the faithful steward takes no credit to himself. He does not say, "My pound;" but "Thy pound has gained other pounds." He knows that without the entrusted gift no increase could have been made. He feels that in faithfully discharging his stewardship, he has but done his duty. The capital was the Lord's, and by his power he was enabled to trade upon it successfully. His name only should be glorified. Without the entrusted capital he knows that he would have been bankrupt for eternity. The approval of the Lord is received almost with surprise, it is so unexpected. But Christ says to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

God calls upon us to work for Him in a world of sin, where men are given to idolatry. They have no thought of their obligations to their Creator. They act as if they had created themselves and their

blessings. God bestows His bounties on the evil and the good. To all He gives sunshine and showers of rain. He carefully watches the seed put into the soil, that from it may spring the living germ. But very few have any realisation of the blessing bestowed on them from day to day. Still less do they realise the greatness of the gift of God's only begotten Son. If they only comprehended the sacrifice made in order that our world might be blessed with the light of truth, how many conversions would be made in a day! How many would rally round the standard of the Redeemer!

A heavenly watcher marks our words and deportment, and reads the motives that prompt us to action. We have no time now to be idle and indifferent. We must strive to develop a Christian character. Our spiritual understanding must be cleansed, purified, sanctified, and ennobled. All are now taking sides. It is ours now to choose a blessing or a curse. Now is the time for us to purify our minds by obeying the truth.

Christ is to be our example in all things. He alone has the power to reclaim truth from the rubbish under which it had been buried, causing it to shine forth in its original loveliness. In His parables, in order that He might awaken interest and sympathy, He drew His illustrations from the things of nature. Plucking a lily in its glowing beauty, He said, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." In all His teaching Christ sought to impress His hearers that all true knowledge leads heavenward, and that all nature's lessons, rightly understood and interpreted, are the lessons of the Creator.

There is a great work to be done in our world and Christian educators are needed, men and women who are partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. These can enter cities and towns, and there plant the standard of truth, glorifying God by humility and faith, by a faithful performance of every duty. In the work to be done in the Lord's vineyard discouragements will come, but these may prove instructive to the worker, teaching him to wait patiently, and endure trial nobly. Those who keep God's glory in view will not fail nor be discouraged.

The Lord needs men who are true, who will not seek for promotion, whose course of action is marked by self-sacrifice. The nature

of our trust demands that self be best in Christ; that in the daily life we seek to imitate in the very best way possible the Christ-life. All sin, from the least to the greatest, may be overcome by the Holy Spirit's power. God desires us to lift up the Saviour as one who has been crucified among us. We are to think and talk of Christ, praising and magnifying His name. As servants of God we need to put away all self-importance, and abide in Christ, taking not one jot or tittle of credit to ourselves. If we are abiding in Christ, we shall reveal Him in character. Thus we become channels through which God can communicate light. We are made workers together with God.

Mrs. E. G. White.

November 2, 1899

The Gift of the Holy Spirit

EGW

By use and experience men learn how to do successfully their worldly, temporal business, and in the same way God expects everyone in His service to improve the talents He has entrusted, and to become wise, faithful workmen in spiritual and eternal things. If men exercise the gifts of grace that God has bestowed, they will have grace for grace, and the promise will be fulfilled that they shall be endowed with the Holy Spirit.

At infinite cost provision has been made that men shall reach the perfection of Christian character. Those who have been privileged to hear the truth, and have been impressed by the Holy Spirit to receive the Word of God as the voice of God, have no excuse for becoming dwarfed in religious life. By exercising the ability which God has given, they are to be daily learning, and daily receiving spiritual fervour and power which has been provided for every true believer. If we would be growing plants in the Lord's garden we must have a constant supply of spiritual life and earnestness. Growth will then be seen in the faith and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no halfway house where we may throw off responsibility, and rest by the way. We are to keep advancing heavenward, developing a solid religious character.

The measure of the Holy Spirit we receive will be proportioned to the measure of our desire, and the faith exercised for it, and the use we shall make of the light and knowledge that shall be given to us. We shall be entrusted with the Holy Spirit according to our

capacity to receive, and our ability to impart to others. Christ says, “Everyone that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth.” He who truly seeks for the precious grace of Christ will be sure not to be disappointed. This promise has been given to us by Him who will not deceive us. It is not stated as a maxim or a theory, but as a fact, as a law of the Divine government. We can be assured that we shall receive the Holy Spirit, if we individually test God’s word. God is true, His order is perfect. “He that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.” Light and truth will shine forth according to the desire of the soul. O that all would hunger and thirst after righteousness, that they might be filled.

Those men who calculate just how religious exercises should be conducted, and are very precise and methodical in diffusing the light and grace that they seem to have, simply do not have much of the Holy Spirit. If they had more of the Holy Spirit, they would meddle less with the experiences of men who have received this Divine gift in large abundance.

There is much need of the testimony that was given to Nicodemus. Jesus said unto Nicodemus, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee. Expect a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God.” Nicodemus was astonished as well as indignant at these words. He considered himself not only an intellectual but a pious and religious man. But Christ said again to him, “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto Him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?”

Nicodemus was unbelieving. He could not harmonise this doctrine of conversion with his understanding of what constituted religion. He could not explain to his own satisfaction the science of conversion; but Jesus showed him by a figure that it could not be explained by any of his precise methods. He pointed out to him the fact that he could not see the wind, yet he could discern its action. He might never be able to explain the process of conversion, but he would be able to discern its effect. He heard the sound of the wind, which bloweth where it listeth, and he could see the results

of its action. The operating agency was not revealed to view; men could not tell whence it came or whither it went. They could not define by what law it was governed, but they could see that which it produced by its action. So no human reasoning of the most learned man could define the operations of the Holy Spirit upon human minds and characters; yet men could see the effects upon the life and actions. The Holy Spirit is a free, working, independent agency. The God of heaven uses His Spirit as it pleaseth Him, and human minds and human judgment and human methods can no more set boundaries to its workings, or prescribe the channel through which it shall operate, than they can say to the wind, I bid you to blow in a certain direction, and to conduct yourself in such and such a manner.

Though we cannot see the Spirit of God, yet we know that men who have been dead in trespasses and sins, become convicted and converted under its operations. The thoughtless and wayward become serious. The hardened repent of their sins, and the faithless believe. The gambler, the drunkard, the licentious become steady, sober, and pure. The rebellious and obstinate become meek and Christ-like. When we see these changes in the character, we may be assured that the converting power of God has transformed the entire man. We saw not the Holy Spirit, but we saw the evidence of its work on the changed character of those who were hardened and obdurate sinners.

As the wind moves in its force upon the lofty trees, and brings them down, so the Holy Spirit can work upon human hearts, and it is not the work of finite man to circumscribe the work of God. The Spirit of God is manifested in different ways upon different men. One under the movings of the Spirit's power will tremble before the Word of God. His convictions will be so deep that a hurricane and tumult of feeling seems to rage in his heart, and his whole being is prostrate under the convicting power of the truth. When the Lord speaks forgiveness to the repenting soul, he is full of ardour, full of love to God, full of earnestness and energy, and the life-giving spirit which he has received cannot be repressed. Christ is in him, a well of water springing up into everlasting life. His feelings of love are as deep and ardent as was his distress and agony. His soul is like the fountain of the great deep, broken up, and he pours forth his thanksgiving and praise, his gratitude and joy, until the heavenly

harps are tuned to notes of rejoicing. He has a story to tell, but not in any precise, common, methodical way. He is a soul ransomed through the merits of Jesus Christ, and his whole being is thrilled with the realisation of the salvation of God.

Others are brought to Christ in a more gentle way. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." You cannot see the operating agency, but you can see its effects. When Nicodemus said unto Jesus, "How can these things be?" Jesus said to him, "Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" A teacher in Israel, a man among wise men, a man who supposed that he was able to comprehend the science of religion, and yet stumbling at the doctrine of conversion! He was not willing to admit truth, because he could not understand all that was connected with the operation of the power of God; and yet he accepted the facts of nature, although he could not explain or even comprehend them. Like others of all ages, he was looking to forms and precise ceremonies as more essential to religion than the deep movements of the Spirit of God. The work that Christ declared necessary in the case of Nicodemus is the very work that needs to be done for those men who think that everything pertaining to religion must be done in a precise, methodical way. They need to be born again, and how the new birth is accomplished matters not, so long as the heart is renewed.

When the prayer is sincerely offered, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me," the voice of the Lord answers, "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them." The renewed heart will have no plants of selfishness to cultivate. Pride will be seen in its sinfulness and will be expelled. It is not for the human clay to find fault with the moulding process of the potter, but to submit to be moulded in any way. Every soul must submit to the Lord before he can be made a vessel unto honour, to be filled with the renewing, sanctifying grace of Christ.

November 2, 1899

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Mrs. E. G. White.

April 26, 1900

God's Word Our Study Book

EGW

“And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him.” “And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them.” “And Jesus increased in wisdom, and stature, and in favour with God and man.” Let the brightest example the world has yet seen be your example, rather than the greatest and most learned men of the age, who know not God, nor Jesus Christ whom He has sent. The Father and the Son alone are to be exalted. Their holy banner is to be exalted above all the greatness of the greatest men, above all the honour and glory of the world.

The cross of Christ,—how many believe it to be what it is? How many bring it into their studies, and know its true significance? There could not be a Christian in our world without the cross of Christ. Then keep it before the schools as the foundation of all true education. Turn from the examples of the world, cease to extol the professedly great men; turn the mind from the glory of everything save the cross of Christ. Said Paul, “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Let all, from the highest to the lowest, understand what it means to glory in the cross of Christ. That cross is to be bravely and manfully borne. Christ declares, “He that will come after Me. let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” And to all who will lift it, and bear it after Christ, the cross is a pledge of the crown of glory that can never fade away.

The most essential lessons for students to obtain are those that will point them to straight paths, which lead, not to the world, but from the world to the cross of Calvary. Their studies should be of that character which will make them most successful in the service of God, and enable them to walk in the footsteps of Christ.

This is the highest science that we can learn,—the science of salvation. The cross of Calvary, rightly regarded, is true philosophy, pure and undefiled religion. It is eternal life to all who believe. By painstaking effort, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, it should be impressed upon the minds of students that the cross of Christ is just as efficacious now as in Paul's day, and should be as perfectly understood by them as it was by the great apostle who could declare, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world."

Christ was crucified for fallen man. But to many who call themselves Christians this event is nothing. In practice they deny the cross of Christ. They know it not, they glory not in it. They admit that Christ died on the cross, but because there is a crucifixion for them to experience, they will not receive the lessons that lead to self-denial and self-sacrifice. They are Christians in name only. The central point of their faith is not a crucified and risen Saviour who brings to all who will receive Him the privilege of being sons and daughters of God.

Students, study the Scriptures. Know that the only thing in which you can safely glory is that which will open to you the gates of the city of God. Learn from the Word of God how to form characters fitted for the country you are seeking. Know that Christ is to be set forth among you, and that all that was lost in Adam the cross of Christ fully restores to every believing soul.

Then your testimony will be: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."

Mrs. E. G. White.

October 4, 1900

God's Temple

EGW

Young men and women, heed the charge that is given to you through the Apostle Paul. He says: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Again Paul says, "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." We are to do everything under a sense of our personal accountability and responsibility before God. The whole treatment of the physical organism has an effect upon the life of the soul. The condition of the body has a close relation to the life of Christ in the heart.

One asks, "May I not do as I choose with myself? Is not my body my own?"—No; for the Lord has bought us. Our bodies are the members of Christ. "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." God condemns every sinful, defiling practice.

Mrs. E. G. White.

October 18, 1900

Offer Unto God Thanksgiving

EGW

“I will praise Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will show forth all Thy marvellous works. I will be glad and rejoice in Thee. I will sing praise to Thy name, O Thou Most High.”

We should ever remember that thanksgiving is the fruit of true, willing obedience. The Lord is the object of our worship, and to praise His holy name shows respect for His efficiency. He says, “Whose offereth praise glorifieth Me.” “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Faith relies upon God as being able and willing to save to the uttermost all who come to Him. As we speak of God’s power, we show that we appreciate the love that is be constantly shown us, that we are grateful for the mercies and favours bestowed on us, and that the whole soul is awakened to a realisation of God’s glory.

The absence of praise and thanksgiving pleases the enemy of God; and the line of demarcation between those who utter the holy name of God in blasphemy, and those who praise Him with heart and with voice is clear and distinct. He who is truly converted will glorify God as he beholds the wonderful things of His creation, the brightness of the sun, moon, and stars, the changing beauty of the heavens. To Him all nature will declare God’s mighty power. He will be led to give glory to His holy name.

Isaiah tells us what God is doing for us: “Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of

My righteousness. . . . I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel. I will help thee, saith the Lord God, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. . . . When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys, I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the fir tree, and the pine, and the box tree together: that they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it.”

What greater encouragement and assurance than this could the Lord give His loyal, commandment-keeping people? Is it not our duty to show the world that we appreciate the love of Christ? As we produce the fruit of thanksgiving, we bear living evidence that by connection with Christ we are placed on vantage ground. God is the fountain of life and power. He can make the wilderness a fruitful held for those who keep His commandments; for it is for the glory of His name to do this. Thus He witnesses to Christianity. He has done for His chosen people that which should inspire every heart with praise and thanksgiving; and it grieves Him that so little praise is offered. He desires to have a stronger expression of praise from His people, showing that they know they have reason for manifesting joy and gladness.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. . . . He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. . . . And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.” As the grace which is in the soul flows out

to others, more grace flows in to be given back to God in willing offerings.

The people of God need to be aroused to let their light shine forth. Christ said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." God's people should be an animated people, filled with joy and gladness because they behold Him who is invisible to the eyes of the world.

Our tongues should be used to express the appreciation in our hearts for God's goodness. Thus God requires us to return to Him gratitude offerings. But this is not the only way in which we are to praise God. We are to praise Him by tangible service, by doing all we can to advance the glory of His name. By improving our entrusted talents, we are to offer thanksgiving to God.

Mrs. E. G. White.

November 14, 1901

The Blessing of Labour

EGW

Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hands of the poor and needy.

One of the first laws of the being is that of action. Every organ of the body has its appointed work, upon the doing of which depends its strength and development. The normal action of all the organs gives vigour and life; inaction brings decay and death.

God placed our first parents in Paradise, surrounding them with all that was useful and lovely. In their Eden home nothing was wanting that could minister to their comfort and happiness. And to Adam was given the work of caring for the Garden. The Creator knew that Adam could not be happy without employment. The beauty of the garden delighted him, but this was not enough. He must have labour to call into exercise the wonderful organs of the body. Had happiness consisted in doing nothing, man, in his state of holy innocence, would have been left unemployed. But He who created man knew what would be for his happiness, and no sooner had He created him than He gave him his appointed work. In order to be happy, he must labour.

Today thousands are ill and dying who might get well if they would; but imagination keeps them ill. Self-made invalids, they think that to work would make them worse, when work is just what they need to make them well. Without labour they can never improve. When the body is inactive, the blood flows sluggishly through the

blood-vessels, and the muscles decrease in size and strength. Rising above their aches and pains, forgetting that they have aching backs, sides, and heads, they should engage in some useful employment. Physical exercise, and a free use of air and sunlight,—blessings which heaven has abundantly bestowed on all,—would give life and strength to many an emaciated invalid.

When not actively engaged in preaching, the apostle Paul laboured at his trade as tent-maker. Before he embraced Christianity, he had occupied a high position, and was not dependent upon his trade for support. But among the Jews it was customary to teach children a trade, however high the position they were expected to fill, that a reverse of circumstances might not leave them incapable of sustaining themselves. In accordance with this role, Paul learned the tent-maker's trade; and when his means had been expended in advancing the cause of God and in his own support, Paul resorted to his trade in order to gain a livelihood. Although feeble in health, he laboured during the day in serving the cause of Christ, and then toiled a large part of the night, and frequently all night, that he might provide for his own and other's necessities.

Let no one be ashamed of work; for honest toil is ennobling. While the hands are engaged in the most common tasks, the mind may be filled with high and holy thoughts. Work is a blessing, not a curse. Diligent labour keeps many, young and old, from the snares of him who "finds some mischief still for idle hands to do."

God never designed that man should live in idleness. Those who are always busy, who go cheerfully about the performance of their daily tasks are the most happy and healthy. At night sleep brings to their wearied frames unbroken slumber, preparing mind and body for the duties of the coming day.

The Lord knew what was necessary for man's happiness when He gave him work to do. The promise of future glory and the decree that man must toil for his daily bread came from the same throne.

Drowsiness and indolence destroy godliness and grieve the Spirit of God. A stagnant pool is offensive; but a pure flowing stream spreads health and gladness over the land. No man or woman who is converted can be anything but a worker.

Mrs. E. G. White.

November 28, 1901

What Shall It Profit?

EGW

Cares, riches, pleasures, all are used by Satan in playing the game of life for the human soul. The warning is given, “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

He who reads the hearts of men as an open book says, “Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life.” And the Apostle Paul, writing by the Holy Spirit, says, “They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

“And when He was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to Him, and asked Him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?”

Christ pointed him to the commandments, and the young man answered, “All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?”

“And Jesus beholding him, loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give

to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me.”

“But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions.” He chose his riches before Jesus. He wanted eternal life, but he would not receive into the soul that unselfish love which alone is life. With a sorrowful heart he turned away from Christ.

As the young man turned away, Jesus said to His disciples, “How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!” These words astonished the disciples. They had been taught to look upon the rich as the favourites of heaven; worldly power and riches they themselves hoped to receive in the Messiah’s kingdom; if the rich were to fail of entering the kingdom, what hope could there be for them?

“Jesus answereth again, and said unto them, Children, how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus, looking upon them, saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.”

My dear young friends, God knows what your besetting sin is just as surely as He knew the ruler’s. His Word to him is a message to you. You must decide between Christ and the world. If you choose Christ, you must deny self, take up the cross, and follow Him. The Saviour says to you, “Withdraw your love from earthly treasures. Follow me, and you shall have treasure in heaven,—a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

Christ does not ask His children to follow where He has not led the way. He was rich, but for our sake He became poor. He left the heavenly courts, and came to this earth in the guise of humanity, to share the poverty of the poor, and the toll of the labourer. He said of Himself, “Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head.”

God is testing and proving His children, to see if He can trust them with eternal riches. Are you living for Him? Have you placed all you have at His disposal? Are you day by day revealing the unselfishness of the Redeemer? Life is uncertain. One may count

on years of worldly pleasure, but accident or disease may suddenly cut him off. Are you ready for death?

God asks you, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" "Behold, I come quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

Mrs. E. G. White.

June 30, 1904

Rejoice in the Lord Always.

EGW

In this life we shall be tempted and tried. We are ever to remember that the church militant is not the church triumphant. But we are to remember also that God will not break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax, till He send forth judgment unto victory. Friends may prove treacherous, enemies may be inspired by Satan to cause sadness. In these trials let us turn to the strong for strength. There we may find comfort, consolation, and tender sympathy. God says, "Let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me, and he shall make peace with Me." Isa. xxvii. 3.

Christ interposes between us and the difficulties that appear so formidable. The flame and the flood are behind Him. Then lift up the Man of Calvary with voice and song, and let the melody of thanksgiving and praise ascend to heaven in life-service to God. Keep cheerful, full of faith and courage and hope. Elijah was subject to like passions as we are, yet the Lord was his strength. He prayed most earnestly, and the Lord heard his prayer. Let us, under all circumstances, preserve our confidence in Christ. He is to be everything to us, the first, the last, the best in everything. Let our tongues be educated to speak forth His praise, not only when we feel gladness and joy, but at all times, because He is our Redeemer, and deserving of our praise and thanksgiving.

Let us keep the heart full of God's precious promises, that we may speak words which will be a comfort and a strength to others. Thus we may learn the language of the heavenly angels, who, if we

are faithful, will be our companions through the eternal ages. Thus we may be brought into partnership with the heavenly firm. Our cold hearts will be warmed by the contemplation of our Redeemer's love.

Every day we should make advancement in gaining perfection of character, and this we shall certainly do if we press toward the mark of the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus. We who are the least of all the saints may be obtaining a fitness for standing before the Son of man at His appearing. We shall be one with Christ. His abiding presence will enable us to glorify God.

Let us not talk of the great power of Satan, but of the great power of God. We are to speak even as Christ spoke, allowing no harsh, impatient words to fall from our lips. Thus we shall be a savour of life to all with whom we come in contact.

If you will surrender yourself to Him, He who has begun a good work in you will through His grace perfect it unto the day of His appearing. His honour is concerned in the perfection of your character. You are members of His body, a part of Himself. That you might have a probation in which to form a perfect character, that His glory might be your glory, that when He appears you may also appear, pure and undefiled, He suffered on the cross of Calvary.

In every soul two powers are struggling earnestly for the victory. Unbelief marshals its forces, led by Satan, to cut us off from the source of our strength. Faith marshals its forces, led by Christ, the Author and Finisher of our faith. Hour by hour, in the sight of the heavenly universe the conflict goes forward. This is a hand-to-hand fight, and the great question is, Which shall obtain the mastery? This question we must decide for ourselves. In this warfare we take a part, fighting on one side or the other. From the conflict there is no release.

He who is mighty in counsel, to whom all power in heaven and earth has been given, will come to the help of those who trust in Him. In the Scriptures we read that in certain places Christ could not do many mighty works, because of the unbelief existing there. It is of great importance that we have a faith which waits not for the evidence of sight before it ventures to advance. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do

appear. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts, and by it, he being dead yet speaketh. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.”

Mrs. E. G. White.

August 25, 1904

Seeking the Lost.

EGW

“Then drew near unto Him all the publicans and sinners for to hear Him. And the scribes and Pharisees murmured, saying, This Man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.”

The Jewish leaders prided themselves on being God’s chosen people. But they were full of selfishness and pride. When Christ came to them, they refused to receive Him, because He did not flatter their pride nor endorse their opinions. They turned from Him with scorn because He received publicans and sinners. By His ministry of mercy and compassion Christ rebuked all pride and selfishness; therefore the Jews would have none of Him. They were angry that the works they did to be seen of men did not awe or charm the great Teacher, or draw from Him one word of approval. They flattered themselves, but Christ did not flatter them. He spoke against all vanity and pride as abhorrent to the Most High. It is the prayers of the humble and contrite that are heard and answered. God declares that He knows the proud afar off, but He says, “To this man will I look, even to him that is of an humble and contrite heart.”

The Pharisees could not bear to see the publicans following Christ and listening to His teaching with an interest that their teaching had never received. Hatred against the Saviour filled their hearts, and they said bitterly, “This Man receiveth sinners and eateth with them,” implying that He chose these as His associates and was insensible to their wickedness.

To this reproach Christ replied with the parable of the lost sheep. “What man of you,” He said, “having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.”

The loss of the sheep makes it necessary for the shepherd, at any cost, to seek for it. “Doth he not leave the ninety and nine and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?” Christ asked. The sheep has wandered from the fold, and the shepherd leaves the rest that he may seek for the lost one. It must be found, however dark the night or severe the tempest. At each step the shepherd calls the lost sheep by name, until in the distance he hears its faint and dying cry. In crevices and among the tangled briers he searches, until he finds it. Then carefully rescuing it from its peril, he places it on his shoulders, and goes home with rejoicing.

“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” By making this gift to save perishing souls, God has shown the value He places on human beings. Then should anyone, high or low, white or black, be treated with contempt? Satan has made it his study to lay the temple of God in ruins, to obliterate the image of God in man. And by yielding to sin, men have become defiled and corrupted. Christ came, clothing His divinity with humanity, that He might touch humanity, without extinguishing it by divinity. He came to save the lost sheep. He became a servant that by loving service He might uplift the lowly.

More than eighteen hundred years ago Christ walked on this earth, a Man among men, yet a God. Hear what He said, “I am come to seek and to save that which was lost.” A solemn duty rests upon everyone who believes in Christ to go outside the church and seek in every way to save souls. To be a Christian means to be Christlike, and upon all Christians rests the burden of working as Christ worked.

Christ came to this world to represent the character of God as expressed in His law, and in human nature He lived that law. So our lives are to be spent in doing God’s will. We have been made repositories of sacred truth; but this truth is of no value to us unless

it is practised in the daily life. Christians are to do thorough work. Instead of expending their time and means in working for those who already have been blessed with so many opportunities and privileges that they do not know how to appreciate them, let God's workers go into places where the truth has not been heard. Let earnest zeal and fervent piety be manifested in behalf of those who are in the darkness of error. Of those who work in this way Christ says, "Ye are labourers together with God." "Ye are the light of the world." "Ye are the salt of the earth." "Ye are My witnesses." "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

We are to exert a saving influence over those who are without God and without hope in the world. The pathway to the city of refuge is to be kept free from the rubbish of selfishness and sin. Those who profess to be following the Lamb of God are to take every stumbling block out of the way. But too often those who claim to believe the truth lay stumbling blocks in the way of others. They say that they know Christ, but in works they deny Him. By their trifling conduct they hurt those they might have helped. They sin against God and lie against the truth, imperilling their own souls and leading others astray.

"Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time, because the days are evil." God's people are to be lights, shining amid the moral darkness of the world. By a godly life they are to show that the truth exerts an ennobling influence over them.

Mrs. E. G. White.

October 13, 1904

Faithfulness in Service.

EGW

The parable of the talents should receive prayerful, critical attention. By it we are shown the importance of trading diligently and conscientiously on our Lord's goods. Not one thread of selfishness is to be woven into His work. Worldly ambition is not to be cherished. We are to keep self out of sight, holding Christ before the world. We are to bring glory to God by doing our best to be perfect men and perfect women.

Christ gave the parable of the talents to show us that all the blessings we have come from God. Our gifts belong to Him. They are not to be used according to human judgment, but according to the directions given in God's Word. We are to study how we may use these gifts for the up-building of the cause of truth.

In the parable our Saviour says, "And unto one He gave five talents, to another two, and to another one: to every man according to his several ability." Here we are shown that different gifts are entrusted to different individuals. With the talents given him, be they many or few, each one is to do his utmost to glorify God. Talents improve and multiply as they are used in the service of the Master.

In the parable, the one who received five talents and the one who received two are represented as trading wisely on their talents, so that when their lord returned, they were able to present to him that which he had entrusted to them, together with what they had gained by trading. And to each were spoken the words of commendation, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a

few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”

“But he that received one, went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord’s money.” When the time came for him to render an account, he said, “Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed; and I was afraid, and went and hid my talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast that is thine.”

“His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed, thou oughtest therefore, to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.”

Today thousands are doing as the unfaithful servant did. They live for self when God desires them to improve their abilities for Him, that they may act their part in His work. They excuse themselves by saying that they have but one talent. But if used for God, that one talent would accomplish much.

By careful use the slothful servant might have doubled the talent which instead of using he hid in the ground.

In our work the thought of glorifying God is to be made prominent. The business man is to bring the principles of heaven into every line of his work. In all he does the Christlikeness is to be clearly revealed. He who tills the soil is to make his work an object lesson of the careful, thorough work which must be done in the culture of the soil of the heart. The mechanic is to do his very best, bringing his work as near perfection as possible.

“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much.” The Lord cannot unite with those who are careless and slothful in their work. He leaves them to themselves, choosing for His service those who do well every piece of work they handle, those who manage economically, gathering up the fragments, so that nothing will be lost.

Those who work for the Lord must remember that they are members of the royal family, and that they are to do all their hands find to

do as in the sight of the heavenly universe. Never must they slight their work, doing it in such a way that He who has redeemed them will be ashamed of it. They are to guard against doing anything that will lead to carelessness or irreverence. They are ever to remember the words, "Ye are God's husbandry; ye are God's building." By following principles of strict integrity they are to build up a symmetrical character.

Christ will increase the talents of every faithful worker. This is the principle He always follows in dealing with His servants in this world. But the full honour in store for the one who in this life works with an eye single to the glory of God, will not be bestowed until the day of judgment. Then Christ will say to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Mrs. E. G. White.