

Ellen G. White Estate

TESTIMONY FOR THE CHURCH — NO.32

ELLEN G. WHITE



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**TESTIMONY FOR  
THE CHURCH.  
— No.32**

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**Ellen G. White**

**1885**

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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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## **NOTE TO THE READER.**

WHILE the closing chapters of the fourth volume of the Great Controversy were being prepared for the press, it was found that four hundred pages the size of the first three volumes, would not admit all the matter. By making volume four one hundred pages larger than was at first intended, the main points of the history were all admitted, but some chapters of warning and exhortation to our people were left to be printed in the Testimonies, and will be found in the closing articles of this number.

Most of the matter contained in the first sixty-four pages of this Testimony was written in 1880, and read to the persons addressed. On a subsequent visit to these Conferences, it appeared that the errors reprov'd in these testimonies had had a lasting influence to hinder the growth of the Conferences. Additional warnings were given, and these, with those written four years before, were read to some of the leading brethren. The fact that all in these Conferences need the benefit of the testimony, and that the cause of truth in other Conferences is crippled and hindered by the same wrongs, leads to its publication in this number.

In the reproofs and advice given to individuals, and in the warnings and counsels of the other portions of this Testimony, there is instruction for all. In many cases the persons addressed in these epistles have made a radical change in life, and are striving to correct past wrongs. It is hoped that a prayerful reading of these pages will save many from committing the same errors.

All who are laboring for the advancement and spread of the truth will be especially interested in the articles on the management and support of missions, and the canvassing and publishing work.

In former numbers of the printed Testimonies, blanks or initials were generally used for the names of persons addressed. In this number the letters of the alphabet, beginning with A, are used instead.

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**TESTIMONY FOR THE CHURCH.  
NUMBER THIRTY-TWO.**

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## **THE WORK OF THE GOSPEL MINISTER.**

There are many things that need to be corrected in the IT. C. and N. P. Conferences. The Creator expected these brethren to bear fruit according to the light and privileges bestowed upon them; but in this he has been disappointed. He has given them every advantage, but they have not improved in meekness, godliness, benevolence. They have not pursued that course of life, have not revealed that character nor exercised that influence, which would tend most to honor their Creator, ennoble themselves, and make them a blessing to their fellow-men. Selfishness exists in their hearts. They love to have their own way, and seek their own ease, honor, and wealth, and their own pleasure in its grosser or more refined forms. If we pursue the course of the world, and follow the bent of our own minds, will that work for our best good ? Does not God, who formed man, look for something better from us?

“Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children.” Christians must be like Christ. They should have the same spirit, exert the same influence, and have the same moral excellence, that he possessed. The idolatrous and corrupt in heart must repent and turn to God. Those who are proud and self-righteous must abase self, and become penitent and meek and lowly in heart. The worldly-minded must have the tendrils of the heart removed from the rubbish of the world, around which they are clinging, and entwined about God; [6] they must become spiritually minded. The dishonest and untruthful must become just and true. The ambitious and covetous must be hid in Jesus, and seek his glory, not their own. They must despise their own holiness, and lay up their treasure above. The prayerless must feel the need of both secret and family prayer, and must mate their supplications to God with great earnestness.

As the worshipers of the true and living God, we should bear fruit corresponding to the light and privileges we enjoy. Many are worshiping idols instead of the Lord of Heaven and earth. Anything that men love and trust in instead of loving the Lord and trusting

wholly in him, becomes an idol, and is thus registered in the books of Heaven. Even blessings are often turned into a curse. The sympathies of the human heart, strengthened by exercise, are sometimes perverted until they become a snare. If one is reprov'd, there are always some who will sympathize with him. They entirely overlook the harm that has been done to God's cause by the wrong influence of one whose life and character do not in any way resemble those of the Pattern. God sends his servants with a message to the people professing to be followers of Christ; but some are children of God only in name, and they reject the warning.

God has in a wonderful manner endowed man with reasoning powers. He who fitted the tree to bear its burden of goodly fruit has made man capable of bearing the precious fruits of righteousness. He has planted man in his garden and tenderly cared for him; and he expects him to bear fruit. In the parable of the fig-tree Christ says, "Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit." For more than two years has the Owner looked for the fruit that he has a right to expect from these Conferences; but how has his search been rewarded? How anxiously we watch a favorite tree or plant, expecting it to reward our care by producing buds, blossoms, and fruit; and how disappointed we are to find upon it nothing but leaves. With how much more anxiety and tender interest does the heavenly Father watch the spiritual growth of those whom he has made in his own image, and for whom he condescended to give his Son that they may be elevated, ennobled, and glorified. [7]

The Lord has his appointed agencies to meet men in their errors and backslidings. His messengers are sent to bear a plain testimony to arouse them from their sleepy condition, and to open the precious words of life, the Holy Scriptures, to their understanding. These men are not to be preachers merely, but ministers, light bearers, faithful watchmen, who will see the threatened danger and warn the people. They must resemble Christ in their earnest zeal, in their thoughtful tact, in their personal efforts,—in short, in all their ministry. They are to have a vital connection with God, and are to become so familiar with the prophecies and the practical lessons of the Old and the New Testament that they may bring from the treasure-house of God's word things new and old.

Some of these ministers make a mistake in the preparation of their discourses. They arrange every minutia with such exactness that they give the Lord no room to lead and impress their minds. Every point is fixed, stereotyped as it were, and they cannot depart from the plan marked out. This course, if continued, will cause them to become narrow-minded, circumscribed in their views, and will soon leave them as destitute of life and energy as are the hills of Gilboa of dew and rain. They must throw the soul open, and let the Holy Spirit take possession to impress the mind. When everything is laid out beforehand, and they feel that they cannot vary from these set discourses, the effect is little better than that produced by reading a sermon.

God would have his ministers wholly dependent upon him, but at the same time they should be thoroughly furnished unto every good work. No subject can be treated before all congregations in the same manner. The Spirit of God, if allowed to do its work, will impress the mind with ideas calculated to meet the cases of those who need help. But the tame, formal discourses of many who enter the desk have very little of the vitalizing power of the Holy Spirit in them.

[8] The habit of preaching such discourses will effectually destroy a minister's usefulness and ability. This is one reason why the efforts of the workers in — and — have not been more successful. God has had too little to do with impressing the mind in the desk.

Another cause of failure in these Conferences is that the people to whom God's messenger is sent wish to mold his ideas to theirs, and to put into his mouth the words that he should speak. God's watchmen must not study how they shall please the people, nor listen to their words and utter them; but they must listen to hear what saith the Lord, what is his word for the people. If they rely upon discourses prepared years before, they may fail to meet the necessities of the occasion. Their hearts should be laid open, so that the Lord may impress their minds, and then they will be able to give the people the precious truth warm from Heaven. God is not pleased with those narrow-minded ministers who devote their God-given powers to matters of little moment, and fail to grow in divine knowledge to the full stature of men in Christ Jesus. He would have his ministers possess breadth of mind and true moral courage. Such

men will be prepared to meet opposition and surmount difficulties, and will lead the flock of God instead of being led by them.

There is altogether too little of the Spirit and power of God in the labor of the watchmen. The Spirit which characterized that wonderful meeting on the day of Pentecost is waiting to manifest its power upon the men who are now standing between the living and the dead as ambassadors for God. The power which stirred the people so mightily in the 1844 movement will again be revealed. The third angel's message will go forth, not in whispered tones, but with a loud voice.

Many who profess to have great light are walking in sparks of their own kindling. They need to have their lips touched with a live coal from off the altar, that they may pour forth the truth like men who are inspired. Too many go into the desk with mechanical discourses, that have no light from Heaven in them.

There is too much of self and too little of Jesus in the ministry of all denominations. The Lord uses humble men to proclaim his messages. Had Christ come in the majesty of a king, with the pomp which attends the great men of earth, many would have accepted him. But Jesus of Nazareth did not dazzle the senses with a display of outward glory, and make this the foundation of their reverence. He came as a humble man, to be the teacher and exemplar as well as the redeemer of the race. Had he encouraged pomp, had he come followed by a retinue of the great men of earth, how could he have taught humility? how could he have presented such burning truths as in his sermon upon the mount? His example was such as he wished all his followers to imitate. Where would have been the hope of the lowly in life, had he come in exaltation, and dwelt as a king upon the earth? Jesus knew the needs of the world better than they themselves knew. He did not come as an angel, clothed with the panoply of Heaven, but as a man. Yet combined with his humility was an inherent power and grandeur that awed men while they loved him. Although possessing such loveliness, such an unassuming appearance, he moved among them with the dignity and power of a Heaven-born king. The people were amazed, confounded. They tried to reason the matter out; but, unwilling to renounce their own ideas, they yielded to doubts, clinging to the old expectation of a Saviour to come in earthly grandeur. [9]

[10] When Jesus delivered the sermon on the mount, his disciples were gathered close about him, and the multitude, filled with intense curiosity, also pressed as near as possible. Something more than usual was expected. Eager faces and listening attitudes gave evidence of the deep interest. The attention of all seemed riveted upon the speaker. His eyes were lighted up with unutterable love, and the heavenly expression upon his countenance gave meaning to every word uttered. Angels of Heaven were in that listening throng. There, too, was the adversary of souls with his evil angels, prepared to counteract, as far as possible, the influence of the heavenly Teacher. The truths there uttered have come down through the ages, and have been a light amid the general darkness of error. Many have found in them that which the soul most needed,—a sure foundation of faith and practice. But in these words spoken by the greatest Teacher the world has ever known, there is no parade of human eloquence. The language is plain, and the thoughts and sentiments are marked with the greatest simplicity. The poor, the unlearned, the most simpleminded, can understand them. The Lord of Heaven was in mercy and kindness addressing the souls he came to save. He taught them as one having authority, speaking the words of eternal life.

All should copy the Pattern as closely as possible. While they cannot possess that consciousness of power which Jesus had, they can so connect with the Source of strength that Jesus can abide in them and they in him, and so his spirit and his power will be revealed in them.

“Walk in the light as He is in the light.” It is earthliness and selfishness that separate from God. The messages from Heaven are of a character to arouse opposition. The faithful witnesses for Christ and the truth will reprove sin. Their words will be like a hammer to break the flinty heart; like a fire to consume the dross. There is constant need of earnest, decided messages of warning. God will have men who are true to duty. At the right time he sends his faithful messengers to do a work similar to that of Elijah.



**MINISTERS AS EDUCATORS.**

The state of things in — is a matter of deep regret. That which the Lord has been pleased to present before me has been of a character to give me pain. Whoever shall labor here or in — hereafter will have up-hill work, and must carry a heavy load, because the work has not been faithfully bound off, but has been left in an unfinished state. And this is the more grievous because the failure is not wholly chargeable to worldliness and want of love for Jesus and the truth on the part of the people, but much of it lies at the door of the ministers, who, while laboring among them, have signally failed in their duty. They have not had the missionary spirit; they have not felt the great need of thoroughly educating the people in all branches of the work, in all places where the truth has gained a foothold. The work done thoroughly for one soul is done for many. But the ministers have not realized this, and have failed to educate persons who in their turn should stand steadfast in defense of the truth, and educate others. This loose, slack, half-way manner of working is displeasing to God.

[11]

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

There are many who have no desire to become acquainted with their unbelieving neighbors, and those with whom they come in contact; and they do not feel it their duty to overcome this reluctance. The truth they teach and the love of Jesus should have great power to help them to overcome this feeling. They should remember that they must meet these very men and women in the Judgment. Have they left words unsaid that should have been spoken? Have they felt interest enough for souls, to warn, to entreat, to pray for them, to make every effort to win them to Christ? Have they united discrimination with zeal, heeding the direction of the apostle, “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” ?

[12] There is earnest work to be done by all who would be successful in their ministry. I entreat you, dear brethren, ministers of Christ, not to fail in your appointed duty to educate the people to work intelligently to sustain the cause of God in all its varied interests. Christ was an educator, and his ministers, who represent him, should be educators. When they neglect to teach the people their obligation to God in tithes and offerings, they neglect one important part of the work which their Master has left them to do, and “unfaithful servant” is written against their names in the books of Heaven. The church come to the conclusion that if these things were essential, the minister, whom God has sent to present the truth to them, would tell them so; and they feel secure and at ease while neglecting their duty. They go contrary to the express requirements of God, and as the result become lifeless and inefficient. They do not exert a saving influence upon the world, and they are represented by Christ as salt without savor.

Companies of Sabbath-keepers may be raised up in many places. Often they will not be large companies; but they must not be neglected; they must not be left to die for want of proper personal effort and training. The work should not be left prematurely. See that all are intelligent in the truth, established in the faith, and interested in every branch of the work, before leaving them for another field. And then, like the apostle Paul, visit them often to see how they do. Oh, the slack work that is done by many who claim to be commissioned of God to preach his word, makes angels weep.

The cause might be in a healthful condition in every field, and it would be if ministers would trust in God, and allow nothing to come between them and their work. Laborers are needed much more than mere preachers; but the two offices must be united. It has been proved in the missionary field, that, whatever may be the preaching talent, if the laboring part is neglected, if the people are not taught how to work, how to conduct meetings, how to act their part in missionary labor, how to reach people successfully, the work will be nearly a failure. There is much to be done in the Sabbath-school work also, in bringing the people to realize their obligation and to

act their part. God calls them to work for him, and the ministers should guide their efforts.

The sad fact is apparent that the work in these fields ought to be years in advance of what it now is. The negligence on the part of the ministers has discouraged the people, and the lack of interest, self-sacrifice, and appreciation of the work on the part of the people, has discouraged the ministers. Two years behind stands recorded in the ledger of Heaven. This people might have done much to advance the cause of truth and to bring souls to Christ in different localities, and at the same time might themselves have been growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth, had they improved their opportunities and made the most of their privileges, walking, not with murmuring and complaining, but in faith and courage. Eternity alone can reveal how much has been lost during these years;—how many souls have been left to perish through this state of tilings. The loss is too great to be computed. God has been insulted. The course pursued has brought upon the cause a wound which will be years in healing; and if the mistakes that have been made are not seen and repented of, they will surely be repeated. [13]

A realization of these facts has brought unspeakable burdens upon me, driving sleep from my eyes. At times it has seemed that my heart would break, and I could only pray, while giving vent to my anguish in weeping aloud. Oh, I felt so sorry for my Saviour! His searching for fruit amid the leaf-covered branches of the figtree, and his disappointment in finding “nothing hut leaves,” seemed so vivid before my eyes. I felt that I could not have it so. I could in no way be reconciled to the past years of neglect of duty on the part of ministers and people. I feared that the withering curse passed upon the fig-tree might be the fate of these careless ones. The terrible neglect of doing the work and fulfilling the mission which God has intrusted to them incurs a loss which none of us can afford to sustain. It is running a risk too fearful to contemplate, and too terrible to be ventured at any time in our religious history, but especially now, when time is so short, and so much is to be done in this day of God’s preparation. All Heaven is earnestly engaged for the salvation of men; light is coming from God to his people, defining their duty, so that none need err from the right path. But God does not send his [14]

light and truth to be lightly esteemed and trifled with. If the people are inattentive, they are doubly guilty before him.

As Christ was riding into Jerusalem, on the crest of Olivet he broke forth in uncontrollable grief, exclaiming in broken utterances, as he looked upon Jerusalem, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." He wept not for himself, but for the despisers of his mercy, long-suffering, and forbearance. The course taken by the hard-hearted and impenitent inhabitants of the doomed city is similar to the attitude of churches and individuals toward Christ at the present time. They neglect his requirements and despise his forbearance. There is a form of godliness, there is ceremonial worship, there are complimentary prayers; but the real power is wanting. The heart is not softened by grace, but is cold and unimpressible. Many, like the Jews, are blinded by unbelief, and know not the time of their visitation. So far as the truth is concerned, they have had every advantage; God has been appealing to them for years in warnings, reproofs, corrections, and instruction in righteousness; but special directions have been given only to be disregarded, and placed on a level with common things.

### **DUTY TO REPROVE MONEY-LOVERS.**

Many who are numbered with the believers, are not really with them in faith and principle. They are doing exactly that which Jesus told them not to do,—seeking to lay up treasures upon the earth. Christ said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth; . . . but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven. . . . For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Here is one danger which threatens Christians. They are not obedient to Christ's positive directions. They show no real faith and confidence in God. In order to gain riches, they accumulate burdens and cares, until their minds are almost wholly engrossed with them. They are eager for gains, and always anxious for fear of losses. The more money and lands they possess, the more eager are they for more. "They are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink." They are surfeited with the cares of this life, which affect them as strong drink does the drunkard. They are so blinded by selfishness that they work

night and day to secure perishable treasures. Their eternal interests are neglected; they have no time to attend to these things. The great matters of truth are not kept in mind, as is evidenced by their words, their plans, and their course of action. What if souls around them perish in their sins? This is not of so much consequence to them as their earthly treasures. Let souls for whom Christ died sink to ruin; they have no time to save them. In laying plans for earthly gain they show skill and talent; but these precious qualities are not devoted to winning souls to Christ, to the up building of the Redeemer's kingdom. Are not the senses of such persons perverted? Are they not drunken with the intoxicating cup of worldliness? Is not reason laid aside, and have not selfish aims and purposes become the ruling power? The work of preparing themselves to stand in the day of the Lord, and employing their God-given abilities in helping to prepare a people for that day, is considered too tame and unsatisfying.

The Saviour of the world has presented a most profitable business, in which rich and poor, learned and unlearned, may engage. All may safely lay up for themselves "a treasure in the heavens that faileth not." This is investing their powers on the right side. It is putting out their talents to the exchangers.

Jesus illustrated his teaching by the case of a substantial farmer whom the Lord had greatly favored. The Lord had blessed his grounds, causing them to produce plentifully, thus placing it in his power to exercise liberality to others not so greatly blessed. But when he found that his grounds had produced so abundantly, far beyond his expectation, instead of planning how to relieve the poor in their necessities, he began to devise means to secure all to himself. As he saw the gifts of Heaven rolling into his garners, he poured not out his soul in thanksgiving to the bounteous Giver, neither did he consider that this great blessing had brought additional responsibility. In the pure selfishness of his nature he inquires, "What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?" Taking counsel with his own covetous heart, he said, "This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." The means of real enjoyment and elevation of soul are activity, self-control, holy purposes; but all that this man proposed

[16]

to do with the bounties God had given him was to degrade the soul. And what was the result? “God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

This poor rich man possessed great earthly treasure, but was destitute of the true riches. How many to-day are under condemnation for a similar reason. Streams of salvation are poured in upon us from the throne of God. Temporal blessings are given, but they are not improved to bless humanity or to glorify God. The Lord is our gracious benefactor. He has brought light and immortality to light through Jesus Christ. Yes; through Jesus all our blessings come. Oh that every tongue would acknowledge the great Giver! Let every voice, in clear and joyful strains, proclaim the glad tidings that through Jesus the future, immortal life is opened to us; and invitations are given for all to accept this great boon. All the treasures of Heaven are brought within our reach, waiting our demand. Can we be surprised that this poor rich man was called a fool because [17] he turned away from eternal riches, the priceless gift of immortal life, the eternal weight of glory, and was satisfied with perishable, earthly treasures ?

God tests men, some in one way, and some in another. He tests some by bestowing upon them his rich bounties, and others by withholding his favors. He proves the rich to see if they will love God, the Giver, and their neighbor as themselves. When man makes a right use of these bounties, God is pleased; he can then trust him with greater responsibilities. The Lord reveals man's relative estimate of time and eternity, of earth and Heaven. He has admonished us, “If riches increase, set not your heart upon them.” They have a value when used for the good of others and the glory of God; but no earthly treasure is to be your portion, your god, or your saviour.

My brethren, the world will never believe that you are in earnest in your faith until you have less to say about temporal things and more about the realities of the eternal world. The Lord is coming; but many who profess the faith do not realize that that event is nigh. They cannot fasten their faith upon the revealed purposes of God. With some, the passion for money-making has become all-

absorbing, and earthly riches have eclipsed the heavenly treasure. Eternal things have faded from the mind, as of minor consequence, while worldliness has come in like a flood. The great question is, How can I make money? Men are alive to every hope of gain. They try a thousand plans and devices, among them various inventions and patent-rights. Some dig in the earth for the precious metals, others deal in bank stock, still others till the soil; but all have the one object in view of making money. They become bewildered and even insane, in the pursuit of wealth; yet they refuse to see the advantage of securing an immortal inheritance.

When Christ was on earth, he was brought in contact with some whose imaginations were fevered with the hope of worldly gain. They were never at rest, but were constantly trying something new, and their extravagant expectations were aroused only to be disappointed. Jesus knew the wants of the human heart, which are the same in all ages; and he called their attention to the only permanent riches. “The kingdom of Heaven,” said he, “is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which, when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.” He tells men of treasure beyond estimate, which is within the reach of all. He came to earth to guide their minds in their search for this treasure. The way is marked out; the very poorest who will follow him will be made richer than, the most wealthy upon earth who know not Jesus, and they will be made increasingly rich by sharing their happiness with others.

[18]

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.” Those who do this will meet with no loss. The treasure laid up in Heaven is secure; and it is put to our account, for Jesus said, “Lay up for *yourselves* treasures in Heaven.” Men may sow here, but they reap in eternity.

It is this eternal treasure that ministers of Christ are to present wherever they may go. They are to urge the people to become wise unto salvation. They are not to allow world-loving, time-serving professed believers to influence their course and weaken their faith. It is not their mission to help individuals or churches to contrive how

they can save money by narrow plans and circum-scribed efforts in the cause of God. Instead of this they are to teach men how to work disinterestedly, and thus become rich toward God. They should educate minds to place the right estimate on eternal things, and to make the kingdom of Heaven first.

[19] Calebs are wanted in these two fields. There must be in these Conferences, not children, but men who will move understandingly and bear burdens, letting their voice be heard above the voices of the unfaithful, who present objections, doubts, and criticism. Great interests are not to be managed by children. An undeveloped Christian, dwarfed in religious growth, destitute of wisdom from above, is unprepared to meet the fierce conflicts through which the church is often called to pass. "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night." Unless the minister shall fearlessly declare the whole truth, unless he shall have an eye single to the glory of God, and shall work under the direction of the great Captain of his salvation, unless he shall move to the front, irrespective of censure and uncontaminated by applause, he will be accounted an unfaithful watchman.

There are some in — who ought to be men instead of boys, and heavenly minded instead of earthly and sensual; but their spiritual vision has become obscured; the Saviour's great love has not ravished their souls. He has many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now. You are children in growth, and cannot comprehend the mysteries of God. When God raises up men to do his work, they are false to their trust if they allow their testimony to be shaped to please the minds of the unconsecrated. He will prepare men for the times. They will be humble, God-fearing men, not conservative, not policy men; but men who have moral independence, and will move forward in the fear of the Lord. They will be kind, noble, courteous; yet they will not be swayed from the right path, but will proclaim the truth in righteousness whether men will hear or whether they will forbear.

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## CHRISTIAN GROWTH.

I HAVE been shown that those who have a knowledge of the truth, and yet allow all their powers to be absorbed in worldly interests, are unfaithful. They are not, by their good works, letting the light of truth shine to others. Nearly all their ability is devoted to becoming sharp, skillful men of the world. They forget that their talents were given them of God to be used in advancing his cause. If they were faithful to their duty, the result would be great gain of souls to the Master; but many are lost through their neglect.

God calls upon those who know his will to be doers of his word. [20] Weakness, half-heartedness, and indecision provoke the assaults of Satan; and those who permit these traits to grow will be borne helplessly down by the surging waves of temptation. Everyone who professes the name of Christ is required to grow up to the full stature of Christ, the Christian's living head.

We all need a guide through the many strait places in life, as much as the sailor needs a pilot over the sandy bar or up the rocky river; and where is this guide to be found? We point you, dear brethren, to the Bible. Inspired of God, written by holy men, it points out with great clearness and precision the duties of both old and young. It elevates the mind, softens the heart, and imparts gladness and holy joy to the spirit. The Bible presents a perfect standard of character; it is an infallible guide under all circumstances, even to the end of the journey of life. Take it as the man of your counsel, the rule of your daily life.

Every means of grace should be diligently improved that the love of God may abound in the soul more and more, "that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being filled with the fruits of righteousness." Your Christian life must take on vigorous and stalwart forms. You can attain to the high standard set before you in the Scriptures, and you must if you would be children of God. You cannot stand still; you must either advance or retrograde. You must have spiritual

knowledge, that you “may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ,” that you may be “filled with all the fullness of God.”

[21] Many who have an intelligent knowledge of the truth, and are able to defend it by arguments, are doing nothing for the up building of Christ’s kingdom. We meet them from time to time; but they bear no fresh testimonies of personal experience in the Christian life; they relate no new victories gained in the holy warfare. Instead of this, you notice the same old routine,—the same expressions in prayer and exhortation. Their prayers have no new note; they express no greater intelligence in the things of God, no more earnest, living faith. Such persons are not living plants in the garden of the Lord, sending forth fresh shoots and new foliage, and the grateful fragrance of a holy life. They are not growing Christians. They have limited views and plans, and there is no expansion of mind, no valuable additions to the treasures of Christian knowledge. Their powers have not been taxed in this direction. They have not learned to view men and things as God views them, and in many cases unsanctified sympathy has injured souls and greatly crippled the cause of God. The spiritual stagnation that prevails is terrible. Many lead a formal Christian life, and claim that their sins have been forgiven, when they are as destitute of any real knowledge of Christ as is the sinner.

Brethren, will you have a stunted Christian growth, or will you make healthy progress in the divine life? Where there is spiritual health, there is growth. The child of God grows up to the full stature of a man or woman in Christ. There is no limit to his improvement. When the love of God is a living principle in the soul, there are no narrow, confined views; there is love and faithfulness in warnings and reproofs; there is earnest work, and a disposition to bear burdens and take responsibilities.

Some are not willing to do self-denying work. They show real impatience when urged to take some responsibility. “What need is there,” say they, “of an increase of knowledge and experience ?” This explains it all. They feel that they are “rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing,” while Heaven pronounces them poor, miserable, blind, and naked. To these the True Witness says, “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayst

be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayst be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayst see." Your very self-complacency shows you to be in need of everything. You are spiritually sick, and need Jesus as your physician.

In the Scriptures thousands of gems of truth lie hidden from the surface-seeker. The mine of truth is never exhausted. The more you search the Scriptures with humble hearts, the greater will be your interest, and the more you will feel like exclaiming with Paul, "Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Every day you should learn something new from the Scriptures. Search them as for hid treasures, for they contain the words of eternal life. Pray for wisdom and understanding to comprehend these holy writings. If you would do this, you would find new glories in the word of God; you would feel that you had received new and precious light on subjects connected with the truth, and the Scriptures would be constantly receiving a new value in your estimation. [22]

"The great day of the Lord is near; it is near, and hasteth greatly." Jesus says, "Lo, I come quickly." We should keep these words ever in mind, and act as though we do indeed believe that the coming of the Lord is nigh, and that we are pilgrims and strangers upon the earth. The vital energies of the church of God must be brought into active exercise for the great object of self-renovation; every member must be an active agent for God. "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and 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." This is a particular work, which must be carried forward in all harmony, in unity of spirit, and in the bonds of peace. No place should be given to criticisms, doubts, and unbelief.

The U. C. and N. P. Conferences are years behind. Some who ought to be strong and established in Christ are as babes in understanding and experimental knowl- edge of the workings of the [23]

Spirit of God. After years of experience they are able to comprehend only the first principles of that grand system of faith and doctrine that constitutes the Christian religion. They do not comprehend that perfection of character which will receive the commendation, "Well done."

Brethren, your duty, happiness, future usefulness, and final salvation call upon you to sever the tendrils of your affections from everything earthly and corruptible. There is an unsanctified sympathy that partakes of the nature of love-sick sentimentalism, and is earthly, sensual. It will require no feeble effort for some of you to overcome this, and change the course of your life; for you have not placed yourselves in connection with the Strength of Israel, and have become enfeebled in all your faculties. Now you are loudly called upon to be diligent in the use of every means of grace, that you may be transformed in character, and may grow to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus.

We have great victories to gain, and a Heaven to lose if we do not gain them. The carnal heart must be crucified; for its tendency is to moral corruption, and the end thereof is death. Nothing but the life-giving influences of the gospel can help the soul. Pray that the mighty energies of the Holy Spirit, with all their quickening, recuperative, and transforming power, may fall like an electric shock on the palsy-stricken soul, causing every nerve to thrill with new life, restoring the whole man from his dead, earthly, sensual state to spiritual soundness. You will thus become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust; and in your souls will be reflected the image of Him by whose stripes you are healed.

### TITHES AND OFFERINGS.

[24] The Lord requires that we return to him in tithes and offerings, a portion of the goods he has lent us. He accepts these offerings as an act of humble obedience on our part, and a grateful acknowledgment of our in-debtedness to him for all the blessings we enjoy. Then let us offer willingly, saying with David, "All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." Withholding more than is meet tends to poverty. God will bear long with some, he will test and

prove all; but his curse will surely follow the selfish, world loving professor of truth. God knows the heart; every thought and every purpose is open to his eye. He says, "Them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." He knows whom to bless, and who are deserving of his curse. He makes no mistakes; for angels are keeping a record of all our works and words.

When the people of God were about to build the sanctuary in the wilderness, extensive preparations were necessary. Costly materials were collected, and among them was much gold and silver. As the rightful owner of all their treasures, the Lord called for these offerings from the people; but he accepted only those that were given freely. The people offered willingly, until word was brought to Moses, "The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make." And the proclamation was made to all the congregation: "Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing; for the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much."

Had some men of limited ideas been on the ground, they would have opened their eyes in horror. Like Judas they would have asked, "To what purpose is this waste?" "Why not make everything in the cheapest manner?" But the sanctuary was not designed to honor man, but the God of Heaven. He had given specific directions how everything was to be done. The people were to be taught that he was a being of greatness and majesty, and that he was to be worshiped with reverence and awe.

The house where God is worshiped should be in accordance with his character and majesty. There are small churches that ever will be small, because they place their own interests above the interests of God's cause. While they have large, convenient houses for themselves, and are constantly improving their premises, they are content to have a most unsuitable place for the worship of God, where his holy presence is to dwell. They wonder that Joseph and Mary were obliged to find shelter in a stable, and that there the Saviour was born; but they are willing to expend upon themselves a large part of their means, while the house of worship is shamefully neglected. How often they say, "The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built." But the word of the Lord to them is, "Is it

time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste ?”

The house where Jesus is to meet with his people should be neat and attractive. If there are but few believers in a place, put up a neat but humble house, and by dedicating it to God, invite Jesus to come as your guest. How does he look upon his people when they have every convenience that heart could wish, but are willing to meet for his worship in a barn, some miserable, out-of-the-way building, or some cheap, forsaken apartment? You work for your friends, you expend means to make everything around them as attractive as possible; but Jesus, the One who gave everything for you, even his precious life,—He who is the Majesty of Heaven, the King of kings and Lord of lords,—is favored with a place on earth but little better than the stable which was his first home. Shall we not look at these things as God looks at them ? Shall we not test our motives, and see what kind of faith we possess?

[26] “God loveth a cheerful giver,” and those who love him will give freely and cheerfully when by so doing they can advance his cause and promote his glory. The Lord never requires his people to offer more than they are able, but according to their ability he is pleased to accept and bless their thank-offerings. Let willing obedience and pure love bind upon the altar every offering that is made to God; for with such sacrifices he is well pleased, while those that are offered grudgingly are an offense to him. When churches or individuals have no heart in their offerings, but would limit the cost of carrying forward the work of God, and gauge it by their own narrow views, they show decidedly that they have no living connection with God. They are at variance with his plan and manner of working, and he will not bless them.

We are builders for God, and we must build upon the foundation which he has prepared for us. No man is to build upon his own foundation, independent of the plan which God has devised. There are men whom God has raised up as counselors, men whom he has taught, and whose heart and soul and life are in the work. These men are to be highly esteemed for their work's sake. There are some who will wish to follow their own crude notions; but they must learn to receive advice and to work in harmony with their brethren, or they will sow doubt and discord that they will not care to harvest. It is

the will of God that those who engage in his work shall be subject to one another. His worship must be conducted with consistency, unity, and sound judgment. God is our only sufficient helper. The laws which govern his people, their principles of thought and action, are received from him through his word and Spirit. When his word is loved and obeyed, his children walk in the light, and there is no occasion of stumbling in them. They do not accept the world's low standard, but work from the Bible standpoint.

The selfishness which exists among God's people is very offensive to him. The Scriptures denounce covetousness as idolatry. "No covetous man," says Paul, "who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." The trouble with many is, they have too little faith. Like the rich man in the parable, they want to see their supplies piled up in their granaries. The world is to be warned, and God wants us wholly engaged in his work; but men have so much to do to forward their money-making projects that they have no time to push the triumphs of the cross of Christ. They have neither time nor disposition to put their intellect, tact, and energy into the cause of God.

Brethren and sisters, I wish to excite in your minds disgust for your present limited ideas of God's cause and work. I want you to comprehend the great sacrifice that Christ made for you when he became poor, that through his poverty you might come into possession of eternal riches. Oh! do not, by your indifference to the eternal weight of glory which is within your reach, cause angels to weep and hide their faces in shame and disgust. Arouse from your lethargy; arouse every Godgiven faculty, and work for precious souls for whom Christ died. These souls, if brought to the fold of Christ, will live through the ceaseless ages of eternity; and will you plan to do as little as possible for their salvation, while, like the man with the one talent, you invest your means in the earth? Like that unfaithful servant, are you charging God with reaping where he has not sown, and gathering where he has not strewed?

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All that you have and are belongs to God. Then will you not say from the heart, "All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee"? "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase." Paul thus exhorts his Corinthian brethren to Christian beneficence: "As ye abound in everything, in

faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.” In his epistle to Timothy he says, “Charge them that are rich in this world that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”

[28] Liberality is not so natural to us that we gain this virtue by accident. It must be cultivated. We must deliberately resolve that we will honor God with our substance; and then we must let nothing tempt us to rob him of the tithes and offerings that are his due. We must be intelligent, systematic, and continuous in our acts of charity to men and our expressions of gratitude to God for his bounties to us. This is too sacred a duty to be left to chance, or to be controlled by impulse or feeling. We should regularly reserve something for God’s cause, that he may not be robbed of the portion which he claims. When we rob God we rob ourselves also. We give up the heavenly treasure for the sake of having more of this earth. This is a loss that we cannot afford to sustain. If we live so that we can have the blessing of God, we shall have his prospering hand with us in our temporal affairs; but if his hand is against us. he can defeat all our plans, and scatter faster than we can gather.

I was shown that the situation of things in these two Conferences is sad indeed; but God has many precious souls here, over whom he has a jealous care, and he will not leave them to be deceived and misled.

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## FAITHFULNESS IN THE WORK OF GOD.

THERE is precious talent in the churches in Oregon and Washington Territory; and had it been developed by well-directed labor, there might now be efficient workers in these Conferences. A live church is always a working church. The truth is a power, and those who see its force will stand boldly and fearlessly in its defense. Truth must be apprehended by the intellect, received into the heart, and its principles incorporated into the character; and then there must be a constant effort to win others to accept it, for God holds men responsible for the use they make of the light he imparts to them.

The Lord calls upon all his people to improve the ability he has given them. The mental powers should be developed to the utmost; they should be strengthened and ennobled by dwelling upon spiritual truths. If the mind is allowed to run almost entirely upon trifling things and the common business of every-day life, it will, in accordance with one of its unvarying laws, become weak and frivolous, and deficient in spiritual power.

Times that will try men's souls are just before us; and those who are weak in the faith will not stand the test of those days of peril. The great truths of revelation are to be carefully studied; for we shall all want an intelligent knowledge of the word of God. By Bible study and daily communion with Jesus, we shall gain clear, well-defined views of individual responsibility, and strength to stand in the day of trial and temptation. He whose life is united to Christ by hidden links will be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

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More thought should be given to the things of God, and less to temporal matters. The world-loving professor, if he will exercise his mind in that direction, may become as familiar with the word of God as he now is with worldly business. "Search the Scriptures," said Christ; "for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." The Christian is required to be diligent in searching the Scriptures, to read over and over again the truths of God's word. Willful ignorance on this subject endangers the

Christian life and character. It blinds the understanding and corrupts the noblest powers. It is this that brings confusion into our lives. Our people need to understand the oracles of God; they need to have a systematic knowledge of the principles of revealed truth, which will fit them for what is coming upon the earth, and prevent them from being carried about by every wind of doctrine.

[30] Great changes are soon to take place in the world, and everyone will need an experimental knowledge of the things of God. It is the work of Satan to dishearten the people of God, and to unsettle their faith. He tries in every way to insinuate doubts and questionings in regard to the position, the faith, the plans, of the men upon whom God has laid the burden of a special work, and who are zealously doing that work. Although he may be baffled again and again, yet he renews his attacks, working through those who profess to be humble and God-fearing, and who are apparently interested in, or believers of, present truth. The advocates of truth expect fierce and cruel opposition from their open enemies; but this is far less dangerous than the secret doubts expressed by those who feel at liberty to question and find fault with what God's servants are doing. These may appear to be humble men; but they are self-deceived and they deceive others. In their hearts are envy and evil surmisings. They unsettle the faith of the people in those in whom they should have confidence, those whom God has chosen to do his work; and when they are reprov'd for their course, they take it as personal abuse. While professing to be doing God's work, they are in reality aiding the enemy.

Brethren, never allow any one's ideas to unsettle your faith in regard to the order and harmony which should exist in the church. Many of you do not see all things clearly. The directions in regard to order in the tabernacle service were recorded that lessons might be drawn from it by all who should live upon the earth. Men were selected to do various parts of the work of setting up and taking down the tabernacle, and if one strayed in carelessly and put his hands to the work assigned to another, he was to be put to death. We serve the same God to-day. But the death penalty has been abolished; had it not been, there would not now be so much careless, disorderly work in his cause. The God of Heaven is a God of order, and he requires

all his followers to have rules and regulations, and to preserve order. All should have a perfect understanding of God's work.

It is unsafe to cherish doubt in the heart even for a moment. The seeds of doubt which Pharaoh sowed when he rejected the first miracle, were allowed to grow, and they produced such an abundant harvest that all subsequent miracles could not persuade him that his position was wrong. He continued to venture on in his own course, going from one degree of questioning to another, and his heart became more and more hardened until he was called to look upon the cold, dead faces of the firstborn.

God is at work, and we are not doing one-half that must be done to prepare a people to stand in the day when the Son of man shall be revealed. Woe he to the man that shall in the least degree seek to hinder the work which God is doing. We must labor for others; we must try to weaken the hold of our brethren upon their earthly treasures; for many will sell their birthright to eternal life for worldly advantages. How much better to encourage them to lay up their treasure in Heaven, than complainingly to drop the words, "It is money, money, that these men are continually calling for; and they are getting rich by it." How sweet are words like these to the world-loving professor! How they strengthen his courage to withhold from God the proportion which belongs to him, and which should be returned to him in tithes and offerings! The curse of the Lord will rest upon those who fail to render to him his own. Let us work in harmony with God. His servants have a message to bear to money-lovers; why should they not bear a close testimony in regard to bringing all the tithes into the storehouse, when the Lord himself has set them the example? [31]

The religion of Christ subdues the selfish spirit, and transforms the mind and the affections; it lays low the pride of men, that God alone may be exalted. This is what Bro. A wants. He needs a practical faith in God. He needs to see and feel the glory of serving Christ; he needs to exalt principle and elevate the Christian standard; he needs to store his mind with the rich promises, the warnings, the counsels and threatenings, of God's word; he needs to see the importance of having faith and corresponding works, that he may fairly represent, at home, in the church, and in his business, the purity and elevated character of religion. He should place himself

in connection with Christ, that he may have spiritual power. His connection with the world, and with influences adverse to the spirit of truth, have greater power over him than the Spirit of Christ. Here is his danger; and he will eventually make shipwreck of faith unless he changes his course of action and firmly connects with the Source of light.

[32] If his interest in spiritual things were as great as it is in the things of the world, his consecration to God would be entire; he would show himself a true disciple of Christ, and God would accept and use the talents which are now wholly devoted to the service of the world. The very same ability is required in the cause of God that is now given to the accumulation of property. Managers are needed in every branch of his work, that it may be carried on with energy and system. If a man has tact, industry, and enthusiasm, he will make a success in temporal business, and the same qualities, consecrated to the work of God, will prove even doubly efficient; for divine power will be combined with human effort. The best of plans, either in temporal or spiritual matters, will prove a failure if their execution is intrusted to inexperienced, incapable hands.

Those who bury their talents in this world are not pleasing God. All their powers are devoted to the accumulation of property, and the desire to accumulate becomes a passion. Bro. A is an active man, and he takes pride in carrying out worldly projects. If the same interest, tact, and ambition were exercised in trading for the Lord, how much grander, nobler results would he realize! The education obtained in worldly business will not be of the least advantage in the future life, for no such business will be carried on in Heaven; but if the faculties which God has given are used to his glory, to the upbuilding of his kingdom, an education is received which will be taken into Heaven.

What is our position in the world! We are in the waiting time. But this period is not to be spent in abstract devotion. Waiting, watching, and vigilant working are to be combined. Our life should not be all bustle and drive and planning about the things of the world, to the neglect of personal piety and of the service that God requires. While we should not be slothful in business, we should be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. The lamp of the soul must be trimmed, and we must have the oil of grace in our vessels with our lamps. Every

precaution must be used to prevent spiritual declension, lest the day of the Lord overtake us as a thief. That day is not to be put far off; it is near, and no man should say, even in his heart, much less by his works, "My Lord delayeth his coming," lest for so doing his portion be appointed with hypocrites and unbelievers. [33]

I saw that God's people are in great peril; many are dwellers upon the earth; their interest and affections are centered in the world. Their example is not right. The world is deceived by the course pursued by many who profess great and noble truths. Our responsibility is in accordance with the light given, the graces and gifts bestowed. On the workers whose talents, whose means, whose opportunities and abilities, are greatest, rests the heaviest responsibility. God calls upon Bro. A to change his course of action, to use his ability to God's glory instead of debasing it to sordid worldly interests. Now is his day of trust; soon will come his day of reckoning.

Bro. A was presented before me to represent a class who are in a similar position. They have never been indifferent to the smallest worldly advantage. By diligent business tact and successful investments, by trading, not on pounds, but on pence and farthings, they have accumulated property. But in doing this they have educated faculties inconsistent with the development of Christian character. Their lives in no way represent Christ; for they love the world and its gain better than they love God or the truth. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

All the abilities which men possess belong to God. Worldly conformity and attachments are emphatically forbidden in his word. When the power of the transforming grace of God is felt upon the heart, it will send a man, hitherto worldly, into every pathway of beneficence. He who has in his heart a determination to lay up treasure in the world, will "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 [the foundation of all avarice and worldliness], which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

Each member of the church should feel under sacred obligations to guard strictly the interests of the cause of God. The individual members of the church are responsible for its distracted, discouraged [34]

state, by which the most sacred truths ever committed to man are dis-honored. There is no excuse for this condition of things. Jesus has opened to everyone a way by which wisdom, grace, and power may be obtained. He is our example in all things, and nothing should divert the mind from the main object in life, which is to have Christ in the soul, melting and subduing the heart. When this is the case, every member of the church, every professor of the truth, will be Christlike in character, in words, in actions.

Some who have been channels of light, whose hearts have been made glad by the precious light of truth, have denied that truth by assimilating to the world. They have thus lost the spirit of self-sacrifice and the power of the truth, and have depended for happiness upon unstable things of earth. They are in great peril. Having once rejoiced in the light, they will be left in total darkness unless they speedily gather up the rays that are still shining upon them, and return to the Lord with repentance and confession. We are in a day of peril, when error and deception are captivating the people. Who will warn the world, who will show them the better way, unless those who have had the light of truth are sanctified through it, and shall let their light so shine that others may see their good works and glorify God? I wish I could impress upon all the danger they are in of losing Heaven. Joining the church is one thing, and connecting with Christ is quite another. Not all the names registered in the church books are registered in the Lamb's book of life. Many, though apparently sincere believers, do not keep up a living connection with Christ. They have enlisted, they have entered their names on the register; but the inner work of grace is not wrought in the heart. As the result, they are not happy, and they make hard work of serving God.

[35] "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged." Remember that your brethren are fallible creatures like yourself, and regard their mistakes and errors with the same mercy and forbearance that you wish them to exercise toward you. They should not be watched, and their defects paraded to the front for the world to exult over. Those who dare to do this have climbed upon the judgment seat and made themselves judges, while they have neglected the garden of their own hearts, and have allowed poisonous weeds to obtain a rank growth.

We individually have a case pending in the court of Heaven. Character is being weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, and it should be the earnest desire of all to walk humbly and carefully, lest, neglecting to let their light shine forth to the world, they fail of the grace of God and lose everything that is valuable. All dissension, all differences and fault-finding, should be put away, with all evil speaking and bitterness; kindness, love, and compassion for one another should be cherished, that the prayer of Christ that his disciples might be one as he is one with the Father, may be answered. The harmony and unity of the church are the credentials that they present to the world that Jesus is the Son of God. Genuine conversion will ever lead to genuine love for Jesus and for all those for whom he died.

Every one who does what he can for God, who is true and earnest to do good to those around him, will receive the blessing of God upon his efforts. A man may render effective service for God although he is not the head or the heart of the body of Christ. The service represented in the word of God by that of the hand or the foot, though lowly, is nevertheless important. It is not the greatness of the work, but the love with which it is done, the motive underlying the action, that determines its worth. There is work to be done for our neighbors and for those with whom we associate. We have no liberty to cease our patient, prayerful labors for souls as long as any are out of the ark of safety. There is no release in this war. We are soldiers of Christ, and are under obligation to watch lest the enemy gain the advantage, and secure to his service souls that we might win to Christ.

The day of trust and responsibility is ours; we have a work to do for God. The church in — has been gradually growing cold and irreligious. There is much to be done for its individual members. Great light has shone upon their pathway. For this they will be held accountable. Said Christ, “Ye are the light of the world;” “ye are the salt of the earth.” They need a deeper work of grace in their hearts. There must be a reformation before God can bless them. There are plenty of formal professors. A selfish grasping for gain eclipses the heavenly inheritance. If the kingdom of Heaven is made first, noble integrity will shine forth in the life and character. This is what Bro. A needs if he would exert an influence for good. He loves to handle

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money, and to see it accumulate by turning it one way and another. His mind and affections are absorbed in worldly enterprises. He is drunken with the cares of this life; that is, he is so swallowed up in his business that he cannot think rationally and intelligently of the things of God; his vision is obscured by love of money. The truth should reach down deep into his heart, and develop fruit in his private and public life.

Bro. A has excused himself for not making the Scriptures his study, because he was a business man. But to one pressed with business cares the Scriptures will be a source of strength and safety. Such a man has greater need of light from the word of God, of its counsels and warnings, than if he were not placed in such a dangerous position. If Bro. A would exercise the same forethought and business tact in the things of God that he has given to worldly matters, he would realize blessed results. If he thinks that God is satisfied with him while giving his talent and energy almost entirely to the service of mammon, he is fearfully deceived. Said Christ, "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." If Bro. A continues to make eternal things subordinate to his worldly interests, his passion for accumulating will steadily increase until it will overrule principle, and he will be so blinded by the god of this world that he will be unable to discern between the sacred and the common.

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Bro. A has a strong influence upon the minds of his brethren; they view things largely from his standpoint. He needs to improve in spiritual soundness, and be wise in the things of God. He should begin to show an interest in and devotion to heavenly things, and to so educate his powers that they may be of service in the cause of God. He needs the armor of righteousness with which to ward off the darts of the enemy. It is impossible for him to obtain salvation unless there is a decided change in the objects and pursuits of his life, unless he exercises himself continually in spiritual things.

God calls upon the individual members of the churches in these two Conferences to arouse and be converted. Brethren, your worldliness, your distrust, your murmuring, have placed you in such a position that it will be exceedingly difficult for anyone to labor among you. While your president neglected his work and failed in



his duty, your attitude was not such as to give him any encouragement. The one in authority should have acquitted himself as a man of God, reproving, exhorting, encouraging, as the case demanded, whether you would receive or reject his testimony. But he was easily discouraged, and left you without the help that a faithful minister of Christ should have given. He failed in not keeping up with the opening providence of God, and in not showing you your duty and educating you up to the demands of the time; but the ministers neglect should not dishearten you, and lead you to excuse yourselves for neglecting duty. There is the more need of energy and fidelity on your part.

### VOWING AND NOT PAYING.

Some of you have been Stumbling over your pledges. The Spirit of the Lord came into the — meeting in answer to prayer, and while your hearts were softened under its influence, you pledged. While the streams of salvation were pouring upon your hearts, you felt that you must follow the example of Him who went about doing good, and who cheerfully gave his life to ransom man from sin and degradation. Under the heavenly, inspiring influence, you saw that selfishness and worldliness were not consistent with Christian character, and that you could not live for yourselves and be Christlike. But when the influence of his abundant love and mercy was not felt in so marked a manner in your hearts, you withdrew your offerings, and God withdrew his blessing from you. [38]

Adversity came upon some. There was a failure in their crops, so that they could not redeem their pledges; and some were even brought into straitened circumstances. Then, of course, they could not be expected to pay. But had they not murmured and withdrawn their hearts from their pledges, God would have worked for them, and would have opened ways whereby every one could have paid what he had promised. They did not wait in faith, trusting God to open the way so that they could redeem their pledges. Some had means at their command; and had they possessed the same willing mind as when they pledged, and had they heartily rendered to God in tithes and offerings that which he had lent them for this purpose, they would have been greatly blessed. But Satan came in with his

temptations, and led some to question the motives and the spirit which actuated the servant of God in presenting the call for means. Some felt that they had been deceived and defrauded. In spirit they repudiated their vows, and whatever they did afterward was with reluctance, and therefore they received no blessing.

[39] In the parable of the talents, the man to whom was intrusted one talent manifested a grudging spirit, and hid his money so that his lord could not be benefited by it. When his master required him to give an account of his stewardship, he excused his neglect by laying blame upon his lord. "I knew thee [he professes to be acquainted with his lord], that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed; and I was afraid [that all my improvements would not be mine, but that you would claim them], and went and hid thy 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 strewed; 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 [made a right use of my goods] shall be given, and he shall have abundance [for I can trust him, knowing that he will make right improvement of what is lent him]; but from him that hath not [who has been fearful to trust me] shall be taken away even that which he hath. [I shall deprive him of what he claims as his; he shall forfeit all right of trust; I will take away his talents, and give them to one who will improve them.] And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The spirit manifested by the brethren in regard to their pledges has been very offensive to God. Had they seen the cause prospering in the fields already entered, they would have felt differently. There was no deception practiced upon them, and the charge of deception which they made was against the Spirit of God, and not against the servant he sent. Had Bro. A occupied the right position in this matter, had he cherished the spirit which influenced him to make the pledge, he would, not have felt such an unwillingness to invest in the cause of God. But he thought how much he could do with his means by investing it in worldly enterprises. Avarice, worldliness,

and covetousness are defects in character which are opposed to the exercise of the Christian graces. Said the apostle, "Let your conversation [your very deportment and habits of life] be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have; for He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

It was evident that many who vowed had no faith, and believed themselves wronged. They talked of it and dwelt upon it until it seemed a reality to them. They felt that they ought not to have aided the General Conference, and urged that they ought to have had the means to use in their own field. The Lord worked for them according to their limited faith. Satan, who had been holding their minds in deception, caused them to think that they had done a liberal thing in sending means to the General Conference, when upon investigation the facts showed that they still lacked a considerable of returning to the Conference the amount that had been paid out in sending them laborers, and in helping them in various ways to start the work and carry it forward. Yet these persons have been grieved, dissatisfied, unhappy, and have backslidden from God, because they thought they were doing such great things. This only shows what a terrible deception can come upon minds when they are not under the special control of the Spirit of God. Their doubting, their suspicions, their prejudice in regard to the General Conference, were all prompted by Satan. The cause of God is one the world over. Every branch of the work centers in Christ. No one portion of the field is independent of the rest.

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Dear brethren, you have let Satan into your hearts, and he will never be fully vanquished until you repent of your wicked doubts and the withdrawal of your pledges. The Lord's messenger was despised, and charged with bringing an undue pressure upon the people. God was displeased with Bro. B because he did not bear a decided testimony against everything of that sort, and show you your sin as it really was.

"When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools. Pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin, neither say thou before the angel that it was an error; wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?"

[41] Here the matter is presented in its true light. Your work was done before the angel of God. Your words were not only heard by men, but the angel of God listened to them, and can you be surprised that God was angry with you? Can you wonder that he has not blessed you, and made you able to pay your pledges? “When you have grumbled, and murmured, and withdrawn your pledges, and felt that God’s servants had deceived you and extorted from you pledges that were not just, the enemy has exulted. Could you see your course as it is, you would never make one semblance of an excuse for it.

Be careful how you speak one word to lessen the influence of God’s messengers. There may sometimes have been too much urging for means. But when the light and love of Jesus illuminates the hearts of his followers, there will be no occasion for urging or begging their money or their service. When they become one with Jesus, and realize that they are not their own, that they are bought with a price, and are therefore the Lord’s property, and that all they have is simply intrusted to them as his stewards, they will with cheerful heart and unswerving fidelity render to God the things that are his. The Lord will not accept an offering that is made unwillingly, grudgingly. With your present feelings there would be no virtue in making more pledges. When you recover from this snare of the enemy, when you heal the breach that you have made, and realize that the wants of God’s cause are as continual as are his gifts to the children of men, your works will correspond with your faith, and you will receive a rich blessing from the Lord.

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## INFLUENCE OF UNBELIEF.

The church in — — has greatly backslidden from God. It is no longer in a state of healthful prosperity. Each individual member of the church has had burdens and discouragements of his own to bear; but these he should have borne, and kept his soul alive before God, without weakening others in the church. He should have added to the strength of the church instead of diminishing it. Bro. C has not taken a position to strengthen his own faith or that of the church. He has been acting on the side of the enemy to dishearten and discourage. Satan is constantly encouraging unbelief. He notes the mistakes and failings of Christ's professed followers, and taunts the angels of God with them. He is an accuser of the brethren, and he will influence as many as possible to do the same work. Those who take it upon themselves to watch their neighbor's garden instead of weeding their own plot of ground, will surely find their own gardens so grown up to weeds that every precious plant will be crowded out. [42]

Bro. C is not in a position to be a light to the world. Oh, no; he is a body of darkness. Eternity will reveal the fact that his inconsiderate words have planted the seeds of questioning, doubt, and fault-finding in many minds, and that his influence has turned many souls from the truth. He has consented to make himself a channel of darkness, to communicate suspicion and bring discouragement upon minds. God is not pleased with him. His own soul is becoming less and less susceptible to the influence of the Spirit of God. He has but little faith; and how could it be otherwise, when by his words he is constantly strengthening unbelief? While he suggests doubts instead of letting beams of precious light shine upon others, he is aiding the enemy in his work. This spirit makes him almost an infidel, and unless he turns square about, he will yet become one.

Bro. C is thoughtless of his words and actions. Idle words, for which he must render an account in the day of God, are almost continually falling from his lips. He places himself upon the enemy's ground, and as the result has not the Spirit of Christ. He will

[43] sometime see that he has made a great mistake, that he has been losing precious, golden moments, which he might have employed in purifying his own heart. He has been picking flaws in others, living on their mistakes; and this is spiritual starvation. Every revival is liable to bring persons into the church who are not really converted. They hold the truth nominally, but are not sanctified by its sweet influence. Being destitute of grace, they are selfish, hard, and unyielding. Such persons are always unreliable. They will ever be doing and saying things contrary to our faith. The church that has such a burden inflicted upon it deserves pity. The world is in opposition to the church, and Satan and his angels are constantly at war with it. Therefore the defects of these unworthy members are held up before those who are sound in the faith.

Those who believe the truth should be determined to help and not to hinder the few in — — who are struggling under discouragements. The members of the church should each have a jealous care that the enemies of our faith have no occasion to triumph over their lifeless, backslidden state. Some have wasted their influence, when with a little self-denial, earnestness, and zeal, they might have been a power on the side of good. This zeal will not come without effort, without earnest struggles. If only three faithful souls were left, in the — — church, they would, if connected with God, be living channels of light, and he would add to their numbers. God has raised up standard-bearers in — —. Some have moved away, some have died, and some have become spiritually dead; their services are given to Satan. They do not realize that a by-and-by is coming, when their account in the heavenly records will be balanced, and when every man's work will be revealed, of what sort it is.

Remember that every one must be judged according to his work. When, in the great day of final reckoning, the record of your life shall be opened before you, my doubting, questioning, accusing brother, how will it stand? "Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? Ye have said, It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have "walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?" This has been the language of your heart; and "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." By your words you are to be justified or condemned. Accusing the brethren

is the very work that Satan has been engaged in since his fall. You have disheartened the church, who had little enough courage at best. You have presented the truth in almost every objectionable light. This is the work Satan is doing. You have no occasion to be proud of your words; for they will bring confusion of face, shame and despair, in the day when every man shall receive according to the deeds done in the body. [44]

Your wife has heard your expressions of darkness until she is molded in a great degree to your ideas. The fear of the Lord is almost entirely removed from you both. You are now sowing seeds of unbelief, and they will produce a plentiful harvest by and by, in the reaping of which you will take no satisfaction. You have lent yourself to the enemy, to be his agent to lead souls to doubt and unbelief. Your whole work has been to scatter from Christ. You glory in your sharpness, your aptness in confusing minds. You think it a mark of intelligence; but it is the same kind of intelligence that the prince of darkness possesses, and will receive the same reward that he is winning by his intense activity and shrewdness. The tendency of this age is to unbelief, to making light of godliness and true religion. This is Satan's plan; and when you yield your powers to unbelief, you are led captive by his devices to do his work.

Your wife will have a hard fight to conquer the devices of the enemy, to overcome her own defects of character, and bring all her powers into subjection to the will of God, planting her feet firmly upon the platform of eternal truth. She is not naturally devotional, and you have placed things before her in such an uncertain light that she is left to drift without anchorage. She takes no real comfort in faith and hope; for she has not an intelligent knowledge of the truth. She is greatly affected by the atmosphere of unbelief she breathes, and if she is lost, the blood of her soul will be found on your garments.

You are just as surely doing the work of Satan as is any one of his open agents. The doubts which you have introduced into many minds will bear fruit. Your harvest is ripening for the final gathering. Will you be proud of it then? You may turn to the Lord; you may find rest in him. But you have so long educated yourself to criticise, to turn and twist everything in a false light, that it will require earnest prayer and constant watchfulness to break the habit [45]

which has become second nature. My heart yearns over you and your family. The Lord is displeased with you; he is grieved every day. You must be a thoroughly converted, transformed man, or you will never have the precious gift of everlasting life.

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## DECEITFULNESS OF SIN.

BRO. D was presented before me as doing a work which in the Judgment he will wish undone. He is not correct in all points of doctrine, and he obstinately maintains his erroneous positions. He is an accuser of the brethren. He has not only thought evil of those whom God has chosen as laborers in his cause, but he has spoken this evil to others. He has not conformed to the Bible rule, and conferred with the leading brethren; and yet he finds fault with them all.

The excuse made for him is, "Oh, Bro. D is such a good man. He is a pattern of amiability and kind-heartedness, and is a ready helper anywhere." Bro. D has many excellent traits of character. He has no great ability as a preacher, but may become an earnest, faithful worker. The enemy has come in through his estimation of himself. Had he not esteemed himself more highly than he should, he would never have dared to use the reputation of his brethren as he has done. By his freedom in gathering up and repeating false reports, he has come in between the people and the message which God has given his ministers to bear to them to fit them to stand in the day of the Lord. His good traits have made him all the more dangerous; for they have given him influence. People have thought that what he said must be so. Had he been an immoral or quarrelsome person, he could not have succeeded in winning the confidence of so many.

Bro. D's manner of working also makes his course more de- [46]  
serving of censure, and a greater offense to God. Had he shown his feelings undisguised, had he said in public the things he talked in private, no one would have thought for a moment of sending him out to labor in the Conference. While he is laboring under its sanction, his brethren have a right to suppose that his views are correct. And with this sanction his influence has been a power for evil. There are some who would never have entertained suspicion of their brethren or thought evil of them, had it not been for his words. He has started minds on a track which, if pursued, will end in rebellion and the loss

of the soul. Stripped of its disguise, this is the work which our good brother has been doing.

God has presented this matter before me in its true light. Bro. D's heart is not right. It is defiled with bitterness, wrath, envy, jealousy, and evil surmising, and it needs to be purified. Unless he changes his course entirely, he will soon be a fallen man. Charity, or love, "suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

Suppose that Bro. D leads the people to question and reject the testimonies that God has been giving to his people during the past thirty-eight years; suppose he makes them believe that the leaders in this work are designing, dishonest men, engaged in deceiving the people; what great and good work has he done? It is a work exactly similar to that of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; and with all whom he has influenced the result will be disastrous. He has thought that he could not be in error; but does this work bear the signet of Heaven? No; Bro. D has indulged a self-righteous spirit, which has almost ruined him. Let him come upon an equality with his brethren; if he has difficulties with them in regard to their course of action, let him show wherein their sin lies.

[47] When Satan became disaffected in Heaven, he did not lay his complaint before God and Christ; but he went among the angels who thought him perfect, and represented that God had done him injustice in preferring Christ to himself. The result of this misrepresentation was that through their sympathy with him one-third of the angels lost their innocence, their high estate, and their happy home. Satan is instigating men to continue on earth the same work of jealousy and evil surmising that he commenced in Heaven.

When Jesus was upon earth, the Jews were ever acting as spies on his track. They gathered up every false report, and charged him with one crime after another. They were constantly endeavoring to turn the people away from him. Was their course right? If it was, then Bro. D has not sinned, for he is doing a similar work. He may now break the snare of the enemy; he may conquer this spirit which leads him to exalt himself above his brethren. Let him seek meekness, and

learn to esteem others better than himself. If he will work in fidelity and in harmony with God's plan, he will hear the sweet words, "Well done," from the lips of the Master. But if he rejects the labors of God's servants, if he chooses his own way and leans to his own understanding, he will surely make shipwreck of faith. God has not passed his people by, and chosen one solitary man here and another there as the only ones worthy to be intrusted with his truth. He does not give one man new light contrary to the established faith of the body. In every reform men have arisen making this claim. Paul warned the church in his day, "Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." The greatest harm to God's people comes through those who go out from among them speaking perverse things. Through them the way of truth is evil spoken of.

Let none be self-confident, as though God had given them special light above their brethren. Christ is represented as dwelling in his people; and believers, as "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." "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord," says Paul, "beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation where with ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." [48]

That which Bro. D calls light is apparently harmless; it does not look as though anyone could be injured by it. But, brethren, it is Satan's device, his entering wedge. This has been tried again and again. One accepts some new and original idea which does not seem to conflict with the truth, He talks of it and dwells upon it until it seems to him to be clothed with beauty and importance, for Satan has power to give this false appearance. At last it becomes the all-absorbing theme, the one great point around which everything centers; and the truth is uprooted from the heart.

No sooner are erratic ideas started in his mind than Bro. D begins to lose faith, and to question the work of the Spirit which has been manifested among us for so many years. He is not a man who will entertain what he believes to be special light without imparting it to others; therefore it is not safe to give him influence that will enable him to unsettle other minds. It is opening a door through which Satan will rush in many errors to divert the mind from the importance of the truth for this time. Brethren, as an ambassador of Christ I warn you to beware of these side-issues, whose tendency is to divert the mind from the truth. Error is never harmless. It never sanctifies, but always brings confusion and dissension. It is always dangerous. The enemy has great power over minds that are not thoroughly fortified by prayer and established in Bible truth.

[49] There are a thousand temptations in disguise prepared for those who have the light of truth; and the only safety for any of us is in receiving no new doctrine, no new interpretation of the Scriptures, without first submitting it to brethren of experience. Lay it before them in a humble, teachable spirit, with earnest prayer; and if they see no light in it, yield to their judgment; for “in the multitude of counselors there is safety.”

Satan saw in Bro. D traits that would enable him to gain an advantage. “The prince of this world cometh,” said Christ, “and hath nothing in me.” But while appearing to possess great humility, Bro. D has placed too high an estimate upon himself. For years he has entertained the feeling that his brethren did not appreciate him, and he has expressed this feeling to others; and Satan found in him a self-conceit to which he could successfully appeal.

This is a time of extreme peril to Bro. D, and to many others. Angels of God are watching these souls with intense interest, and Satan and his angels are very anxious to see how their plans will succeed. This is a crisis in Bro. D’s life. He will here make decisions for time and for eternity. God loves him, and this experience may be one of great value to him. If he fully yields his heart to God, and accepts all the truth, he will be a tireless laborer; God will work through him, and he may do much good. But he must work in harmony with his brethren. He must overcome sensitiveness, and learn to endure hardness as a good soldier of the cross of Christ.

Satan is constantly at work; but few have any idea of his activity and subtlety. The people of God must be prepared to withstand the wily foe. It is this resistance that Satan dreads. He knows better than we do the limit of his power, and how easily he can be overcome if we resist and face him. Through divine strength, the weakest saint is more than a match for him and all his angels, and if brought to the test, he would be able to prove his superior power. Therefore Satan's step is noiseless, his movements stealthy, and his batteries masked. He does not venture to show himself openly, lest he arouse the Christian's dormant energies, and send him to God in prayer.

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The enemy is preparing for his last campaign against the church. He has so concealed himself from view that many can hardly believe that he exists, much less can they be convinced of his amazing activity and power. They have to a great extent forgotten his past record, and when he makes another advance move, they will not recognize him as their enemy, that old serpent, but they will consider him a friend, one who is doing a good work. Boasting of their independence, they will, under his specious, bewitching influence, obey the worst impulses of the human heart, and yet believe that God is leading them. Could their eyes be opened to distinguish their captain, they would see that they are not serving God, but the enemy of all righteousness. They would see that their boasted independence is one of the heaviest fetters Satan can rivet on unbalanced minds.

Man is Satan's captive, and is naturally inclined to follow his suggestions and do his bidding. He has in himself no power to oppose effectual resistance to evil. It is only as Christ abides in him, by living faith, influencing his desires and strengthening him with strength from above, that man may venture to face so terrible a foe. Every other means of defense is utterly vain. It is only through Christ that Satan's power is limited. This is a momentous truth that all should understand. Satan is busy every moment, going to and fro, walking up and down in the earth, seeking whom he may devour. But the earnest prayer of faith will baffle his strongest efforts. Then take the "shield of faith," brethren, "wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

The worst enemies we have are those who are trying to destroy the influence of the watchmen upon the walls of Zion. Satan works through agents. He is making an earnest effort here. He works

[51] according to a definite plan, and his agents act in concert. A line of unbelief stretches across the continent, and is in communication with the church of God. Its influence has been exerted to undermine confidence in the work of the Spirit of God. This element is here, and is silently working. Be careful lest you be found aiding the enemy of God and man by spreading false reports, and by criticisms and decided opposition.

Through deceptive means and unseen channels, Satan is working to strengthen his authority and to place obstacles in the way of God's people, that souls may not be freed from his power, and gathered under the banner of Christ. By his deceptions he is seeking to allure souls from Christ, and those who are not established upon the truth will surely be taken in his snare. And those whom he cannot lead into sin, he will persecute, as the Jews did Christ.

Satan's object is to dishonor God, and he works with every element that is unsanctified to accomplish this de-sign. The men whom he makes his instruments in doing this work, are blinded, and do not see what they are doing until they are so deeply involved in guilt that they think it would be useless to try to recover themselves, and they risk all, and continue in their course of transgression to the bitter end.

[52] Satan hopes to involve the remnant people of God in the general ruin that is coming upon the earth. As the coming of Christ draws nigh, he will be more determined and decisive in his efforts to overthrow them. Men and women will arise professing to have some new light or some new revelation whose tendency is to unsettle faith in the old landmarks. Their doctrines will not bear the test of God's word, yet souls will be deceived. False reports will be circulated, and some will be taken in this snare. They will believe these rumors, and in their turn will repeat them, and thus a link will be formed connecting them with the arch-deceiver. This spirit will not always be manifested in an open defiance of the messages that God sends, but a settled unbelief is expressed in many ways. Every false statement that is made feeds and strengthens this unbelief, and through this means many souls will be balanced in the wrong direction.

We cannot be too watchful against every form of error, for Satan is constantly seeking to draw men from the truth. He fills them

with notions of their own sufficiency, and persuades them, as he has Bro. D, that originality is a gift much to be coveted. Bro. D needs to learn the truth more perfectly. Satan has taken advantage of his ignorance in this direction, and here comes the danger. One man has been drawn aside who is hard to be persuaded when once he has set his feet in a wrong track, and many who thought they were only following the man as he followed Christ, are betrayed into following him when he has turned his back upon his Saviour.

Pride dwells in the heart of Bro. D, and it will be exceedingly difficult for him to yield; but unless he makes a full surrender to Christ, the enemy will continue to work through him. And if he does not at once take a decided stand, I fear he never will.

The — and — churches have taken a heavy responsibility. The full result of the work they have done will not be known until the Judgment. You need heavenly wisdom, brethren, for sin has many disguises. The want of spiritual vision makes you stumble like blind men. Had you had singleness of purpose, it would have been in your Conference an element of tremendous power. But the very things I feared have come. There was work to be done that has been left undone. The companies that I saw would have been raised up as the result of well-directed effort, and the meeting-houses that would have been built,—where are they? Your unbelief has held the work. You have done comparatively nothing yourselves, and when one would work, you hedged the way so that he could not labor to any advantage.

Some are slow, very slow, and they pride themselves in it. But this indolent sluggishness is a defect of character of which no man should boast. Make a firm resolve to be prompt, and with divine help you will succeed. Let your consecration be complete; bind property and friends on the altar of God, and when the heart is prepared to receive the heavenly influence, bright beams from the throne of God will flash into your soul, quickening all its dormant energies.

Some men have no firmness of character. They are like a ball of putty, and can be pressed into any conceivable shape. They are of no definite form and consistency, and are of no practical use in the world. This weakness, indecision, and inefficiency must be overcome. There is an indomitableness about true Christian character which cannot be molded or subdued by adverse circumstances. Men

must have moral backbone, an integrity which cannot be flattered, bribed, or terrified.

I greatly fear for the church. As Paul expressed it, "I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." Paul then explains that it is by means of corrupt teachers that the enemy will assail the faith of the church. "For such are false apostles," he says, "deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness."

The more we learn in reference to the early days of the Christian church, and see with what subtlety Satan worked to weaken and destroy, the better we shall be prepared to resist his devices and meet coming perils. We are in the time when tribulations such as the world has never yet seen shall prevail. "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea; for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." But God has set bounds that Satan cannot pass. Our most holy faith is this barrier; and if we build ourselves up in the faith, we shall be safe in the keeping of the Mighty One. "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."



## CRITICISING MINISTERS.

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ONE mistake leads to another. Our brethren must learn to move intelligently, and not from impulse. Feeling must not be the criterion. A neglect of duty, the indulgence of undue sympathy, will be followed by a neglect to properly estimate those who are laboring to build up the cause of God. Jesus said, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive."

Many do not look upon preaching as Christ's appointed means of instructing his people, and therefore always to be highly prized. They do not feel that the sermon is the word of the Lord to them, and estimate it by the value of the truths spoken, but they judge it as they would the speech of a lawyer at the bar,—by the argumentative skill displayed, and the power and beauty of the language. The minister is not infallible, but God has honored him by making him his messenger. If you listen to him as though he were not commissioned from above, you will not respect his words, nor receive them as the message of God. Your souls will not feed upon the heavenly manna; doubts will arise concerning some things that are not pleasing to the natural heart, and you will sit in judgment upon the sermon, as you would upon the remarks of a lecturer or a political speaker. As soon as the meeting closes, you will be ready with some complaint or sarcastic remark, thus showing that the message, however true and needful, has not profited you. You esteem it not; you have learned the habit of criticising and finding fault, and you pick and choose, and perhaps reject the very things that you most need.

There is very little reverence for sacred things in either the U.C. or N.P. Conference. The ordained instrumentalities of God are almost entirely lost sight of. God has instituted no new method of reaching the children of men. If they cut themselves off from Heaven's appointed agencies to reprove their sins, correct their errors, and point out the path of duty, there is no way to reach them

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with any heavenly communication. They are left in darkness, and are ensnared and taken by the adversary.

The minister of God is commanded: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins." The Lord says of these people, "They seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness." Here is a people who are self-deceived, self-righteous, self-complacent; and the minister is commanded to cry aloud and show them their transgressions. In all ages this work has been done for God's people, and it is needed now more than ever before.

The word of the Lord came to Elijah; he did not seek to be the Lord's messenger, but the word came to him. God always has men to whom he intrusts his message. His Spirit moves upon their hearts, and constrains them to speak. Stimulated by holy zeal, and with the divine impulse strong upon them, they enter upon the performance of their duty without coldly calculating the consequences of speaking to the people the word which the Lord has given them. But the servant of God is soon made aware that he has risked something. He finds himself and his message made the subject of criticism. His maimers, his life, his property, are all inspected and commented upon. His message is picked to pieces and rejected in the most illiberal and unsanctified spirit, as men in their finite judgment see fit. Has that message done the work that God designed it should accomplish? No; it has signally failed because the hearts of the hearers were unsanctified.

[56] If the minister's face is not flint, if he has not indomitable faith and courage, if his heart is not made strong by constant communion with God, he will begin to shape his testimony to please the unsanctified ears and hearts of those he is addressing. In endeavoring to avoid the criticism to which he is exposed, he separates from God and loses the sense of divine favor, and his testimony becomes tame and lifeless. He finds that his courage and faith are gone, and his labors powerless. The world is full of flatterers and dissemblers who have yielded to the desire to please; but the faithful men, who do not study self-interest, but love their brethren too well to suffer sin upon them, are few indeed.

It is Satan's settled purpose to cut off all communication between God and his people, that he may practice his deceptive wiles with no voice to warn them of their danger. If he can lead men to distrust the messenger, or to attach no sacredness to the message, he knows that they will feel under no obligation to heed the word of God to them. And when light is set aside as darkness, Satan has things his own way.

Our God is a jealous God; he is not to be trifled with. He who does all things according to the counsel of his own will, has been pleased to place men under various circumstances, and to enjoin upon them duties and observances peculiar to the times in which they live and the conditions under which they are placed. If they would prize the light given them, their faculties would be greatly enlarged and ennobled, and broader views of truth would be opened before them. The mysteries of eternal things, and especially the wonderful grace of God as manifested in the plan of redemption, would be unfolded to their minds; for spiritual tilings are spiritually discerned.

We are never to forget that Christ teaches through his servants. There may be conversions without the instrumentality of a sermon. Where persons are so situated that they are deprived of every means of grace, they are wrought upon by the Spirit of God and convinced of the truth through reading the word; but God's appointed means of saving souls is through the "foolishness of preaching." Though human, and compassed with the frailties of humanity, men are God's messengers; and the dear Saviour is grieved when so little is effected by their labors. Every minister who goes out into the great harvest field should magnify his office. He should not only seek to bring men to the knowledge of the truth, but he should labor, as did Paul, "warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom," that he may "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

The man is to be regarded and honored only as God's ambas-  
sador. To praise the man is not pleasing to God. The message he brings is to be brought to the test of the Bible. "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." But the word of the Lord is not to be judged by a human standard. It will be seen that those whose minds have the mold of earthliness, those who have a limited Christian

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experience and know but little of the things of God, are the ones who have the least respect for God's servants, and the least reverence for the message he bids them bear. They listen to a searching discourse, and go to their homes prepared to sit in judgment on it; and the impression disappears from their minds like the morning dew before the sun. If the preaching is of an emotional character, it will affect the feelings, but not the heart and conscience. Such preaching results in no lasting good; but it often wins the hearts of the people, and calls out their affections for the man who pleases them. They forget that God has said, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils."

Jesus is waiting with longing desire to open before his people the glory that will attend his second advent, and to carry them forward to a contemplation of the landscapes of bliss. There are wonders to be revealed. A long lifetime of prayer and research will leave much unexplored and unexplained. But what we know not now will be revealed hereafter. The work of instruction begun here will be carried on to all eternity. The Lamb, as he leads the hosts of the redeemed to the fountain of living waters, will impart rich stores of knowledge; he will unravel mysteries in the works and providence of God that have never before been understood.

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We can never by searching find out God. He does not lay open his plans to prying, inquisitive minds. We must not attempt to lift with presumptuous hand the curtain behind which he veils his majesty. The apostle exclaims, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." It is a proof of his mercy that there is the hiding of his power, that he is enshrouded in the awful clouds of mystery and obscurity; for to lift the curtain that conceals the Divine Presence is death. No mortal mind can penetrate the secrecy in which the Mighty One dwells and works. We can comprehend no more of his dealings with us and the motives that actuate him, than he sees fit to reveal. He orders everything in righteousness, and we are not to be dissatisfied and distrustful, but to bow in reverent submission. He will reveal to us as much of his purposes as it is for our good to know; and beyond that we must trust the hand that is omnipotent, the heart that is full of love.

## **FIDELITY AND PERSEVERANCE NEEDED.**

THE state of the church in — is far from what it should be. Unless there is a decided change, it will wither and die. There is much fault-finding; many are giving way to doubt and unbelief. Those who talk faith and cultivate faith will have faith; but those who cherish and express doubts will have doubts.

There has been a neglect on the part of the ministers. They have not urged home to the hearts of their hearers the necessity of faithfulness. They have not educated the church on all points of truth and duty, nor labored with zeal to bring them into working order, and to get them interested in every branch of the cause of God. I have been shown that had the church been properly educated, they would have been far in advance of their present position. The neglect on the part of the ministers has made the people careless and unfaithful. They have not felt their individual responsibility, but have excused themselves on account of the failure of the ministers to do the work of a pastor. But God does not hold them excused. Had they no Bible, had they no warnings, reproofs, and entreaties from Heaven to bring duty to their minds, there would be less condemnation. But the Lord has given counsel and instruction ; the duty of each individual has been made so plain that he need make no mistake. [59]

God gives light to guide those who honestly desire light and truth; but it is not his purpose to remove all cause for questioning and doubt. He gives sufficient evidence to found faith upon, and then requires men to accept that evidence and exercise faith.

He who will study the Bible with a humble and teach-able spirit, will find it a sure guide, pointing out the way of life with unfailing accuracy. But what does your study of the Bible avail, brethren and sisters, unless you practice the truths it teaches ? That holy book contains nothing that is non-essential; nothing is revealed that has not a bearing upon our actual lives. The deeper our love for Jesus, the more highly we shall regard that word as the voice of God directly to us.

The church in — is standing on Satan's enchanted ground, and there is necessity for a thorough conversion. Individual effort is needed. The rich promises of the Bible are for those who take up their cross and deny self-daily. Everyone who has a sincere desire to be a learner in the school of Christ will cultivate spiritual mindedness, and will avail himself of every means of grace; but in this church opportunities and privileges have been slighted. One may be able to say but few words in public, and to do but little in the vineyard of the Lord ; but he is in duty bound to say something, and to be an interested worker. Every member should help to strengthen and sustain the church; but in many cases there are one or two who have the spirit of faithfulness that characterized Caleb of old, and these are permitted to bear the burdens and take the responsibilities, while the rest shirk all care.

[60] Caleb was faithful and steadfast. He was not boastful, he made no parade of his merits and good deeds; but his influence was always on the side of right. And what was his reward? When the Lord denounced judgments against the men who refused to hearken to his voice, he said: "But my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land where into he went; and his seed shall possess it." While the cowards and murmurers perished in the wilderness, faithful Caleb had a home in the promised Canaan. "Them that honor me I will honor," saith the Lord.

Hannah prayed and trusted; and in her son Samuel she gave to the Israel of God a most precious treasure,—a useful man, with a well-formed character, one who was as firm as a rock where principle was concerned.

In Joppa there was a Dorcas, whose skillful fingers were more active than her tongue. She knew who needed comfortable clothing, and who needed sympathy, and she freely ministered to the wants of both classes. And when Dorcas died, the church in Joppa realized their loss. It is no wonder that they mourned and lamented, nor that warm tear-drops fell upon the inanimate clay. She was of so great value that by the power of God she was brought back from the land of the enemy, that her skill and energy might still be a blessing to others.

Such patient, prayerful, and persevering fidelity as was possessed by these saints of God is rare; yet the church cannot prosper without it. It is needed in the church, in the Sabbath-school, and in society. Many come together in church relationship with their natural traits of character unsubdued; and in a crisis, when strong, hopeful spirits are needed, they give up to discouragement, and bring burdens on the church; and they do not see that this is wrong. The cause does not need such persons, for they are unreliable; but there is always a call for steadfast, God-fearing workers, who will not faint in the day of adversity.

There are some in the church in — who will cause trouble; for their wills have never been brought into harmony with the will of Christ. Bro. E will be a great hindrance to this church. When he can have the supremacy, he is satisfied; but when he cannot stand first, he is always upon the wrong side. He moves from impulse. He will not draw in even cords, but questions and takes opposite views, because it is his nature to be fault-finding and an accuser of his brethren. While he claims to be very zealous for the truth, he is drawing away from the body; he is not strong in moral power, rooted and grounded in the faith. The holy principles of truth are not made a part of his nature. He cannot be trusted; God is not pleased with him. [61]

Bro. and Sister E have not regarded the directions of God's word in the training of their children. These children have been allowed to control at home to a very great degree, and have come and gone as they pleased. Unless they are placed under entirely different influences, they will be found in the enemy's ranks, warring against order, discipline, and subordination. Children thus left to have their own way are not happy; and where parental authority is lightly regarded, the authority of God will not be respected.

The work of the parent is solemn and sacred; but many do not realize this because their eyes are blinded by the enemy of all righteousness. Their children are allowed to grow up undisciplined, uncourteous, forward, self-confident, unthankful, and unholy, when a firm, decided, even course, in which justice and mercy are blended with patience and self-control, Would produce wonderful results.

Bro. E must have transforming grace. There is no safety for him while he retains his natural defects of character, and he must war

against them continually. Unless he will live a watchful, prayerful life, he will not be well balanced, and there is danger that the truth will be hindered, misrepresented, and brought into disrepute, through his influence. Let him be careful, lest he awaken in unbelievers prejudices that can never be removed.

[62] There is in human nature a tendency to run to extremes, and from one extreme to another entirely opposite. Many are fanatics. They are consumed by a fiery zeal which is mistaken for religion; but character is the true test of discipleship. Have they the meekness of Christ? have they his humility and sweet benevolence? Is the soul-temple emptied of pride, arrogance, selfish-ness, and censoriousness? If not, they know not what manner of spirit they are of. They do not realize that true Christianity consists in bearing much fruit to the glory of God.

Others go to an extreme in their conformity to the world. There is no clear, distinct line of separation between them and the worldling. If in one case men are driven away from the truth by a harsh, censorious, condemnatory spirit, in this they are led to conclude that the professed Christian is destitute of principle, and knows nothing of a change of heart or character. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven," are the words of Christ.

There are many who have not a correct knowledge of what constitutes a Christian character, and their lives are a reproach to the cause of truth. If they were thoroughly converted, they would not bear briers and thorns, but rich clusters of the precious fruits of the Spirit,—“love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” The great danger is in neglecting a heart-work. Many feel well pleased with themselves; they think that a nominal observance of the divine law is sufficient, while they are unacquainted with the grace of Christ, and he is not abiding in the heart by living faith.

“Without me,” says Christ, “ye can do nothing;” but with his divine grace working through our human efforts, we can do all things. His patience and meekness will pervade the character, diffusing a precious radiance which makes bright and clear the pathway to Heaven. By beholding and imitating his life, we shall become renewed in his image. The glory of Heaven will shine in our lives,



and be reflected upon others. At the throne of grace we are to find the help we need to enable us to live thus. This is genuine sanctification; and what more exalted position can mortals desire than to be connected with Christ as a branch is joined to the vine?

I have seen a device representing a bullock standing between a plow and an altar, with the inscription, "Ready for either,"—willing to swelter in the weary furrow or to bleed on the altar of sacrifice. This is the position the child of God should ever be in,— willing to go where duty calls, to deny self, and to sacrifice for the cause of truth. The Christian church was founded upon the principle of sacrifice. "If any man will come after me," says Christ, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." He requires the whole heart, the entire affections. The exhibitions of zeal, earnestness, and unselfish labor which his devoted followers have given to the world, should kindle our ardor and lead us to emulate their example. Genuine religion gives an earnestness and fixedness of purpose which molds the character to the divine image, and enables us to count all things but loss for the excellency of Christ. This singleness of purpose will prove an element of tremendous power.

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We have a greater and more solemn truth than was ever before committed to mortals, and we are responsible for the way we treat that truth. Every one of us should be intent on saving souls. We should show the power of the truth upon our own hearts and characters, while doing all we can to win others to love it. To bring a sinner to Christ is to elevate, dignify, and ennoble his whole character, and make him a blessing in the home, in society, and in the church. Is not this a work that is worthy of our noblest powers?

Persons of little talent, if faithful in keeping their hearts in the love of God, may win many souls to Christ. Harlan Page was a poor mechanic of ordinary ability and limited education; but he made it his chief business to seek to advance the cause of God, and his efforts were crowned with marked success. He labored for the salvation of his fellow-men in private conversation and in earnest prayer. He established prayer-meetings, organized Sunday-schools, and distributed tracts and other religious reading. And on his death bed, with the shadow of eternity resting upon his countenance, he was able to say, "I know that it is all of God's grace, and not through any merit of anything that I have done; but I think I have evidence that

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more than one hundred souls have been converted to God through my personal instrumentality.”

Every member of the church should be instructed in a regular system of labor. All are required to do something for the Lord. They may interest persons to read; they may converse and pray with them. The minister who shall educate, discipline, and lead an army of efficient workers, will have glorious conquests here, and a rich reward awaits him when he shall meet those saved through his influence around the great white throne.

“Do something, do it soon, with all thy might;  
An angel’s wing would droop if long at rest;  
And God himself, inactive, were no longer blest.”

After the church in — came to the knowledge of the truth, they would have been fruitful in good works, and would have had an influence that would make them a power on the side of right, had they manifested becoming earnestness, zeal, and love. But they have been indifferent, and have been growing cold and dead. Some have attended social meetings when they have carried with them the atmosphere of earth rather than that of Heaven. The church has not been ready to respond to the efforts that have been made for them. In their present state they cannot see or realize the need of co-operation on their part; and their lack of earnestness and consecration has discouraged the ministers. Instead of this carelessness, there should have been a feeling of individual responsibility. This church will never prosper until the members commence the work of reform in their own hearts. Many who profess the faith are easily satisfied; if they come up to a few points of self-denial and reform, they do not see the necessity of going further. Why is there such a resting on the lees? There is no halting-place for us this side of Heaven. None of us should be content with our present spiritual attainments. No one is living up to his opportunities, unless he can show continual progress. He must be climbing, still climbing. It is the privilege of every Christian to grow up until he shall reach the full stature of a man in Christ Jesus.

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How much the dear people in — need instruction in personal godliness; how much they need pastoral labor. But they do not do

as well as they know. God will test you, brethren, and some will prove to be chaff, and some precious grains of wheat. Yield not to the power of the tempter. He will come as a strong man armed; but give him no advantage. Nerve yourselves for duty, and dispute every inch of ground. Instead of retreating, advance; instead of becoming weak and nerveless, brace yourselves for the conflict. God calls on you to engage with all your powers against sin in every form. Put on the whole armor of God, and keep your eye steadily fixed on the Captain of your salvation; for there is danger ahead. Follow no false colors, but watch the banner of our holy faith, and be found where that waves, even though it be in the thickest of the fight. Soon the warfare will be over, and the victory won; and if you are faithful, you will come off more than conquerors through Him that has loved you. The glorious prize, the eternal weight of glory, will then be yours.

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## SINFULNESS OF REPINING.

DEAR FRIENDS: I have been shown that as a family you experience much needless unhappiness. God has not designed that you should be miserable; but you have taken your minds from Jesus, and centered them too much upon yourselves. The great sin of your family is that of needless repining over God's providences; your unsubmitiveness in this respect is indeed alarming. You have magnified small difficulties, and have talked discouragements too much. You have a habit of draping everything about you in mourning, and have made yourselves unhappy without cause. Your continued murmurings are separating you from God.

[66] You should keep off from Satan's enchanted ground, and not allow your minds to be swayed from allegiance to God. Through Christ you may and should be happy, and should acquire habits of self-control. Even your thoughts must be brought into subjection to the will of God, and your feelings under the control of reason and religion. Your imagination was not given you to be allowed to run riot and have its own way, without any effort at restraint or discipline. If the thoughts are wrong, the feelings will be wrong; and the thoughts and feelings combined make up the moral character. When you decide that as Christians you are not required to restrain your thoughts and feelings, you are brought under the influence of evil angels, and invite their presence and their control. If you yield to your impressions, and allow your thoughts to run in a channel of suspicion, doubt, and repining, you will be among the most unhappy of mortals, and your lives will prove a failure.

Dear Sister F, you have a diseased imagination; and you dishonor God by allowing your feelings to have complete control of your reason and judgment. You have a determined will, which causes the mind to react upon the body, unbalancing the circulation, and producing congestion in certain organs; and you are sacrificing health to your feelings.

You are making a mistake, which, if not corrected, will not end with wrecking your own happiness merely. You are doing positive injury, not only to yourself, but to the other members of your family, and especially your mother. She is very nervous and highly sensitive. If one of her children is suffering, she becomes confused and almost distracted. Her mind is becoming unbalanced by the frequent fits of hysteria which she is compelled to witness, and great unhappiness is brought upon all around you. And yet you are capable of controlling your imagination, and overcoming these nervous attacks. You have will-power, and you should bring it to your aid. You have not done this, but have let your highly-wrought imagination control reason. In this you have grieved the Spirit of God. Had you no power over your feelings, this would not be sin; but it will not answer thus to yield to the enemy. Your will needs to be sanctified and subdued, instead of being arrayed in opposition to that of God.

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My dear friends, instead of taking a course to baffle disease, you are petting it and yielding to its power. You should avoid the use of drugs, and carefully observe the laws of health. If you regard your life, you should eat plain food, prepared in the simplest manner, and take more physical exercise. Each member of the family needs the benefits of health reform. But drugging should be forever abandoned; for while it does not cure any malady, it enfeebles the system, making it more susceptible to disease.

Man has been placed in a world of sorrow, care, and perplexity. He is placed here to be tested and proved, as were Adam and Eve, that he may develop a right character, and bring harmony out of discord and confusion. There is much for us to do that is essential to our own happiness and that of others. And there is much for us to enjoy. Through Christ we are brought into connection with God. His mercies place us under continual obligation; feeling unworthy of his favors, we are to appreciate even the least of them.

For all that you have and are, dear friends, you are indebted to God. He has given you powers, that, to a certain extent, are similar to those which he himself possesses; and you should labor earnestly to develop these powers, not to please and exalt self, but to glorify him. You have not improved your privileges to the best advantage. You should educate yourselves to bear responsibilities. Intellect must be cultivated; if left to rust from inaction, it will become debased.

This earth is the Lord's. Here it may be seen that nature, animate and inanimate, obeys his will. God created man a superior being; he alone is formed in the image of God, and is capable of partaking of the divine nature, of co-operating with his Creator and executing his plans; and he alone is found at war with God's purposes.

[68] How wonderfully, with what marvelous beauty, has everything in nature been fashioned. Everywhere we see the perfect works of the great Master-artist. The heavens declare his glory; and the earth, which is formed for the happiness of man, speaks to us of his matchless love. Its surface is not a monotonous plain; but grand old mountains rise to diversify the landscape. There are sparkling streams and fertile valleys, beautiful lakes, broad rivers, and the boundless ocean. God sends the dew and the rain to refresh the thirsty earth. The breezes, that promote health by purifying and cooling the atmosphere, are controlled by his wisdom. He has placed the sun in the heavens to mark the periods of day and night, and by its genial beams give light and warmth to the earth, causing vegetation to flourish.

I call your attention to these blessings from the bounteous hand of God. Let the fresh glories of each new morning awaken praise in your hearts for these tokens of his loving care. But while our kind heavenly Father has given us so many things to promote our happiness, he has given us also blessings in disguise. He understands the necessities of fallen man; and while he has given us advantages on the one hand, on the other there are inconveniences which are designed to stimulate us to use the ability he has given us. These develop patient industry, perseverance, and courage.

There are evils which man may lessen, but can never remove. He is to overcome obstacles, and make his surroundings instead of being molded by them. He has room to exercise his talents in bringing order and harmony out of confusion. In this work he may have divine aid if he will claim it. He is not left to battle with temptations and trials in his own strength. Help has been laid upon One who is mighty. Jesus left the royal courts of Heaven, and suffered and died in a world degraded by sin, that he might teach man how to pass through the trials of life and overcome its temptations. Here is a pattern for us.

As the benefits conferred upon his creatures by our heavenly Father are recounted, do you not feel re-proved for your ungrateful repinings? For a number of years he lent you a daughter and sister, until you began to regard her as yours, and felt that you had a right to this good gift. God heard your murmurings. If there was a cloud in sight, you seemed to forget that the sun ever shone; and clouds and darkness were ever about you. God sent you affliction; he removed your treasure from you, that you might discern between prosperity and real sorrow. But you did not subdue your hearts before him, and repent of the great sin of ingratitude which had separated you from his love. Like Job, you felt that you had cause for grief, and would not be comforted. Was this reasonable? You know that death is a power that none can resist; but you have made your lives nearly useless by your unavailing grief. Your feelings have been little less than rebellion against God. I saw you all dwelling upon your bereavement, and giving way to your excitable feelings, until your noisy demonstrations of grief caused angels to hide their faces and withdraw from the scene. [69]

While thus giving way to your feelings, did you remember that you had a Father in Heaven, who gave his only Son to die for us, that death might not be an eternal sleep? Did you remember that the Lord of life and glory passed through the tomb, and brightened it with his own presence? Said the beloved disciple, "Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." The apostle well knew what he was talking about when he wrote these words; but when you give way to uncontrollable grief, is your conduct consistent with the comfort which they express?

The Lord is gracious, merciful, and true. He has permitted the one of your household band who was the most innocent and the best prepared, to rest through the perils of the last days. Oh! do not shut up your souls against melody and joy, mourning as though there were to be no resurrection of the dead, but praise God that with her there is no more death, no more trial, no more sorrow. She rests in Jesus until the Lifegiver shall call forth his sleeping saints to a glorious immortality. [70]

F has a work to do, through the grace of God, to control her feelings. She knows that she is not in Heaven, but in a world where

death reigns, and where our loved ones may be removed from us at any moment. She should feel that the great burden of life is to prepare for a better world. If she has a right hold on eternal life, it will not disqualify her for living in this world and nobly bearing life's burdens, but it will help her in the performance of self-denying, self-sacrificing duties.

As a family, you have talked darkness and complaining until you are changed into the same image. You seem to work upon one another's sympathies, and to arouse nervous excitability, until you have a dark, sad, dismal time by yourselves. You have held mourning services, but these do not attract angels around you. If you do not change your course, God will come a little closer, and deal with you in judgment. Is it not time that you held thanksgiving services in your home, and recounted with rejoicing the blessings that have been bestowed upon you?

The power of the truth should be sufficient to sustain and console in every adversity. It is in enabling its possessor to triumph over affliction that the religion of Christ reveals its true value. It brings the appetites, the passions, and the emotions under the control of reason and conscience, and disciplines the thoughts to flow in a healthful channel. And then the tongue will not be left to dishonor God by expressions of sinful repining.

[71] Our Creator justly claims the right to do as he chooses with the creatures of his hand. He has a right to govern as he will, and not as man chooses. But he is not a severe judge, a harsh, exacting creditor. He is the very fountain of love, the giver of blessings innumerable. It should cause you the deepest grief that you have disregarded such love, and have not let gratitude and praise well up in your hearts for the marvelous goodness of God, We do not deserve all his benefits; but they are continued to us, notwithstanding our unworthiness and cruel ingratitude. Then cease to complain, as though you were bond-servants under a hard task-master. Jesus is good. Praise him. Praise him who is the health of your countenance, and your God.

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## **“PRAISE YE THE LORD.”**

“LET everything that hath breath praise the Lord.” Have any of us duly considered how much we have to be thankful for? Do we remember that the mercies of the Lord are new every morning, and that his faithfulness faileth not? Do we acknowledge our dependence upon him, and express gratitude for all his favors? On the contrary, we too often forget that “every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.”

How often those who are in health forget the wonderful mercies that are continued to them day by day, year after year. They render no tribute of praise to God for all his benefits. But when sickness comes, God is remembered. The strong desire for recovery leads to earnest prayer; and this is right. God is our refuge in sickness as in health. But many do not leave their cases with him; they encourage weakness and disease by worrying about themselves. If they would cease repining, and rise above depression and gloom, their recovery would be more sure. They should remember with gratitude how long they enjoyed the blessing of health; and should this precious boon be restored to them, they should not forget that they are under renewed obligations to their Creator. When the ten lepers were healed, only one returned to find Jesus and give him glory. Let us not be like the unthinking nine, whose hearts were untouched by the mercy of God.

God is love. He has a care for the creatures he has formed. “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.” “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.” What a precious privilege is this, that we may be sons and daughters of the Most High, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. Then let us not mourn and grieve because in this life we are not free from disappointments and afflictions. If in the providence of God we are called upon to endure trials, let us accept the cross, and drink the bitter cup, remembering that it is a Father’s hand that holds it to our lips. Let us trust him in the darkness as well as in the day. Can we not believe that he

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will give us everything that is for our good ? “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things ?” Even in the night of affliction, how can we refuse to lift heart and voice in grateful praise, when we remember the love to us expressed by the cross of Calvary?

What a theme for meditation is the sacrifice that Jesus made for lost sinners ! “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.” How shall we estimate the blessings thus brought within our reach ? Could Jesus have suffered more? Could he have purchased for us richer blessings ? Should it not melt the hardest heart, when we remember that for our sakes he left the happiness and glory of Heaven, and suffered poverty and shame, cruel affliction and a terrible death ? Had he not, by his death and resurrection, opened for us the door of hope, we should have known nothing but the horrors of darkness and the miseries of despair. In our present state, favored and blessed as we are, we cannot realize from what depths we have been rescued. We cannot measure how much deeper our afflictions would have been, how much greater our woes, had not Jesus encircled us with his human arm of sympathy and love, and lifted us up.

[73] We may rejoice in hope. Our Advocate is in the heavenly sanctuary, pleading in our behalf. Through his merits we have pardon and peace. He died that he might wash away our sins, clothe us with his righteousness, and fit us for the society of Heaven, where we may dwell in light forever. Dear brother, dear sister, when Satan would fill your mind with despondency, gloom, and doubt, resist his suggestions. Tell him of the blood of Jesus, that cleanses from all sin. You cannot save yourself from the tempter’s power; but he trembles and flees when the merits of that precious blood are urged. Then will you not gratefully accept the blessings Jesus bestows? Will you not take the cup of salvation that he presents, and call on the name of the Lord? Do not show distrust of Him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Do not for a moment pain the heart of the pitying Saviour by your unbelief. He watches with the most intense interest your progress in the heavenly way; he sees your earnest efforts; he notes your declensions and your recoveries, your hopes and your fears, your conflicts and your victories.

Shall all our devotional exercises consist in asking and receiving? Shall we be always thinking of our wants, and never of the benefits we receive? Shall we be recipients of his mercies, and never express our gratitude to God, never praise him for what he has done for us? We do not pray any too much, but we are too sparing of giving thanks. If the loving-kindness of God called forth more thanksgiving and praise, we would have far more power in prayer. We would abound more and more in the love of God, and have more bestowed to praise him for. You who complain that God does not hear your prayers, change the present order, and mingle praise with your petitions. When you consider his goodness and mercies, you will find that he will consider your wants.

Pray, pray earnestly and without ceasing, but do not forget to praise. It becomes every child of God to vindicate his character. You can magnify the Lord; you can show the power of sustaining grace. There are multitudes who do not appreciate the great love of God nor the divine compassion of Jesus, Thousands even regard with disdain the matchless grace shown in the plan of redemption. All who are partakers of this great salvation are not clear in this matter. They do not cultivate grateful hearts. But the theme of redemption is one that the angels desire to look into; it will be the science and the song of the ransomed throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. Is it not worthy of careful thought and study now? Should we not praise God with heart and soul and voice for his "wonderful works to the children of men" ?

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Praise the Lord in the congregation of his people. When the word of the Lord was spoken to the Hebrews anciently, the command was, "And let all the people say, Amen." When the ark of the covenant was brought into the city of David, and a psalm of joy and triumph was chanted, all the people said, "Amen, and praised the Lord." This fervent response was an evidence that they understood the word spoken, and joined in the worship of God.

There is too much formality in our religious services. The Lord would have his ministers who preach the word energized by his Holy Spirit; and the people who hear should not sit in drowsy indifference, or stare vacantly about, making no responses to what is said. The impression that is thus given to the unbeliever is anything but favorable for the religion of Christ. These dull, careless professed

Christians are not destitute of ambition and zeal when engaged in worldly business; but things of eternal importance do not move them deeply. The voice of God through his messengers may be a pleasant song; but its sacred warnings, reproofs, and encouragements are all unheeded. The spirit of the world has paralyzed them. The truths of God's word are spoken to leaden ears and hard, unimpressible hearts. There should be wide-awake, active churches to encourage and uphold the ministers of Christ, and to aid them in the work of saving souls. Where the church is walking in the light, there will ever be cheerful, hearty responses and words of joyful praise.

[75] Our God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, declares: "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." All Heaven unite in praising God. Let us learn the song of the angels now, that we may sing it when we join their shining ranks. Let us say with the psalmist, "While I live, will I praise the Lord; I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being." "Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee."

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## **PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY.**

PARENTS are in a great degree responsible for the mold given to the characters of their children. They should aim at symmetry and proportion. There are few well-balanced minds, because parents are wickedly negligent of their duty to stimulate weak traits and repress wrong ones. They do not remember that they are under the most solemn obligation to watch the tendencies of each child; that it is their duty to train their children to right habits and right ways of thinking.

Sometimes parents wait for the Lord to do the very work that he has given them to do. Instead of restraining and controlling their children as they should, they pet and indulge them, and gratify their whims and desires. When these children go out from their early homes, it is with characters deformed by selfishness, with ungoverned appetites, with strong self-will; they are destitute of courtesy or respect for their parents, and do not love religious truth or the worship of God. They have grown up with traits that are a life-long curse to themselves and to others. Home is made anything but happy if the evil weeds of dissension, selfishness, envy, passion, and sullen stubbornness are left to flourish in the neglected garden of the soul.

Parents should show no partiality, but should treat all their children with tenderness, remembering that they are the purchase of Christ's blood. Children imitate their parents; hence great care should be taken to give them correct models. Parents who are kind and polite at home, while at the same time they are firm and decided, will see the same traits manifested in their children. If they are upright, honest, and honorable, their children will be quite likely to resemble them in these particulars. If they reverence and worship God, their children, trained in the same way, will not forget to serve him also.

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It is often the case that parents are not careful to surround their children with right influences. In choosing a home, they think more

of their worldly interests than of the moral and social atmosphere; and the children form associations that are unfavorable to the development of piety and the formation of right characters. Then parents allow the world to engross their time, strength, and thought; and when the Sabbath comes, it finds them so utterly exhausted that they have naught to render to God on his holy day, no sweet piety to grace the home, and make the Sabbath a delight to their children. They are seldom visited by a minister, for they have placed themselves out of the reach of religious privileges. An apathy steals over the soul. The children are contaminated by evil communications, and the tenderness of soul that they once felt dies away and is forgotten.

Parents who denounce the Canaanites for offering their children to Moloch, what are you doing? You are making a most costly offering to your mammon god; and then, when your children grow up unloved and unlovely in character, when they show decided impiety and a tendency to infidelity, you blame the faith you profess because it was unable to save them. You are reaping that which you have sown,—the result of your selfish love of the world and neglect of the means of grace. You moved your families into places of temptation, and the ark of God, your glory and defense, you did not consider essential; and the Lord has not worked a miracle to deliver your children from temptation.

[77] You who profess to love God, take Jesus with you wherever you go; and, like the patriarchs of old, erect an altar to the Lord wherever you pitch your tent. A reformation in this respect is needed,—a reformation that shall be deep and broad. Parents need to reform; ministers need to reform. They need God in their households. They need to build the waste places of Zion; to set up her gates, and make strong her walls for a defense of the people.

There is earnest work to be done in this age, and parents should educate their children to share in it. The words of Mordecai to Esther may apply to the men and youth of to-day: “Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” Young men should be gaining solidity of character, that they may be fitted for usefulness. Daniel and Joseph were youth of firm principle, whom God could use to carry out his purposes. Mark their history, and see how God wrought for them. Joseph met with a variety of experiences,—experiences that tested his courage and uprightness to the fullest

extent. After being sold into Egypt, he was at first favored, and intrusted with great responsibilities; but suddenly, without any fault on his part, he was unjustly accused and cast into prison. But he is not discouraged. He trusts in God ; and the purpose of his heart, the purity of his motive, is made manifest. The eye of God is upon him, a divine hand leads him, and soon we see him come forth from prison to share the throne of Egypt.

Joseph's checkered life was not an accident; it was ordered of Providence. But how was he enabled to make such a record of firmness of character, uprightness, and wisdom? It was the result of careful training in his early years. He had consulted duty rather than inclination; and the purity and simple trust of the boy bore fruit in the deeds of the man. The most brilliant talents are of no value unless they are improved; industrious habits and force of character must be gained by cultivation. A high moral character and fine mental qualities are not the result of accident. God gives opportunities; success depends upon the use made of them. The openings of Providence must be quickly discerned and eagerly seized upon.

Young men, if you would be strong, if you would have the integrity and wisdom of a Joseph or a Daniel, study the Scriptures. Parents, if you would educate your children to serve God and do good in the world, make the Bible your text-book. It exposes the wiles of Satan. It is the great elevator of the race, the reprover and corrector of moral evils, the detector which enables us to distinguish between the true and the false. Whatever else is taught in the home or at school, the Bible, as the great educator, should stand first. If it is given this place, God is honored, and he will work for you in the conversion of your children. There is a rich mine of truth and beauty in this holy book, and parents have themselves to blame if they do not make it intensely interesting to their children.

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To many, education means a knowledge of books; but "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." The true object of education is to restore the image of God in the soul. The first and most precious knowledge is the knowledge of Christ; and wise parents will keep this fact ever before the minds of their children. Should a limb be broken or fractured, parents will try every means that love or wisdom can suggest to restore the affected member to comeliness and soundness. This is right, it is their duty; but the Lord requires

that still greater tact, patience, and persevering effort be employed to remedy blemishes of the soul. That father is unworthy of the name who is not to his children a Christian teacher, ruler, and friend, binding them to his heart by the strong ties of sanctified love,—a love which has its foundation in duty faithfully performed.

Parents have a great and responsible work to do, and they may well inquire, “Who is sufficient for these things ?” But God has promised to give wisdom to those that ask in faith, and he will do just as he said he would. He is pleased with the faith that takes him at his word. The mother of Augustine prayed for her son’s conversion. She saw no evidence that the Spirit of God was impressing his heart, but she was not discouraged. She laid her finger upon the texts, presenting before God his own words, and pleaded as only a mother can. Her deep humiliation, her earnest importunities, her unwavering faith, prevailed, and the Lord gave her the desire of her heart. To-day he is just as ready to listen to the petitions of his people. “His hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear;” and if Christian parents seek him earnestly, he will fill their mouths with arguments, and, for his name’s sake, will work mightily in their behalf in the conversion of their children.

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## THE TRAINING OF CHILDREN.

DEAR BRO. and Sisters G: I am troubled in reference to your case. I see dangers that you seem never to have realized. Have you thoughtfully and prayerfully considered your duty to the children you have taken the responsibility of bringing into the world? Have you thought whether these children are receiving from you an education and discipline that will lead them to honor their Creator in the days of their youth? Have you considered that if you fail to teach them to respect you, their father and mother, and to yield to your authority, you are educating them to dishonor God? Every time you allow them to trample on your authority, and their will to control yours, you are fostering a defect which will be carried with them into all their experience should they become religiously inclined, and will teach them to disregard and trample upon divine authority.

The question to be settled by you is, "Am I raising a family of children to strengthen the influence and swell the ranks of the powers of darkness, or am I bringing up children for Christ?" If you do not govern your children, and mold their characters to meet the requirements of God, then the fewer children there are to suffer from your defective training, the better it will be for you, their parents, and the better it will be for society. Unless children can be trained and disciplined from their babyhood by a wise and judicious mother, who is conscientious and intelligent, and who rules her household in the fear of the Lord, molding and shaping their characters to meet the standard of righteousness, it is a sin to increase your family. God has given you reason, and he requires you to use it.

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You should feel under obligation, by patient, pains-taking effort and by earnest, fervent prayer, to so form the characters of your children as to make them a blessing in the home, a blessing in the church, and a blessing in society. You will receive no credit for your work if you allow your children to be controlled by the enemy of all righteousness; the reward is promised for conscientiously forming their characters after the divine Pattern. If you neglect this work,

which is so far-reaching in its results, because for the present it is more agreeable for you to do so, and your children grow up morally deformed, their feet in the broad road to death, can God pronounce your work well done? Those who cannot inform themselves, and work intelligently with all their powers to bring their children to Jesus, should decide not to take upon themselves the responsibility of becoming parents.

Mothers must be willing and even anxious to qualify themselves for their important work of developing the characters of their children, guiding, instructing, and restraining their tender charge. Fathers and mothers should be united in this work. Weakness in requiring obedience, and false love and sympathy,—the false notion that to indulge and not to restrain is wisdom,—constitute a system of training that grieves angels; but it delights Satan, for it brings hundreds and thousands of children into his ranks. This is why he blinds the eyes of parents, benumbs their sensibilities, and confuses their minds. They see that their sons and daughters are not pleasant, lovely, obedient, and care-taking; yet children accumulate in their homes, to poison their lives, fill their hearts with grief, and add to the number whom Satan is using to allure souls to destruction.

[81] Oh! when will parents be wise? When will they see and realize the character of their work in neglecting to require obedience and respect according to the instructions of God's word? The results of this lax training are seen in the children as they go out into the world, and take their place at the head of families of their own. They perpetuate the mistakes of their parents. Their defective traits have full scope; and they transmit to others the wrong tastes, habits, and tempers that were permitted to develop in their own characters. Thus they become a curse instead of a blessing to society.

Because men and women do not obey God, but choose their own way and follow their own perverted imagination, Satan is permitted to set up his hellish banner in their families, and make his power felt through babes, children, and youth. His voice and will are expressed in the unsubdued wills and warped characters of the children, and through them he exerts a controlling power and carries out his plans. God is dishonored by the exhibition of perverse tempers, which exclude reverence for him, and induce obedience to Satan's suggestions. The sin committed by parents in thus permitting Satan to

bear sway is beyond conception. They are sowing seed which will produce briars and thorns, and choke out every plant of heavenly growth; and the harvest that will be gathered, the Judgment alone will reveal. But how sad is the thought that when life and its mistakes are viewed in the light of eternity, it will be too late for this aftersight to be of any avail.

The utter neglect of training children for God has perpetuated evil, and thrown into the ranks of the enemy many who with judicious care might have been co-laborers with Christ. False ideas and a foolish, misdirected affection have nurtured traits which have made the children unlovely and unhappy, have embittered the lives of the parents, and have extended their baleful influence from generation to generation. Any child that is permitted to have his own way will dishonor God and bring his father and mother to shame. Light has been shining from the word of God and the testimonies of his Spirit, so that none need err in regard to their duty. God requires parents to bring up their children to know him and to respect his claims; they are to train their little ones, as the younger members of the Lord's family, to have beautiful characters and lovely tempers, that they may be fitted to shine in the heavenly courts. By neglecting their duty and indulging their children in wrong, parents close to them the gates of the city of God. [82]

These facts must be pressed home upon parents; they must arouse, and take up their long-neglected work. Parents who profess to love God are not doing his will. Because they do not properly restrain and direct their children, thousands are coming up with deformed characters, with lax morals, and with little education in the practical duties of life. They are left to do as they please with their impulses, their time, and their mental powers. The loss to the cause of God in these neglected talents lies at the door of fathers and mothers; and what excuse will they render to Him whose stewards they are, intrusted with the sacred duty of fitting the souls under their charge to improve all their powers to the glory of their Creator?

My dear brother and sister, may the Lord open your eyes and quicken your minds, that you may see and re-deem your failures. You are neither of you living with an eye single to the glory of God. You show but little power to stand up for Jesus and in defense of the faith once delivered to the saints. You have neglected your duty in

the family, and have proved that youth intrusted to your care are not safe. Thus God looks upon your work in the home; thus it stands registered in the books of Heaven. You might have brought many to Jesus; but your want of moral courage has made you unfaithful in every position.

[83] The errors in your lax system of family government are revealed in the characters of your children. You have not educated yourselves to follow the instructions given in the word of God. The evils resulting from your failures in duty are becoming serious and deep. Sister G does not have the right influence. She has yielded to the strong wills of her wrong-minded children, and has indulged them to their hurt. Both of you should have taught your children from their very babyhood that they could not control you, but that your will was to be obeyed. Had Sister G received the proper training in her childhood, had she been disciplined and educated according to the word of God, she would have a different mold of character herself, and would better understand the duties that devolve upon her. She would know how to train her children so as to make their ways pleasing to God. But the defects that have resulted from her own wrong training are reproduced in her children; and what will be the nature of their work, should they ever stand at the head of families of their own? The oldest may have some knowledge of domestic duties, but further than this, she is a mere novice.

With wise, firm government, these children might have been useful members of society; as it is, they are a curse, a reproach to our faith. They are vain, frivolous, willful, extravagant. They have but little reverence for their parents, and their consciences are far from sensitive. They have had their own way, and their wishes have governed their parents, until it is almost impossible to arouse their moral sensibilities. The natural tendencies of the parents, particularly those that are objectionable, are strongly developed in the children. The whole family, parents and children, are under divine censure; and none of them can hope to enter the peaceful abodes of bliss unless they will take up their long-neglected duties, and, in the spirit of Christ, build up characters that God can approve.

Parents are responsible for the work coming from their hands. They should have wisdom and firmness to do their work faithfully and in the right spirit. They are to train their children for usefulness

by developing their God-given talents. A failure to do this should not be winked at, but should be made a matter of church discipline; for it will bring the curse of God on the parents, and a reproach and grievous trials and difficulties on the church. A moral leprosy that is contagious, polluting the bodies and souls of the youth, often results from a failure to discipline and restrain the young; and it is time that something was done to check its ravages. [84]

The Bible gives explicit directions concerning the important work of educating children: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart." The parents are themselves to be connected with God; they are to have his fear before them, and to have a knowledge of his will. Then comes their work: "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates."

The Lord commanded Israel not to make marriages with the idolatrous nations around them. "Thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods; so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly." "For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers."

Here are positive directions that reach down to our time. God is speaking to us in these last days, and he will be understood and obeyed. God spoke to Israel through his servants: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayst observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and [85]

then thou shalt have good success.” “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.” “The entrance of thy words giveth light: it giveth understanding unto the simple.” “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”

Here the duties of parents are clearly set forth. The word of God is to be their daily monitor. It gives such instruction that parents need not err in regard to the education of their children; but it admits of no indifference or negligence. The law of God is to be kept before the minds of the children as the great moral standard. When they rise up, and when they sit down, when they go out, and when they come in, this law is to be taught them as the great rule of life, and its principles are to be interwoven with all their experience. They are to be taught to be honest, truthful, temperate, economical, and industrious, and to love God with the whole heart. This is bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. This is setting their feet in the path of duty and safety.

Youth are ignorant and inexperienced, and the love of the Bible and its sacred truths will not come naturally. Unless great pains is taken to build up around them barriers to shield them from Satan’s devices, they are subject to his temptations, and are led captive by him at his will. In their early years, children are to be taught the claims of God’s law, and faith in Jesus our Redeemer to cleanse from the stains of sin. This faith must be taught day by day, by precept and example.

A solemn responsibility rests upon parents, and how can the Lord bless them in the positive neglect of their duty? Children can be molded when they are young. But years pass when their hearts are tender and susceptible to the impressions of truth, and but little time is devoted to their moral culture. The precious lessons of truth and duty should be instilled into their hearts daily. They should have a knowledge of God in his created works; this will be of greater value to them than any knowledge of books.

[86] “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God,” are the words of our Saviour. Errors in doctrine are multiplying, and twining themselves with serpent-like subtlety around the affections of the people. There is not a doctrine of the Bible that has not been denied. The great truths

of prophecy, showing our position in the history of the world, have been shorn of their beauty and power by the clergy, who seek to make these all-important truths dark and incomprehensible. In many cases the children are drifting away from the old landmarks. The Lord commanded his people Israel: "When thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord our God hath commanded you 'I then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's bondmen in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand; and the Lord showed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes; and he brought us out from thence, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he sware unto our fathers. And the Lord commanded us to do all these 'statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he hath commanded us."

Here are principles that we are not to regard with indifference. Those who have seen the truth and felt its importance, and have had an experience in the things of God, are to teach sound doctrine to their children. They should make them acquainted with the great pillars of our faith, the reasons why we are Seventh-day Adventists,—why we are called, as were the children of Israel, to be a peculiar people, a holy nation, separate and distinct from all other people on the face of the earth. These things should be explained to the children in simple language, easy to be understood; and as they grow in years, the lessons imparted should be suited to their increasing capacity, until the foundations of truth have been laid broad and deep.

Parents, you profess to be children of God; are you obedient children? Are you doing the will of your heavenly Father? Are you following his directions, or are you walking in the light of sparks of your own kindling? Are you daily working to outgeneral the enemy, and save your children from his devices? Are you opening to them the precious truths of the word of God, explaining to them the reasons of our faith, that their young feet may be planted on the platform of truth? [87]

The Bible with its precious gems of truth was not written for the scholar alone. On the contrary, it was designed for the common people; and the interpretation given by the common people, when aided by the Holy Spirit, accords best with the truth as it is in Jesus. The great truths necessary for salvation are made clear as the noonday; and none will mistake and lose their way except those who follow their own judgment instead of the plainly revealed will of God.

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## CHRISTIAN FORBEARANCE.

Dear Brother and Sister H: In regard to your present relations with the church, I would advise that you do all that can be done on your part to come into harmony with your brethren. Cultivate a kind, conciliatory spirit, and let no feeling of retaliation come into your minds and hearts. We have but a little time in this world, and let us work for time and for eternity. Be diligent to make your calling and election sure. See that you make no mistake in regard to your title to a home in Christ's kingdom. If your name is registered in the Lamb's book of life, then all will be well with you. Be ready and anxious to confess your faults and forsake them, that your mistakes and sins may go before-hand to judgment, and be blotted out.

I believe that you are making improvement; but let the work be deeper, more thorough, more earnest. Leave nothing undone that you can do. Walk humbly with God, set your heart in order, overcome self, and watch to avoid every device of Satan. When the heart is in harmony with Jesus, when in words, in spirit, and in deportment, you copy the Pattern, the manners will be refined and elevated, convincing all that there has been in you a radical change. You will then be numbered among the virtuous, God-fearing followers of Jesus. [88]

My brother, you have a very spotted record. God and your own soul know this. But no one will be more rejoiced than myself to see you setting your feet in the way that Christ has walked, and to meet you in the kingdom of God. It is difficult for us to understand ourselves, to have a correct knowledge of our own characters. The word of God is plain; but often there is an error in applying it to one's self. There is liability to self-deception, and to think its warnings and reproofs do not mean me. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" Self-flattery may be construed into Christian emotion and zeal. Self-love and confidence may give us assurance that we are right, when we are far from meeting the requirements of God's word.

The Bible is full, clear, and explicit; the character of the true disciple of Christ is marked out with exactness. We must search the Scriptures with humble hearts, trembling at the word of the Lord, if we would not be in any way deceived in regard to our true character. There must be persevering effort to overcome selfishness and self-confidence. Self-examination must be thorough, that there be no danger of self-deception. A little catechising of self on special occasions is not sufficient. Daily examine the foundation of your hope, and see whether you are indeed in the love of Christ. Deal truly with your own hearts; for you cannot afford to run any risk here. Count the cost of being a wholehearted Christian, and then gird on the armor. Study the Pattern; look to Jesus, and be like him. Your peace of mind, your hope of eternal salvation, depends [89] on faithfulness in this work. As Christians, we are less thorough in self-examination than in anything else; it is no wonder, then, that we make such slow advancement in understanding self.

I am writing these things to you because I want you to be saved. I do not want to discourage you, but to urge you to more earnest, vigorous effort. Self-love will prompt you to make a superficial work of self-examination; but let no vain confidence cheat you out of eternal life. Do not build yourself up on the mistakes and errors of others, but between God and your own soul settle the important question upon which hangs your eternal destiny.

“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.” Submit your heart to be refined and purified; then you will become a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. Then you will “be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.” The peace of Christ will be yours. Your name will stand registered in the book of life; your title to the heavenly inheritance will bear the royal

signet, which none on earth dare question. No one can bar your way to the portals of the city of God, but you will have free access to the royal presence, and to the temple of God on high.

A few words more press upon my mind. I want you to be united with the church, not because I regard all the church members perfect, nor because I regard you perfect. God has precious ones in his church; there are also men and women who are as tares among the wheat. But the Lord does not give you or any one else the office of saying who are tares and who are wheat. We may see and condemn the faults of others, while we have greater faults which we have never realized, but which are distinctly seen by others. God requires you to give to the world and the church a good example, a life that represents Jesus. There are duties to be performed and responsibilities to be borne. The world has not enough true Christians; the church has need of them; society cannot spare them. Christ's prayer for his disciples was, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." Jesus knows we are in the world, exposed to its temptations; but he loves us, and will give us grace to triumph over its corrupting influences. He would have us perfect in character, that our waywardness may not occasion moral deformity in others.

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You see that your brethren do not come up to the Bible standard, that there are defects in them; and you dwell upon these defects. You feed upon them instead of feeding upon Christ; and by beholding, you become changed into the same image. But criticise no one; do not contrast your own exact course with the deficiencies of others. You may be in danger of wanting to correct others, and make them feel their wrongs. Do not do this. This is not the work God has given you to do. He has not made you a church-tinker. There are many things which you view in the light of the Bible. But though you may be in the right on some points, do not get the impression that your positions are always correct; for on many points your ideas are distorted, and will not bear criticism.

Do not seek to exalt self, but learn in the school of Christ meekness and lowliness of heart. You know what Peter's character was, how strikingly his peculiar traits were developed. Before his great fall he was always forward and dictatorial, speaking unadvisedly from the impulse of the moment. He was always ready to correct

others, and to express his mind, before he had a clear comprehension of himself or of what he had to say. But Peter was converted, and the converted Peter was very different from the rash, impetuous Peter. [91] While he retained his former fervor, the grace of Christ regulated his zeal. Instead of being impetuous, self-confident, and self-exalted, he was calm, self-possessed, and teachable. He could then feed the lambs as well as the sheep of Christ's flock.

You, my brother, have a great work to do for yourself day by day. You must make constant effort to curb bad tempers and evil propensities. These have grown with your growth, and Jesus alone can strengthen you to fully overcome them. You should regard yourself as a servant of Christ, and seek to be like him in character. Try to make yourself agreeable to others. Even in your business relations, be courteous, kind, and forbearing, showing the meekness of Jesus, and that his spirit is ruling you. You are related to humanity, and you must be patient, kind, and pitiful. You need to cherish thoughtfulness and subdue selfishness. Let your inquiry be, "What can I do to bless others?" If your heart is yearning to do them good, even at inconvenience to yourself, you will have the blessing of God. Love, lifted out of the realm of passion and impulse, becomes spiritualized, and is revealed in words and acts. A Christian must have a sanctified tenderness and love, in which there is no impatience or fretfulness; the rude, harsh manners must be softened by the grace of Christ.

O my brother, my sister, educate yourselves in the school of Christ. Let the spirit of controversy cease, at home and in the church. Let your hearts be drawn out in love for the people of God. Hearts that are filled with the love of Christ can never get very far apart. Religion is love; and a Christian home is one where love reigns, and finds expression in words and acts of thoughtful kindness and gentle courtesy. Let no harsh words be spoken. Let the family worship be made pleasant and interesting. Be a Christian gentleman, my brother; for the very same principles that characterize the home life will be carried into the church. A lack of courtesy, a moment of petulance, a single rough, thoughtless word, will mar your reputation, and may close the door to hearts so that you can never reach them.

[92] Now I have set before you your dangers, and I tell you there are precious victories that you may gain. We can never see the kingdom

of Heaven unless we have the mind and spirit of Christ. Then copy the Pattern at home, at your work, and in the church. Do not try to teach others nor to see how widely you can differ from your brethren; but try to see how near you can come to them, how fully you can be in harmony with them. While doing all that you can on your part to perfect Christian character, give your heart to God, for him to mold according to his pleasure. He will help you; I know he will. May God bless you and your dear children; and may I meet you all around the great white throne, is my prayer.

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## WORLDLY AMBITION.

My DEAR BRO. I: Since meeting you at the Maine camp-meeting, I have felt that it was not too late for you to set your heart and house in order. I know that you have been impressed by the Spirit of God; and now the question is, Will you, in response to this invitation to repent, gladly surrender your heart to God? Your case has been presented to me in vision; but while you were so completely under the control of the enemy of souls, I had no courage to send you the message given me of the Lord. I feared that you would make light of it, and that the Holy Spirit would be grieved away for the last time. But now I feel urged to send you this testimony, which will prove to you a savor of life unto life or of death unto death.

Do not read this if you are decided to choose darkness rather than light, to serve mammon rather than Christ. But if you really want to do the will of God, and are willing to be saved in his own appointed way, then read the testimony; but do not read it to cavil, nor to pervert, ridicule, and despise it; for in that case it will be to you a savor of death unto death, and will witness against you in the Judgment. Before reading this warning message, go alone before God, and ask him to remove from you the spirit of defiance, rebellion, and unbelief, and to melt and subdue your stony heart.

We do not understand the greatness and majesty of God, nor remember the immeasurable distance between the Creator and the creatures formed by his hand. He who sitteth in the heavens, swaying the scepter of the universe, does not judge according to our finite standard, nor reckon according to our computation. We are in error if we think that that which is great to us must be great to God, and that which is small to us must be small to him. He would be no more exalted than ourselves if he possessed only the same faculties.

God does not regard all sins as of equal magnitude; there are degrees of guilt in his estimation as well as in that of finite man. But however trifling this or that wrong in their course may seem in the eyes of men, no sin is small in the sight of God. The sins

which man is disposed to look upon as small may be the very ones which God accounts as great crimes. The drunkard is despised, and is told that his sin will exclude him from Heaven, while pride, selfishness, and covetousness go unrebuked. But these are sins that are especially offensive to God. He “resisteth the proud;” and Paul tells us that covetousness is idolatry. Those who are familiar with the denunciations against idolatry in the word of God, will at once see how grave an offense this sin is.

God speaks through his prophet: “Let the wicked for-sake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” We need clear discernment, that we may measure sin by the Lord’s standard, and not by our own. Let us take for our rule, not human opinions, but the divine word.

We are on the great battle field of life, and let it never be forgotten that we are individually responsible for the issue of the struggle; that though Noah, Job, and Daniel were in the land, yet should they deliver neither son or daughter by their righteousness. You, my brother, have not thought of this. But you have justified your own course because you thought that your brethren did not do right. Sometimes you have acted like a petted, spoiled child, and have talked unbelief and doubt to spite others; but will it pay? Is there anything in your family, in the church, or in the world to justify your indifference to the claims of God? Will any of your excuses avail when you stand face to face with the Judge of all the earth? How foolish and sinful will your selfish, avaricious course then appear. How unaccountable it will seem to you that you could let worldly opinions and worldly gain eclipse the re-ward to be given to the faithful,—an eternity of bliss in the Paradise of God.

When you were in great physical suffering, and there was no hope for you in human skill, the Lord pitied you, and mercifully removed disease from you. Satan has sought to afflict and ruin you, and even to take your life; but your Saviour has shielded you again and again, lest you should be cut down when your heart was filled with a Satanic frenzy, your tongue uttering words of bitterness and

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unbelief against the Bible and against the truth you once advocated. When Satan has clamored for you, claiming you as his own, Christ has repulsed your cruel and malignant foe with the words: "I have not yet withdrawn my Spirit from him. He has two more steps to take before he will pass the boundary of my mercy and love. Souls are the purchase of my blood. The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; the Lord rebuke thee."

[95] I was then carried back in your life, and you were shown to me when the truth found a response in your heart. The Spirit of God convicted you of the course you should pursue, and you had quite a struggle with self. You had been a sharp, scheming man. You had not done by others as you would wish them to do by you, but had taken advantage of them whenever you could. You had a close, stem battle to fight to subdue self and mortify pride; and it was only through the grace of God that this work could be accomplished. Instead of effecting a thorough reformation, you joined the truth to a patched-up character, which would not stand the test of temptation. You did not begin by seeking God with a broken and contrite heart, and making Wrongs right. Had you done this, you would not have stumbled, and fallen into the snare of the enemy. There was a mixture of selfishness in your motives, which you yourself did not clearly see. Arguments drawn from worldly interest, social position, and comparative respectability, influenced you, and decided you not to make earnest, thorough work before God and men. Reaching after the worldly standard marred the sincerity and purity of your Christian character; and you failed to bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

Zacchaeus declared, "If I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." You could at least have made efforts to correct your acts of injustice to your fellow-men. You cannot make every case right; for some whom you have injured have gone into their graves, and the account stands registered against you. In these cases the best you can do is to bring a trespass offering to the altar of the Lord, and he will accept and pardon you. But where you can, you should make reparation to the wronged ones.

Had the unbelievers with whom you have associated seen in you the transforming power of the truth, they would have had an argument in favor of Christianity which they could not controvert.



You might thus have reflected a clear, sharp light to the world; but instead of this you have mingled with the world, and imbibed its spirit. My brother, you must be born again. A mere form of Christianity is not of the least value. It is destitute of saving power, having in it no reformative energy. A religion which is confined to Sabbath worship emits no rays of light to others. I entreat you to examine your own heart closely. You have a combative, contentious spirit, and you are cultivating instead of repressing that spirit. You should [96] make a decided change, and cultivate meekness, faith, humility, and love. Your soul is in peril; you will surely be subject to the strong delusions of Satan, unless you stop where you are, and press against the current of worldliness and ambition. Your relations with the world must be changed, and a decided separation must take place. The positions which you occupy, which are continually opening to you doors of temptation, must be given up. Avoid politics; shun contention. Keep clear of every office which would encourage those traits in your character that need to be battled down and overcome.

My brother, you must make a strong, decided effort, or you will never be able to cast off the works of darkness. Satan looks upon you as his own. When you listen to the testimonies of God's servants, as at the late camp-meeting, you are deeply convicted. But you do not respond to the impressions of the Spirit of God, and as you mingle with worldlings, you drink in their spirit, and are borne down by the worldly current, having no moral power to resist its influence. You become one with the world-loving, and your spirit is worse than theirs, for your choice is voluntary. You love the praise of men, and you love worldly possessions above Jesus. The love of mammon has been woven into every fiber of your being, and has become all-absorbing. To eradicate it will be like plucking out the right eye or cutting off the right arm. But I speak to you as one who knows: unless you overcome this intense love of money, it will cost you your soul's salvation, and then it would have been better for you, had you never been born.

"Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Just as far as you love and cherish the spirit of the world, you will have a spirit of defiance, and will question and find fault with those who bring you the message of truth. You will deride the truth, and will become a false witness, an accuser of the brethren. The talents given you of God to be improved

[97] to his glory, will be actively employed against his work and cause. There is no concord between Christ and Belial. You have already chosen the friendship of the world; therefore you are decidedly on the side of Satan. The natural heart is at enmity against God, and will resist the clearest evidence of truth. The wicked will not endure the light that condemns their wrong course of action.

You have opened your heart to doubt and skepticism; but you will never be able to be an honest infidel. You may boast that you do not believe the Bible; but you will be perjuring yourself all the time, for you know better.

I entreat you to make earnest work for eternal life. Break the snare of Satan; work against his devices. Let this be the language of your soul: "There is nothing in the universe that I fear so much as that I shall not know all my duty, or that, knowing, I shall fail to do it." "Stand up for Jesus" were the words of a dying saint. Yes, Bro. I, stand up for Jesus. It will take all to do this. You may have to change your position in the world; but a name, distinction, office, are to you a snare, imperiling your soul. A calculating, worldly wisdom is continually seeking to turn you away from the Saviour. A bold, defiant, blasphemous infidelity will attempt to crush his gospel, not only out of your own soul, but out of the world. But stand up for Jesus. In the presence of your relatives and friends, in all your business relations, in your associations with the world,—anywhere and everywhere, under all circumstances, stand up for Jesus.

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## LOVE AMONG BRETHREN.

Dear Brethren and Sisters in —: My mind has been exceedingly troubled in regard to your condition. I have not been able to sleep, and I arise at twelve o'clock to write to J, and to you as a church. I do not know what might have been the condition of J at the present time had you pursued a righteous, Christian course toward him,—such a course as every child of God should pursue in such a case. Some of you will not be able to comprehend my words; for your own course has placed you where you have not sanctified discernment. You have allowed strong, hard feelings against him to come into your hearts, and have justified yourselves in treating him with indifference, and even contempt. You have reasoned that by his unbelief and his wrong course he was certainly injuring the church and endangering souls, and you must have no fellowship with him. But will you, in the light of God's great standard of righteousness, critically examine every word and act of your own that you can call to mind, and compare these with the life of Christ? If you have been doing the will of God, then his light and his approval will second your efforts, and prosperity will attend you. I wish the members of this once prosperous church would each begin to build over against his own house. When they see their course in its true light, they will know that they have made a very great mistake in allowing their own critical, Pharisaical spirit to control their tongues and develop itself in their treatment of their brethren. This unchristian harshness has excluded Jesus from the church, and has brought in a spirit of dissension. It has fostered a disposition to judge and condemn, a hatred of those who do not see things as you see them. Even if your brethren say and do many things that really injure you, will you push them one side, and say, "I am holier than thou"?

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"By their fruits ye shall know them." Christ has not been revealed in your deportment toward some who were much nearer the kingdom of Heaven than yourselves. The Lord has opened before you your wrong toward his children; your want of mercy and love, your

determination to control minds and make them see things just as you see them. And when light came to you, what course did you take ? Did you merely admit that you were wrong, or did you heartily confess your error, and humble your proud hearts before God ? Did you cast aside your ways, and accept God's teachings? Did you go to the very ones you had bruised and wounded, and say, "I have been wrong; I have sinned against you. Forgive me. I have failed; I have worked in my own spirit. I had a zeal, but not according to knowledge. It was the spirit of Jehu, rather than the meekness and lowliness of Christ. The word of God directs, ' Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.' Will you pray for me that God will forgive me for the distress and anguish I have caused you?"

If you who have engaged in this work of bruising and condemning have not heartily repented, then light, peace, and joy will not come into your souls. When you are careful, kind, and tender to your brethren in the same degree that you have been hard, unforgiving, and oppressive, you will confess your faults, and make restitution as far as possible; and when you have done all on your part, you may ask the Lord to do that which it is impossible for you to do,—heal the wounds you have made, forgive you, and blot out your transgression. When there is so great reluctance to confess a wrong which is laid open and plain before the erring, it shows that they are controlled by their own untamable, unsanctified natures rather than by the spirit of the gospel of Christ.

If God has ever spoken by me, you have most earnest work to do in zealous repentance for showing to the erring the Satanic element in your character not in coldness and indifference merely, but in neglect and contempt. If they are indeed in darkness, and doing things that imperil their souls, you should manifest the greater interest in them. Show them that while you will be true to principle, and will not swerve from the right, you love their souls. Let them know by your words and actions that you have not a spirit of revenge and retaliation, but that for their sakes you will sacrifice feeling and subdue self. Represent Jesus, our pattern; manifest his spirit at all times and under all circumstances, and let that mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus. Your ways have not been God's ways; your will has not been God's will. The precious plant of love has not

been cultivated, and watered by the dews of grace. Self-love, self-righteousness, self-complacency, have exerted a controlling power. [100]

What has Jesus done for you, and what is he continually doing for us individually? What have you that you have not received? Said Christ: "I am the vine, ye are the branches." "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." The branches do not sustain the vine, but the vine supports and nourishes the branches. The church does not support Christ, but Christ, by his vital power, supports the church. It is not enough to be a branch; we are to be fruitful branches. "He that abideth in me," said Jesus, "and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." But if the fruit produced be that of the thorn-bush, it is evident that we are not branches of the Living Vine.

Life is disciplinary. While in the world, the Christian will meet with adverse influences. There will be provocations to test the temper; and it is by meeting these in a right spirit that the Christian graces are developed. If injuries and insults are meekly borne, if insulting words are responded to by gentle answers, and oppressive acts by kindness, this is evidence that the Spirit of Christ dwells in the heart, that sap from the Living Vine is flowing to the branches. We are in the school of Christ in this life, where we are to learn to be meek and lowly of heart; and in the day of final accounts we shall see that all the obstacles we meet, all the hardships and annoyances that we are called to bear, are practical lessons in the application of principles of Christian life. If well endured, they develop the Christlike in the character, and distinguish the Christian from the worldling.

There is a high standard to which we are to attain if we would be children of God, noble, pure, holy, and undefiled; and a pruning process is necessary if we would reach this standard. How would this pruning be accomplished if there were no difficulties to meet, no obstacles to surmount, nothing to call out patience and endurance? [101] These trials are not the smallest blessings in our experience. They are designed to nerve us to determination to succeed. We are to use them as God's means to gain decided victories over self, instead of allowing them to hinder, oppress, and destroy us.

Character will be tested. Christ will be revealed in us if we are indeed branches of the Living Vine. We shall be patient, kind, and forbearing, cheerful amid frets and irritations. Day by day and year by year we shall conquer self and grow into a noble heroism. This is our allotted task; but it cannot be accomplished without continual help from Jesus, resolute decision, unwavering purpose, continual watchfulness, and unceasing prayer. Each one has a personal battle to fight. Each must win his own way through struggles and discouragements. Those who decline the struggle lose the strength and joy of victory. No one, not even God, can carry us to Heaven unless we make the necessary effort on our part. We must put features of beauty into our lives. We must expel the unlovely natural traits that make us unlike Jesus. While God works in us to will and to do of his own good pleasure, we must work in harmony with him. The religion of Christ transforms the heart. It makes the worldly-minded man heavenly-minded. Under its influence the selfish man becomes unselfish, because this is the character of Christ. The dishonest, scheming man becomes upright, so that it is second nature to him to do unto others as he would have others do unto him. The profligate is changed from impurity to purity. He forms correct habits; for the gospel of Christ has become to him a savor of life unto life.

[102] Now, while probation lingers, it does not become one to pronounce sentence upon others, and look to himself as a model man. Christ is our model; imitate him, plant your feet in his steps. You may professedly believe every point of present truth, but unless you practice these truths it will avail you nothing. We are not to condemn others; this is not our work; but we should love one another and pray for one another. When we see one err from the truth, then we may weep over him as Christ wept over Jerusalem. Let us see what our heavenly Father, in his word, says about the erring: "If a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." "If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." What a great missionary work is this! how much more Christlike than for poor, fallible mortals to be ever accusing and condemning those who do not exactly meet their minds. Let us remember that

Jesus knows us individually, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. He knows the wants of each of his creatures, and reads the hidden, unspoken grief of every heart. If one of the little ones for whom he died is injured, he sees it, and calls the offender to account. Jesus is the Good Shepherd. He cares for his feeble, sickly, wandering sheep. He knows them all by name. The distress of every sheep and every lamb of his flock touches his heart of sympathizing love, and the cry for aid reaches his ear. One of the greatest sins of the shepherds of Israel is thus pointed out by the prophet: "The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd; and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill; yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them."

Jesus cares for each one as though there were not another individual on the face of the earth. As Deity, he exerts mighty power in our behalf, while as our Elder Brother he feels for all our woes. The Majesty of Heaven held not himself aloof from degraded, sinful humanity. We have not a high priest who is so high, so lifted up, that he cannot notice us or sympathize with us, but one who was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. [103]

How different from this spirit is the feeling of indifference and contempt that has been manifested by some in — toward J and those who have been affected by his influence. If ever the transforming grace of God was needed, it is needed in this church. In judging and condemning a brother, they have undertaken to do a work that God never put into their hands. A hardness of heart, a censorious, condemnatory spirit that would destroy individuality and independence, has been woven into their Christian experience, and they have lost the love of Jesus out of their hearts. Make haste, brethren, to get these things off your soul before it shall be said in Heaven, "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."

You will have many perplexities to meet in your Christian life in connection with the church; but do not try too hard to mold your brethren. If you see that they do not meet the requirements of God's word, do not condemn; if they provoke, do not retaliate. When things are said that would exasperate, quietly keep your soul from fretting. You see many things which appear wrong in others, and you want to correct these wrongs. You commence in your own strength to work for a reform; but you do not go about it in the right way. You must labor for the erring with a heart subdued, softened by the Spirit of God, and let the Lord work through you, the agent. Roll your burden on Jesus. You feel that the Lord must take up the case, where Satan is striving for the mastery over some soul; but you are to do what you can in humility and meekness, and put the tangled work, the complicated matters, into the hands of God. Follow the directions in his word, and leave the outcome of the matter to his wisdom. Having done all you can to save your brother, cease worrying, and go calmly [104] about other pressing duties. It is no longer your matter, but God's.

Do not, through impatience, cut the knot of difficulty, making matters hopeless. Let God untangle the snarled up threads for you. He is wise enough to manage the complications of our lives. He has skill and tact. We cannot always see his plans; we must wait patiently their unfolding, and not mar and destroy them. He will reveal them to us in his own good time. Seek for unity; cultivate love and conformity to Christ in all things. He is the source of unity and strength; but you have not sought for Christian unity, that you might knit hearts together in love.

There is work for you to do in the church and out of the church. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." The fruit we bear is the only test of the character of the tree before the world. This is the proof of our discipleship. If our works are of such a character that as branches of the Living Vine we bear rich clusters of precious fruit, then we wear before the world God's own badge as his sons and daughters. We are living epistles, known and read of all men.

Now, I fear that you will fail in doing the work you must do to redeem the past and become living, fruit bearing branches. If you do as God would have you, his blessing will come into the church. You have not yet been humble enough to make thorough work and meet the mind of the Spirit of God. There has been self-



justification, self-pleasing, self-vindication, when there should have been humiliation, contrition, and repentance. You should remove every stumbling-block, and make “straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way.” It is not too late for wrongs to be righted; but you must not feel that you are whole, and have no need of a physician, for you need help. When you come to Jesus with a broken heart, he will help and bless you, and you will go forth in the Master’s work with courage and energy. The best evidence that you are in Christ is the fruit you bear. If you are not truly united to him, your light and privileges will condemn and ruin you.

## REDEEMING THE TIME.

DEAR BRO. J: I have arisen at twelve o'clock to write to you, because my mind is burdened. I am troubled on your account; for I know that we are near the close of earth's history, and your life-record is not such a one as you will be pleased to meet in the great day when every man will receive as his works have been.

You may feel that others have done wrong; and I know as well as you do that a Christlike spirit has not been manifested in the church. But will this avail you in the Judgment? Will two wrongs make one right? Though one, two, or three in the church have done wrong, this will not blot out or excuse your sin. Whatever course others may take, your work is to set your own heart in order. God has claims upon you which no circumstances should lead you to forget or neglect; for every soul is precious in his sight.

My heart is drawn out after those who have stumbled on the dark mountains of unbelief, and I want to help them. There is good material in the church in —; but the members have not been transformed by the Spirit of God, and brought into a position where they can let their light shine to the world. Some, with the best of motives, and possessing capabilities for great usefulness, utterly fail in times of trial in the church, for want of the love and mercy that dwelt so richly in the heart of Christ. They see one in error; and instead of helping him they hold themselves aloof. They are inclined to make unpleasant allusions, and to touch sensitive spots when they might avoid them. Self comes up and bears sway, and they give pain and stir up wrong feelings. However pure their intentions, their efforts to do good nearly always result in failure, if not in actual harm, because the tenderness and compassion of Christ are wanting. They would make very good surgeons, but they are poor nurses. They have not the tact that is born of love. If they had this, they would know how to speak the right word and do the right thing at the right time and in the right place. Others may have no more sincere desires to do right, no deeper interest in the cause of God; they may

be no more true and loyal, their sympathies no deeper, their love no warmer; yet because of their gentleness and tact they are far more successful in winning back the erring.

The Lord would be pleased to have his people more considerate than they now are, more merciful and more helpful to one another. When the love of Christ is in the heart, each will be tenderly regardful of the interests of others. Brother will not take advantage of brother in business transactions. One will not charge exorbitant interest because he sees his brother in a close place, where he must have help. Those who will take advantage of the necessities of another, prove conclusively that they are not governed by the principles of the gospel of Christ. Their course is recorded in the books of Heaven as fraud and dishonesty; and wherever these principles rule, the blessing of the Lord will not come into the heart. Such persons are receiving the impress of the great adversary rather than that of the Spirit of God. But those who shall finally inherit the heavenly kingdom must be transformed by divine grace. They must be pure in heart and life, and possess symmetrical characters.

I regard you, my brother, as in great peril. Your treasure is laid up on the earth, and your heart is upon your treasure. But all the means you may accumulate, even though it should be millions, will not be sufficient to pay a ransom for your soul. Then do not remain in impenitence and unbelief, and in your case defeat the gracious purposes of God; do not force from his reluctant hand destruction of your property or affliction of your person.

How many there are who are now taking a course which must ere long lead to just such visitations of judgment. They live on day by day, week by week, year by year, for their own selfish interest. Their influence and means, accumulated through God-given skill and tact, are used upon themselves and their families, without thought of their gracious Benefactor. Nothing is allowed to flow back to the Giver. Indeed, they come to regard life and its intrusted talents as their own; and if they render back to God that portion which he justly claims, they think that they have placed their Creator under obligation to them. At last his patience with these unfaithful stewards is exhausted; and he brings all their selfish, worldly schemes to an abrupt termination, showing them that as they have gathered for their own glory, he can scatter, and they are helpless to resist his power.

Bro. J, I address you to-day as a prisoner of hope. But will you consider that your sun passed its meridian some time ago, and is now rapidly declining? The evening has come. Do you not discern the lengthening shadows? You have but a little time left in which to work for yourself, for humanity, and for your Master. There is a special work to be done for your own soul if you are ever to be numbered with the overcomers. How stands your life record? Is Jesus pleading in your behalf in vain? Shall he be disappointed in you? Some of your companions, who stood side by side with you, have already been summoned away. Eternity will reveal whether they were bankrupt in faith and failed to secure eternal life, or whether they were rich toward God, and heirs of the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Will you not consider that the long forbearance of God toward you calls for repentance and humiliation of soul before him ?

There are other weighty considerations aside from your own personal salvation, which demand your attention. Late as it now is, with your sun about to sink behind the western hills, you have still a great work to do for your children, who have allowed the love of the world to separate them from God. You have also unsaved relatives, neighbors, and friends. Had your example been consistent with the light given you; had you been as diligent to save these precious souls as you have been to gather earthly treasure; had you used your means and influence, your wisdom and tact, in an effort to gather [108] these straying ones into the fold of Christ,— had this been your life-work, you would have secured a harvest of souls, and would have insured a rich reward in the day of God. You would thus have been building upon the true foundation valuable and imperishable material; but instead of this you have been building wood, hay, and stubble, to be consumed when every man's work shall be tried, of what sort it is.

Your life has been a failure. You have been a stumbling-block to sinners. They have said of you, "If the religion which this man professes is indeed genuine, why is he so eager after this world? Why does he not in his own conduct show the spirit of Christ?" Hasten, my brother, before it is forever too late, to remove this stumbling-block from the way of sinners. Can you look with pleasure upon your life or upon the influence you have exerted? Will you now consider your

ways? Will you now make efforts to come into right relations with God? I do not believe your heart is unimpressible, and I know that the loving-kindness and tender mercy of God are marvelous. You have a little time of probation, will you improve it now, while Jesus is pleading his blood before the Father? He has graciously spared your life; but it has been like the barren fig-tree, upon which year after year there appeared no fruit, nothing but leaves. How long will you continue to disappoint the Master? Will you compel him to say, "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever;" or, "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" Oh, wait not for the Lord to put his hand against you, and scatter the property which you have accumulated. Remember that all your wealth will not give you one moment of sweet assurance and peace upon your dying bed.

I earnestly urge upon you the necessity of returning to the Lord at once. I entreat you to disappoint the enemy. Break from off you his cruel power. Seek, during the remainder of your life, to make an entirely different record in Heaven, one of which you will not be ashamed when the books shall be opened, and the Judge shall pronounce sentence upon those who have neglected this great salvation.

Paul exhorts his Ephesian brethren to redeem the time, because the days are evil. This exhortation is very applicable to you. In one sense it is impossible to redeem the time; for once gone, it is gone forever. But you are called upon to reform, to be zealous of good works in the same degree that you have been negligent of duty. Turn square about. Double your diligence to make your calling and election sure. Keep God's commandments, and live, and his law as the apple of your eye. Tax every moment to the utmost in laboring for your own eternal interest and for the salvation of souls around you. By so doing you may save both yourself and those who are more or less controlled by your example. These are motives which should be duly considered.

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Wake up! wake up! You have work to do, and your sun is fast hastening to its setting. Your powers are becoming enfeebled; but all there is of you, every particle of your ability, belongs to God, and should be used earnestly and disinterestedly in his service. Work while the sun still lingers in the heavens; for the "night cometh, when no man can work."

Come, my brother, come just as you are, sinful and polluted. Lay your burden of guilt on Jesus, and by faith claim his merits. Come now, while mercy lingers; come with confession, come with contrition of soul, and God will abundantly pardon. Do not dare to slight another opportunity. Listen to the voice of mercy that now pleads with you to arise from the dead that Christ may give you light. Every moment now seems to connect itself directly with the destinies of the unseen world. Then let not your pride and unbelief lead you to still further reject offered mercy. If you do, you will be left to lament at the last, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."

[110] Wait in deep humiliation before God. From this hour, resolve to be the Lord's, doing your whole duty, trusting implicitly in the great atonement. Do this, and you will have nothing to fear. The remainder of your life-journey will be tranquil and happy, and you will secure to yourself that life which shall continue as long as God shall live.

I have written this because I felt urged to do so by the Spirit of God, and because I have a deep interest for you. Do not for one moment let your feelings rise against me; for I have been influenced by love for your soul. We have enjoyed many precious seasons in worshipping God, when our hearts were made joyful by his sweet blessing. Are these seasons forever past? We may never meet again in this life; but shall we not meet when the ransomed are gathered around the great white throne?

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## THE MANUFACTURE OF WINE AND CIDER.

Dear Brethren and Sisters of the Church at ———: I have been shown that as a church you are not growing in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. There is not that consecration to God, that devotion to his service, and that disinterested labor for the up building of his cause, which would make you a prosperous and healthy church. You are not subject one to another. There are too many among you who have, their own ideas to maintain, and their own selfish plans to carry out; and some who occupy prominent places in the church are of this number.

Bro. K has not an eye single to the glory of God; he does not view things from a right stand-point. He is giving heed to suggestions of Satan, and taking counsel of his own unsanctified judgment; and he grasps at every word that can be framed into a justification of his wrong course. He is self-deceived; he does not see that he is shutting himself away from the Spirit of God. When he entered upon this path, he did not know its dangers, nor realize where it would lead him. All who are walking in the same way would do well to turn their feet at once into the path of safety.

We are living in an age of intemperance, and catering to the appetite of the cider-bibber is an offense against God. With others, you have engaged in this work because you have not followed the light. Had you stood in the light, you would not, you could not, have done this. Every one of you who has acted a part in this work will come under the condemnation of God, unless you make an entire change in your business. You need to be in earnest. You need to commence the work at once to clear your souls from condemnation.

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Some of you in — developed wonderful zeal in denouncing the red-ribbon clubs. So far as you were actuated by a desire to condemn the evil in these societies, you were right; but when you acted as though it were a crime to speak at all in their favor, or to show them the least good will, you carried matters to extremes. You should be consistent in all things. You have cherished a hatred for the very

name “red-ribbon club” that savors not of the Spirit of Christ; and your feelings of bitterness have not helped you or any one else.

You have taken the Testimonies given in reference to our people mingling with the temperance societies to the detriment of their spiritual interest, and by perverting them have used them to oppress and burden souls. By this treatment of the light given, you have brought my work into disrepute. There was not the least necessity for this, and some of you have a work to do to make this matter right. You would make an iron bedstead for others; if too short, they must be stretched; if too long, they must be cut off. “Judge not, that ye be not judged.”

After you had taken a decided stand in opposition to active participation in the work of the temperance societies, you might still have retained an influence over others for good, had you acted conscientiously in accordance with the holy faith which you profess; but by engaging in the manufacture of cider, you have hurt your influence very much; and what is worse, you have brought reproach upon the truth, and your own souls have been injured. You have been building up a barrier between yourselves and the temperance cause. Your course led unbelievers to question your principles. You are not making straight paths for your feet; and the lame are halting and stumbling over you to perdition.

I cannot see how, in the light of the law of God, Christians can conscientiously engage in the raising of hops or in the manufacture of wine or cider for the market. All these articles may be put to a good use, and prove a blessing; or they may be put to a wrong use, and prove a temptation and a curse. Cider and wine may be canned when fresh, and kept sweet a long time; and if used in an unfermented state, they will not dethrone reason. But those who manufacture apples into cider for the market are not careful as to the condition of the fruit used, and in many cases the juice of decayed apples is expressed. Those who would not think of using the poisonous rotten apples in any other way, will drink the cider made from them, and call it a luxury; but the microscope would reveal the fact that this pleasant beverage is often unfit for the human stomach, even when fresh from the press. If it is boiled, and care is taken to remove the impurities, it is less objectionable.



I have often heard people say, "Oh! this is only sweet cider; it is perfectly harmless, and even healthful." Several quarts, perhaps gallons, are carried home. For a few days it is sweet; then fermentation begins. The sharp flavor makes it all the more acceptable to many palates, and the lover of sweet wine or cider is loth to admit that his favorite beverage ever becomes hard and sour. Persons may become just as really intoxicated on wine and cider as on stronger drinks, and the worst kind of inebriation is produced by these so-called milder drinks. The passions are more perverse; the transformation of character is greater, more determined and obstinate. A few quarts of cider or wine may awaken a taste for stronger drinks, and in many cases those who have become confirmed drunkards have thus laid the foundation of the drinking habit. For some persons it is by no means safe to have wine or cider in the house. They have inherited an appetite for stimulants, which Satan is continually soliciting them to indulge. If they yield to his temptations, they do not stop; appetite clamors for indulgence, and is gratified to their rum. The brain is benumbed and clouded; reason no longer holds the reins, but they are laid on the neck of lust. Licentiousness, adultery, and vices of almost every type, are committed as the result of indulging the appetite for wine and cider. A professor of religion who loves these stimulants, and accustoms himself to their use, never grows in grace. He becomes gross and sensual; the animal passions control the higher powers of the mind, and virtue is not cherished.

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Moderate drinking is the school in which men are receiving an education for the drunkard's career. So gradually does Satan lead away from the strongholds of temperance, so insidiously do the harmless wine and cider exert their influence upon the taste, that the highway to drunkenness is entered upon all unsuspectingly. The taste for stimulants is cultivated; the nervous system is disordered; Satan keeps the mind in a fever of unrest; and the poor victim, imagining himself perfectly secure, goes on and on, until every barrier is broken down, every principle sacrificed. The strongest resolutions are undermined; and eternal interests are not strong enough to keep the debased appetite under the control of reason.

Some are never really drunk, but are always under the influence of cider or fermented wine. They are feverish, unbalanced in mind, not really delirious, but in fully as bad a condition; for all the noble

powers of the mind are perverted. A tendency to disease of various kinds, as dropsy, liver complaint, trembling nerves, and a determination of blood to the head, results from the habitual use of sour cider. By its use many bring upon themselves permanent disease. Some die of consumption or fall under the power of apoplexy from this cause alone. Some suffer from dyspepsia. Every vital function is deadened and the physicians tell them that they have liver complaint, when if they would break open the cider barrel, and never replace it, their abused life-forces would recover their vigor.

[114] Cider-drinking leads to the use of stronger drinks. The stomach loses its natural vigor, and something stronger is needed to arouse it to action. On one occasion, when my husband and myself were traveling, we were obliged to spend several hours waiting for the train. While we were in the depot, a red-faced, bloated farmer came into the restaurant connected with it, and in a loud, rough voice asked, "Have you first-class brandy?" He was answered in the affirmative, and ordered half a tumbler. "Have you pepper sauce?" "Yes," was the answer. "Well, put in two large spoonfuls." He next ordered two spoonfuls of alcohol added, and concluded by calling for "a good dose of black pepper." The man who was preparing it asked, "What will you do with such a mixture!" He replied, "I guess that will take hold," and placing the full glass to his lips, drank the whole of this fiery compound. That man had used stimulants until he had deadened the tender coats of the stomach.

Many, as they read this, will laugh at the warning of danger. They will say, "Surely the little wine or cider that I use cannot hurt me." Satan has marked such as his prey; he leads them on step by step, and they perceive it not until the chains of habit and appetite are too strong to be broken. We see the power that appetite for strong drink has over men; we see how many of all professions and of heavy responsibilities, men of exalted station, of eminent talents, of great attainments, of fine feeling, of strong nerves, and of good reasoning powers, sacrifice everything for the indulgence of appetite, until they are reduced to the level of the brutes; and in very many cases their downward course commenced with the use of wine or cider.

When intelligent men and women who are professedly Christians, plead that there is no harm in making wine or cider for the market, because when unfermented it will not intoxicate, I feel sad

at heart. I know there is another side to this subject that they refuse to look upon. for selfishness has closed their eyes to the terrible evils that may result from the use of these stimulants. I do not see how our brethren can abstain from all appearance of evil, and engage largely in the business of hop- raising, knowing to what use the hops are put. Those who help to produce these beverages that encourage and educate the appetite for stronger stimulants, will be rewarded as their works have been. They are transgressors of the law of God; and they will be punished for the sins which they commit, and for those which they have influenced others to commit through the temptations which they have placed in their way. [115]

Let all who profess to believe the truth for this time, and to be reformers, act in accordance with their faith. If one whose name is on the church book manufactures wine or cider for the market, he should be faithfully labored with, and if he continues the practice, he should be placed under censure of the church. Those who will not be dissuaded from doing this work are unworthy of a place and a name among the people of God. We are to be followers of Christ, to set our hearts and our influence against every evil practice. How should we feel in the day when God's judgments are poured out, to meet men who have become drunkards through our influence? We are living in the antitypical day of atonement, and our cases must soon come in review before God. How shall we stand in the courts of Heaven, if our course of action has encouraged the use of stimulants that pervert reason, and are destructive of virtue, purity, and the love of God?

The lawyer asked Christ, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law ? how readest thou ? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live." Eternal life is the prize at stake, and Christ tells us how we may gain it. He directs us to the written word, "How readest thou?" The way is there pointed out; we are to love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves. But if we love our neighbor as ourselves, we shall not throw upon the market anything that will be a snare to him.

To love God and man is the Christian's whole duty. The law of [116]

love is written upon the tablets of the soul, the Spirit of Christ dwells in him, and his character appears in good works. Jesus became poor, that through his poverty we might be made rich. What sacrifices are we willing to make for his sake? Have we his love enshrined in our hearts? Do we love our neighbor as Christ loved us? If we have this love for souls, it will lead us to consider carefully whether by our words, our acts, our influence in any way, we are placing temptation before those who have little moral power. We shall not censure the weak and suffering, as the Pharisees were continually doing, but we shall endeavor to remove every stone of stumbling from our brother's path, lest the lame be turned out of the way.

As a people, we profess to be reformers, to be lightbearers in the world, to be faithful sentinels for God, guarding every avenue whereby Satan could come in with his temptations to pervert the appetite. Our example and influence must be a power on the side of reform. We must abstain from any practice which will blunt the conscience or encourage temptation. We must open no door that will give Satan access to the mind of one human being formed in the image of God. If all would be vigilant and faithful in guarding the little openings made by the moderate use of the so-called harmless wine and cider, the highway to drunkenness would be closed up. What is needed in every community is firm purpose, and a will to touch not, taste not, handle not; then the temperance reformation will be strong, permanent, and thorough.

[117] The love of money will lead men to violate conscience. Perhaps that very money may be brought to the Lord's treasury; but he will not accept any such offering, it is an offense to him. It was obtained by transgressing his law, which requires that a man love his neighbor as himself. It is no excuse for the transgressor to say that if he had not made wine or cider, somebody else would, and his neighbor might have become a drunkard just the same. Because some will place the bottle to their neighbor's lips, will Christians venture to stain their garments with the blood of souls,—to incur the curse pronounced upon these who place this temptation in the way of erring men? Jesus calls upon his followers to stand under his banner, and aid in destroying the works of the devil.

The world's Redeemer, who knows well the state of society in the last days, represents eating and drinking as the sins that condemn

this age. He tells us that as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be when the Son of man is revealed. "They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away." Just such a state of things will exist in the last days, and those who believe these warnings will use the utmost caution not to take a course that will bring them under condemnation.

Brethren, let us look at this matter in the light of the Scriptures, and exert a decided influence on the side of temperance in all things. Apples and grapes are God's gifts; they may be put to excellent use as healthful articles of food, or they may be abused by being put to a wrong use. Already God is blighting the grape vine and the apple crop because of men's sinful practices. We stand before the world as reformers; let us give no occasion for infidels or unbelievers to reproach our faith. Said Christ, "Ye are the salt of the earth," "the light of the world." Let us show that our hearts and consciences are under the transforming influence of divine grace, and that our lives are governed by the pure principles of the law of God, even though these principles may require the sacrifice of temporal interests.

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## MARRIAGE WITH UNBELIEVERS.

[118] DEAR SISTER L: I have learned of your contemplated marriage with one who is not united with you in religious faith, and I fear that you have not carefully weighed this important matter. Before taking a step which is to exert an influence upon all your future life, I urge you to give the subject careful and prayerful deliberation. Will this new relationship prove a source of true happiness? Will it be a help to you in the Christian life? Will it be pleasing to God? Will your example be a safe one for others to follow ?

Before giving her hand in marriage, every woman should inquire whether he with whom she is about to unite her destiny is worthy. What has been his past record? Is his life pure? Is the love which he expresses of a noble, elevated character, or is it a mere emotional fondness? Has he the traits of character that will make her happy? Can she find true peace and joy in his affection? Will she be allowed to preserve her individuality, or must her judgment and conscience be surrendered to the control of her husband? As a disciple of Christ, she is not her own; she has been bought with a price. Can she honor the Saviour's claims as supreme? Will body and soul, thoughts and purposes, be preserved pure and holy? These questions have a vital bearing upon the well-being of every woman who enters the marriage relation.

Religion is needed in the home. Only this can prevent the grievous wrongs which so often im bitter married life. Only where Christ reigns, can there be deep true, unselfish love. Then soul will be knit with soul, and the two lives will blend in harmony. Angels of God will be guests in the home, and their holy vigils will hallow the marriage chamber. Debasing sensuality will be banished. Upward to God will the thoughts be directed; to him will the heart's devotion ascend.

The heart yearns for human love, but this love is not strong enough, or pure enough, or precious enough, to supply the place of the love of Jesus. Only in her Saviour can the wife find wisdom,

strength, and grace to meet the cares, responsibilities, and sorrows of life. She should make him her strength and her guide. Let woman give herself to Christ before giving herself to any earthly friend, and enter into no relation which shall conflict with this. Those who would find true happiness, must have the blessing of Heaven upon all that they possess, and all that they do. It is disobedience to God that Fills so many hearts and homes with misery. My sister, unless you would have a home where the shadows are never lifted, do not unite yourself with one who is an enemy of God. [119]

As one who expects to meet these words in the Judgment, I entreat you to ponder the step you contemplate taking. Ask yourself, "Will not an unbelieving husband lead my thoughts away from Jesus? He is a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God; will he not lead me to enjoy the things that he enjoys?" The path to eternal life is steep and rugged. Take no additional weights to retard your progress. You have too little spiritual strength, and you need help instead of hindrance.

The Lord commanded ancient Israel not to intermarry with the idolatrous nations around them: "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son." The reason is given. Infinite Wisdom, foreseeing the result of such unions, declares: "For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods; so will the anger of the Lord be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly." "For thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God; the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." "Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; and repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them. He will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face."

In the New Testament are similar prohibitions concerning the marriage of Christians with the ungodly. The apostle Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians, declares: "The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; *only in the Lord.*" Again, in his second epistle, he writes: "Be ye not unequally yoked to- [120]

gether with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

My sister, dare you disregard these plain and positive directions? As a child of God, a subject of Christ’s kingdom, the purchase of his blood, how can you connect yourself with one who does not acknowledge his claims, who is not controlled by his Spirit? The commands I have quoted are not the word of man, but of God. Though the companion of your choice were in all other respects worthy (which he is not), yet he has not accepted the truth for this time; he is an unbeliever, and you are forbidden of Heaven to unite yourself with him. You cannot, without peril to your soul, disregard this divine injunction.

I would warn you of your danger before it shall be too late. You listen to smooth, pleasant words, and are led to believe that all will be well; but you do not read the motives that prompt these fair speeches. You cannot see the depths of wickedness hidden in the heart. You cannot look behind the scenes, and discern the snares that Satan is laying for your soul. He would lead you to pursue such a course that he can obtain easy access, to aim his shafts of temptation against you. Do not give him the least advantage. While God moves upon the minds of his servants, Satan works through the children of disobedience. There is no concord between Christ and Belial. The two cannot harmonize. To connect with an unbeliever is to place yourself on Satan’s ground. You grieve the Spirit of God and forfeit his protection. Can you afford to have such terrible odds against you in fighting the battle for everlasting life?

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You may say, “But I have given my promise, and shall I now retract it I” I answer, If you have made a promise contrary to the Scriptures, by all means retract it without delay, and in humility before God repent of the infatuation that led you to make so rash a



pledge. Par better take back such a promise, in the fear of God, than keep it, and thereby dishonor your Maker.

Remember, you have a Heaven to gain, an open path to perdition to shun. God means what he says. When he prohibited our first parents from eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge, their disobedience opened the floodgates of woe to the whole world. If we walk contrary to God, he will walk contrary to us. Our only safe course is to render obedience to all his requirements, at whatever cost. All are founded in infinite love and wisdom.

The spirit of intense worldliness that now exists, the disposition to acknowledge no higher claim than that of self-gratification, constitutes one of the signs of the last days. "As it was in the days of Noah," said Christ, "so shall it be also 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." The people of this generation are marrying and giving in marriage with the same reckless disregard of God's requirements as was manifested in the days of Noah. There is in the Christian world an astonishing, alarming indifference to the teaching of God's word in regard to the marriage of Christians with unbelievers. Many who profess to love and fear God choose to follow the bent of their own minds rather than take counsel of Infinite Wisdom. In a matter which vitally concerns the happiness and well-being of both parties, for this world and the next, reason, judgment, and the fear of God are set aside, and blind impulse, stubborn determination, is allowed to control. Men and women who are otherwise sensible and conscientious close their ears to counsel; they are deaf to the appeals and entreaties of friends and kindred and of the servants of God. The expression of a caution or warning is regarded as impertinent meddling, and the friend who is faithful enough to utter a remonstrance is treated as an enemy. All this is as Satan would have it. He weaves his spell about the soul, and it becomes bewitched, infatuated. Reason lets fall the reins of self-control upon the neck of lust, unsanctified passion bears sway, until, too late, the victim awakens to a life of misery and bondage. This is not a picture drawn by the imagination, but a recital of facts. God's sanction is not given to unions which he has expressly forbidden. For years I have been receiving letters from different persons who

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have formed unhappy marriages, and the revolting histories opened before me are enough to make the heart ache. It is no easy thing to decide what advice can be given to these unfortunate ones, or how their hard lot can be lightened; but their sad experience should be a warning to others.

In this age of the world, as the scenes of earth's history are soon to close, and we are about to enter upon the time of trouble such as never was, the fewer the marriages contracted, the better for all, both men and women. Above all, when Satan is working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, let Christians beware of connecting themselves with unbelievers. God has spoken. All who fear him will submit to his wise injunctions. Our feelings, impulses, and affections must flow Heavenward, not earthward, not in the low, base channel of sensual thought and indulgence. It is time now that every soul should stand as in the sight of the heart-searching God.

[123] My dear sister, as a disciple of Jesus you should inquire what will be the influence of the step you are about to take, not only upon yourself, but upon others. The followers of Christ are to be co-workers with their Master; they must be "blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom," says Paul, "ye shine as lights in the world." We are to receive the bright beams from the Sun of Righteousness, and by our good works let them shine forth to others in clear, steady rays, never fitful, never growing dim. We cannot be sure that we are doing no harm to those about us, unless we are exerting a positive influence to lead them Heavenward.

"Ye are my witnesses," said Jesus, and in each act of our lives we should inquire, How will our course affect the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom? If you are indeed Christ's disciple, you will choose to walk in his footsteps, however painful this may be to your natural feelings. Said Paul, "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." You, Sister L, need to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn of him, as did Mary of old. God requires of you an entire surrender of your will, your plans and purposes. Jesus is your leader; to him you must look, in him you must trust, and you must permit nothing to deter you from the life of consecration

which you owe to God. Your conversation must be in Heaven, from whence you look for the Saviour. Your piety must be of a character to make itself felt by all within the sphere of your influence. God requires you in every act of life to shun the very appearance of evil. Are you doing this? You are under the most sacred obligation not to belittle or compromise your holy faith by uniting with the Lord's enemies. If you are tempted to disregard the injunctions of his word because others have done so, remember that your example also will exert an influence. Others will do as you do, and thus the evil will be extended. While you profess to be a child of God, a departure on your part from his requirements will result in infinite harm to those who look to you for guidance.

The salvation of souls will be the constant aim of those who are abiding in Christ. But what have you done to show forth the praises of Him who has called you out of darkness? "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Shake off this fatal infatuation that benumbs your senses and palsies the energies of the soul. [124]

The very strongest incentives to faithfulness are set before us, the highest motives, the most glorious rewards. Christians are to be Christ's representatives, sons and daughters of God. They are his jewels, his peculiar treasures. Of all who will maintain their steadfastness he declares, "They shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy." Those who reach the portals of eternal bliss will not count that any sacrifice which they have made was too great.

May God help you to stand the test, and preserve your integrity. Cling by faith to Jesus. Disappoint not your Redeemer.

*St. Helena, Cal., Feb. 13, 1885.*

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## THE SUPPORT OF CITY MISSIONS.

Dear BRO. M: A few days ago I received a letter written by you to Eld. N, in which you raise very serious objections to leaving the — mission to be supported by your Conference, and say that other Conferences all over the field should have an equal interest in this mission. But if these Conferences do not now have important missions to sustain in cities in their own borders, are there not places where such missions should be established? If your Conference is asked to take the — mission under its care, and carry it on under the super-vision of the General Conference, the responsible men should feel that this is an evidence that their brethren have confidence in them, and they should say, “Yes; we accept the sacred trust. We will do all in our power to make the mission a success, and to show that the confidence of our brethren is not misplaced. We will ask wisdom of God, and will practice self-denial and rigid economy if necessary.” God will sustain you in the cheerful performance of this duty, and will make it a blessing to you, rather than a burden, a hindrance to the cause in your State.

That great city is in darkness and error, and we have left it so thus long. Will God pardon this negligence on our part? What account shall we give for the men and women who have died without hearing the sound of present truth, who would have received it had the light been brought to them? My spirit is stirred that the work in — has been delayed so long. The work that is now being done there might have been done years ago, and could then have been accomplished with far less expenditure of money, time, and labor. Nevertheless, it must not be left undone now. A small beginning has been made on a very economical plan, and much more has been accomplished than could have been expected considering the facilities that have been provided. But better facilities must be furnished. There must be a place where people can hear the truth. There must be means to support the workers in this mission field, not in ease and luxury, but in a plain, comfortable manner. They are God’s instruments, and

nothing should be said or done to discourage them. On the contrary, let their hands be strengthened, and their hearts encouraged.

There is enough wealth in your Conference to carry forward this work successfully; and shall the prince of darkness be left in undisputed possession of our great cities because it costs something to sustain missions? Let those who would follow Christ fully come up to the work, even if it be over the heads of ministers and president. Those who in such a work as this will say, "I pray thee have me excused," should beware lest they receive their discharge for time and for eternity. Let Christians who love duty lift every ounce they can, and then look to God for further strength. He will work through the efforts of thorough-going men and women, and will do what they cannot do. New light and power will be given them as they use what they have. New fervor and zeal will stir the church as they see something accomplished.

We rejoice in spirit as we contemplate what may be done; but we blush before our Maker at the thought of the little that has been accomplished. Shepherds have neglected their God-given responsibilities; they have become narrow and faithless, and have encouraged unpardonable cowardice, slothfulness, and covetousness. They have not realized the magnitude and importance of the work. Men are wanted whose eyes are anointed to see and understand Heaven's designs. Then the standard of piety will be raised, and there will be real missionaries, who will be ready to sacrifice for the truth's sake. There is no room in the church of God for the selfish and easeloving; but men and women are called for who will make exertions to plant the standard of truth in our large cities, in the great thoroughfares of travel. [126]

A world is to be warned, and in humility we should work as God has given us ability. Let every State come up to the work. What right have those with narrow and unconsecrated ideas to say what their Conference will do and what it will not do? The — mission will not be left wholly to your State; but if your Conference had a heart to work, it could sustain two such missions, and not feel the burden. Come, brethren, arouse to action. Time lost through your unbelief and want of courage is lost forever. Let the ministers act as though something were to be done, and the large-hearted men who love God and keep his commandments will come up to the help

of the Lord. In this way the church will be disciplined for future efforts; for their beneficence is never to cease.

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

You need to drink deep of the streams of grace and salvation before you can lead others to the Fountain of living waters. Holding the office of president of a Conference, with the experience and influence that this office gives, instead of discouraging the people, you should have urged them to new exertion, to bear weightier responsibilities. There are special duties devolving upon men in responsible positions; there are laborious efforts to be made which it would be convenient to neglect. But when the shepherds are negligent of duty, may the Lord pity the poor sheep.

Your work, my brother, does not show that you have realized that your obligations are sacred and weighty. I have been shown that you are capable of doing much better work than you have done, and that God requires more and better work at your hands. He requires integrity and faithfulness. The work of saving souls is the highest and noblest ever intrusted to mortal man; and you should allow nothing to come in between you and this sacred work to absorb your mind

and confuse your judgment. One standing in the responsible position that you occupy should make eternal interests first, and temporal matters of secondary importance. You are an ambassador for Christ; and you should encourage those under your charge to seek for higher spiritual attainments, to live holier and purer lives. In your efforts to save souls from perdition and to build up the church in truth and righteousness, you should use tact, wisdom, and the power that it is your privilege to have through constant communion with God. God requires this of you, and of every other minister engaged in his work. You should show your loyalty to your crucified Redeemer by acting as though you realized that you have a solemn charge to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus, wanting in nothing. [128]

In your case very much more might have been accomplished by holy living, by fervent prayer, and by a careful, painstaking discharge of every duty. You might have done much by faithful warnings and reproofs and by affectionate appeals. It is not brain power alone that is needed, but heart power. The truth presented as it is in Jesus will have an effect. You lack ardent, active home religion. Selfish interests have clouded your mind and perverted your judgment, and the claims of God have not been realized. You need to unburden your soul of worldly cares and business, and to have an eye single to the glory of God.

The eternal destiny of all is soon to be decided. From Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, and other Conferences, scores of ministers should go forth with burning zeal to proclaim the last message of warning. And at such a time as this, will the presidents of our Conferences lie back in the harness, and refuse to draw the heavy load? Will they by voice or pen exert an influence to discourage those who have a mind to work? Any course on their part that would encourage indolence and unbelief is criminal in the highest degree. They should encourage the people to diligence in the cause of God, to make every exertion for the salvation of souls; but they should never leave even the slightest impression on their minds that they are Sacrificing too much for the cause of God, or that more is required of them than is reasonable. In the heavenly warfare, something must be ventured. Now is our time to work, to encounter difficulties and dangers. The providence of God says, "Go forward," not back into Egypt; and

instead of framing a testimony to please the people, ministers should seek to arouse those who are asleep.

[129] I discern in your letter, Eld. M, a vein of unbelief, a lack of judgment and discernment. Your position confirms the testimony I have had that you are giving the Conference a narrow mold, and have stood in the way of its advancement, because you have not elevated the standard of truth. I will here quote a few paragraphs from this testimony, which was written during the General Conference at Battle Creek, in November, 1883:—

“Our conversation in regard to the — mission has left a disagreeable impression on my mind. Do not think me severe in my remarks in regard to this mission. You spoke with great satisfaction of the way this work had been carried forward. You said that Bro. O and those associated with him were willing to do any way to get along; that they had a small room in a loft, where they prepared their food; and that they were doing a good work in the most economical way. Your ideas on this subject are not correct. The light which God has given us, precious above the price of silver and gold, is to go forth in a way to give character to the work. The brethren connected with this mission are not free from the infirmities of humanity; and unless attention is given to their health, their work must be greatly embarrassed. Those who stand at the head of the work in the Conference, should not permit such a state of things to exist. They should educate the people to give of their means, that no pinched want may be experienced by the workers. As the stewards of God, the responsibility rests upon them to see that one or two do not have all the sacrificing to do, while others are taking their ease, eating, drinking, and dressing, without a thought of our sacred missions, or of their duty with reference to them.

[130] “I have been shown, Eld M, that you do not take a correct view of the work, that you do not realize its importance. You have failed to educate the people in the true spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion. You have feared to urge duty upon wealthy men; and when you have made a feeble effort in the right direction, and they have begun to make excuses and to find a little fault with some one in regard to the management of the work, you have thought perhaps they were right; this subterfuge, which has developed in them doubt and unbelief, has taken effect in your own heart, and they have turned this to



account, and have learned just how to treat your efforts. When they have encouraged doubt in regard to the Testimonies, you have not done what you should to uproot this feeling. You should have shown them that Satan is always picking flaws, questioning, accusing, and laying reproach upon the brethren, and that it is unsafe to be in any such position.”

“My brother, you have not taken a course to encourage men to give themselves to the ministry. Instead of bringing the expense of the work down to a low figure, it is your duty to bring the minds of the people to understand that the laborer is worthy of his hire.” “The churches need to be impressed with the fact that it is their duty to deal honestly with the cause of God, not allowing the guilt of the worst kind of robbery to rest upon them, that of robbing God in tithes and offerings. When settlements are made with the laborers in his cause, they should not be forced to accept small remuneration because there is a lack of money in the treasury. Many have been defrauded of their just dues in this way, and it is just as criminal in the sight of God as for one to keep back the wages of those who are employed in any other regular business.

“There are men of ability who would like to go out and labor in our several Conferences; but they have no courage, for they must have means to support their families. It is the worst kind of generalship to allow a Conference to stand still, or to fail to settle its honest debts. There is a great deal of this done; and whenever it is done, God is displeased.

“If the presidents and other laborers in our Conferences impress upon the minds of the people the character of the crime of robbing God, and if they have a true spirit of devotion and a burden of the work, God will make their labors a blessing to the people, and fruit will be seen as the result of their efforts. Ministers have failed greatly in their duty to so labor with the churches. There is important work to be done aside from that of preaching. Had this been done, as God designed it should be, there would have been many more laborers in the field than there now are. And had the ministers done their duty in educating every member, whether rich or poor, to give as God has prospered him, there would be a full treasury from which to pay the honest debts to thy workers; and this would greatly advance missionary work in all their borders. God has shown me

that many souls are in danger of eternal ruin through selfishness and worldliness; and the watchmen are guilty, for they have neglected their duty. This is a state of things that Satan exults to see.”

“All branches of the work belong to the ministers. It is not God’s order that someone should follow after them, and bind off their unfinished work. It is not the duty of the Conference to be at the expense of employing other laborers to follow after, and pick up the stitches dropped by negligent workers. It is the duty of the president of the Conference to have an oversight of the laborers and their work, and to teach them to be faithful in these things; for no church can prosper that is robbing God. The spiritual dearth in our churches is frequently the result of an alarming prevalence of selfishness. Selfish, worldly pursuits and schemes interpose between the soul and God. Men cling to the world, seeming to fear that should they let go their hold upon it, God would not care for them. And so they attempt to take care of themselves; they are anxious, troubled, distressed, holding on to their large farms, and adding to their possessions.”

“The word of God speaks of the ‘hire of the laborers, which is by you kept back by fraud.’ This is generally understood to apply to wealthy men who employ servants and do not pay them for their labor; but it has a broader meaning than this. It applies with great force to those who have been enlightened by the Spirit of God, and yet in any degree work upon the same principle that these men do in hiring servants, grinding them down to the lowest price.”

[132] I solemnly warn you not to stand in an attitude similar to that of the unfaithful spies, who went up to view the land of promise. When these spies returned from their search, the congregation of Israel were cherishing high hopes and were waiting in eager expectancy. The news of their return is carried from tribe to tribe, and is hailed with rejoicing. The people rush out to meet the messengers, who have endured the fatigue of travel in the dusty highways and under a burning sun. These messengers bring specimens of the fruit, showing the fertility of the soil. The congregation rejoice that they are to come into possession of so goodly a land; and they listen intently as the report is brought to Moses, that not a word shall escape them. “We came unto the land whither thou sentest us,” the spies begin, “and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of

it.” The people are enthusiastic; they would eagerly obey the voice of the Lord, and go up at once to possess the land.

But the spies continue: “Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great; and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.” Now the scene changes. Hope and courage give place to cowardly despair, as the spies utter the sentiments of their unbelieving hearts, which are filled with discouragement prompted by Satan. Their unbelief casts a gloomy shadow over the congregation, and the mighty power of God, so often manifested in behalf of the chosen nation, is forgotten.

The people are desperate in their disappointment and despair. A wail of agony arises, and mingles with the confused murmur of voices. Caleb comprehends the situation, and, bold to stand in defense of the word of God, does all in his power to counteract the evil influence of his unfaithful associates. For an instant the people are stilled to listen to his words of hope and courage respecting the goodly land. He does not contradict what has already been said; the walls are high, and the Canaanites strong. “Let us go up at once, and possess it,” he urges; “for we are well able to overcome it.” But the ten interrupt him, and picture the obstacles in darker colors than at first. “We be not able to go up against the people,” they declare; “for they are stronger than we.” “All the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants; and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.”

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“And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night.” The men who have so long borne with the perversity of Israel know too well what the next scene will be. Revolt and open mutiny quickly follow; for Satan has had full sway, and the people seem bereft of reason. They curse Moses and Aaron, forgetting that God hears their wicked speeches, and that, enshrouded in the cloudy pillar, the Angel of his presence is witnessing their terrible outburst of wrath. In bitterness they cry out, “Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness! And wherefore hath the Lord brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? Were it not better for us to return into Egypt? And they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.”

In humiliation and distress, Moses and Aaron fall on “their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel,” not knowing what to do to turn them from their rash and passionate purpose. Caleb and Joshua attempt to quiet the tumult. With their garments rent in token of grief and indignation, they rush in among the people, and their ringing voices are heard above the tempest of lamentation and rebellious grief: “The land, which we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good land. If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us. Their defense is departed from them, and the Lord is with us; fear them not.”

[134] The false report of the unfaithful spies was fully accepted, and through it the whole congregation were deluded, just as Satan meant that they should be; and the voice of God through his faithful servants was disregarded. The traitors had done their work. All the assembly, as with one voice, cried out in favor of stoning Caleb and Joshua.

And now the mighty God reveals himself to the confusion of his disobedient, murmuring people. “And the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel.” What a burden was brought upon Moses and Aaron, and how earnest were their entreaties that God would not destroy his people! Moses pleads before the Lord the wonderful manifestations of divine power that have made the name of Israel’s God a terror to their enemies, and entreats that the enemies of God and of his people may have no occasion to triumph, saying, “Because the Lord was not able to bring this people into the land which he swore unto them, therefore he hath slain them in the wilderness.” The Lord hearkened unto the prayer of Moses; but he declared that those who had rebelled against him after having witnessed his power and glory, should fall in the wilderness; they should never see the land which was their promised inheritance. But of Caleb he said, “My servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and hath followed me fully, him will I bring into the land whereinto he went; and his seed shall possess it.”

It was Caleb’s faith in God that gave him courage; that kept him from the fear of man, even the mighty giants, the sons of Anak,

and enabled him to stand boldly and unflinchingly in defense of the right. From the same exalted source, the mighty General of the armies of Heaven, every true soldier of the cross of Christ must receive strength and courage to overcome obstacles that often seem insurmountable. The law of God is made void; and those who would do their duty must be ever ready to speak the words that God gives them, and not the words of doubt, discouragement, and despair.

Eld. M, although you may be sustained by many, as were the unfaithful spies, yet the sentiments of your letter are not prompted by the Spirit of the Lord. Beware lest your words and your spirit be like theirs, and your work of the same baleful character. At such a time as this, we must not harbor a thought nor breathe a word of unbelief, nor encourage an act of self-serving. This has been done in the U. C. and N. P. Conferences; and while there we felt in some measure the sorrow, mortification, and discouragement that Moses and Aaron, Caleb and Joshua, experienced. We tried to set the current flowing in an opposite direction; but it was at the cost of much severe labor and great anxiety and distress of mind. And the work of reform in these Conferences has but just commenced. It is the work of time to overcome the unbelief, distrust, and suspicion of years. Satan has been to a great extent successful in carrying out his purposes in these Conferences, because he has found persons whom he could use as his agents.

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For Christ's sake and the truth's sake, Bro. M, do not leave the work in your Conference in such a shape that it will be impossible for the one that succeeds you to set things in order. The people have received narrow and limited views of the work; selfishness has been encouraged, and worldliness has been unrebuked. I call upon you to do all in your power to efface the wrong mold you have given to this Conference, to remedy the sad effects of your neglect of duty, and thus to prepare the field for another laborer. Unless you do this, may God pity the workman who shall follow you.

Presidents of Conferences should be men who can be fully trusted with God's work. They should be men of integrity, unselfish, devoted, working Christians. If they are deficient in these respects, the churches under their care will not prosper. They, even more than other ministers of Christ, should set an example of holy living, and of unselfish devotion to the interests of God's cause, that those

[136] looking to them for an example may not be misled. But in some instances they are trying to serve both God and mammon. They are not self-denying; they do not carry a burden for souls. Their consciences are not sensitive; when the cause of God is wounded, they are not bruised in spirit. In their hearts they question and doubt the Testimonies of the Spirit of God. They do not themselves bear the cross of Christ; they know not the fervent love of Jesus. And they are not faithful shepherds of the flock over which they have been made overseers; their record is not one that they will rejoice to meet in the day of God.

How much is required of the minister in his work of watching for souls as they that must give an account? What devotion, what singleness of purpose, what elevated piety, should be seen in his life and character ! How much is lost through a want of tact and skill in presenting the truth to others,—how much through a carelessness of deportment, a roughness of speech, and a worldliness that in no way represents Jesus or savors of Heaven. Our work is about to close up. Soon it will be said in Heaven: “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.” At this solemn time the church is called upon to be vigilant, because of the intense activity of Satan. His agency is seen on every hand; and yet ministers and people act as though they were ignorant of his devices and paralyzed by his power. Let each member of the church awake. Let each laborer remember that the vineyard he tills is not his own, but belongs to his Lord, who has gone on a long journey, and in his absence has commissioned his servants to look after his interests; and let him remember that if he is unfaithful to his trust, he must give an account to his Lord when he shall return.

[137] While the doubting ones talk of impossibilities, while they tremble at the thought of high walls and strong giants, let the faithful Calebs, who have “another spirit,” come to the front. The truth of God, which bringeth salvation, will go forth to the people, if ministers and professed believers will not hedge up its way, as did the unfaithful spies. Our work is aggressive. Something must be done to warn the world; and let no voice be heard that will encourage selfish interests to the neglect of missionary fields. We must engage

in the work with heart and soul and voice; both mental and physical powers must be aroused. All Heaven is interested in our work, and angels of God are ashamed of our weak efforts.

I am alarmed at the indifference of our churches. Like Meroz, they have failed to come up to the help of the Lord. The laymen have been at ease. They have folded their hands, feeling that the responsibility rested upon the ministers. But to every man God has appointed his work; not work in his fields of corn and wheat, but earnest, persevering work for the salvation of souls. God forbid, Eld. M, that you or any other minister should quench one particle of the spirit of labor that now exists. Will you not rather stimulate it by your words of burning zeal? The Lord has made us the depositaries of his law; he has committed to us sacred and eternal truth, which is to be given to others in faithful warnings, reproofs, and encouragement. By means of railroads and steamboat lines we are connected with every part of the world, and given access to every nation with our message of truth. Let us sow the seed of gospel truth beside all waters; for we know not which shall prosper, this or that, or whether both shall be alike fruitful. Paul may plant, and Apollos water; but it is God who giveth the increase.

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.” Do not put your light under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house. “Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price,” even the precious blood of the Son of God. We have no right to live to ourselves. Every minister should be a consecrated missionary; every layman a worker, using his talents of influence and means in his Lord’s service; for active benevolence is a vital principle of Christianity. It is the exercise of this principle that is to bring sheaves to the Lord of the harvest, while a want of it hinders the work of God, and bars the way for the salvation of souls.

Ministers have neglected to enforce gospel beneficence. The subject of tithes and offerings has not been dwelt upon as it should have been. Men are not naturally inclined to be benevolent, but to be sordid and avaricious, and to live for self. And Satan is ever ready to present the advantages to be gained by using all their means for selfish, worldly purposes; he is glad when he can influence them to shirk duty, and rob God in tithes and offerings. But not one is

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excused in this matter. "Let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." The poor and the rich, the young men and the young women who earn wages,—all are to lay by a portion; for God claims it. The spiritual prosperity of every member of the church depends on personal effort and strict fidelity to God. Says the apostle Paul: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." All are required to show a deep interest in the cause of God in its various branches; and close and unexpected tests will be brought to bear upon them to see who are worthy to receive the seal of the living God.

All should feel that they are not proprietors, but stewards, and that the time is coming when they must give an account for the use they have made of their Lord's money. Means will be needed in the cause of God. With David they should say, "All things come of Thee, and of thine own have we given Thee." Schools are to be established in various places, publications are to be multiplied, churches are to be built in the large cities, and laborers are to be sent forth, not only into the cities, but into the highways and hedges. And now, my brethren who believe the truth, is your opportunity. We are standing, as it were, on the borders of the eternal world. We are looking for the glorious appearing of our Lord; the night is far spent; the day is [139] at hand. When we realize the greatness of the plan of redemption, we shall be far more courageous, self-sacrificing, and devotional than we now are.

There is a great work for us to do before success will crown our efforts. There must be decided reforms in our homes and in our churches. Parents must labor for the salvation of their children. God will work with our efforts, when we do on our part all that he has enjoined upon us and qualified us to do; but because of our unbelief, worldliness, and indolence, blood-bought souls in the very shadow of our homes are dying in their sins, and dying unwarned. Is Satan always thus to triumph! Oh, no! The light reflected from the cross of Calvary indicates that a greater work is to be done than our eyes have yet witnessed.



The third angel, flying in the midst of heaven, and heralding the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus, represents our work. The message loses none of its force in the angel's onward flight; for John sees it increasing in strength and power until the whole earth is lightened with its glory. The course of God's commandment-keeping people is onward, ever onward. The message of truth that we bear must go to nations, tongues, and peoples. Soon it will go with a loud voice, and the earth will be lightened with its glory. Are we, preparing for this great outpouring of the Spirit of God?

Human agencies are to be employed in this work. Zeal and energy must be intensified; talents that are rusting from inaction must be pressed into service. The voice that would say, "Wait; do not allow yourself to have burdens imposed upon you," is the voice of the cowardly spies. We want Calebs now, who will press to the front,—chieftains in Israel who with courageous words will make a strong report in favor of immediate action. When the selfish, ease-loving, panic-stricken people, fearing tall giants and inaccessible walls, clamor for retreat, let the voice of the Calebs be heard, even though the cowardly ones stand with stones in their hands, ready to beat them down for their faithful testimony.

Can we not discern the signs of the times? Can we not see how earnestly Satan is at work binding the tares in bundles, uniting the elements of his kingdom, that he may gain control of the world? This work of binding up the tares is going forward far more rapidly than we imagine. Satan is opposing every obstacle to the advancement of the truth. He is seeking to create diversity of opinion, and to encourage worldliness and avarice. He works with the subtlety of the serpent, and when he sees it will do, with the ferocity of the lion. The ruin of souls is his only delight, their destruction his only employment; and shall we act as though we were paralyzed? Will those who profess to believe the truth listen to the temptations of the wily foe, and allow themselves to become selfish and narrow, and their worldly interests to interfere with efforts for the salvation of souls?

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All who ever enter Heaven's gates will enter as conquerors. When the redeemed throng surround the throne of God, with palm branches in their hands and crowns on their heads, it will be known

what victories have been won. It will be seen how Satan's power has been exercised over minds,—how he has linked with himself souls who flattered themselves that they were doing God's will. It will then be seen that his power and subtlety could not have been successfully resisted had not divine power been combined with human effort. Man must also be victor over himself ; his temper, inclinations, and spirit must be brought into subjection to the will of God. But the righteousness and strength of Christ avail for all who will claim his merits.

[141] Then let earnest and determined effort be made to beat back the terrible foe. We want on the whole armor of righteousness. Time is passing, and we are fast approaching the close of our probation. Will our names stand registered in the Lamb's book of life, or shall we be found with the unfaithful? Are we of the number who shall gather around the great white throne, singing the song of the redeemed? There are no cold, formal ones in that throng. Every soul is in earnest, every heart full of thanksgiving for the marvelous love of God, and the overcoming grace that has enabled his people to conquer in the warfare against sin. And with a loud voice they swell the song, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

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## THE TRUE MISSIONARY SPIRIT.

THE true missionary spirit is the spirit of Christ. The world's Redeemer was the great model missionary. Many of his followers have labored earnestly and unselfishly in the cause of human salvation; but no man's labor can bear comparison with the self-denial, the sacrifice, the benevolence, of our Exemplar.

The love which Christ has evinced for us is without a parallel. How earnestly he labored! How often was he alone in fervent prayer, on the mountain side or in the retirement of the garden, pouring out his supplications with strong crying and tears. How perseveringly he urged his petitions in behalf of sinners! Even on the cross, he forgot his own sufferings in his deep love for those whom he came to save. How cold our love, how feeble our interest, when compared with the love and interest manifested by our Saviour! Jesus gave himself to redeem our race; and yet how ready are we to excuse ourselves from giving all that we have for Jesus. Our Saviour submitted to wearing labor, ignominy, and suffering. He was repulsed, mocked, derided, while engaged in the great work which he came to earth to do.

Do you, my brethren and sisters, inquire, What model shall we copy? I do not point you to great and good men, but to the world's Redeemer. If we would have the true missionary spirit, we must be imbued with the love of Christ; we must look to the Author and Finisher of our faith, study his character, cultivate his spirit of meekness and humility, and walk in his footsteps.

Many suppose that the missionary spirit, the qualification for missionary work, is a special gift or endowment bestowed upon the ministers and a few members of the church, and that all others are to be mere spectators. Never was there a greater mistake. Every true Christian will possess a missionary spirit; for to be a Christian is to be Christlike. No man liveth to himself, and "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Every one who has tasted of the powers of the world to come, whether he be young or old, learned or unlearned, will be stirred with the spirit which actuated Christ. The

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very first impulse of the renewed heart is to bring others also to the Saviour. Those who do not possess this desire, give evidence that they have lost their first love; they should closely examine their own hearts in the light of God's word, and earnestly seek a fresh baptism of the Spirit of Christ; they should pray for a deeper comprehension of that wondrous love which Jesus manifested for us in leaving the realms of glory, and coming to a fallen world to save the perishing.

There is work for every one of us in the vineyard of the Lord. We are not to seek that position which will yield us the most enjoyment or the greatest gain. True religion is free from selfishness. The missionary spirit is a spirit of personal sacrifice. We are to work anywhere and everywhere, to the utmost of our ability, for the cause of our Master.

Just as soon as a person is really converted to the truth, there springs up in his heart an earnest desire to go and tell some friend or neighbor of the precious light shining forth from the sacred pages. In his unselfish labor to save others, he is a living epistle, known and read of all men. His life shows that he has been converted to Christ, and has become a co-laborer with him.

[143] As a class, Seventh-day Adventists are a generous and warm-hearted people. In the proclamation of the truth for this time, we can rely upon their strong and ready sympathy. When a proper object for their liberality is presented, appealing to their judgment and conscience, it calls forth a hearty response. Their gifts in support of the cause testify that they believe it to be the cause of truth. There are, indeed, exceptions among us. Not all who profess to accept the faith are earnest and true hearted believers. But the same was true in the days of Christ. Even among the apostles there was a Judas; but that did not prove all to be of the same character. We have no reason for discouragement while we know that there are so many who are devoted to the cause of truth, and are ready to make noble sacrifices for its advancement. But there is still a great lack, a great need among us. There is too little of the true missionary spirit. All missionary workers should possess that deep interest for the souls of their fellow-men that will unite heart to heart, in sympathy, and in the love of Jesus. They should plead earnestly for divine aid, and should work wisely to win souls to Christ. A cold, spiritless effort will accomplish nothing. There is need that the spirit of Christ fall

upon the sons of the prophets. Then will they manifest such love for the souls of men as Jesus exemplified in his life.

The reason why there is no deeper religious fervor, and no more earnest love for one another in the church is, the missionary spirit has been dying out. Little is now said concerning Christ's coming, which was once the theme of thought and of conversation. There is an unaccountable reluctance, a growing disrelish for religious conversation; and in its stead, idle, frivolous chit-chat is indulged in, even by the professed followers of Christ.

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

We have the theory of the truth, and now we need to seek most earnestly for its sanctifying power. I dare not hold my peace in this time of peril. It is a time of temptation, of despondency. Every one is beset by the wiles of Satan, and we should press together to resist his power. We should be of one mind, speaking the same things, and with one mouth glorifying God. Then may we successfully enlarge our plans, and by vigilant missionary effort, take advantage of every talent we can use in the various departments of the work. [144]

The light of truth is shedding its bright beams upon the world through missionary effort. The press is an instrumentality by which many are reached whom it would be impossible to reach by ministerial effort. A great work can be done by presenting to the people the Bible just as it reads. Carry the word of God to every man's door, urge its plain statements upon every man's conscience, repeat to all the Saviour's command, "Search the Scriptures." Admonish them to take the Bible as it is, to implore divine enlightenment, and

then, when the light shines, to gladly accept each precious ray, and fearlessly abide the consequences.

The down-trodden law of God is to be exalted before the people; as soon as they turn with earnestness and reverence to the holy Scriptures, light from Heaven will reveal to them wondrous tilings out of God's law. Great truths that have long been obscured by superstition and false doctrine, will blaze forth from the illuminated pages of the sacred word. The living oracles pour forth their treasures new and old, bringing light and joy to all who will receive them. Many are roused from their slumber. They rise as it were from the dead, and receive the light and life which Christ alone can give. Truths which have proved an overmatch for giant intellects are understood by babes in Christ. To these is plainly revealed that which has clouded the spiritual perception of the most learned expositors of the word, because, like the Sadducees of old, they were ignorant of the Scriptures and of the power of God.

[145] Those who study the Bible with a sincere desire to know and do the will of God, will become wise unto salvation. The Sabbath-school is an important branch of the missionary work, not only because it gives to young and old a knowledge of God's word, but because it awakens in them a love for its sacred truths, and a desire to study it for themselves; above all, it teaches them to regulate their lives by its holy teachings.

All who take the word of God as their rule of life are brought into close relationship with one another. The Bible is their bond of union. But their companionship will not be sought or desired by those who do not bow to the sacred word as the one unerring guide. They will be at variance, both in faith and practice. There can be no harmony between them; they are unreconcilable. As Seventh-day Adventists, we appeal from custom and tradition to the plain "Thus saith the Lord;" and for this reason we are not, and we cannot be, in harmony with the multitudes who teach and follow the doctrines and commandments of men.

All who are born of God will become co-workers with Christ. Such are the salt of the earth. "But if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted?" If the religion we profess fails to renew our hearts and sanctify our lives, how shall it exert a saving power upon unbelievers? "It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast

out, and to be trodden under foot of men.” That religion which will not exert a regenerating power upon the world, is of no value. We cannot trust it for our own salvation. The sooner we cast it away the better : for it is powerless and spurious.

We are to serve under our great Leader, to press against every opposing influence, to be laborers together with God. The work appointed us is to sow the gospel seed beside all waters. In this work every one must act a part. The manifold grace of Christ imparted to us constitutes us stewards of talents which we must increase by putting them out to the exchangers, that when the Master calls for them, he may receive his own with usury.

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## YOUNG MEN AS MISSIONARIES.

YOUNG men who desire to enter the field as ministers, colporters, or canvassers, should first receive a suitable degree of mental training, as well as a special preparation for their calling. Those who are uneducated, untrained, and unrefined are not prepared to enter a field in which the powerful influences of talent and education combat the truths of God's word. Neither can they successfully meet the strange forms of error, religious and philosophical combined, to expose which requires a knowledge of scientific as well as Scriptural truth.

Those especially who have the ministry in view, should feel the importance of the Scriptural method of ministerial training. They should enter heartily into the work, and while they study in the schools, they should learn of the Great Teacher the meekness and humility of Christ. A covenant-keeping God has promised that in answer to prayer his Spirit shall be poured out upon these learners in the school of Christ, that they may become ministers of righteousness.

There is hard work to be done in dislodging error and false doctrine from the head, that Bible truth and Bible religion may find a place in the heart. It was as a means ordained of God to educate young men and women for the various departments of missionary labor that colleges were established among us. It is God's will that they send forth not merely a few, but many laborers. But Satan, determined to overthrow this purpose, has often secured the very ones whom God would qualify for places of usefulness in his work. There are many who would work if urged into service, and who would save their souls by thus working. The church should feel her great responsibility in shutting up the light of truth, and restraining the grace of God within her own narrow limits, when money and influence should be freely employed in bringing competent persons into the missionary field.

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Hundreds of young men should have been preparing to act a part



in the work of scattering the seeds of truth beside all waters. We want men who will push the triumphs of the cross; men who will persevere under discouragements and privations; who will have the zeal and resolution and faith that are indispensable in the missionary field.

Our churches are called upon to take hold of this work with far greater earnestness than has yet been manifested. Every church should make special provision for the training of its missionaries, thus aiding the fulfillment of the great command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." My brethren, we have erred and sinned in attempting too little. There should be more laborers in the foreign missionary field. There are among us those who, without the toil and delay of learning a foreign language, might qualify themselves to proclaim the truth to other nations. In the primitive church, missionaries were miraculously endowed with a knowledge of the languages in which they were called to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. And if God was willing thus to help his servants then, can we doubt that his blessing will rest upon our efforts to qualify those who naturally possess a knowledge of foreign tongues, and who with proper encouragement would bear to their own countrymen the message of truth? We might have had more laborers in foreign missionary fields, had those who entered these fields availed themselves of every talent within their reach. But some have had a disposition to re-fuse help if it did not come just according to their ideas and plans. And what is the result? If our missionaries were to be removed by sickness or death from their fields of labor, where are the men whom they have educated to fill their places?

Not one of our missionaries has secured the co-operation of every available talent. Much time has thus been lost. We rejoice in the good work which has been done in foreign lands; but had different plans of labor been adopted, ten-fold, yes, twenty-fold more might have been accomplished; an acceptable offering would have been presented to Jesus, in many souls rescued from the bondage of error.

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Every one who receives the light of truth should be taught to bear the light to others. Our missionaries in foreign lands should gratefully accept every help, every facility, offered them. They must be willing to run some risk, to venture something. It is not pleasing

to God that we defer present opportunities for doing good, in hope of accomplishing a greater work in the future. Each should follow the leadings of Providence, not consulting self-interest, and not trusting wholly to his own judgment. Some may be so constituted as to see failure where God intends success; they may see only giants and walled cities, where others, with clearer vision, see also God and angels, ready to give victory to his truth.

It may in some cases be necessary that young men learn foreign languages. This they can do with most success by associating with the people, at the same time devoting a portion of each day to studying the language. This should be done, however, only as a necessary step preparatory to educating such as are found in the missionary fields themselves, and who with proper training can become workers. It is essential that those be urged into the service who can speak in their mother tongue to the people of different nations. It is a great undertaking for a man of middle age to learn a foreign language; and with all his efforts it will be next to impossible for him to speak it so readily and correctly as to render him an efficient laborer.

We cannot afford to deprive our home missions of the influence of middle-aged and aged ministers to send them into distant fields, to engage in a work for which they are not qualified, and to which no amount of training will enable them to adapt themselves. The men thus sent out leave vacancies which inexperienced laborers cannot supply.

[149] But the church may inquire whether young men can be trusted with the grave responsibilities involved in establishing and superintending a foreign mission. I answer, God designed that they should be so trained in our colleges and by association in labor with men of experience, that they would be prepared for departments of usefulness in this cause. We must manifest confidence in our young men. They should be pioneers in every enterprise involving toil and sacrifice, while the overtaxed servants of Christ should be cherished as counselors, to encourage and bless those who strike the heaviest blows for God. Providence thrust these experienced fathers into trying, responsible positions at an early age, when neither physical nor intellectual powers were fully developed. The magnitude of the

trust committed to them aroused their energies, and their active labor in the work aided both mental and physical development.

Young men are wanted. God calls them to missionary fields. Being comparatively free from care and responsibilities, they are more favorably situated to engage in the work than are those who must provide for the training and support of a large family. Furthermore, young men can more readily adapt themselves to new climates and new society, and can better endure inconveniences and hardships. By tact and perseverance, they can reach the people where they are.

Strength comes by exercise. All who put to use the ability which God has given them, will have increased ability to devote to his service. Those who do nothing in the cause of God, will fail to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth. A man who would lie down and refuse to exercise his limbs, would soon lose all power to use them. Thus the Christian who will not exercise his God-given powers, not only fails to grow up into Christ, but he loses the strength which he already had; he becomes a spiritual paralytic. It is those who, with love for God and their follow-men, are striving to help others, that become established, strengthened, settled, in the truth. The true Christian works for God, not from impulse, but from principle; not for a day or a month, but during the entire period of life.

How is our light to shine forth to the world, unless it be by our consistent Christian life? How is the world to know that we belong to Christ, if we do nothing for him? Said our Saviour, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." And again: "He that is not with me is against me." There is no neutral ground between those who work to the utmost of their ability for Christ, and those who work for the adversary of souls. Every one who stands as an idler in the vineyard of the Lord is not merely doing nothing himself, but he is a hindrance to those who are trying to work. Satan finds employment for all who are not earnestly striving to secure their own salvation and the salvation of others.

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The church of Christ may be fitly compared to an army. The life of every soldier is one of toil, hardship, and danger. On every hand are vigilant foes, led on by the prince of the powers of darkness, who never slumbers and never deserts his post. Whenever a Christian is off his guard, this powerful adversary makes a sudden and violent

attack. Unless the members of the church are active and vigilant, they will be overcome by his devices.

What if half the soldiers in an army were idling or asleep when ordered to be on duty; the result would be defeat, captivity, or death. Should any escape from the hands of the enemy, would they be thought worthy of a reward? No; they would speedily receive the sentence of death. And is the church of Christ careless or unfaithful, far more important consequences are involved. A sleeping army of Christian soldiers—what could be more terrible! What advance could be made against the world, who are under the control of the prince of darkness? Those who stand back indifferently in the day of battle, as though they had no interest and felt no responsibility as to the issue of the contest, might better change their course or leave the ranks at once.

[151] The Master calls for gospel workers. Who will respond? All who enter the army are not to be generals, captains, sergeants, or even corporals. All have not the care and responsibility of leaders. There is hard work of other kinds to be done. Some must dig trenches and build fortifications; some are to stand as sentinels, some to carry messages. While there are but few officers, it requires many soldiers to form the rank and file of the army; yet its success depends upon the fidelity of every soldier. One man's cowardice or treachery may bring disaster upon the entire army.

There is earnest work to be done by us individually if we would fight the good fight of faith. Eternal interests are at stake. We must put on the whole armor of righteousness, we must resist the devil, and we have the sure promise that he will be put to flight. The church is to conduct an aggressive warfare, to make conquests for Christ, to rescue souls from the power of the enemy. God and holy angels are engaged in this warfare. Let us please Him who has called us to be soldiers.

All can do something in the work. None will be pronounced guiltless before God, unless they have worked earnestly and unselfishly for the salvation of souls. The church should teach the youth, both by precept and example, to be workers for Christ. There are many who complain of their doubts, who lament that they have no assurance of their connection with God. This is often attributable to the fact that they are doing nothing in God's cause. Let them seek

earnestly to help and bless others, and their doubts and despondency will disappear.

Many who profess to be followers of Christ speak and act as though their names were a great honor to the cause of God, while they bear no burdens and win no souls to the truth. Such persons live as though God had no claims upon them. If they continue in this course, they will find at last that they have no claims upon God.

He who has appointed "to every man his work," according to his ability, will never let the faithful performance of duty go unrewarded. Every act of loyalty and faith will be crowned with special tokens of God's favor and approbation. To every worker is given the promise, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

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## IMPORTANCE OF THE CANVASSING WORK.

VERY much more efficient work can be done in the canvassing field than has yet been done. The canvasser should not rest satisfied unless he is constantly improving. He should make thorough preparation, but should not be content with a set form of words; he should give the Lord a chance to work with his efforts and impress his mind. The love of Jesus abiding in his heart will enable him to devise means to gain access to individuals and families.

Canvassers need self-culture and polished manners, not the affected and artificial manners of the world, but the agreeable manners that are the natural result of kindness of heart and a desire to copy the example of Christ. They should cultivate thoughtful, care-taking habits,— habits of industry and discretion,—and should seek to honor God by making of themselves all that it is possible for them to become. Jesus made an infinite sacrifice to place them in right relations to God and to their fellow-men, and divine aid combined with human effort will enable them to reach a high standard of excellence. The canvasser should be chaste like Joseph, meek like Moses, and temperate like Daniel; then a power will attend him wherever he goes.

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

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There are too many in families and in the church who make little account of glaring inconsistencies. There are young men who

appear what they are not. They seem honest and true; but they are like whited sepulchres, fair without, but corrupt to the core. The heart is spotted, stained with sin; and thus the record stands in the heavenly courts. A process has been going on in the mind that has made them callous, past feeling. But if their characters, weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, are pronounced wanting in the great day of God, it will be a calamity that they do not now comprehend. Truth, precious, untarnished truth, is to be a part of the character.

Whatever way is chosen, the path of life is beset with perils. If the workers in any branch of the cause become careless and inattentive to their eternal interests, they are meeting with great loss. The tempter will find access to them. He will spread nets for their feet, and will lead them in uncertain paths. Those only are safe whose hearts are garrisoned with pure principles. Like David they will pray, "Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." A constant battle must be kept up with the selfishness and corruption of the human heart. Often the wicked seem to be prospered in their way; but those who forget God, even for an hour or a moment, are in a dangerous path. They may not realize its perils; but ere they are aware, habit, like an iron band, holds them in subjection to the evil with which they have tampered. God despises their course, and his blessing will not attend them.

I have seen that young men undertake this work without connecting themselves with Heaven. They place themselves in the way of temptation to show their bravery. They laugh at the folly of others. They know the right way; they know how to conduct themselves. How easily they can resist temptation! how vain to think of their falling! But they make not God their defense. Satan has an insidious snare prepared for them, and they themselves become the sport of fools.

Our great adversary has agents that are constantly hunting for an opportunity to destroy souls, as a lion hunts his prey. Shun them, young man; for while they appear to be your friends, they will slyly introduce evil ways and practices. They flatter you with their lips, and offer to help and guide you; but their steps take hold on hell. If you listen to their counsel, it may be the turning-point in your life. One safeguard removed from conscience, the indulgence of one evil habit, a single neglect of the high claims of duty, may be [154]

the beginning of a course of deception that will pass you into the ranks of those who are serving Satan, while you are all the time professing to love God and his cause. A moment of thoughtlessness, a single misstep, may turn the whole current of your lives in the wrong direction. And you may never know what caused your ruin until the sentence is pronounced, "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Some young men know that what I have said fairly describes their course. Their ways are not hidden from the Lord, although they may be hidden from their best friends, even their father and mother. I have little hope that some of these will ever change their course of hypocrisy and deception. Others who have erred are seeking to redeem themselves. May the dear Jesus help them to set their faces as a flint against all falsehoods, and the flatteries of those who would weaken their purpose to do right, or who would insinuate doubts or infidel sentiments to shake their faith in the truth. Young friends, do not spend an hour in the company of those who would unfit you for the pure and sacred work of God. Do nothing before strangers that you would not do before your father and mother, or that you would be ashamed of before Christ and the holy angels.

[155] Some may think these cautions are not needed by Sabbath-keepers; but those to whom they apply know what I mean. I tell you, young men, to beware; for you can do nothing that is not open to the eyes of angels and of God. You cannot do an evil work, and others not be affected by it. While your course of action reveals what kind of material is used in your own character-building, it also has a powerful influence over others. Never lose sight of the fact that you belong to God, that he has bought you with a price, and you must render an account to him for all his intrusted talents. No one should have any part in the work of the canvasser or colporter whose hand is defiled with sin, or whose heart is not right with God; for such persons will surely dishonor the cause of truth. Those who are workers in the missionary field need God to guide them. They should be careful to start right, and then keep quietly and firmly on in the path of rectitude. They should be decided; for Satan is determined and persevering in his efforts to overthrow them.

A mistake has been made in soliciting subscriptions for our periodicals for only a few weeks, when by a proper effort much longer



subscriptions might have been obtained. One yearly subscription is of more value than many for a short time. When the paper is taken for only a few months, the interest often ends with the short subscription. Few renew their subscriptions for a longer period, and thus there is a large outlay of time that brings small returns, when with a little more tact and perseverance, yearly subscriptions might have been obtained. You strike too low, brethren; you are too narrow in your plans. You do not put into your work all the tact and perseverance that it deserves. There are more difficulties in this work than in some other branches of business; but the lessons that will be learned, the tact and discipline that will be acquired, will fit you for other fields of usefulness, where you may minister to souls. Those who poorly learn their lesson, and are careless and abrupt in approaching persons, would show the same defects of manner, the same want of tact and skill in dealing with minds, should they enter the ministry.

While short subscriptions are accepted, some will not make the effort necessary to obtain them for a longer time. Canvassers should not go over the ground in a careless, unconcerned manner. They should feel that they are God's workmen, and the love of souls should load them to make every effort to enlighten men and women in regard to the truth. Providence and grace, means and ends, are closely connected. When his laborers do the very best they can, God does for them that which they cannot do themselves; but no one need expect to succeed independently and by his own exertions. There must be activity united with firm trust in God.

Economy is needed in every department of the Lord's work. The natural turn of youth in this age is to neglect and despise economy, and to confound it with stinginess and narrowness. But economy is consistent with the most broad and liberal views and feelings; there can be no true generosity where it is not practiced. No one should think it beneath him to study economy, and the best means of taking care of the fragments. Said Christ, after he had performed a notable miracle, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost."

Quite a sum may be expended in hotel bills that are not at all necessary. The cause of God lay so near the heart of the pioneers in this message, that they seldom took a meal at a hotel, even though the cost was but twenty-five cents each. But young men and women

generally are not educated to economize, and waste follows waste everywhere. In some families there is a wicked waste of enough to support another family if reasonable economy were used. If, while traveling, our youth will keep an exact account of the money they expend, item by item, their eyes will be opened to see the leaks. While they may not be called upon to deprive themselves of warm meals, as the early workers did in their itinerant life, they may learn to supply their real wants with less expense than they now think necessary. There are persons who practice self-denial in order to give means to the cause of God; then let the workers in the cause also practice self-denial by limiting their expenses as far as possible. It would be well for all our workers to study the history of the Waldensian missionaries, and to imitate their example of sacrifice and self-denial.

[157] We have a grand work to do for the Master, to open the word of God to those who are in the darkness of error. Young friends, act as though you had a sacred charge. You should be Bible students, ever ready to give to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you. By your true Christian dignity, give evidence that you know you have a truth that it is for the interest of the people to hear. If this truth is inwrought in the soul, it will manifest itself in the countenance and demeanor, in a calm, noble self-possession and peace which the Christian alone can possess.

Those who have genuine humility, and whose minds have been expanded by the truths unfolded in the gospel, will have an influence that will be felt. They will make an impression upon minds and hearts, and they will be respected by the larger number, even of those who have no sympathy with their faith. With the truths of the Bible, and our valuable papers, they will have success; for the Lord will open the way before them. But to urge our papers upon the people by means of gifts and premiums does not have a permanent influence for good. If our workers would go forth relying upon the truths of the Bible, with the love of Christ and souls in their hearts, they would accomplish more in obtaining permanent subscribers than by depending upon premiums or low prices. The prominence given to these inducements to take the paper, gives the impression that it cannot possess real merit in itself. The results would be better if the paper were made prominent, and the money spent for premiums were

reserved to distribute a few copies free. When premiums are offered, some may be induced to take the paper who otherwise would not, but others will refuse to subscribe because they think it a speculation. If the canvasser would present the merits of the paper itself, with his heart uplifted to God for success, and would depend less upon premiums, more would be accomplished.

In this age the trivial is praised and magnified. There is a call for anything that will create a sensation and make sales. The country is flooded with utterly worthless publications, which were written for the sake of making money, while really valuable books are unsold and unread. Those who handle this sensational literature because by so doing they can make higher wages, are missing a precious opportunity to do good. There are battles to be fought to arrest the attention of men and women, and interest them in really valuable books that have the Bible for their foundation, and it will be a still greater task to find conscientious, God-fearing workers who will enter the field to canvass for these books for the purpose of diffusing light. [158]

The worker who has the cause of God at heart will not insist on receiving the highest wages. He will not plead, as some of our youth have done, that unless he can make a stylish and elegant appearance, and board at the best hotels, he will not be patronized. What the canvasser needs is not the faultless apparel, or the address of the dandy or the clown, but that honesty and integrity of character which is reflected in the countenance. Kindness and gentleness leave their impress upon the face, and the practiced eye sees no deception, detects no pomposity of manner.

A large number have entered the field as canvassers with whom premiums are the only means of success. They have no real merit as workers. They have no experience in practical religion; they have the same faults, the same tastes and self-indulgences, that characterized them before they claimed to be Christians. Of them it may be said that God is not in their thoughts; he has no abiding-place in their hearts. There is a littleness, an earthliness, a debasement in their character and deportment, that testifies against them, that they are walking in the way of their own hearts and in the sight of their own eyes. They will not practice self-denial, but are determined to enjoy life. The heavenly treasure has no attractions for them; all their tastes

are downward, not upward. Friends and relatives cannot elevate such persons; for they have not a mind to despise the evil and choose the good.

[159] The less we trust these persons, who are not few hut many, the better will the work of present truth stand in the eyes of the world. Our brethren should show discretion in selecting canvassers and colporters, unless they have made up their minds to have the truth misapprehended and misrepresented. They should give all real workers good wages; but the sum should not be increased to buy canvassers, for this course hurts them. It makes them selfish and spendthrifts. Seek to impress them with the spirit of true missionary work, and with the qualifications necessary to insure success. The love of Jesus in the soul will lead the canvasser to feel it a privilege to labor to diffuse light. He will study, plan, and pray over the matter.

Young men are wanted who are men in understanding, who appreciate the intellectual faculties that God has given them, and cultivate them with the utmost care. Exercise enlarges these faculties, and if heart-culture is not neglected, the character will be well balanced. The means of improvement are within the reach of all. Then let none disappoint the Master, when he comes seeking for fruit, by presenting nothing but leaves. A resolute purpose, sanctified by the grace of Christ, will do wonders. Jesus and holy angels will give success to the efforts of intelligent, God-fearing men, who do all in their power to save souls. Quietly, modestly, with a heart overflowing with love, let them seek to win minds to investigate the truth, engaging in Bible-readings when they can. By so doing they will be sowing the seed of truth beside all waters, showing forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. Those who are doing this work from right motives are doing an important work of ministering. They will manifest no feeble, undecided character. Their minds are enlarging, their manners are becoming more refined. They should place no bounds to their improvement, but every day be better fitted to do good work.

[160] Many of the workers in the canvassing field are making no sacrifices. As a class, they have less of the missionary spirit than the workers in any other denomination. When the way is all prepared for them, when they can command the highest wages, then they are willing to enter the field. Many inducements are presented to

canvassers to handle popular books; large wages are offered them; and many refuse to work for less wages to circulate books treating on present truth. Therefore the inducements have been increased to correspond with those offered by other publishers, and as a consequence the expense of getting our publications before the people is large; many of the canvassers obtain their money easily, and spend it freely.

Among the people professing present truth there is not a missionary spirit corresponding with our faith. The ring of the true gold in character is wanting. Christian life is more than they take it to be. It does not consist in mere gentleness, patience, meekness, and kindness. These graces are essential; but there is need of courage, force, energy, and perseverance also. Many who engage in the work of canvassing are weak, nerveless, spiritless, easily discouraged. They lack push. They have not those positive traits of character that give men power to do something,—the spirit and energy that kindle enthusiasm. The canvasser is engaged in an honorable business, and he should not act as though he were ashamed of it. If he would have success attend his efforts, he must be courageous and hopeful

The active virtues must be cultivated as well as the passive. The Christian, while he is ever ready to give the soft answer that turneth away wrath, must possess the courage of a hero to resist evil. With the charity that endureth all things, he must have the force of character which will make his influence a positive power for good. Faith must be wrought into his character. His principles must be firm; he must be noble-spirited, above all suspicion of meanness. The canvasser must not be self-inflated. As he associates with men, he must not make himself conspicuous, talking of himself in a boastful way; for by this course he would disgust intelligent, sensible people. He must not be selfish in his habits, nor overbearing and domineering in his manners. Very many have settled it in their minds that they cannot find time to read one in ten thousand of the books that are published and put upon the market. And in many cases when the canvasser makes known his business, the door of the heart closes firmly; hence the great need of doing his work with tact, and in a humble, prayerful spirit. He should be familiar with the word of God, and have words at his command to unfold the precious truth, and to show the great value of the pure reading matter he carries. [161]

Well may every one feel an individual responsibility in this work. Well may he consider how he may best arrest the attention; for his manner of presenting the truth may decide the destiny of a soul. If he makes a favorable impression, his influence may be to that soul a savor of life unto life; and that one person, enlightened in regard to the truth, may enlighten many others. Therefore it is dangerous to do careless work in dealing with minds.

The canvassing work is God's means of reaching many that would not otherwise be impressed with the truth. The work is a good one, the object high and elevating; and there should be a corresponding dignity of deportment. The canvasser will meet men of varied minds. He will meet those who are ignorant and debased, and can appreciate nothing that does not bring them money. These will be abusive; but he should not heed them. His good nature should never fail; he should take a cheerful, hopeful view of every perplexity. He will meet those who are bereaved, disheartened, and sore and wounded in spirit. He will have many opportunities of speaking to these kind words, and words of courage, hope, and faith. He may be a well-spring to refresh others if he will; but in order to do this, he must himself draw from the Fountain of living truth.

[162] The canvassing work is more important than many have regarded it, and as much care and wisdom must be used in selecting the workers as in selecting men for the ministry. Young men can be trained to do much better work than has been done, and on much less pay than many have received. Lift up the standard; and let the self-denying and the self-sacrificing, the lovers of God and of humanity, join the army of workers. Let them come, not expecting ease, but to be brave and of good courage under rebuffs and hardships. Let those come who can give a good report of our publications, because they themselves appreciate their value.

May the Lord help every one to improve to the utmost the talents committed to his trust. Those who work in this cause do not study their Bibles as they should. If they did, its practical teachings would have a positive bearing upon their lives. Whatever your work may be, dear brethren and sisters, do it as for the Master, and do your best. Do not overlook present golden opportunities, and let your life prove a failure, while you sit idly dreaming of ease and success in a work for which God has never fitted you. Do the work that is nearest

you. Do it, even though it may be amid perils and hardships in the missionary field; but do not, I beg of you, complain of hardships and self-sacrifices. Look at the Waldenses. See what plans they devised that the light of the gospel might shine into benighted minds. We should not labor with the expectation of receiving our reward in this life, but with our eyes fixed steadfastly upon the prize at the end of the race. Men and women are wanted now who are as true to duty as the needle to the pole,—men and women who will work without having their way smoothed and every obstacle removed.

I have described what canvassers ought to be; and may the Lord open their minds to comprehend this subject in its length and breadth, and may they realize their duty to represent the character of Christ by their patience, courage, and steadfast integrity. Let them remember that they can deny him by a loose, lax, undecided character. Young men, if you take these principles with you into the canvassing field, you will be respected, and many will believe the truth you advocate, because you live your faith,—because your daily life is as a bright light set upon a candlestick, which giveth light to all that are in the house. Even your enemies, as much as they war against your doctrines, will respect you; and when you have gained this much, your simple words will have a power, and will carry conviction to hearts.

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## THE PUBLISHING WORK.

THERE are and ever will be many perplexities connected with the publishing office at Battle Creek. The institutions established there are God's instrumentalities for accomplishing his work in the earth. For this reason, Satan is on the ground, exercising his ingenuity to embarrass and hinder. He comes with his temptations to men and women connected with these institutions, whether in responsible positions or doing the humblest work, and if possible he so ensnares them with his devices that they lose their connection with God, become confused in judgment, and are unable to discern between right and wrong. He knows that the time will surely come when the spirit that has controlled the life will be made manifest; and he is glad to have the lives of these persons testify against them, that they are not co-workers with Christ.

Many who have grown to the years and stature of manhood, are deficient in the elements that constitute a noble, manly character. God does not regard them as men. They are not reliable. Some of these are connected with our institutions. They have influence; but it is of a pernicious character, for it is seldom on the side of right. While they profess godliness, their example constantly tends to encourage unrighteousness. Skepticism is interwoven with their thoughts and expressed in their words, and their powers are used for the perversion of righteousness, truth, and justice. Their minds are controlled by Satan, and he works through them to demoralize and bring in confusion. The more pleasing and attractive their manners, the more richly they are endowed with brilliant talents, the more effectual agents are they in the hands of the enemy of all righteousness to demoralize all who come under their influence. It will be found a hard and thankless task to keep these from becoming a ruling power, and carrying out their own purposes in encouraging disorder and loose, lax principles.

The youth exposed to their influence are never safe unless those under whose care they are placed exercise the greatest vigilance,



and they themselves have right principles firmly established. But it is a sad fact that in this age many of the young yield readily to the influence of Satan, but resist the Spirit of God; and in many cases wrong habits have become so firmly fixed that the greatest effort on the part of the managers would not result in molding their characters in the right direction.

Those who stand in positions of trust in the publishing house have weighty responsibilities to bear; and they are not fitted for these places unless they are day by day gaining a deeper and more reliable Christian experience. Eternal interests should be made the first consideration, and every influence which would help in the divine life should be welcomed. Men to whom the Lord has given the charge of business matters connected with his cause should be spiritually minded. They should not neglect to attend religious meetings, nor consider it a task to speak often one to another of their religious life and experience. God will listen to their testimonies; they will be recorded in his book of remembrance; and he will favor his faithful ones, and “will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.”

Those standing at the head of the publishing work should remember that they are an example to many; and they should be faithful in the public worship of God, just as they would have every workman in every department of the Office faithful. If they are seen in the house of worship only occasionally, others will excuse themselves on account of their neglect. These business men can at any time talk fluently and intelligently on business matters, showing that they have not exercised their powers in this direction in vain. They have put tact and skill and knowledge into their work; but how important it is that their hearts, their minds, and all their powers, be also trained for faithful service in the cause and worship of God; that they be able to point out the way of salvation through Christ in language eloquent in its simplicity. They should be men of earnest prayer and firm reliance upon God; men who, like Abraham, will order their households after them, and will manifest a special interest in the spiritual welfare of all connected with the Office.

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Those who make Christ first in everything can be trusted. They will not be self-confident, nor will they sink their religious interest in their business. Has God intrusted men with sacred responsibil-

ities? then he would have them feel their own weakness and their dependence upon him. It is unsafe for men to lean to their own understanding; therefore they should daily seek strength and wisdom from above. God should be in all their thoughts; then all the wiles and subtleties of the old serpent cannot betray them into sinful neglect of duty. They will meet the adversary with the simple weapon that Christ used,—“It is written,” or will repulse him with, “Get thee behind me, Satan.”

In the warning to “watch and pray,” Jesus has indicated the only safe course. There is need of watchfulness. Our own hearts are deceitful, we are compassed with the weaknesses and frailties of humanity, and Satan is intent to destroy. We may be off our guard, but our adversary is never idle. Knowing his tireless vigilance, let us not sleep, as do others, but “watch and be sober.” The spirit and influence of the world must be met; but they must not be allowed to take possession of the mind and heart.

[166] The active man of business, as he is brought in contact with the world, will have trials, perplexity, and anxious care. He will find that there is a tendency to let worldly thoughts and plans take the lead, and that it will require effort, and discipline of mind and soul, to maintain a devotional spirit. But divine grace waits his demand, and his great need is the mighty argument that will prevail with God. For these men Jesus has made special provision. He invites them: “Come unto me, all ye that labor 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 to your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Those who have fellowship with Christ have constant rest and peace. Then why do we walk alone, disdaining his companionship? Why do we not take him into all our counsels? Why do we not come to him in all our perplexities, and prove the strength of his promises?

The Holy Spirit illumines our darkness, informs our ignorance, and understands and helps us in our manifold necessities. But the mind must be constantly going out after God. If coldness and worldliness are allowed to come in, we shall have no heart to pray, no courage to look up to Him who is the source of strength and wisdom. Then pray always, dear brethren and sisters, “lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.” Urge your requests to the throne of

grace, and rely upon God hour by hour and moment by moment. The service of Christ will regulate all your relations with your fellowmen, and make your life fruitful in good works.

Let none imagine that selfishness, self-esteem, and self-indulgence are compatible with the Spirit of Christ. Upon every truly converted man or woman there rests a responsibility that we cannot rightly estimate. The maxims and ways of the world are not to be adopted by the sons and daughters of the heavenly King. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." But the world know us not, because they knew not Christ, our Master.

Business managers are needed in the Review Office, who will correctly represent Jesus and the plan of salvation. God is displeased when they use all their powers in worldly enterprises, or even in business relating to the publishing work, and do nothing for the strengthening of his church, the up-building of his kingdom. To labor for God and for the salvation of souls is the highest and noblest calling that men ever had or ever can have. The losses and gains in this business are of great importance; for the results do not end with this life, but reach over into eternity.

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Brethren, whatever business you engage in, whatever department of the work is allotted to you, carry your religion with you. God and Heaven should not be left out of the experience and the life-work. The workers in this cause should guard against becoming one-sided men, and letting only the worldly element in their characters appear. In the past there have been decided failures on the part of men connected with the Office. They have not been spiritually minded; and their influence has not tended to lead toward the heavenly Canaan, but backward toward Egypt.

Bro. P has been blessed with abilities which, if consecrated to God, would enable him to do great good. He has a quick mind. He understands the theory of the truth, and the claims of God's law; but he has not learned in the school of Christ the meekness and lowliness that would make him a safe man to stand in a position of trust. He has been weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, and found wanting. He has had great light in warnings and reproofs; but

he has not given heed to them; he has not even seen the necessity of changing his course of action. His example before those laboring in the Office has not been consistent with his profession. He has not manifested a steadfast purpose; he has been a boyish man; and his influence has had a tendency to lead away from Christ toward conformity to the world.

[168] The cross of Christ has been presented to Bro. P; but he has turned away from it, for it involves shame and reproach, rather than the honor and praise of the world. Again and again Jesus has called, "Take up the cross and follow me, so shall ye be my disciple." But other voices have been calling in the direction of worldly pride and ambition; and he has listened to these voices because their spirit is more pleasing to the natural heart. He has turned from Jesus, divorced himself from God, and embraced the world. He was called to represent Christ, and to be a bright light in the world; but he has betrayed his sacred trust. The world interposes between his soul and Jesus, and he has had a worldly experience when he should have been gaining one of an entirely opposite character. He has been decidedly worldly in his tastes and opinions, and consequently has been unable to comprehend spiritual things.

Bro. P's success in the ministry, and also in his position of trust in the Office, depended upon the character he should maintain. Painstaking, persevering effort was needed that in going out and coming in before his fellow laborers no wrong example should be set. The plan he should have adopted, the course of action he should have pursued, is plainly marked out in the word of God, Had he taken heed to that word, it would have been a light to his path, guiding his inexperienced feet into a safe way. Testimonies of the Spirit of God have been sent to him again and again, showing him where he was diverging from the highway cast up for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in, and warning and entreating him to change his course of action. But his own ways have seemed right in his eyes; and he has followed inclination, not heeding the light given him. He was not a safe counselor. He was not a safe man in the Office; neither was he a safe shepherd, for he would lead the sheep astray. He has preached excellent discourses; but out of the desk he has not carried out the principles he has preached. This kind of work is an offense to God.

Bro. P's union with the world has proved a snare to himself and to others. Oh, how many stumble over such lives as his. They get the impression that when they take the first steps in conversion,—repentance, faith, and baptism,—this is all that is required of them. But this is a fatal error. The arduous struggle for conquest over self, for holiness and Heaven, is a life-long struggle. There is no release in this war; the effort must be continuous and persevering. Christian integrity must be sought with resistless energy, and maintained with a resolute fixedness of purpose. [169]

A genuine religious experience unfolds and intensifies. Continual advancement, increasing knowledge and power in the word of God, is the natural result of a vital connection with God. The light of holy love will grow brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. It was Bro. P's privilege to have such an experience as this; but he has not had the oil of grace in his vessel with his lamp, and his light has been growing dim. If he does not make a decided change soon, he will be where no warnings or entreaties will ever reach him. His light will go out in darkness, and he will be left in despair.

### IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMY.

Bro. R has good business ability for some branches of the work, which would enable him to serve the Office acceptably; but he has not educated and disciplined himself to be a thorough, efficient manager. Under his charge there have been grave neglects; a disorderly, disorganized state of things has existed, which should be promptly corrected. There are many little matters connected with his work that have not received attention; and as a consequence there are leaks. Losses and wastes are allowed that might be avoided.

I have passed through the Office, and have been shown how the angels of God look upon the work done in the various rooms. In some the condition of things is better than in others; but in all there are wrongs that might be remedied. Loss, loss, is seen in many departments. The reckless way that many work results in loss to the Office, and is an offense to God. It is sad that it should be thus. Jesus has given us lessons in economy. "Gather up the fragments," he says, "that nothing be lost." It would have been better not to undertake so many large enterprises, if by this means so many small matters must

[170] be left without attention; for the little things are like small screws that keep the machinery from falling to pieces. The word of God explains duty; it gives the rule of faithful service: “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.”

I have been shown that in addition to the help now in the Office, competent men should be employed to assist in the management of the different departments of the work. Men should be employed who have experience in business, and who are wise managers. It would have been better years ago to have employed men who were thorough managers,—men who would have taught thoroughness, promptness, and economy,—even if double the wages that has been paid to foremen had been necessary. Bro. R is deficient here; he has not a happy way of correcting evils. He undertakes to do this; but very many things are entirely neglected that Ought to be reformed at once. The Office has lacked a care-taking economist, a thorough business man. There is three times as much lost as would be required to pay for the very best talent and experience in this work.

Very much is lost for want of a competent person, one who is efficient, apt, and practical, to oversee the different departments of the work. One is needed who is a practical printer, and is acquainted with every part of the work. There are some who understand printing, but utterly fail in generalship. Others do the best they can; but they are yet inexperienced, and do not understand the publishing work. Their ideas are often narrow, They do not know how to meet the demands of the cause; and, as a consequence, they are unable to estimate the advantages and disadvantages of enlarging their work. They are also liable to misjudge, to make wrong calculations, and to estimate incorrectly. There have been losses in consequence of a failure to make proper estimates and to improve opportunities of pushing the publishing work. In such an institution as this, thousands of dollars may be lost through the calculations of incompetent persons. Bro. P had ability in some respects to understand and properly estimate the interests of the publishing work; but his influence was an in-jury to the Office.

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There should be some one to see that the youth, as they enter the Office to learn trades, have prompt and proper attention. A man should be employed for this work who is apt to teach, patient, kind,

and discerning. If one man is not sufficient for this work, let others be employed. If it is done faithfully, it will save to the Office the wages of three men. These youth are forming habits that will affect their entire experience. They are, as it were, in a school; and if they are left to pick up their knowledge as best they can, marked defects will be seen all through their future work. The basis of thoroughness, honesty, and integrity must be laid in youth. The formation of correct habits in youth is of the utmost importance. If instead of being trained to obedience to rules and regulations, and to habits of punctuality, thoroughness, neatness, order, and economy, they are allowed to form loose, lax habits, they will be liable to retain these bad habits all through life. They may have talent to make a success in their business, and they should be taught the importance of making a right use of their powers. They should also be taught to be economical, to gather up the fragments that nothing be lost.

Men in responsible positions should undertake no more than they can do thoroughly, promptly, and well; for if they would have those under their care form right habits, they must set a right example. A great responsibility rests upon these leading men as to the mold of character that by their principles and their manner of working they are giving to the youth. They should consider that, by the instruction they are giving, both in regard to their work and in the way of religious education, they are helping these youth to form character. Progress is the watchword. The youth should be taught to aim at perfection in whatever branch of labor they undertake. If there are persons at the head of any of the rooms who are not thorough, who are not economists, who are not diligent in the use of their time and careful of their influence, they mold others in the same way. If these do not change after being admonished, they should be removed, and more competent persons secured, even if it is necessary to try again and again. The workers ought to be far more efficient and faithful than they are at the present time.

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The first impressions, the first discipline, of these youthful workers should be of the very highest order; for their characters are being molded for time and for eternity. Let those who have charge of them remember that they have a great and solemn responsibility. Let them mold the plastic clay before it becomes hardened and insensible to impressions; let them train the sapling ere it becomes a gnarled and

tangled oak; let them direct the course of the rivulet ere it becomes a swollen river. If they are left to choose their own boarding-house and their own companions, some will choose those that are good, and others will choose improper associations. If the religious element is not mingled with their education, they will become easy subjects of temptation, and their characters will be liable to become warped and one-sided. The youth who show respect for sacred and holy things learn these lessons under the home roof, before the world has placed upon the soul its mark,—the image of sin, deceit, and dishonesty. Love to God is learned at the family altar,—of the father and mother in very babyhood.

The want of a religious influence is sadly felt in the Office; there should be greater devotion, more spirituality, more practical religion. Missionary work done here by God-fearing men and women would be attended with the very best results. Bro. R's course is not well-pleasing to God. A man in his position should be a man of devotion; he should be among the first in religious matters. His only safety is in maintaining a living connection with God, and feeling his dependence upon him. Without this, he will not do justice to his position, neither will he exert a right influence in the Office and over those with whom his business brings him in contact.

[173] I have also seen that there should be a close investigation of the manner of dealing in the Office, both with brethren and with unbelievers. Benevolence, purity, truth, and peace are the fruits that should be seen there. Motives and actions should be closely examined, and compared with the law of God; for this law is the only infallible rule by which to regulate the conduct, the only reliable code of honor between man and man.

### UNITY OF THE WORK.

The Lord would have union among those who manage his work in different parts of the field. Those who manage his work on the Pacific Coast, and those who are engaged in his work on the east side of the Rocky Mountains, should be of the same mind and judgment,—one in heart, in plans, and in action. He would not have those at either Office think it a virtue to differ with their brethren at the other publishing house. There should be a comparing of notes,



an interchange of plans and ideas; and if any improvements are suggested in either Office, let the managers consider the proposition, and adopt improved plans and methods. In both publishing houses there are very great improvements to be made, and the managers have much to learn. And the lesson which will bear its mark most decidedly and happily in the advancement of the work is to lean less to their own understanding, and to learn more of the meekness and lowliness of Christ. Let not those at either Office be so egotistical, so unlike Christ, as to maintain their own plans for the gratification of having their own way, irrespective of consequences.

Those connected with our office of publication at Battle Creek are not what they should be nor what they might be. They think their tastes, habits, and opinions are correct. They are in constant danger of becoming narrow in their ideas, and jealous of the Pacific Press, and of standing in an attitude to criticise and have feelings of superiority. This feeling is suffered to grow, and to mar and hinder their own interests and also the interests of the work on the Pacific Coast, all because selfish feelings control, and prevent clear discernment as to what is for their own good and for the advancement and up-building or the cause of God. This sectional feeling is contrary to the spirit of Christ. God is dis-pleased with it; he would have every particle of it over-come. The cause is one; the vineyard is one great field, with God's servants employed in various parts of the work. There should be no aim but to work disinterestedly to warn the careless and to save the lost.

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The men connected with the work of God in the Office, the Sanitarium, and the College, can be accounted safe men only so far as they assimilate to the character of Christ. But many have inherited traits of character that in no way represent the divine model. There are many who have some defect of character received as a birthright, which they have not overcome, but have cherished as though it were fine gold, and brought with them into their religious experience. In many cases these traits are retained through the entire life. For a time no particular harm may be seen to result from them; but the leaven is at work, and when a favorable opportunity arrives, the evil manifests itself.

Some of these men who have marked deformities of character have strong, decided opinions, and are unyielding when it would be

Christlike to yield to others whose love for the cause of truth is just as deep as their own. Such persons need to cultivate opposite traits of character, and to learn to esteem others better than themselves. When they become connected with an important enterprise, where great designs are to be worked out, they should be careful, lest their own peculiar ideas and special traits of character have an unfavorable influence on its development. The Lord saw the danger that would result from one man's mind and judgment controlling decisions and working out plans, and in his inspired word we are commanded to be subject one to another, and to esteem others better than ourselves. When plans are to be laid that will affect the cause of God, they should be brought before a council composed of chosen men of experience; for harmony of effort is essential in all these enterprises.

[175] Men of various temperaments and defective characters can see the faults of others, but do not seem to have a knowledge of their own errors; and if left to carry out their own plans without consultation with others, they would make sad mistakes. Their ideas must become broader. With ordinary humanity there is a selfishness, an ambition, that mars the work of God. Self-interest must be lost sight of. There should be no aiming to be first, no standing aloof from God's workmen, speaking and writing in a bigoted manner of things that have not been critically and prayerfully investigated and humbly brought before the council.

The future world is close at hand, with its unalterable and solemn issues—so near, so very near, and such a great work to be done, so many important decisions to be made; yet in your councils the preconceived opinions, the selfish ideas and plans, the wrong traits of character received by birth, are lugged in, and allowed to have an influence. You should ever feel that it is a sin to move from impulse. You should not abuse your power, using it to carry out your own ends regardless of the consequences to others, because you are in a position that makes this possible; but you should use the power that is given you as a sacred, solemn trust, remembering that you are servants of the most high God, and must meet in the Judgment every decision that you make. If your acts are unselfish, and for the glory of God, they will bear the trying test. Ambition is death to spiritual advancement, genius is erring, slothful indolence is criminal; but a life where every just principle is respected must be a successful one.

Many of your councils do not bear the stamp of Heaven. You do not come to them as men who have been communing with God, and who have his mind and his merciful compassion, but as men having a firm purpose to carry out your own plans, and to settle questions according to your own minds. In every department of the work it is essential to have the mind and spirit of Christ. You are God's workmen; and you must possess courtesy and grace, else you cannot represent Jesus.

All who are employed in our institutions should realize that that [176] they will be a blessing or a curse. If they would be a blessing, they must renew their spiritual strength daily; they must be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

Amid the cares of active life it is sometimes difficult to discern our own motives; but progress is made daily either for good or evil. Likes or dislikes, an uprising of personal feelings, will come in to control our actions; the things of sense will blind our vision. I have been shown that Jesus loves us; but he is grieved to see such a want of wise discrimination, of adaptability to the work, and of wisdom to reach human hearts and enter into the feelings of others. While we are to guard against the constant danger of forming an alliance with the enemies of Christ, and being corrupted by them, we must guard against holding ourselves aloof from those whom our Lord claims as his. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren," he says, "ye have done it unto me." If with an earnest, loving purpose we improve every opportunity to help to their feet those who have stumbled and fallen, we shall not have lived in vain. Our manners will not be harsh, overbearing, and dictatorial, but our lives will be fragrant with the hidden grace of Christ

Our heavenly Father requires of his servants according to that which he has intrusted to them, and his requirements are reasonable and just. He will not accept less of us than he claims; all his righteous demands must be fully met, or they will testify against us that we are weighed in the balances and found wanting. But Jesus watches our efforts with the deepest interest. He knows that men with all the infirmities of humanity, are doing his work; and he notes their failures and discouragements with the tenderest pity. But the failures and defects might be far less than they are. If we will move in

harmony with Heaven, ministering angels will work with us, and crown our efforts with success.

[177] This is the great day of preparation, and the solemn work going on in the sanctuary above should be kept constantly before the minds of those employed in our various institutions. Business cares should not be allowed to absorb the mind to such a degree that the work in Heaven, which concerns every individual, will be lightly regarded. The solemn scenes of the Judgment, the great day of atonement, should be kept before the people, and urged upon their consciences with earnestness and power. The subject of the sanctuary will give us correct views of the importance of the work for this time. A proper appreciation of it will lead the workers in the publishing houses to manifest greater energy and zeal to make the work a success. None should become careless, blinded to the wants of the cause and the perils that attend every soul; but each should seek to be a channel of light.

In all our institutions there is too much of self, and too little of Christ. All eyes should turn to our Redeemer, all characters should become like his. He is the model to copy, if we would have well-balanced minds and symmetrical characters. His life was as the garden of the Lord, in which grew every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. While embracing in his soul every lovely trait of character, his sensibility, courtesy, and love brought him into close sympathy with humanity. He was the creator of all things, sustaining worlds by his infinite power. Angels were ready to do him homage and to obey his will. Yet he could listen to the prattle of the infant, and accept its lisping praise. He took little children in his arms, and pressed them to his great heart of love. They felt perfectly at home in his presence, and reluctant to leave his arms. He did not look upon the disappointments and woes of the race as a mere trifle; but his heart was ever touched by the sufferings of those he came to save.

[178] The world had lost the original pattern of goodness, and had sunk into universal apostasy and moral corruption; and the life of Jesus was one of laborious, self-denying effort to bring man back to his first estate by imbuing him with the spirit of divine benevolence and unselfish love. While in the world, he was not of the world. It was a continual pain to him to be brought in contact with the

enmity, depravity, and impurity which Satan had brought in; but he had a work to do to bring man into harmony with the divine plan, and earth in connection with Heaven, and he counted no sacrifice too great for the accomplishment of the object. "He was in all points tempted like as we are." Satan stood ready to assail him at every step, hurling at him his fiercest temptations; yet he "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." "He suffered being tempted,"— suffered in proportion to the perfection of his holiness. But the prince of darkness found nothing in him; not a single thought or feeling responded to temptation.

His doctrine dropped as the rain; his speech distilled as the dew. In the character of Christ was blended such majesty as God had never before displayed to fallen man, and such meekness as man had never developed. Never before had there walked among men one so noble, so pure, so benevolent, so conscious of his Godlike nature; yet so simple, so full of plans and purposes to do good to humanity. While abhorring sin, he wept with compassion over the sinner. He pleased not himself. The Majesty of Heaven clothed himself with the humility of a child. This is the character of Christ. Are we walking in his footsteps ? O my Saviour, how poorly art thou represented by thy professed followers !

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## BUSINESS AND RELIGION.

[179] THOSE employed in our various institutions,—our publishing houses, our schools, and our health institutions,— should have a living connection with God. Especially is it very important that those who have the management of these great branches of the work be men who make the kingdom of God and his righteousness the first consideration. They are not fit for their positions of trust, unless they take counsel of God and bear fruit to his glory. They should pursue a course of life that will honor their Creator, ennoble themselves, and bless their fellow-men. All have natural traits which must be cultivated or repressed, as they shall help or hinder in obtaining a growth in grace, a depth of religious experience.

Those engaged in the work of God cannot serve his cause acceptably, unless they make the best use possible of the religious privileges they enjoy. We are as trees planted in the garden of the Lord; and he comes to us seeking the fruit he has a right to expect. His eye is upon each of us; he reads our hearts and understands our lives. This is a solemn search, for it has reference to duty and to destiny; and with what interest is it prosecuted. Let each of those to whom are committed sacred trusts inquire, “How do I meet the inspecting eye of God? Is my heart cleansed from its defilement? or have its temple-courts become so desecrated, so occupied with buyers and sellers, that Christ finds no room?” The bustle of business, if continuous, will dry up spirituality, and leave the soul Christless. Although they may profess the truth, yet if men pass along day by day with no living connection with God, they will be led to do strange things; decisions will be made not in accordance with the will of God. There is no safety for our leading brethren while they shall go forward according to their own impulses. They will not be yoked up with Christ, and so will not move in harmony with him. They will be unable to see and realize the wants of the cause, and Satan will move upon them to take positions that will embarrass and hinder.

My brethren, are you cultivating devotion? Is love of religious things prominent? Are you living by faith, and overcoming the world? Do you attend the public worship of God? and are your voices heard in the prayer and social meeting? Is the family altar established? Do you gather your children together morning and evening, and present their cases to God? Do you instruct them how to become followers of the Lamb? Your families, if irreligious, testify to your neglect and unfaithfulness. If, while you are connected with the sacred cause of God, your children are careless, irreverent, and have no love for religious meetings or sacred truth, it is a sad thing. Such a family exerts an influence against Christ and against the truth; and "he that is not with me is against me," says Christ. The neglect of home religion, the neglect to train your children, is most displeasing to God. If one of your children were in the river, battling with the waves, and in imminent danger of drowning, what a stir there would be! What efforts would be made, what prayers offered, what enthusiasm manifested, to save the human life! But here are your children out of Christ, their souls unsaved. Perhaps they are even rude and uncourteous, a reproach to the Adventist name. They are perishing without hope and without God in the world, and you are careless and unconcerned. [180]

What example do you give your children? What order do you have at home? Your children should be educated to be kind, thoughtful of others, gentle, easy to be entreated, and, above everything else, to respect religious things, and feel the importance of the claims of God. They should be taught to respect the hour of prayer; they should be required to rise in the morning so as to be present at family worship.

Fathers and mothers who make God first in their households, who teach their children that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, glorify God before angels and before men, by presenting to the world a well ordered, well-disciplined family,—a family that love and obey God, instead of rebelling against him. Christ is not a stranger in their homes; his name is a household name, revered and glorified. Angels delight in a home where God reigns supreme, and the children are taught to reverence religion, the Bible, and their Creator. Such families can claim the promise, "Them that honor me, I will honor." As from such a home the father goes forth to his daily

duties, it is with a spirit softened and subdued by converse with God. He is a Christian, not only in his profession, but in trade, in all his business relations. He does his work with fidelity, knowing that the eye of God is upon him,

[181] In the church his voice is not silent. He has words of gratitude and encouragement to utter; for he is a growing Christian, with a fresh experience every day. He is a helpful, active worker in the church, laboring for the glory of God and the salvation of his fellow-men. He would feel condemned and guilty before God, were he to neglect to attend public worship, thus failing to improve the privileges that would enable him to do better and more effective service in the cause of truth

God is not glorified when influential men make them-selves mere business men, ignoring their eternal interests, that are so much more enduring, so much more noble and elevated, than the temporal. Where should the greatest tact and skill be exercised, if not upon those things that are imperishable, as enduring as eternity? Brethren, develop your talent in the direction of serving the Lord; manifest as much tact and ability in working for the up-building of the cause of Christ as you do in worldly enterprises.

There is, I am sorry to say, a great want of earnestness and interest in spiritual things, on the part of the heads of many families. There are some who are seldom found in the house of worship. They make one excuse, then another, and still another, for their absence; but the real reason is that their hearts are not religiously inclined. A spirit of devotion is not cultivated in the family. The children are not brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. These men are not what God would have them. They have no living connection with him; they are purely business men. They have not a conciliatory spirit; there is such a lack of meekness, kindness, and courtesy in their deportment that their motives are misconstrued, and the good they really do possess is evil spoken of. If they could realize how offensive their course is in the sight of God, they would make a change.

[182] The work of God should be carried forward by men who have a daily, living experience in the religion of Christ. "Without me," says Christ, "ye can do nothing." None of us are beyond the power of temptation. All who are connected with our institutions, our



Conferences, and our missionary enterprises, may ever have the assurance that they have a powerful foe, whose constant aim is to separate them from Christ, their strength. The more responsible the position they occupy, the more fierce will be Satan's attacks; for he knows that if he can move them to take an objectionable course, others will follow their example. But those who are continually learning in the school of Christ, will be able to pursue the even tenor of their way, and Satan's efforts to throw them off their balance will be signally defeated. Temptation is not sin. Jesus was holy and pure; yet he was tempted in all points as we are, but with a strength and power that man will never be called upon to endure. In his successful resistance he has left us a bright example, that we should follow his steps. If we are self-confident or self-righteous, we shall be left to fall under the power of temptation; but if we look to Jesus, and trust in him, we call to our aid a power that has conquered the foe on the field of battle, and with every temptation he will make a way of escape. When Satan comes in like a flood, we must meet his temptations with the sword of the Spirit, and Jesus will be our helper, and will lift up for us a standard against him. The father of lies quakes and trembles when the truth of God, in burning power, is thrown in his face.

Satan makes every effort to lead people away from God; and he is successful in his purpose when the religious life is drowned in business cares, when he can so absorb their minds in business that they will not take time to read their Bibles, to pray in secret, and to keep the offering of praise and thanksgiving burning on the altar of sacrifice morning and evening. How few realize the wiles of the arch-deceiver! how many are ignorant of his devices! When our brethren voluntarily absent themselves from religious meetings, when God is not thought of and revered, when he is not chosen as their counselor and their strong tower of defense, how soon secular thoughts and wicked unbelief come in, and vain confidence and philosophy take the place of humble, trusting faith. Often temptations are cherished as the voice of the True Shepherd, because men have separated themselves from Jesus. They cannot be safe a moment, unless right principles are cherished in the heart, and carried into every business transaction.

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.” Such a promise is of more value than gold or silver. If with a humble heart you seek divine guidance in every trouble and perplexity, his word is pledged that a gracious answer will be given you. And his word can never fail. Heaven and earth may pass away, but his word will never pass away. Trust in the Lord, and you will never be confounded or ashamed. “It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.”

Whatever position in life we may occupy, whatever our business, we must be humble enough to feel our need of help; we must lean implicitly on the teachings of God’s word, acknowledge his providence in all things, and be faithful in pouring out our souls in prayer. Lean to your own understanding, dear brethren, as you make your way through the world, and you will reap sorrow and disappointment. Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and he will guide your steps in wisdom, and your interests will be safe for this world and for the next. You need light and knowledge. You will take counsel either of God or your own heart; you will walk in the sparks of your own kindling, or will gather to yourself divine light from the Sun of Righteousness.

[184] Do not act from motives of policy. The great danger of our business men and those in responsible positions, is that they will be turned from Christ to secure some help aside from him. Peter would not have been left to show such weakness and folly, had he not sought, by the use of policy, to avoid reproach and scorn, persecution and abuse. His highest hopes centered in Christ; but when he saw him in humiliation, unbelief came in and was entertained. He fell under the power of temptation, and instead of showing his fidelity in a crisis, he wickedly denied his Lord.

For the sake of making money, many divorce themselves from God, and ignore their eternal interests. They pursue the same course as the scheming, worldly man; but God is not in this, it is an offense to him. He would have them prompt to devise and execute plans; but all business matters should be transacted in harmony with the great moral law of God. The principles of love to God and our neighbor must be carried out in all the acts of the daily life, the least as well

as the greatest. There must be a spirit to do more than pay tithes on mint, anise, and cummin; the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and the love of God, must not be neglected; for the personal character of each one connected with the work leaves its impress upon it.

There are men and women who have left all for Christ's sake. Their own temporal interests, their own enjoyment of society and of family and friends, are made of less importance than the interests of the kingdom of God. They have not made houses and lands, and relatives and friends however dear, first in their affections, and God's cause second. And those who do this, who devote their lives to the advancement of the truth, to bringing many sons and daughters to God, have the promise that they shall have a hundred-fold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting. Those who work from a noble stand point and with unselfish motives will be consecrated to God, body, soul, and spirit. They will not exalt self; they will not feel competent to take responsibilities; but they will not refuse to bear burdens, for they will have a desire to do all that they are capable of doing. These will not study their own convenience; the question with them will be, What is duty?

The more responsible the position, the more essential that the influence be right. Every man whom God has chosen to do a special work becomes a target for Satan. Temptations press thick and fast upon him; for our vigilant foe knows that his course of action has a molding influence upon others. We are amid the perils of the last days, and Satan has come down in great wrath, knowing that he has but a short time. He works with all deceivableness of unrighteousness; but Heaven is open to every one who makes God his trust. The only safety for any of us is in clinging to Jesus, and letting nothing separate the soul from the mighty Helper. [185]

Those who have merely a form of godliness, and yet are connected with the cause in business relations, are to be feared. They will surely betray their trust. They will be overcome by the devices of the tempter, and will imperil the cause of God. There will be temptations to allow self to control; an overbearing, critical spirit will arise, and in many cases compassion and consideration for those who need to be dealt with in thoughtful tenderness will be wanting.

“Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” What seed are we scattering? What will be our harvest for time and for eternity? To every man the Master has assigned his work, in accordance with his ability. Are we sowing the seed of truth and righteousness, or that of unbelief, disaffection, evil surmising, and love of the world? The one who scatters evil seed may discern the nature of his work, and repent and be forgiven. But the pardon of the Master does not change the character of the seed sown, and make of briers and thistles precious wheat. He himself may be saved so as by fire; but when the time of harvest comes, there will be only poisonous weeds where there should be fields of waving grain. That which was sown in wicked heedlessness, will do its work of death. This thought pains my heart and fills me with sadness. If all who profess to believe the truth would sow the precious seeds of kindness, love, faith, and courage, they would make melody to God in their hearts as they travel the upward way, rejoicing in the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and in the great gathering day they would receive an eternal reward.

## WORLDLY-MINDEDNESS A SNARE.

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DEAR BRO. AND SISTER P: My soul is exceedingly sorrowful as I review your cases. Last night my mind was heavily burdened. In dreams I was conversing with you, Bro P. Your separation from God was so evident, and you were so blind in regard to your true condition, that it seemed like saying to a blind man, "See," to try to make you discern your true standing.

I have not been able to sleep since three o'clock, and have been pleading with God for a larger measure of his Spirit. I inquire over and over again, Who is sufficient for these things? I dare not hold my peace when light has been given me of God. I must speak; and yet it is with trembling, fearing that the message will be rejected, and the souls to whom it is addressed will be enshrouded in darkness more dense than before the light came to them. I must come close to Jesus. I have laid my hand in his, with the earnest prayer, "Lead me, guide me; I have not wisdom to go alone." Jesus seems very near; and I am deeply impressed that he is about to do a special work for his people, particularly for those that labor in word and doctrine. He is willing to help you both, if you will receive help in his own appointed way; but I cannot speak one word of encouragement to you while you remain in your present position. The words of Christ to the Pharisees, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life," are applicable to you.

I wish we could do something to help you; but while you remain in the worldly channel in which you have placed yourselves, what can be done for you? You love the world, and the world loves you, because, so far as practical godliness is concerned, there is no separation between yourselves and worldlings. In their eyes, you are agreeable, smart, and good; they find in you both that which pleases them. They have praised you and spoken to you smooth things, and thus have had an influence to soothe and comfort you; and you, in your turn, have soothed and comforted them in their careless indifference to the claims of God. You have encouraged

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them in their pride and love of pleasure; for your actions have said to the sinner, "It shall be well with thee." By mingling with worldlings, your judgment has become perverted; and sins which God abhors are tame and harmless in your sight.

I greatly fear that by your self-righteousness you are building around your souls barriers that nothing can break down. You have been no nearer to God, no more working his works, no more imbued with his Spirit, than the professors in the nominal churches. You have had no real sense of the sacredness of the Sabbath, and God has not accepted your observance of his holy day. You have had no true consecration, no sincere devotion. God has not been honored by either of you; you have not known him experimentally. You have walked apart from him so long that he is nearly a stranger to you. Spiritual things are spiritually discerned; but you have so long cultivated worldly tastes and habits that it will not be easy for you to bend your mind in an opposite direction.

You will feel, "This is a hard saying; who can hear it?" But the world cannot understand the people of God. There is no harmony between the children of light and the children of darkness. Paul asks: "And what concord hath Christ-with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." John testifies: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" asks James. "Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

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Jesus said to his disciples: "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 forever [not a profession of the truth, not a form of godliness, but] 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." "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings."

The words of Christ find no response in your hearts; for you have blinded your eyes and hardened your hearts. In the books of Heaven you are both accounted as of the world. Your hearts are sometimes troubled, but not enough to lead you to repent and change your course of action. The world holds your affections, and its customs are more agreeable to you than obedience to the heavenly Teacher.

Your example before your children is not at all in accordance with the truth you profess to love. The truth does not sanctify you or them. You love selfish enjoyment; and the lessons taught your children, both by precept and example, have not been of a character to foster in them humility, meekness, and a Christlike disposition. You are molding them after the world's standard. When Jesus shall open before you the book of records, where day by day your words and actions have been faithfully registered, you will see that with both of you life has been a terrible failure.

What your recent affliction may have done for you, I am unable to say; but if it has had power to open your eyes and convict your souls, you will certainly take a course to make this evident. Without a thorough con-version, you can never receive the crown of everlasting life; and your children will never have part with the blood-washed throng unless they first unlearn the lessons you have taught them, which have become a part of their life and character. Your example has led them to think that religion is like a garment, that may be worn or laid off, as occasion requires or convenience dictates; and unless there is an entire change in the influences brought to bear upon them, these lax ideas of the claims of God will cling to them. They do not know what constitutes the Christian life; they have not learned what it is to live the truth and bear the cross.

“If the world hate you,” said Christ, “ye know that it hated me before it hated you.” You have entertained the opinion that the reason why the world is so much opposed to us as a people is, we are too unsocial, too plain in our dress, and too strict in regard to amusements, withdrawing ourselves from them too much in practice as well as in precept. You have thought that if we would be less exclusive, and would mingle more with the world, their opinions and impressions of us would be greatly modified. But no greater mistake could affect the human mind. Said Christ, “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 saying, 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.”

These are the words of One of whom even his enemies were forced to admit, “Never man spake like this man.” The words of men express their own human thoughts; but those of Christ are spirit and life. “If ye continue in my word,” he says, “then are ye my disciples indeed.” “He that is of God heareth God’s words;” but these divine utterances find no place in the heart of one who is of the world, and loves its pleasures.

[190] God has given us specific directions, so that no one need err. “Man shall not live by bread alone,” he says, “but by *every word* that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” The truth given by inspiration “is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” Not by one word, not by many words, but by every word that God has spoken, shall man live. You cannot disregard one word, a single injunction that he has given, however trifling it may seem to you, and be safe. “Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he 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.” Whosoever will willfully break one command, cannot in spirit and in truth keep any of them. He may claim that, with the exception of what he may regard as slight deviations, he keeps them all; yet if he willingly offends in one point, he is guilty of all.



Bro. and Sister P, while you have been making a profession of Christianity, you have been keeping back part of the price. You have robbed God of thought and devotion; you have robbed him of your talents and influence. Your inclinations have been a snare to you. You have not followed the light that God has graciously given you in testimonies; and you have done things that without repentance and reformation on your part will exclude you from Heaven. Had you heeded the reproofs sent to you by the Holy Spirit, you would now be strong in God, and far advanced in Christian experience; and you would have had an entirely different record in the books of Heaven.

“He that rejecteth me,” says Christ, “and receiveth not my words, hath One that judgeth him. The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” In that day what shame and confusion of face will cover those who have had such light and privileges, who have had salvation brought within their reach by the infinite sacrifice of the Son of God, and yet have not availed themselves of these precious gifts. Through his word, God is constantly pointing out to us the right path, even the high and glorious path of the just. The travelers in this path do not walk in darkness, for it is illuminated by the Sun of Righteousness; but you have rejected it because it was too far separated from the world. Self-love and selfish ambition cannot pass the strait gate, and walk the narrow, upward way.

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

How different it would now be with you both, had you regarded in their true light the praise and honor that come from men. You

both thirst more for the praise of the world than for the waters of life. The idea of being thought of importance among men of the world has intoxicated you; their words of esteem have deceived you. When you place a right estimate on eternal things, the friendship and esteem of the rich and the learned will have no influence over you. Pride, in whatever form it may manifest itself, will no longer live in your heart. But you have so long drunk of the turbid stream of worldliness that you see no better way to live.

[192] Again and again God has stretched out his hand to save you by showing you your duties and obligations. These duties change in character with the increase of light. When the light shines, making manifest and re-proving the errors that were undiscovered, there must be a corresponding change in the life and character. The mistakes that are the natural result of blindness of mind, are, when pointed out, no longer sins of ignorance or errors of judgment; but unless there are decided reforms in accordance with the light given, they then become presumptuous sins. The moral darkness that surrounds you will become more dense; your heart will become harder and harder, and you will be more offensive in the sight of God. You do not realize the great peril you are in, the danger there is that in your case the light will become entirely obscured, veiled in complete darkness. When the light is received and acted upon, you will be crucified to sin, being dead indeed unto the world, but alive to God. Your idols will be abandoned, and your example will be on the side of self-denial rather than that of self-indulgence.

Bro. and Sister P, had you heeded the Testimonies of the Spirit of God, you would now be walking in the light, in harmony with the people of God; but your unbelief has shut you away from great good. Sister P has not risen up against the Testimonies, neither has she shown confidence in them as from the Lord by obeying them. She loves to have her husband praised and honored by the world; it gratifies her pride, which is by no means small. You may each appropriately inquire, "Why am I so slow to come out from the world, and take Christ for my portion? Why should I love and honor those whom I know do not love God nor respect his claims? Why should I wish to retain the friendship of my Lord's enemies? Why should I follow their customs or be influenced by their opinions?" You cannot, my dear friends, serve both God and mammon. You

must make an unreserved surrender, or in the near future the light that shines upon your pathway will go out in the darkness of despair. You are on the enemy's ground. You have voluntarily placed yourselves there; and the Lord will not protect you against his assaults.

In your present state, you are doing far more harm than good; for you have a form of godliness, and profess to believe the truth, while your words and actions say, "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way," that leads to life, "and many there be which go in thereat." If your life is a confession of Christ, then we may truly say that the world has gone after him. Your profession may be right; but have you humility and love, meekness and devotion? "Whosoever shall confess me before men," by a holy life and godly conversation, "him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God." No one can confess Christ unless he has the mind and spirit of Christ; he cannot communicate that which he does not possess. The daily life must be an expression of the sanctifying power of the truth, and evidence that Christ is abiding in the soul by faith. Whatever is opposed to the fruits of the Spirit, or to the work of God in separating his people from the world, is a denial of Christ; and his words are, "He that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God."

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We may deny Christ by our worldly conversation and by our pride of apparel. You have a circle of friends who are a snare to you and to your children. You love their companionship. Through association with them, you are led to dress yourselves and your children after the fashions followed by those who have no fear of God before their eyes. You thus show that you have friendship with the world. "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin." Does your intercourse with these friends incline you to visit the closet, and ask divine love and grace, or does it estrange your mind from God? And your dear children—what is your neglect of their eternal interests doing for them? Your example has encouraged them to hurry on the life-journey with heedless presumption or with blind self-confidence, having no fixed religious principles to guide them. They have no conscientious regard for the Sabbath, or for the claims of God in any respect; they do not love Christian duties, and are straying farther and farther from the Source of light, peace, and joy.

[194] Without faith it is impossible to please God; for “whatsoever is not of faith is sin.” The faith that is required is not a mere assent to doctrines; it is the faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Humility, meekness, and obedience are not faith; but they are the effects, or fruit, of faith. These graces you have yet to attain by learning in the school of Christ. You do not know the sentiments and principles of Heaven; its language is almost a strange language to you both. The Spirit of God still pleads in your behalf; but I have serious, painful doubts whether you will heed that voice that has been appealing to you for years. I hope you will, and that you will turn and live.

Do you feel that it is too great a sacrifice to give your poor unworthy selves to Jesus? Will you choose the hopeless bondage of sin and death, rather than to have your life severed from the world, and united to Christ by bonds of love? Jesus still lives to intercede for us. This should daily call out the gratitude of our hearts. He that realizes his guilt and helplessness may come just as he is, and receive the blessing of God. The promise belongs to him if he will grasp it by faith. But he that in his own eyes is rich, and honorable, and righteous, who sees as the world sees, and calls evil good and good evil, cannot ask and receive, because he feels no need. He feels that he is full; therefore he must go away empty.

Should you become alarmed for your own souls, should you seek God diligently, he will be found of you; but he will accept no half-hearted repentance. If you will forsake your sins, he is ever ready to forgive. Will you just now surrender to him? Will you look to Calvary, and inquire, “Did Jesus make this sacrifice for me? Did he endure humiliation, shame, and reproach, and suffer the cruel death of the cross, because he desired to save me from the sufferings of guilt and the horror of despair, and make me unspeakably happy in his kingdom?” Look upon Him whom your sins have pierced, and resolve, “The Lord shall have the service of my life. I will no longer unite with his enemies; I will no longer lend my influence to the rebels against his government. All I have and am is too little to devote to Him who so loved me that he gave his life for me,—his  
[195] whole divine self for one so sinful and erring.” Separate from the world, be wholly on the Lord’s side, press the battle to the gates, and you will win glorious victories.

Blessed is he who heeds the words of eternal life. Guided by the "Spirit of truth," he will be led into all truth. He will not be loved, honored, and praised by the world; but he will be precious in the sight of Heaven. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

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## **RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PHYSICIAN.**

“THE fear of the lord is the beginning of wisdom.” Professional men, whatever their calling, need divine wisdom. But the physician is in special need of this wisdom in dealing with all classes of minds and diseases. He occupies a position even more responsible than that of the minister of the gospel. He is called to be a colaborer with Christ, and he needs stanch religious principles, and a firm connection with the God of wisdom. If he takes counsel of God, he will have the Great Healer to work with his efforts, and he will move with the greatest caution, lest by his mismanagement he injure one of God’s creatures. Ho will be firm as a rock to principle, yet kind and courteous to all. He will feel the responsibility of his position, and his practice will show that he is actuated by pure, unselfish motives, and a desire to adorn the doctrine of Christ in all things. Such a physician will possess a Heaven-born dignity, and will be a powerful agent for good in the world. Although he may not be appreciated by those who have no connection with God, yet he will be honored of Heaven. In God’s sight he will be more precious than gold, even the gold of Ophir.

[196] The physician should be a strictly temperate man. The physical ailments of humanity are numberless, and he has to deal with disease in all its varied forms. He knows that much of the suffering he seeks to relieve is the result of intemperance and other forms of selfish indulgence. He is called to attend young men, and men in the prime of life and in mature age, who have brought disease upon themselves by the use of the narcotic tobacco. If he is an intelligent physician, he will be able to trace disease to its cause; but unless he is free from the use of tobacco himself, he will hesitate to put his finger upon the plague-spot, and faithfully unfold to his patients the cause of their sickness. He will fail to urge upon the young the necessity of overcoming the habit before it becomes fixed. If he uses the weed himself, how can he present to the inexperienced youth its injurious effects, not only upon themselves, but upon those around them?

In this age of the world the use of tobacco is almost universal. Women and children suffer from having to breathe the atmosphere that has been polluted by the pipe, the cigar, or the foul breath of the tobacco-user. Those who live in this atmosphere will always be ailing, and the smoking physician is always prescribing some drug to cure ailments which could be best remedied by throwing away tobacco

Physicians cannot perform their duties with fidelity to God or to their fellow-men while they are worshiping an idol in the form of tobacco. How offensive to the sick is the breath of the tobacco-user! How they shrink from him! How inconsistent for men who have graduated from medical colleges, and claim to be capable of ministering to suffering humanity, to constantly carry a poisonous narcotic with them into the sick-rooms of their patients. And yet many chew and smoke until the blood is corrupted, and the nervous system undermined. It is especially offensive in the sight of God for physicians who are capable of doing great good, and who profess to believe the truth of God for this time, to indulge in this disgusting habit. The words of the apostle Paul are applicable to them: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." "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."

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Tobacco-users cannot be acceptable workers in the temperance cause; for there is no consistency in their profession to be temperance men. How can they talk to the man who is destroying reason and life by liquor drinking, when their pockets are filled with tobacco, and they long to be free to chew and smoke and spit all they please? How can they with any degree of consistency plead for moral reforms before boards of health and from temperance platforms, while they themselves are under the stimulus of tobacco? If they would have power to influence the people to overcome their love for stimulants, their words must come forth with pure breath and from clean lips.

Of all men in the world, the physician and the minister should have strictly temperate habits. The welfare of society demands total abstinence of them; for their influence is constantly telling for or against moral reform and the improvement of society. It is willful

sin in them to be ignorant of the laws of health or indifferent to them; for they are looked up to as wise above other men. This is especially true of the physician, who is intrusted with human life. He is expected to indulge in no habit that will weaken the life-forces.

[198] How can a tobacco-using minister or doctor bring up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord ? How can he discountenance in his child that which he allows in himself? If he does the work enjoined upon him by the Ruler of the universe, he will protest against iniquity in every form and in every degree; he will exert his authority and influence on the side of self-denial, and strict, undeviating obedience to the just requirements of God. It will be his object to place his children in the most favorable conditions to secure happiness in this life and a home in the city of God. How can he do this while yielding to the indulgence of appetite? How can he place the feet of others on the ladder of progress, while he himself is treading the downward way?

Our Saviour set an example of self-denial. In his prayer for his disciples, he said: "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." If a man who assumes so grave a responsibility as that of a physician, sins against himself in not conforming to nature's laws, he will reap the consequences of his own doings, and abide her righteous decision, from which there can be no appeal. The cause produces the effect; and in many cases the physician, who should have a clear, sharp mind and steady nerves, that he may be able to discern quickly and execute with precision, has disordered nerves and a brain clouded by narcotics. His capabilities for doing good are lessened. He will lead others in the path his own feet are traveling. Hundreds will follow the example of one intemperate physician, feeling that they are safe in doing what the doctor does. And in the day of God he will meet the record of his course, and be called to give an account for all the good he might have done, but did not do, because by his own voluntary act he weakened his physical and mental powers by selfish indulgence.

The question is not, What is the world doing? but, What are professional men doing in regard to the widespread and prevailing curse of tobacco-using? Will men to whom God has given intelligence, and who are in positions of sacred trust, be true to follow intelligent reason? Will these responsible men, having under their



care persons whom their influence will lead in a right or a wrong direction, be pattern men? Will they, by precept and example, teach obedience to the laws which govern the physical system? If they do not put to a practical use the knowledge they have of the laws that govern their own being, if they prefer present gratification to soundness of mind and body, they are not fit to be intrusted with the lives of others. They are in duty bound to stand in the dignity of their God-given manhood, free from the bondage of any appetite or passion. The man who chews and smokes is doing injury, not only to himself, but to all who come within the sphere of his influence. [199] If a physician must be called, the tobacco-devotee should be passed by. He will not be a safe counselor. If the disease has its origin in the use of tobacco, he will be tempted to prevaricate, and assign some other than the true cause; for how can he condemn himself in his own daily practice?

There are many ways of practicing the healing art; but there is only one way that Heaven approves. God's remedies are the simple agencies of nature, that will not tax or debilitate the system through their powerful properties. Pure air and water, cleanliness, a proper diet, purity of life, and a firm trust in God, are remedies for the want of which thousands are dying; yet these remedies are going out of date because their skillful use requires work that the people do not appreciate. Fresh air, exercise, pure water, and clean, sweet premises, are within the reach of all with but little expense; but drugs are expensive, both in the outlay of means, and the effect produced upon the system.

The work of the Christian physician does not end with healing the maladies of the body; his efforts should extend to the diseases of the mind, to the saving of the soul. It may not be his duty, unless asked, to present any theoretical points of truth; but he may point his patients to Christ. The lessons of the divine Teacher are ever appropriate. He should call the attention of the repining to the ever-fresh tokens of the love and care of God, to his wisdom and goodness as manifested in his created works. The mind can then be led through nature up to nature's God, and centered on the Heaven which he has prepared for those that love him.

The physician should know how to pray. In many cases he must increase suffering in order to save life; and whether the patient is

a Christian or not, he feels greater security if he knows that his physician fears God. Prayer will give the sick an abiding confidence; and many times if their cases are borne to the Great Physician in humble trust, it will do more for them than all the drugs that can be administered.

[200] Satan is the originator of disease; and the physician is warring against his work and power. Sickness of the mind prevails everywhere. Nine-tenths of the diseases from which men suffer have their foundation here. Perhaps some living home-trouble is, like a canker, eating to the very soul and weakening the life-forces. Remorse for sin sometimes undermines the constitution, and unbalances the mind. There are erroneous doctrines also, as that of an eternally burning hell and the endless torment of the wicked, that, by giving exaggerated and distorted views of the character of God, have produced the same result upon sensitive minds. Infidels have made the most of these unfortunate cases, attributing insanity to religion; but this is a gross libel, and one which they will not be pleased to meet by and by. The religion of Christ, so far from being the cause of insanity, is one of its most effectual remedies; for it is a potent soother of the nerves.

The physician needs more than human wisdom and power that he may know how to minister to the many perplexing cases of disease of the mind and heart with which he is called to deal. If he is ignorant of the power of divine grace, he cannot help the afflicted one, but will aggravate the difficulty; but if he has a firm hold upon God, he will be able to help the diseased, distracted mind. He will be able to point his patients to Christ, and teach them to carry all their cares and perplexities to the great Burden-bearer.

There is a divinely appointed connection between sin and disease. No physician can practice for a month without seeing this illustrated. He may ignore the fact; his mind may be so occupied with other matters that his attention will not be called to it; but if he will be observing and honest, he cannot help acknowledging that sin and disease bear to each other the relationship of cause and effect. The physician should be quick to see this, and to act accordingly. When he has gained the confidence of the afflicted by relieving their sufferings and bringing them back from the verge of the grave, he

[201] may teach them that disease is the result of sin; and that it is the fallen

foe who seeks to allure them to healthand-soul-destroying practices. He may impress their minds with the necessity of denying self, and obeying the laws of life and health. In the minds of the young especially he may instill right principles. God loves his creatures with a love that is both tender and strong. He has established the laws of nature; but his laws are not arbitrary exactions. Every "Thou shalt not," whether in physical or moral law, contains or implies a promise. If it is obeyed, blessings will attend our steps; if it is disobeyed, the result is danger and unhappiness. The laws of God are designed to bring his people closer to himself. He will save them from the evil, and lead them to the good, if they will be led; but force them he never will. We cannot discern God's plans; but we must trust him, and show our faith by our works.

Physicians who love and fear God are few compared with those who are infidels or openly irreligious; and these should be patronized in preference to the latter class. We may well distrust the ungodly physician. A door of temptation is open to him, a wily devil will suggest base thoughts and actions, and it is only the power of divine grace that can quell tumultuous passion and fortify against sin. To those who are morally corrupt, opportunities to corrupt pure minds are not wanting. But how will the licentious physician appear in the day of God? While professing to care for the sick, he has betrayed sacred trusts. He has degraded both the soul and the body of God's creatures; and has set their feet in the path that leads to perdition. How terrible to trust our loved ones in the hands of an impure man, who may poison the morals and ruin the soul! How out of place is the godless physician at the bedside of the dying!

The physician is almost daily brought face to face with death. He is, as it were, treading upon the verge of the grave. In many instances familiarity with scenes of suffering and death results in carelessness and indifference to human woe, and recklessness in the treatment of the sick. Such physicians seem to have no tender sympathy. They are harsh and abrupt, and the sick dread their approach. Such men, however great their knowledge and skill, can do the suffering little good; but if the love and sympathy that Jesus manifested for the sick is combined with the physician's knowledge, his very presence will be a blessing. He will not look upon his patient as a mere piece of human mechanism, but as a soul to be saved or lost.

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

Many, knowing how trying are the duties of the physician, and how few opportunities physicians have for release from care, even upon the Sabbath, will not choose this for their life-work. But the great enemy is constantly seeking to destroy the workmanship of God's hands, and men of culture and intelligence are called upon to combat his cruel power. More of the right kind of men are needed to devote themselves to this profession. Painstaking effort should be made to induce suitable men to qualify themselves for this work. They should be men whose characters are based upon the broad principles of the word of God,—men who possess a natural energy, force, and perseverance that will enable them to reach a high standard of excellence. It is not every one who can make a successful physician. Many have entered upon the duties of this profession every way unprepared. They have not the requisite knowledge; neither have they the skill and tact, the carefulness and intelligence, necessary to insure success.

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A physician can do much better work if he has physical strength. If he is feeble, he cannot endure the wearing labor incident to his calling. A man who has a weak constitution, who is a dyspeptic, or who has not perfect self-control, cannot become qualified to deal with all classes of disease. Great care should be taken not to encourage persons who might be useful in some less responsible

position, to study medicine at a great outlay of time and means, when there is no reasonable hope that they will succeed.

Some have been singled out as men who might be useful as physicians, and they have been encouraged to take a medical course. But some who commenced their studies in the medical colleges as Christians, did not keep the divine law prominent; they sacrificed principle, and lost their hold on God. They felt that single-handed they could not keep the fourth commandment, and meet the jeers and ridicule of the ambitious, the world-loving, the superficial, the skeptic, and the infidel. This kind of persecution they were not prepared to meet. They were ambitious to climb higher in the world, and they stumbled on the dark mountains of unbelief, and became untrustworthy. Temptations of every kind opened before them, and they had no strength to resist. Some of these have become dishonest, scheming policy men, and are guilty of grave sins.

In this age there is danger for everyone who shall enter upon the study of medicine. Often his instructors are worldly-wise men and his fellow-students infidels, who have no thought of God, and he is in danger of being influenced by these irreligious associations. Nevertheless, some have gone through the medical course, and have remained true to principle. They would not continue their studies on the Sabbath; and they have proved that men may become qualified for the duties of a physician, and not disappoint the expectations of those who furnish them means to obtain an education. Like Daniel, they have honored God, and he has kept them. Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not adopt the customs of kingly courts; he would not eat of the king's meat, nor drink of his wine. He looked to God for strength and grace, and God gave him wisdom, and skill, and knowledge above that of the astrologers, the soothsayers, and the magicians of the kingdom. To him the promise was verified, "Them that honor me, I will honor."

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The young physician has access to the God of Daniel. Through divine grace and power, he may become as efficient in his calling as Daniel was in his exalted position. But it is a mistake to make a scientific preparation the all-important thing, while religious principles, that lie at the very foundation of a successful practice, are neglected. Many are lauded as skillful men in their profession, who scorn the thought that they need to rely upon Jesus for wisdom in their work.

But if these men who trust in their knowledge of science were illuminated by the light of Heaven, to how much greater excellence might they attain! How much stronger would be their powers, with how much greater confidence could they undertake difficult cases! The man who is closely connected with the great Physician of soul and body, has the resources of Heaven and earth at his command, and he can work with a wisdom, an unerring precision, that the godless man cannot possess.

[205] Those to whom the care of the sick is intrusted, whether as physicians or nurses, should remember that their work must stand the scrutiny of the piercing eye of Jehovah. There is no missionary field more important than that occupied by the faithful, God-fearing physician. There is no field where a man may accomplish greater good, or win more jewels to shine in the crown of his rejoicing. He may carry the grace of Christ, as a sweet perfume, into all the sick-rooms he enters; he may carry the true healing balm to the sinsick soul. He can point the sick and dying to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. He should not listen to the suggestion that it is dangerous to speak of their eternal interests to those whose lives are in peril, lest it should make them worse; for in nine cases out of ten the knowledge of a sin-pardoning Saviour would make them better both in mind and body. Jesus can limit the power of Satan. He is the physician in whom the sin-sick soul may trust to heal the maladies of the body as well as of the soul.

The superficial and the evil-minded in the profession will seek to arouse prejudice against the man who faith-fully discharges the duties of his profession, and to strew his path with obstacles; but these trials will only reveal the pure gold of character. Christ will be his refuge from the strife of tongues. Though his life may be hard and self-denying, and in the estimation of the world may be a failure, in the sight of Heaven it will be a success, and he will be ranked as one of God's noblemen. "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

## THE COMING CRISIS.

“AND the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” In the near future we shall see these words fulfilled, as the Protestant churches unite with the world and with the papal power against commandment keepers. The same spirit which actuated papists in ages past, will lead Protestants to pursue a similar course toward those who will maintain their loyalty to God.

Church and State are now making preparations for the future conflict. Protestants are working in disguise to bring Sunday to the front, as did the Romanists. Throughout the land the papacy is piling up her lofty and massive structures, in the secret recesses of which her former persecutions are to be repeated. And the way is preparing for the manifestation, on a grand scale, of those lying wonders by which, if it were possible, Satan would deceive even the elect [206]

The decree which is to go forth against the people of God will be very similar to that issued by Ahasuerus against the Jews in the time of Esther. The Persian edict sprung from the malice of Haman toward Mordecai. Not that Mordecai had done him harm, but he had refused to show him reverence which belongs only to God. The king's decision against the Jews was secured under false pretenses, through misrepresentation of that peculiar people. Satan instigated the scheme, in order to rid the earth of those who preserved the knowledge of the true God. But his plots were defeated by a counter-power that reigns among the children of men. Angels that excel in strength were commissioned to protect the people of God, and the plots of their adversaries returned upon their own heads. The Protestant world to-day see in the little company keeping the Sabbath a Mordecai in the gate. His character and conduct, expressing reverence for the law of God, are a constant rebuke to those who have cast off the fear of the Lord, and are trampling upon

his Sabbath; the unwelcome intruder must by some means be put out of the way.

[207] The same masterful mind that plotted against the faithful in ages past is still seeking to rid the earth of those who fear God and obey his law. Satan will excite indignation against the humble minority who conscientiously refuse to accept popular customs and traditions. Men of position and reputation will join with the lawless and the vile to take counsel against the people of God. Wealth, genius, education, will combine to cover them with contempt. Persecuting rulers, ministers, and church members will conspire against them. With voice and pen, by boasts, threats, and ridicule, they will seek to overthrow their faith. By false representations and angry appeals, they will stir up the passions of the people. Not having a "Thus saith the Scriptures" to bring against the advocates of the Bible Sabbath, they will resort to oppressive enactments to supply the lack. To secure popularity and patronage, legislators will yield to the demand for a Sunday law. Those who fear God cannot accept an institution that violates a precept of the decalogue. On this battle-field comes the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error. And we are not left in doubt as to the issue. Now, as in the days of Mordecai, the Lord will vindicate his truth and his people.

By the decree enforcing the institution of the papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with Spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its constitution as a Protestant and Republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan, and that the end is near.

As the approach of the Roman armies was a sign to the disciples of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, so may this apostasy be a sign to us that the limit of God's forbearance is reached, that the measure of our nation's iniquity is full, and that the angel of mercy is about to take her flight, never to return. The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress which prophets have described as the time of Jacob's trouble. The cries of



the faithful, persecuted ones ascend to Heaven. And as the blood of Abel cried from the ground, there are voices also crying to God from martyrs' graves, from the sepulchers of the sea, from mountain caverns, from convent vaults, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?"

The Lord is doing his work. All Heaven is astir. The Judge of all the earth is soon to arise and vindicate his insulted authority. The mark of deliverance will be set upon the men who keep God's commandments, who revere his law, and who refuse the mark of the beast or of his image.

God has revealed what is to take place in the last days, that his people may be prepared to stand against the tempest of opposition and wrath. Those who have been warned of the events before them are not to sit in calm expectation of the coming storm, comforting themselves that the Lord will shelter his faithful ones in the day of trouble. We are to be as men waiting for their Lord, not in idle expectancy, but in earnest work, with unwavering faith. It is no time now to allow our minds to be engrossed with things of minor importance. While men are sleeping, Satan is actively arranging matters so that the Lord's people may not have mercy or justice. The Sunday movement is now making its way in darkness. The leaders are concealing the true issue, and many who unite in the movement do not themselves see whither the under-current is tending. Its professions are mild, and apparently Christian; but when it shall speak, it will reveal the spirit of the dragon. It is our duty to do all in our power to avert the threatened danger. We should endeavor to disarm prejudice by placing ourselves in a proper light before the people. We should bring before them the real question at issue, thus interposing the most effectual protest against measures to restrict liberty of conscience. We should search the Scriptures, and be able to give the reason for our faith. Says the prophet, "The wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand."

Those who have access to God through Christ have important work before them. Now is the time to lay hold of the arm of our strength. The prayer of David should be the prayer of pastors and laymen: "It is time for thee, Lord, to work; for they have made

[209] void thy law." Let the servants of the Lord weep between the porch and the altar, crying, "Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach." God has always wrought for his people in their greatest extremity, when there seemed the least hope that ruin could be averted. The designs of wicked men, the enemies of the church, are subject to his power and over ruling providence. He can move upon the hearts of statesmen; the wrath of the turbulent and disaffected, the haters of God, his truth, and his people, can be turned aside, even as the rivers of water are turned, if he orders it thus. Prayer moves the arm of Omnipotence. He who marshals the stars in order in the heavens, whose word controls the waves of the great deep,—the same infinite Creator will work in behalf of his people if they call upon him in faith. He will restrain the forces of darkness, until the warning is given to the world, and all who will heed it are prepared for the conflict.

"The wrath of man shall praise Thee," says the psalmist; "the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain." God means that testing truth shall be brought to the front, and become a subject of examination and discussion, even if it is through the contempt placed upon it. The minds of the people must be agitated. Every controversy, every reproach, every slander, will be God's means of provoking inquiry, and awakening minds that otherwise would slumber.

Thus it has been in the past history of God's people. For refusing to worship the great golden image which Nebuchadnezzar had set up, the three Hebrews were cast into the fiery furnace. But God preserved his servants in the midst of the flames, and the attempt to enforce idolatry resulted in bringing the knowledge of the true God before the assembled princes and great men of the vast kingdom of Babylon.

So when the decree went forth forbidding prayer to any god save the king. As Daniel, according to his custom, made his supplications three times a day to the God of Heaven, the attention of the princes and rulers was called to his case. He had an opportunity to speak for himself, to show who is the true God, and to present the reason why he alone should receive worship, and the duty of rendering him praise and homage. And the deliverance of Daniel from the den of lions was another evidence that the Being whom he worshiped was the true and living God.

So the imprisonment of Paul brought the gospel before kings, princes, and rulers, who otherwise would not have had this light. The efforts made to retard the progress of truth will serve to extend it. The excellence of truth is more clearly seen from every successive point from which it may be viewed. Error requires disguise and concealment. It clothes itself in angel robes, and every manifestation of its real character lessens its chance of success. [210]

The people whom God has made the depositaries of his law are not to permit their light to be hidden. The truth must be proclaimed in the dark places of the earth. Obstacles must be met and surmounted. A great work is to be done, and this work has been intrusted to those who know the truth. They should make mighty intercession with God for help now. The love of Christ must be diffused in their own hearts. The Spirit of Christ must be poured out upon them, and they must be making ready to stand in the Judgment. While they are consecrating themselves to God, a convincing power will attend their efforts to present the truth to others, and its light will find access to many hearts. We must sleep no longer on Satan's enchanted ground, but call into requisition all our resources, and avail ourselves of every facility with which Providence has furnished us. The last warning is to be proclaimed "before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings;" and the promise is given, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

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## **THE CHURCH THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.**

[211] THE Lord called out his people Israel, and separated them from the world, that he might commit to them a sacred trust. He made them the depositaries of his law, and he designed, through them, to preserve among men the knowledge of himself. Through them the light of Heaven was to shine out to the dark places of the earth, and a voice was to be heard appealing to all peoples to turn from their idolatry to serve the living and true God. Had the Hebrews been true to their trust, they would have been a power in the world. God would have been their defense, and he would have exalted them above all other nations. His light and truth would have been revealed through them, and they would have stood forth under his wise and holy rule as an example of the superiority of his government over every form of idolatry.

But they did not keep their covenant with God. They followed after the idolatrous practices of other nations, and instead of making their Creator's name a praise in the earth, their course held it up to the contempt of the heathen. Yet the purpose of God must be accomplished. The knowledge of his will must be spread abroad in the earth. God brought the hand of the oppressor upon his people, and scattered them as captives among the nations. In affliction many of them repented of their transgressions, and sought the Lord. Scattered throughout the countries of the heathen, they spread abroad the knowledge of the true God. The principles of the divine law came in conflict with the customs and practices of the nations. Idolaters endeavored to crush out the true faith. The Lord in his providence brought his servants, Daniel, Nehemiah, Ezra, face to face with kings and rulers, that these idolaters might have an opportunity to receive the light. Thus the work which God had given his people to do in prosperity, in their own borders, but which had been neglected through their unfaithfulness, was done by them in captivity, under great trial and embarrassment.

God has called his church in this day, as he called ancient Israel, to stand as a light in the earth. By the mighty cleaver of truth, the messages of the first, second, and third angels, he has separated them from the churches and from the world to bring them into a sacred nearness to himself. He has made them the depositaries of his law, and has committed to them the great truths of prophecy for this time. Like the holy oracles committed to ancient Israel, these are a sacred trust to be communicated to the world. The three angels of Revelation 14 represent the people who accept the light of God's messages, and go forth as his agents to sound the warning throughout the length and breadth of the earth. Christ declares to his followers, "Ye are the light of the world." To every soul that accepts Jesus, the cross of Calvary speaks, "Behold the worth of the soul. 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.'" Nothing is to be permitted to hinder this work. It is the all-important work for time; it is to be far-reaching as eternity. The love that Jesus manifested for the souls of men in the sacrifice which he made for their redemption, will actuate all his followers.

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But very few of those who have received the light are doing the work intrusted to their hands. There are a few men of unswerving fidelity who do not study ease, convenience, or life itself, who push their way wherever they can find an opening to press the light of truth and vindicate the holy law of God. But the sins that control the world have come into the churches, and into the hearts of those who claim to be God's peculiar people. Many who have received the light exert an influence to quiet the fears of worldlings and formal professors. There are lovers of the world, even among those who profess to be waiting for the Lord. There is ambition for riches and honor. Christ describes this class when he declares that the day of God is to come as a snare upon all that dwell upon the earth. This world is their home. They make it their business to secure earthly treasures. They erect costly dwellings, and furnish them with every good thing; they find pleasure in dress and the indulgence of appetite. The things of the world are their idols. These interpose between the soul and Christ, and the solemn and awful realities that are crowding upon us are but dimly seen and faintly realized. The same disobedience and failure which were seen in the Jewish church have characterized in a greater degree the people who have had this

[213] great light from Heaven in the last messages of warning. Shall we let the history of Israel be repeated in our experience? Shall we, like them, squander our opportunities and privileges until God shall permit oppression and persecution to come upon us? Will the work which might be performed in peace and comparative prosperity be left undone until it must be performed in days of darkness, under the pressure of trial and persecution?

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

[214] Brethren and sisters, many of you excuse yourselves from labor, on the plea of inability to work for others. But did God make you so incapable? Was not this inability produced by your own inactivity, and perpetuated by your own deliberate choice? Did not God give you at least one talent to improve, not for your own convenience and gratification, but for him? Have you realized your obligation, as his hired servant, to bring a revenue to him by the wise and skillful use of this intrusted capital? Have you not neglected opportunities to improve your powers to this end? It is too true that few have felt any real sense of their responsibility to God. Love, judgment, memory, foresight, tact, energy, and every other faculty has been devoted to self. You have displayed greater wisdom in the service of evil than in the cause of God. You have perverted, disabled, nay, even besotted your powers, by your intense activity in worldly pursuits to the neglect of God's work.

Still you soothe your conscience by saying that you cannot undo the past, and gain the vigor, the strength, and the skill which you might have had by employing your powers as God required. But remember that he holds you responsible for the work negligently done or left undone through your unfaithfulness. The more you exercise your powers for the Master, the more apt and skillful you will become. The more closely you connect yourself with the Source of light and power, the greater light will be shed upon you, and the greater power will be yours to use for God. And for all that you might have had, but failed to obtain through your devotion to the world, you are responsible. When you became a follower of Christ, you pledged yourself to serve him, and him alone, and he promised to be with you and bless you, to refresh you with his light, to grant you his peace, and to make you joyful in his work. Have you failed to experience these blessings? be sure it is the result of your own course.

In order to escape the draft during the war, there were men who induced disease, others maimed themselves that they might be rendered unfit for service. Here is an illustration of the course which many have been pursuing in relation to the cause of God. They have crippled their powers, both physical and mental, so that they are unable to do the work which is so greatly needed.

Suppose that a sum of money were placed in your hands to invest for a certain purpose; would you throw it away, and declare that you were not now responsible for its use? would you feel that you had saved yourself a great care? Yet this is what you have been doing with the gifts of God. To excuse yourself from working for others on the plea of inability, while you are all absorbed in worldly pursuits, is mockery of God. Multitudes are going down to ruin; the people who have received light and truth are but as a handful, to with stand all the host of evil; and yet this little company are devoting their energies to anything and everything but to learning how they may rescue souls from death. Is it any marvel that the church is weak and inefficient, that God can do but little for his professed people? They place themselves where it is impossible for him to work with them and for them. Dare you continue thus to disregard his claims? Will you still trifle with Heaven's most sacred trusts? Will you say with Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Remember that your responsibility is measured, not by your present resources and capacities, but by the powers originally bestowed and the possibilities for improvement. The question which each one should ask himself is not whether he is now inexperienced and unfit to labor in God's cause, but how and why he is in this condition, and how it can be remedied. God will not supernaturally endow us with the qualifications which we lack; but while we exert the ability we have, he will work with us to increase and strengthen every faculty; our dormant energies will be aroused, and powers which have long been palsied will receive new life.

So long as we are in the world, we must have to do with the things of the world. There will ever be a necessity for the transaction of temporal, secular business; but this should never become all-absorbing. The apostle Paul has given a safe rule: "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." The humble, common duties of life are all to be performed with fidelity; "heartily," says the apostle, "as unto the Lord." Whatever our department of labor, be it housework, or fieldwork, or intellectual pursuits, we may perform it to the glory of God so long as we make Christ first and last and best in everything. But aside from these worldly employments, there is given to every follower of Christ a special work for the upbuilding of his kingdom,— a work which requires personal effort for the salvation of men. It is not a work to be performed once a week merely, at the place of worship, but at all times and in all places.

[216] Every one who connects himself with the church makes in that act a solemn vow to work for the interest of the church, and to hold that interest above every worldly consideration. It is his work to preserve a living connection with God, to engage with heart and soul in the great scheme of redemption, and to show, in his life and character, the excellency of God's commandments in contrast with the customs and precepts of the world. Every soul that has made a profession of Christ has pledged himself to be all that it is possible for him to be as a spiritual worker, to be active, zealous, and efficient in his Master's service. Christ expects every man to do his duty; let this be the watchword throughout the ranks of his followers.

We are not to wait to be solicited to give light, to be importuned for counsel or instruction. Every one who receives the rays of the Sun of Righteousness is to reflect its brightness to all about him. His



religion should have a positive and decided influence. His prayers and entreaties should be so imbued with the Holy Spirit that they will melt and subdue the soul. Said Jesus, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." It would be better for a worldling never to have seen a professor of religion than to come under the influence of one who is ignorant of the power of godliness. If Christ were our pattern, his life our rule, what zeal would be manifested, what efforts put forth, what liberality exercised, what self-denial practiced! How untiringly should we labor, what fervent petitions for power and wisdom would ascend to God! If all the professed children of God would feel that it is the chief business of life to do the work which he has bidden them to do, if they would labor unselfishly in his cause, what a change would be seen in hearts and homes, in churches, yea, in the world itself!

Vigilance and fidelity have been required of Christ's followers in every age; but now that we are standing upon the very verge of the eternal world, holding the truths we do, having so great light, so important a work, we must double our diligence. Everyone is to do to the very utmost of his ability. My brother, you endanger your own salvation if you hold back now. God will call you to account if you fail in the work he has assigned you. Have you a knowledge of the truth? give it to others. [217]

What can I say to arouse our churches? what can I say to those who have acted a prominent part in the proclamation of the last message? "The Lord is coming," should be the testimony borne, not only by the lips, but by the life and character; but many to whom God has given light and knowledge, talents of influence and of means, are men who do not love the truth, and do not practice it. They have drunk so deeply from the intoxicating cup of selfishness and worldliness that they have become drunken with the cares of this life. Brethren, if you continue to be as idle, as worldly, as selfish as you have been, God will surely pass you by, and take those who are less self-caring, less ambitious for worldly honor, and who will not hesitate to go, as did their Master, without the camp, bearing the reproach. The work will be given to those who will take it, those who prize it, who weave its principles into their every-day experience. God will choose humble men, who are seeking to glorify his name

and advance his cause rather than to honor and advance themselves. He will raise up men who have not so much worldly wisdom, but who are connected with him, and who will seek strength and counsel from above.

[218] Some of our leading men are inclined to indulge the spirit manifested by the apostle John when he said, "Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us." Organization and discipline are essential, but there is now very great danger of a departure from the simplicity of the gospel of Christ. What we need is less dependence upon mere form and ceremony, and far more of the power of true godliness. If their life and character are exemplary, let all work who will, in any capacity. Although they may not conform exactly to your methods, not a word should be spoken to condemn or discourage them. When the Pharisees desired Jesus to silence the children who sung his praise, the Saviour said, "If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." Prophecy must be fulfilled. So in these days; the work must be done. There are many departments of labor; let every one act a part as best he can. The man with one talent is not to bury that in the earth. God has given to every man his work, according to his ability. Those to whom larger trusts and capabilities have been committed, should not endeavor to silence others who are less able or experienced. Men with one talent may reach a class that those with two or five talents cannot approach. Great and small alike are chosen vessels to bear the water of life to thirsting souls. Let not those who preach the word lay their hands upon the humblest worker, and say, "You must labor in this channel, or not work at all." Hands off, brethren. Let every one work in his own sphere, with his own armor on, doing whatever he can do in his humble way. Strengthen his hands in the work. This is no time for Phariseeism to control. Let God work through whom he will. The message must go.

All are to show their fidelity to God by the wise use of his intrusted capital, not in means alone, but in any endowment that will tend to the upbuilding of his kingdom. Satan will employ every possible device to prevent the truth from reaching those who are buried in error; but the voice of warning and entreaty must come to them. And while only a few are engaged in this work, thousands

ought to be as much interested as they. God never designed that the lay members of the church should be excused from labor in his cause. "Go, labor in my vineyard," is the Master's command to each of his followers. As long as there are unconverted souls in the world, there should be the most active, earnest, zealous, determined effort for their salvation. Those who have received the light should seek to enlighten those who have it not. If the church members do not individually take hold of this work, then they show that they have no living connection with God. Their names are registered as slothful servants. Can you not discern the reason why there is no more spirituality in our churches? It is because you are not co-laborers with Christ.

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God has given to every man his work. Let us each wait on God, and he will teach us how to work, and what work we are best adapted to perform. Yet none are to start out in an independent spirit, to promulgate new theories. The workers should be in harmony with the truth and with their brethren. There should be counsel and co-operation. But they are not to feel that at every step they must wait to ask some higher officer if they may do this or that. Look not to man for guidance, but to the God of Israel.

The work which the church has failed to do in a time of peace and prosperity, she will have to do in a terrible crisis, under most discouraging, forbidding circumstances. The warnings that worldly conformity has silenced or withheld, must be given under the fiercest opposition from enemies of the faith. And at that time the superficial, conservative class, whose influence has steadily retarded the progress of the work, will renounce the faith, and take their stand with its avowed enemies, toward whom their sympathies have long been tending. These apostates will then manifest the most bitter enmity, doing all in their power to oppress and malign their former brethren, and to excite indignation against them. This day is just before us. The members of the church will individually be tested and proved. They will be placed in circumstances where they will be forced to bear witness for the truth. Many will be called to speak before councils and in courts of justice, perhaps separately and alone. The experience which would have helped them in this emergency they have neglected to obtain, and their souls are burdened with remorse for wasted opportunities and neglected privileges.

[220] My brother, my sister, ponder these things, I beseech you. You have each a work to do. Your unfaithfulness and neglect are registered against you in the ledger of Heaven. You have diminished your powers and lessened your capabilities. You lack the experience and efficiency which you might have had. But before it is forever too late, I urge you to arouse. Delay no longer. The day is almost spent. The westering sun is about sinking forever from your sight. Yet while the blood of Christ is pleading, you may find pardon. Summon every energy of the soul, employ the few remaining hours in earnest labor for God and for your fellow-men.

My heart is stirred to the very depths. Words are inadequate to express my feelings as I plead for perishing souls. Must I plead in vain? As Christ's ambassador I would arouse you to labor as you never labored before. Your duty cannot be shifted upon another. No one but yourself can do your work. If you withhold your light, someone must be left in darkness through your neglect.

Eternity stretches before us. The curtain is about to be lifted. We who occupy this solemn, responsible position, what are we doing, what are we thinking about, that we cling to our selfish love of ease, while souls are perishing around us? Have our hearts become utterly callous? Cannot we feel or understand that we have a work to do for the salvation of others? Brethren, are you of the class who having eyes see not, and having ears hear not? Is it in vain that God has given you a knowledge of his will? Is it in vain that he has sent you warning after warning? Do you believe the declarations of eternal truth concerning what is about to come upon the earth, do you believe that God's judgments are hanging over the people, and can you still sit at ease, indolent, careless, pleasure-loving?

[221] It is no time now for God's people to be fixing their affections or laying up their treasure in the world. The time is not far distant, when, like the early disciples, we shall be forced to seek a refuge in desolate and solitary places. As the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman armies was the signal for flight to the Judean Christians, so the assumption of power on the part of our nation, in the decree enforcing the papal Sabbath, will be a warning to us. It will then be time to leave the large cities, preparatory to leaving the smaller ones for retired homes in secluded places among the mountains. And now, instead of seeking expensive dwellings here, we should

be preparing to move to a better country, even a heavenly. Instead of spending our means in self-gratification, we should be studying to economize. Every talent lent of God should be used to his glory, in giving the warning to the world. God has a work for his co-laborers to do in the cities. Our missions must be sustained; new missions must be opened. To carry forward this work successfully will require no small outlay. Houses of worship are needed, where the people may be invited to hear the truths for this time. For this very purpose, God has intrusted a capital to his stewards. Let not your property be tied up in worldly enterprises, so that this work shall be hindered. Get your means where you can handle it for the benefit of the cause of God. Send your treasures before you into Heaven.

The members of the church should individually hold themselves and all their possessions upon the altar of God. Now, as never before, the Saviour's admonition is applicable: "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Those who are fastening their means in large houses, in lands, in worldly enterprises, are saying by their actions, "God cannot have it; I want it for myself." They have bound up their one talent in a napkin, and hid it in the earth. There is cause for such to be alarmed. Brethren, God has not intrusted means to you to lie idle, nor to be covetously retained or hid away, but to be used to advance his cause, to save the souls of the perishing. It is not the time now to bind up the Lord's money in your expensive buildings and your large enterprises, while his cause is crippled and left to beg its way, the treasury half-supplied. The Lord is not in this way of working. Remember, the day is fast approaching when it will be said, "Give an account of thy stewardship." Can you not discern the signs of the times?

Every day that passes brings us nearer the last great important day. We are one year nearer the Judgment, nearer eternity, than we were at the beginning of 1884. Are we also drawing nearer to God? Are we watching unto prayer? Another year of our time to labor has rolled into eternity. Every day we have been associating with men and women who are Judgment-bound. Each day may have been the dividing line to some soul; someone may have made the

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decision which shall determine his future destiny. What has been our influence over these fellow-travelers ? What efforts have we put forth to bring them to Christ ?

It is a solemn thing to die, but a far more solemn thing to live. Every thought and word and deed of our lives will meet us again. What we make of ourselves in probationary time, that we must remain to all eternity. Death brings dissolution to the body, but makes no change in the character. The coming of Christ does not change our characters; it only fixes them forever beyond all change.

Again I appeal to the members of the church to be Christians, to be Christlike. Jesus was a worker, not for himself, but for others. He labored to bless and save the lost. If you are Christians, you will imitate his example. He has laid the foundation, and we are builders together with him. But what material are we bringing to lay on this foundation? "Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." If you are devoting all your strength and talent to the things of this world, your life-work is represented by wood, hay, and stubble, to be consumed by the fires of the last day. But unselfish labor for Christ and the future life will be as gold, silver, and precious stones; it is imperishable.

[223] My brethren and sisters, awake, I beseech you, from the sleep of death. It is too late to devote the strength of brain, bone, and muscle to self-serving. Let not the last day find you destitute of heavenly treasure. Seek to push the triumphs of the cross, seek to enlighten souls, labor for the salvation of your fellow-beings, and your work will abide the trying test of fire.

"If any man's work abide," "he shall receive a reward." Glorious will be the reward bestowed when the faithful workers are gathered about the throne of God and the Lamb. When John in his mortal state beheld the glory of God, he fell as one dead; he was not able to endure the sight. But when mortal shall have put on immortality, the ransomed ones are like Jesus, for they see him as he is. They stand before the throne, signifying that they are accepted. All their sins are blotted out, all their transgressions borne away. Now they can look upon the undimmed glory from the throne of God. They have been partakers with Christ of his sufferings, they have been workers together with him in the plan of redemption, and they are

partakers with him in the joy of beholding souls saved through their instrumentality to praise God through all eternity.

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## JOSHUA AND THE ANGEL.

IF the vail which separates the visible from the invisible world could be lifted, and the people of God could behold the great controversy that is going on between Christ and holy angels and Satan and his evil hosts concerning the redemption of man; if they could understand the wonderful work of God for the rescue of souls from the bondage of sin, and the constant exercise of his power for their protection from the malice of the evil one, they would be better prepared to withstand the devices of Satan. Their minds would be solemnized in view of the vast extent and importance of the plan of redemption and the greatness of the work before them as co-laborers with Christ. They would be humbled, yet encouraged, knowing that all Heaven is interested in their salvation.

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A most forcible and impressive illustration of the work of Satan and the work of Christ, and the power of our Mediator to vanquish the accuser of his people, is given in the prophecy of Zechariah. In holy vision the prophet beholds Joshua the high priest, "clothed with filthy garments," standing before the Angel of the Lord, entreating the mercy of God in behalf of his people who are in deep affliction. Satan stands at his right hand to resist him. Because Israel had been chosen to preserve the knowledge of God in the earth, they had been, from their first existence as a nation, the special objects of Satan's enmity, and he had determined to cause their destruction. He could do them no harm while they were obedient to God; therefore he had bent all his power and cunning to enticing them into sin. Ensnared by his temptations, they had transgressed the law of God and thus separated from the Source of their strength, and had been left to become the prey of their heathen enemies. They were carried into captivity to Babylon, and there remained for many years. Yet they were not forsaken of the Lord. His prophets were sent to them with reproofs and warnings. The people were awakened to see their guilt, they humbled themselves before God, and returned to him with true repentance. Then the Lord sent them messages of encouragement,



declaring that he would deliver them from their captivity, and restore them to his favor. It was this that Satan was determined to prevent. A remnant of Israel had already returned to their own land, and Satan was seeking to move upon the heathen nations, who were his agents, to utterly destroy them.

As Joshua humbly pleads for the fulfillment of God's promises, Satan stands up boldly to resist him. He points to the transgressions of Israel as a reason why that people should not be restored to the favor of God. He claims them as his prey, and demands that they be given into his hands to be destroyed.

The high priest cannot defend himself or his people from Satan's accusations. He does not claim that Israel are free from fault. In his filthy garments, symbolizing the sins of the people, which he bears as their representative, he stands before the Angel, confessing their guilt, yet pointing to their repentance and humiliation, relying upon the mercy of a sin-pardoning Redeemer, and in faith claiming the promises of God. [225]

Then the Angel, who is Christ himself, the Saviour of sinners, puts to silence the accuser of his people, declaring, "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee. Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? Israel had long remained in the furnace of affliction. Because of their sins they had been well-nigh consumed in the flame kindled by Satan and his agents for their destruction; but God had now set his hand to bring them forth. In their penitence and humiliation the compassionate Saviour will not leave his people to the cruel power of the heathen. "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench."

As the intercession of Joshua is accepted, the command is given, "Take away the filthy garments from him," and to Joshua the Angel declares, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." "So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments." His own sins and those of his people were pardoned. Israel were clothed with "change of raiment,"—the righteousness of Christ imputed to them. The mitre placed upon Joshua's head was such as was worn by the priests, and bore the inscription, "Holiness to the Lord,"

signifying that not-withstanding his former transgressions, he was now qualified to minister before God in his sanctuary.

After thus solemnly investing him with the dignity of the priesthood, the Angel declared, “Thus saith the Lord of hosts: If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.” He would be honored as the judge or ruler over the temple and all its services; he should walk among attending angels, even in this life, and should at last join the glorified throng around the throne of God.

[226] “Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee; for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch.” Here is revealed the hope of Israel. It was by faith in the coming Saviour that Joshua and his people received pardon. Through faith in Christ they were restored to God’s favor. By virtue of his merits, if they walked in his ways and kept his statutes, they would be “men wondered at,” honored as the chosen of Heaven among the nations of the earth. Christ was their hope, their defense, their justification and redemption, as he is the hope of his church to day.

As Satan accused Joshua and his people, so in all ages he accuses those who are seeking the mercy and favor of God. In the Revelation he is declared to be “the accuser of our brethren,” “which accused them before our God day and night.” The controversy is repeated over every soul that is rescued from the power of evil, and whose name is registered in the Lamb’s book of life. Never is one received from the family of Satan into the family of God without exciting the determined resistance of the wicked one. Satan’s accusations against those who seek the Lord are not prompted by displeasure at their sins. He exults in their defective characters. Only through their transgression of God’s law can he obtain power over them. His accusations arise solely from his enmity to Christ. Through the plan of salvation, Jesus is breaking Satan’s hold upon the human family, and rescuing souls from his power. All the hatred and malignity of the arch-rebel is stirred as he beholds the evidence of Christ’s supremacy, and with fiendish power and cunning he works to wrest from him the remnant of the children of men who have accepted his salvation.

He leads men into skepticism, causing them to lose confidence in God and to separate from his love; he tempts them to break his law, and then he claims them as his captives, and contests the right of Christ to take them from him. He knows that those who seek God earnestly for pardon and grace will obtain it; therefore he presents their sins before them to discourage them. He is constantly seeking occasion against those who are trying to obey God. Even their best and most acceptable services he seeks to make appear corrupt. By countless devices, the most subtle and the most cruel, he endeavors to secure their condemnation. Man cannot meet these charges himself. In his sin-stained garments, confessing his guilt, he stands before God. But Jesus our Advocate presents an effectual plea in behalf of all who by repentance and faith have committed the keeping of their souls to him. He pleads their cause and vanquishes their accuser by the mighty arguments of Calvary. His perfect obedience to God's law, even unto the death of the cross, has given him all power in Heaven and in earth, and he claims of his Father mercy and reconciliation for guilty man. To the accuser of his people he declares, 'The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan.' These are the purchase of my blood, brands plucked from the burning." While those who rely upon him in faith receive the comforting assurance, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." All that have put on the robe of Christ's righteousness will stand before him as chosen and faithful and true. Satan has no power to pluck them out of the hand of Christ. Not one soul that in penitence and faith has claimed his protection, will Christ permit to pass under the enemy's power. His word is pledged: "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me." The promise given to Joshua is made to all: "If thou wilt keep my charge, .... I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by." Angels of God will walk on either side of them, even in this world, and they will stand, at last among the angels that surround the throne of God. [227]

The fact that the acknowledged people of God are represented as standing before the Lord in filthy garments should lead to humility and deep searching of heart on the part of all who profess his name. Those who are indeed purifying their souls by obeying the truth will have a most humble opinion of themselves. The more closely

[228] they view the spotless character of Christ, the stronger will be their desire to be conformed to his image, and the less will they see of purity or holiness in themselves. But while we should realize our sinful condition, we are to rely upon Christ as our righteousness, our sanctification and redemption. We cannot answer the charges of Satan against us. Christ alone can make an effectual plea in our behalf. He is able to silence the accuser with arguments founded not upon our merits, but on his own.

Yet we should never be content with a sinful life. It is a thought that should arouse Christians to greater zeal and earnestness in overcoming evil, that every defect in character, every point in which they fail to meet the divine standard, is an open door by which Satan can enter to tempt and destroy them; and, furthermore, that every failure, and defect on their part gives occasion to the tempter and his agents to reproach Christ. We are to exert every energy of the soul in the work of overcoming, and to look to Jesus for strength to do what we cannot do of ourselves. No sin can be tolerated in those who shall walk with Christ in white. The filthy garments are to be removed, and Christ's robe of righteousness is to be placed upon us. By repentance and faith we are enabled to render obedience to all the commandments of God, and are found without blame before him. Those who shall meet the approval of God are now afflicting their souls, confessing their sins, and earnestly pleading for pardon through Jesus their Advocate. Their attention is fixed upon him, their hopes, their faith, are centered on him, and when the command is given, "Take away the filthy garments, and clothe him with change of raiment, and set a fair mitre upon his head," they are prepared to give him all the glory of their salvation.

Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing up of the great day of atonement. The remnant church will be brought into great trial and distress. Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts.

[229] Satan numbers the world as his subjects, he has gained control of the apostate churches; but here is a little company that are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to

destroy the people of God. All will be required to render obedience to human edicts in violation of the divine law. Those who will be true to God and to duty will be menaced, denounced, and proscribed. They will be betrayed “both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends.”

Their only hope is in the mercy of God; their only defense will be prayer. As Joshua was pleading before the Angel, so the remnant church, with brokenness of heart and earnest faith, will plead for pardon and deliverance through Jesus their Advocate. They are fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives, they see their weakness and unworthiness, and as they look upon themselves they are ready to despair. The tempter stands by to accuse them, as he stood by to resist Joshua. He points to their filthy garments, their defective characters. He presents their weakness and folly, their sins of ingratitude, their unlikeness to Christ, which has dishonored their Redeemer. He endeavors to affright the soul with the thought that their case is hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes to so destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations, turn from their allegiance to God, and receive the mark of the beast.

Satan urges before God his accusations against them, declaring that they have by their sins forfeited the divine protection, and claiming the right to destroy them as transgressors. He pronounces them just as deserving as himself of exclusion from the favor of God. “Are these,” he says, “the people who are to take my place in Heaven, and the place of the angels who united with me ? While they profess to obey the law of God, have they kept its precepts? Have they not been lovers of self more than of God ? Have they not placed their own interests above his service? Have they not loved the things of the world ? Look at the sins which have marked their lives. Behold their selfishness, their malice, their hatred toward one another.”

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The people of God have been in many respects very faulty. Satan has an accurate knowledge of the sins which he has tempted them to commit, and he presents these in the most exaggerated light, declaring, “Will God banish me and my angels from his presence, and yet reward those who have been guilty of the same sins ? Thou canst not do this, O Lord, in justice. Thy throne will not stand

in righteousness and judgment. Justice demands that sentence be pronounced against them.”

But while the followers of Christ have sinned, they have not given themselves to the control of evil. They have put away their sins, and have sought the Lord in humility and contrition, and the Divine Advocate pleads in their behalf. He who has been most abused by their ingratitude, who knows their sin, and also their repentance, declares, “‘The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan.’ I gave my life for these souls. They are graven upon the palms of my hands.”

The assaults of Satan are strong, his delusions are terrible; but the Lord’s eye is upon his people. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but Jesus will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. Their earthliness must be removed that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected; unbelief must be overcome; faith, hope, and patience are to be developed.

[231] The people of God are sighing and crying for the abominations done in the land. With tears they warn the wicked of their danger in trampling upon the divine law, and with unutterable sorrow they humble themselves before the Lord on account of their own transgressions. The wicked mock their sorrow, ridicule their solemn appeals, and sneer at what they term their weakness. But the anguish and humiliation of God’s people is unmistakable evidence that they are regaining the strength and nobility of character lost in consequence of sin. It is because they are drawing nearer to Christ, and their eyes are fixed upon his perfect purity, that they so clearly discern the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Their contrition and self-abasement are infinitely more acceptable in the sight of ‘God than is the self-sufficient, haughty spirit of those who see no cause to lament, who scorn the humility of Christ, and who claim perfection while transgressing God’s holy law. Meekness and lowliness of heart are the conditions for strength and victory. The crown of glory awaits those who bow at the foot of the cross. Blessed are these mourners; for they shall be comforted.

The faithful, praying ones are, as it were, shut in with God. They themselves know not how securely they are shielded. Urged on by Satan, the rulers of this world are seeking to destroy them; but could their eyes be opened, as were the eyes of Elisha’s servant at Dothan,

they would see the angels of God encamped about them, by their brightness and glory holding in check the hosts of darkness.

As the people of God afflict their souls before him, pleading for purity of heart, the command is given, "Take away the filthy garments from them," and the encouraging words are spoken, "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." The spotless robe of Christ's righteousness is placed upon the tried, tempted, yet faithful children of God. The despised remnant are clothed in glorious apparel, never more to be defiled by the corruptions of the world. Their names are retained in the Lamb's book of life, enrolled among the faithful of all ages. They have resisted the wiles of the deceiver; they have not been turned from their loyalty by the dragon's roar. Now they are eternally secure from the tempter's devices. Their sins are transferred to the originator of sin. And the remnant are not only pardoned and accepted, but honored. A "fair mitre" is set upon their heads. They are to be as kings and priests unto God. While Satan was urging his accusations, and seeking to destroy this company, holy angels, unseen, were passing to and fro, placing upon them the seal of the living God. These are they that stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, having the Father's name written in their foreheads. They sing the new song before the throne, that song which no man can learn save the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God."

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Now is reached the complete fulfillment of those words of the Angel: "Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee; for they are men wondered at; for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch." Christ is revealed as the Redeemer and Deliverer of his people. Now indeed are the remnant "men wondered at," as the tears and humiliation of their pilgrimage give place to joy and honor in the presence of God and the Lamb. "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in

Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem.”

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