

Ellen G. White Estate

TESTIMONY FOR THE CHURCH. — NO. 20

ELLEN G. WHITE

**TESTIMONY FOR
THE CHURCH. — No.
20**

Ellen G. White

1871

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About the Author

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

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THIS NUMBER

To ALL those who recognize the voice of God in the gift of prophecy, as manifested in connection with the cause of present truth, this number of the Testimonies will possess especial interest.

1. "How to Conduct Meetings " is invaluable.

2. "How Shall we Keep the Sabbath " is important.

3. "Christian Recreation" is a subject that should be understood.

This was reported as spoken before two hundred who were enjoying a season of innocent recreation beside Goguac Lake, near Battle Creek, May, 1870.

4. The Dreams given are of thrilling interest. May the great facts they illustrate deeply impress the reader.

5. "Camp-Meetings " are a matter of interest just now. This article sets forth the pure spirit of sacrifice, and the duty of the times.

6. And let all read the "Address to Ministers" with especial care. This also was reported as spoken before the General Conference of 1871.

7. We have not space to further particularize. God grant that the reader may be stirred to duty by the appeals in this work.

J. W.

[3]

TESTIMONY FOR THE CHURCH. NO. 20.

* * * * *

How to Conduct Meetings.

I recently received a letter from a brother I highly respect, making inquiries in regard to meetings, how they should be conducted. He inquires if there should be many prayers offered in succession, and then a relief of a few moments, and quite a number of prayers again.

From the light I have had upon the subject, I have decided that God does not require us, as we assemble for his worship, to make these seasons tedious and wearisome, by being obliged to remain bowed quite a length of time, listening to several lengthy prayers. Those in feeble health cannot endure this taxation without extreme weariness and exhaustion. The body is weary by remaining bowed down so long. And that which is worse still, the mind becomes so wearied by the continuous exercise of prayer that no spiritual refreshment is realized, and the meeting to them is worse than a loss. They have become wearied mentally and physically, and they have obtained no spiritual strength. Meetings for conference and prayer should not be made tedious. All should, if possible, be prompt to the hour appointed; and if there are dilatory ones, who are half an hour or fifteen minutes even behind the time, there should be no waiting. If there are but two present, they can claim the promise. The meeting should open at the appointed hour, if possible, be there few or many present. Formality and cold stiffness should be laid aside, and all be prompt to duty. There should not be, upon any common occasion, prayer of more than ten minutes' duration. If any feel the burden of prayer, after there has been a change of position, and the exercise of singing or exhortation has relieved the sameness, then let them pray.

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All should feel it a Christian duty to pray short. Tell the Lord just what you want without going all over the world. In private prayer, all have the privilege of praying as long as they desire, and of being

as explicit as they please. They can pray for all their relatives and friends. The closet is the place to tell all their private difficulties, and trials, and temptations. A common meeting to worship God is not the place to open the privacies of the heart.

What is the object of assembling together? Is it to inform God ? or to instruct him by telling him all we know in prayer? We meet together to edify one another by a mutual interchange of thoughts and feelings, thus making one another acquainted with our aspirations, our hopes, and gathering strength, and light, and courage, from one another. By our earnest, heart-felt prayers, offered up in faith, we receive refreshment and vigor from the Source of our strength. These meetings should be most precious seasons, and made interesting to all who have any relish for religious things. [5]

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

Ye are the light of the world, says the heavenly Teacher. All have not the same experience, and the same exercises in their religious life. But those of diverse experiences come together, and with simplicity and humbleness of mind, talk out their experience. All should have, and will have, an experience that is living, that is new and interesting, if they are pursuing the onward Christian course. A living experience is made up of daily trials, conflicts, and temptations, strong efforts and victories, and great peace and joy gamed through Jesus. A simple relation of such experiences give light, strength, and knowledge, that will aid others in their advancement in the divine life. The worship [6]

of God should be both interesting and instructive to those who have any love for divine and heavenly things.

Jesus, the heavenly teacher, when he was upon the earth, among the children of men, did not hold himself aloof from them, but in order to benefit them, he came from Heaven to earth where they were, that the purity and holiness of his life might shine upon the pathway of all, and light the way to Heaven.

[7] The Redeemer of the world sought to make his lessons of instruction plain and simple, that all might comprehend them. He generally chose the open air for his discourses. There were no walls which could inclose the multitude which followed him. But he had special reasons for choosing the groves and the seaside to give his lessons of instruction, for he could have a commanding view of the landscape and scenery, and make use of objects and scenes with which those in humble life were familiar, to illustrate the important truths he made known to them. The works of God in nature, he associated with his lessons of instruction. He made use of the birds which were caroling forth their songs without a care, and the flowers of the valley glowing in their beauty, and the lily that reposed in its purity upon the bosom of the lake, the lofty trees, the cultivated lands, the waving grains, the barren soil, the tree that bore no fruit, the everlasting hills, the bubbling stream, the setting sun, tinting and gilding the heavens, to impress his hearers with divine truth. He connected the works of God's finger in the heavens and upon the earth with the words of life he wished to impress upon their minds, that as they should look upon the wonderful works of God in nature, his lessons would be fresh in their memories.

[8] Christ, in all his efforts, sought to make his teachings interesting. He knew that a tired, hungry throng could not receive spiritual benefit, and he did not forget their bodily needs. He wrought a miracle to feed five thousand, who had gathered together to listen to the words of life which fell from his lips. Jesus regarded his surroundings, when giving his precious truth to the multitude. The scenery was such as would attract the eye, and awake admiration in the breasts of the lovers of the beautiful. He could extol the wisdom of God in his creative works, and could bind up his sacred lessons by directing their minds through nature up to nature's God.

The landscape, the trees, the birds, the flowers of the valley, the hills, the lake, and the beautiful heavens, were associated in their minds with sacred truths, which would make them hallowed in memory, as they should look upon them after Christ's ascension to Heaven.

When Christ taught the people, he did not devote the time to prayer. He did not enforce upon them, as did the Pharisees, long, tedious ceremonies, and lengthy prayers. He taught his disciples how to pray: "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray use not vain repetition, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye."

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Christ impressed upon his disciples the idea that their prayers should be short, expressing just what they wanted, and no more. He gives the length and substance of their prayers, expressing their desires for temporal and spiritual blessings, and gratitude for the same. This sample prayer, how comprehensive! It covers the actual need of all. One or two minutes is long enough for any ordinary prayer. There may be instances where prayer, in a special manner, is indited by the Spirit of God, and where supplication is made in the Spirit. The yearning soul becomes agonized, and groans after God. The spirit wrestles as did Jacob, and will not be at rest without special manifestations of the power of God. This is as God would have it.

But there are many prayers offered in a dry, sermonizing manner. These pray to men, not to God. If they were praying to God, and really understood what they were doing, they would be alarmed at their audacity ; for they delivered a discourse to the Lord in the mode of prayer, as though the Creator of the universe needed special information upon general questions in relation to the things that were transpiring in the world. All such prayers are as sounding brass, and

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tinkling cymbal. They are made no account of in Heaven. Angels of God are wearied with them, as well as mortals who are compelled to listen to them.

Jesus was often found in prayer. He resorted to the lonely groves, or to the mountains, to make his requests known to his Father. When the business and cares of the day were ended, and the weary were seeking rest, Jesus devoted the time to prayer. We would not discourage prayer; for there is far too little praying and watching thereunto. And there is still less praying with the Spirit and the understanding also. Fervent and effectual prayer is always in place, and will never weary. Such prayer interests and refreshes all who have a love for devotion.

Secret prayer is neglected, and this is the reason why many offer such long, tedious, backslidden prayers, when assembled to worship God. They go over in their prayers a week of neglected duties, and pray round and round, hoping to make up for their neglect, and pacify their condemned consciences, which are scourging them. They hope to pray themselves into the favor of God. But frequently these prayers result in bringing other minds down to their own low level in spiritual darkness. If Christians would take home the teachings of Christ in regard to watching and praying, they would become more intelligent in their worship of God.

* * * * *

How Shall we Keep the Sabbath?

God is merciful. His requirements are reasonable, in accordance with the goodness and benevolence of his character. The object of the Sabbath was that all mankind might be benefited. Man was not made to fit the Sabbath; for the Sabbath was made after the creation of man, to meet his necessities. God rested, after he had made the world in six days. He sanctified and blessed the day upon which he rested from all his work which he had created and made. He set apart that special day for man to rest from his labor, and reflect, as he should look upon the earth beneath, and the heavens above, that God made all these in six days, and rested upon the seventh ; and

that his heart might be filled with love and reverence to his Maker, as he should behold the tangible proofs of his infinite wisdom.

In order to keep the Sabbath holy, it is not necessary that we inclose ourselves in walls, shut away from the beautiful scenes of nature, and also deprive ourselves of the free, invigorating air of heaven. We should in no case allow burdens and business transactions to divert our minds upon the Sabbath of the Lord which he has sanctified. We should not allow even our minds to dwell upon things of a worldly character. The mind cannot be refreshed, enlivened, and elevated, by being confined nearly all the Sabbath hours within walls, listening to long sermons and tedious, formal prayers. The Sabbath of the Lord has been put to a wrong use, if thus celebrated. The object is not attained for which the Sabbath was instituted. The Sabbath was made for man, to be a blessing to him, by calling his mind from secular labor, to contemplate the goodness and glory of God. It is necessary that the people of God assemble to talk of him, to interchange thoughts and ideas in regard to the truths contained in the word of God, and to devote a portion of time to appropriate prayer. But these seasons, even upon the Sabbath, should not be made tedious by their length and lack of interest. During a portion of the day, all should have an opportunity to be out of doors.

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How can the minds of children become better impressed, and receive a more correct knowledge of God, than in spending a portion of their time out of doors; not in play, but in company with their parents ? Surrounded with nature's beautiful scenery, as their minds are associated with God in nature, by their attention being called to the tokens of God's love to man in his creative works, their young minds will be attracted and interested. They will not be in danger of associating the character of God with everything that is stern and severe. But as they view the beautiful things he has created for the happiness of man, they will be led to regard him as a tender, loving Father. They will see that his prohibitions and injunctions are not made merely to show his power and authority, but that he has the happiness of his children in view. As the character of God puts on the aspect of love, benevolence, beauty, and attraction, they are drawn to love him. You can direct their minds to the lovely birds making the air musical with their happy songs, the spires of grass, and the gloriously tinted flowers in their perfection perfuming the air.

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All these proclaim the love and skill of the heavenly Artist, and show forth the glory of God. Parents, why not make use of the precious lessons God has given us in the book of nature to give our children the correct idea of his character ? Those who sacrifice simplicity to fashion, and shut themselves away from the beauties of nature, cannot be spiritually minded. They cannot understand the skill and power of God as revealed in his creative works, therefore their hearts do not quicken and throb with new love and interest, and are not filled with awe and reverence as they see God in nature.

[14] All who love God should do what they can to make the Sabbath a delight, holy and honorable. They cannot do this by seeking their own pleasure in sinful, forbidden amusements. They can do much to exalt the Sabbath in their families, and make it the most interesting day of the week. We should devote time to interest our children. We can walk out with them in the open air. A change will have a happy influence upon them. We can sit with them in the groves, and in the bright sunshine, and give their restless minds something to feed upon by conversing with them upon the works of God, and inspire them with love and reverence by calling their attention to the beautiful objects in nature. The Sabbath should be made so interesting to our families that its weekly return will be hailed with joy. In no better way can parents exalt and honor the Sabbath than to devise means to impart proper instruction to their families, and to interest them in spiritual things, giving them correct views of the character of God, and what he requires of us, in order to perfect Christian characters and to attain to eternal life. Parents, make the Sabbath a delight, that your children shall look forward to it, and have a welcome in their hearts for it.

[15] **Christian Recreation.**

I have been thinking what a contrast would be seen between the gathering that we are having here to-day and such gatherings as they are generally conducted by unbelievers. Instead of prayer and the mentioning of Christ and religious things, we should have the silly laugh and the trifling conversation. Their idea would be to have a general high time. It would commence in folly and end in vanity. We want in these gatherings to have them so conducted, and to so

conduct ourselves, that when we return to our homes we can have a conscience void of offense toward God and man; a consciousness that we have not wounded nor injured in any manner those with whom we have been associated, or had an injurious influence over them.

Here is where very many fail. They do not consider that they are accountable for the influence they daily exert; that in all their associations in life, they must render an account to God for the impressions they make, and the influence they cast. If this influence is such as shall have a tendency to draw the mind away from God, and attract it into the channel of vanity and folly, and lead persons to seek for their own pleasure in amusements and foolish indulgences, they must give an account for this. And if these persons are men and women of influence, if their position is such that their example will affect others, then the greater sin will rest upon them for neglecting to regulate their conduct by the Bible standard. [16]

The occasion we are enjoying to-day is just according to my ideas of recreation. I have tried to give my views upon this subject, but they are better illustrated than expressed. I was here on this ground about one year since, when there was a gathering similar to this. Nearly everything passed off very pleasantly then, but still there were some things objectionable. There was considerable jesting and joking indulged in by some. All were not Sabbath-keepers, and there was an influence manifest that was not as pleasant as we could wish.

But I believe that while we are seeking to refresh our spirits and invigorate our bodies, we are *required of God* to use all our powers at all times to the best purpose. We may associate together as we are here today, and do all to the glory of God. We can, and should, conduct our recreations in such a manner that we shall be better fitted for the more successful discharge of the duties devolving upon us, and our influence be more beneficial upon those with whom we associate, especially upon an occasion like this, which should be of good cheer to us all. We can return to our homes improved in mind and refreshed in body, and prepared to engage in the work anew with better hope and better courage. [17]

We are of that class who believe that it is our privilege every day of our lives to glorify God upon the earth ; that we are not to live in this world merely for our own amusement, merely to please

ourselves. We are here to benefit humanity, and be a blessing to society. And if we should let our minds run in that low channel that many who are seeking only vanity and folly permit their minds to run in, how can we be a benefit to our race and generation? how can we be a blessing to society around us ? We cannot innocently indulge in any amusement which will unfit us for the more faithful discharge of ordinary life duties.

[18] We want to seek the elevated and lovely. We want to direct the mind away from those things that are superficial and of no importance, and that have no solidity. What we desire is, to be gathering new strength from all that we engage in, from all these gatherings for the purpose of recreation, from all these pleasant associations. We want to be gathering new strength to become better men and women. We want from every source possible to gather new courage, new strength, new power, that we may elevate our lives to purity and holiness, and not come down upon the low level of this world. We hear many who profess the religion of Jesus Christ speak often like this: "We must all come down upon a level." There is no such thing as Christians' coming down upon a level. As we embrace the truth of God and the religion of the Bible, this is not coming down, it is coming up upon a high and elevated level, a higher standpoint where we may commune with God.

For this very reason Christ humiliated himself to humanity, and took upon himself our natures, that by his own humiliation, and suffering, and sacrifice, he might become a stepping-stone to fallen men, that they might climb up upon his merits, and through his excellence and virtue receive from God an acceptance of their efforts to keep his law. There is no such thing here as coming down upon a level. It is the elevated and exalted platform of eternal truth that we are seeking to plant our feet upon. We are seeking to be more like the heavenly angels, more pure in heart, more sinless, more harmless and undefiled.

[19] We are seeking for purity and holiness of life, that we may at last be fitted for the heavenly society in the kingdom of glory; and the only means to attain this elevation of Christian character is through Jesus Christ. There is no other way for the exaltation of the human family. Some talk of humiliation, and of the sacrifice they make because they adopt the truth of heavenly origin ! Surely, this is not

accepted by the world, it is not received by the unbeliever. They may talk of those that have embraced the truth and sought the Saviour, and represent them as leaving everything, and giving up everything, and making a sacrifice of everything that is worth retaining. But do not tell me this. I know better. My experience proves this to be otherwise. You need not tell me that we have to give up our dearest treasures, and receive no equivalent. No, indeed ! That God, that Creator, who planted the beautiful Eden for our first parents, and has planted for us the lovely trees and flowers, and everything that is beautiful and glorious in nature for the human race to enjoy, designed that they should enjoy it. Then do not think that God wishes us to yield up everything which it is for our happiness here to retain. All he requires us to give up is that which would not be for our good and happiness to retain.

That God who has planted these noble trees and clothed them with their rich foliage, and given us the brilliant and beautiful shades of the flowers, and whose handy and lovely work we see in all the realm of nature, does not design to make us unhappy; he does not design that we shall have no taste, and take no pleasure in these things. It is his design that we shall enjoy them. It is his design that we shall be happy in the charms of nature, which are of his own creating. It is right that we should choose such places as this grove for seasons of relaxation and recreation. But while we are here, it is not to devote our attention to ourselves merely, and fritter away precious time, and engage in amusements which will encourage a disrelish for sacred things. We have not come here to indulge in jesting and joking, in the senseless laugh and foolish talking. We here behold the beauties of nature. And what then ? fall down and worship them ? No, indeed. But as you behold these works of nature, let your mind be carried up higher to nature's God; let it be elevated to the Creator of the universe, and then adore the Creator who has made all these beautiful things for your benefit, for your happiness.

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Men and women will delight in lovely paintings ; but where do the artists get their ideas of these things to put upon the canvas ? From nature's beautiful scenery. Persons are ready to worship the talent which can produce a beautiful drawing; but where do those who devote their lives to this work obtain their designs ? From nature, only from nature; and yet these individuals will devote the

entire strength of their being, and will bestow all their affections upon their tastes in this direction. Yet art can never attain the perfection

[21] seen in nature. Many withdraw their minds from the beauties and glories of nature that our Creator has prepared for them to enjoy, and devote all the powers of their being to perfection of art; yet all these things are only imperfect copies from nature. The Maker of all these beautiful things is forgotten. I have seen many who would go into ecstasies over a picture of a sunset; but at the same time they could have the privilege of seeing an actual and glorious sunset almost every evening in the year. They can see the beautiful tints with which nature's Master and invisible Artist, with divine skill, has painted glorious scenes on shifting canvas, and carelessly turn from the heavenly-wrought picture to paintings of art, traced by imperfect fingers, and they will almost fall down and worship them. What is the reason of all this ? It is because the enemy is almost constantly seeking to divert the mind from God. But when you present God, and the religion of Jesus Christ, will they receive them ? No, indeed. They cannot accept of Christ. What! they make the sacrifice they would have to make to receive him ? Not at all. But what is required ? Simply their heart's holiest and best affections for Him who left the glory of the Father and came down to die for a race of rebels. He left his riches, his majesty, and his high command, and took upon himself our nature, that he might make a way of escape—to do what

[22] ? to humiliate you? to degrade you? No, indeed. To make a way of escape for you from hopeless misery, and to elevate you to his own right hand in his kingdom at last. For this, the great, the immense, sacrifice was made. And who can realize this great sacrifice? Who can appreciate it ? None but those who understand the mystery of godliness, who have tasted the powers of the world to come, who have drunk from the cup of salvation that has been presented to us. This cup of salvation the Lord offers us, while with his own lips he drained, in our stead, the bitter cup which our own sins had prepared, and which was apportioned us to drink. Yet we talk as though Christ who has made such a sacrifice, and manifested such love for us, would deprive us of everything that is worth having.

But what good would he deprive us of? He would deprive us of the privilege of giving up to the natural passions of the carnal heart. We cannot get angry just when we please, and retain a clear

conscience and the approval of God. But are we not willing to give this up ? Will the indulgence of corrupt passions make us any happier ? It is because it will not, that there are restrictions laid upon us in this respect. It will not add to our enjoyment to get angry, and cultivate a perverse temper. It is not for our happiness to follow the leadings of the natural heart. Will we be made better to indulge them ? No. They will cast a shadow in our households, and will throw a pall over our happiness when indulged in. Giving way to your own natural appetites will only injure your constitution, and tear your system to pieces. Therefore God would have you restrict your appetite, have control over your passions, and hold in subjection the entire man. And he has promised to give you strength if you will engage in this work. [23]

The sin of Adam and Eve caused a fearful separation between God and man. And here Christ steps in between fallen man and God, and says to man, You may yet come to the Father; there is a plan devised through which God can be reconciled to man, and man to God; and through a mediator you can approach God. And here he stands to mediate for you. He is the great High Priest who is pleading in your behalf; and it is for you to come and present your case to the Father through Jesus Christ. Thus you can find access to God; and if you sin, your case is not hopeless. "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

I thank God that we have a Saviour. And there is no other way whereby men and women can be exalted except through Jesus Christ. Then let no one think that it is a great humiliation on his part to accept of Jesus Christ; for when we take that step, we take the first step toward true exaltation; we take hold of the golden cord that links finite man with the infinite God, and elevates us, that we may be fitted for the society of pure and heavenly angels in the kingdom of glory. [24]

Be not discouraged ; be not faint-hearted. Although you may have temptations; although you may be beset by the wily foe ; yet, if you have the fear of God before you, angels that excel in strength will be sent to your help, and you can be more than a match for the powers of darkness. Jesus lives. He has died to make a way of escape for the fallen race; and he lives to-day to make intercession for us, that we may be ex-alted to his own right hand. Have hope

in God. The world is traveling the broad way; and as you travel in the narrow way, and have principalities and powers to contend with, and the opposition of foes to meet, remember that there is provision made for you. Help has been laid upon One that is mighty; and through him you can conquer.

[25] Come out from among them and be separate, says God, and I will receive you, and ye shall be sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. What a promise is this ! It is a pledge to you that you shall become members of the royal family, heirs of the heavenly kingdom. If a person is honored by, or becomes connected with, any of the monarchs of earth, how it goes the rounds of the periodicals of the day, and excites the envy of those who do not think themselves so fortunate. But here is One who is king over all, the monarch of the universe, the originator of every good thing; and he says to us, I will make you my sons and daughters; I will unite you to myself; you shall become members of the royal family, and children of the heavenly King.

And then says Paul, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord." Why should we not do this, when we have such an inducement, the privilege of becoming children of the most high God, the privilege of calling the God of Heaven our father? Is not that enough ? And do you call this depriving you of everything that is worth having ? Is this the giving up of everything that is worth possessing ? Let me be united to God and his holy angels, for this is my highest ambition. You may have all the possessions of this world; but I must have Jesus; I must have a right to the immortal inheritance, the eternal substance. Let me enjoy the beauties of the kingdom of God. Let me delight in the paintings which his own fingers have colored. I may enjoy [26] them. You may enjoy them. But we may not worship them. But through them we may be directed to Him, and behold his glory who has made all these things for our enjoyment.

Again I would say, Be of good courage. Trust in the Lord. Do not let the enemy rob you of the promises. If you have separated yourselves from the world, God has said that he will be your father, and you shall be his sons and daughters. Is not that enough ? What greater inducement could be presented before you ? Is there any

great object in being a butterfly, and having no substance nor aim in life ? Oh! let me stand on the platform of eternal truth. Give me immortal worth. Let me grasp the golden chain that is let down from Heaven to earth, and let it draw me up to God and glory. This is my ambition. This is my aim. If others have no higher object than to dress up with bows and ribbons, and fantastic things here, if they can delight in outward display and satisfy their souls with it, let them enjoy it. But let me have the inward adorning. Let me be clothed with that meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. And I recommend it to you, young ladies and young men, for it is more precious in his sight than the gold of Ophir. It is this which makes a man more precious than fine gold, even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir. Just so with you, my sisters, and you, young people ; it will make you more precious in the sight of Heaven than fine gold, yea, than the golden wedge of Ophir. I recommend to you, Jesus my blessed Saviour. I adore him. I magnify him. Oh! that I had an immortal tongue that I could praise him as I desire; that I could stand before the assembled universe and speak in praise of his matchless charms. And while I adore and magnify him, I want you to magnify him with me. [27]

Praise the Lord, even when you fall into darkness. Praise him even in temptation. "Rejoice in the Lord always," says the apostle: "and again I say, Rejoice." Will that bring darkness and gloom into your families ? No, indeed; it will bring a sunbeam. It will be the gathering of rays of eternal light from the throne of glory, and scattering them around you. Let me exhort you to engage in this work, scatter this light and life around you, not only in your own path, but in the paths of others with whom you associate. Let it be your object to make those around you better; to elevate them; to point them to Heaven and glory, and lead them to seek, above all earthly things, the eternal substance, the immortal inheritance, and the riches which are imperishable.

An Impressive Dream.

While at Battle Creek, in August, 1868, I dreamed of being with a large body of people. A portion of this assembly started out prepared to journey. We had heavily loaded wagons. As we [28]

journeyed, the road seemed to ascend. On one side of this road was a deep precipice. On the other Bide was a high, white, smooth wall, like the hard finish upon plastered rooms.

As we journeyed on, the road grew narrower and steeper. Some places in the road seemed very narrow, so much so that we concluded that we could travel no longer with the loaded wagons. We then loosed them from the horses, and took a portion of the luggage from the wagons and placed it upon the horses, and journeyed on horseback.

As we progressed, the path still continued to grow narrow. We were obliged to press close to the wall, in order to save ourselves from falling off the narrow road, down the deep precipice. In doing this, the luggage on the horses pressed against the wall, and caused us to sway toward the precipice. We feared that we should fall, and be dashed in pieces on the rocks. We then cut the luggage from the horses, which fell over the precipice. We continued, on horseback, greatly fearing as we came to the narrower places in the road, that we should lose our balance, and fall. At such times, a hand seemed to take the bridle and guide us over the perilous way. As the path grew more narrow, we decided that we could go no longer on horseback with safety, and we left the horses and went on foot, in single file, one following in the footsteps of another.

At this point, small cords were let down from the top of the pure white wall, which we eagerly grasped, to aid us in keeping our balance upon the path. As we traveled, the cord moved along with us. The path finally became so narrow that we concluded that we could travel more safely without our shoes ; so we slipped them from our feet, and went on some distance without them. Soon it was decided that we could travel more safely without our stockings; these were removed, and we journeyed on with bare feet.

We then thought of those who had not accustomed themselves to privations and hard-ships. Where were such now ? They were not in the company. At every change, some were left behind, and those only remained who had accustomed themselves to endure hardships. The privations of the way only made these more eager to press on to the end. Our danger of falling from the pathway increased. We pressed close to the white wall, yet could not place our feet fully upon the path, for it was too narrow.

We then suspended nearly our whole weight upon the cords, and would exclaim, "We have hold from above! We have hold from above !" The same words were uttered by all the company in the narrow pathway. As we heard the sounds of revelry and mirth that seemed to come from the abyss below, we shuddered. We heard the profane oath, the vulgar jest, and low, vile songs. We heard the war songs and the dance songs. We heard instrumental music, and the loud laugh, mingled with cursing and cries of anguish and bitter wailing, and were more anxious than ever to keep upon the narrow, difficult pathway. [30]

Much of the time we were compelled to suspend our whole weight upon the cords. And these increased in size as we progressed.

I noticed that the beautiful white wall was stained with blood. It caused a feeling of regret to see the wall thus stained. This feeling, however, lasted but for a moment, as I soon thought that it was all as it should be. Those who are following after will know that others have passed the narrow, difficult way before them, and will conclude that if others were able to pursue their onward course, they can do the same. And as the blood should be pressed from their aching feet, they would not faint with discouragement; but, seeing the blood upon the wall, they would know that others had endured the same pain. [31]

At length, we came to a large chasm at which our path ended. There was nothing now to guide the feet, nothing upon which to rest them. Our whole reliance must be upon the cords, which had increased in size, until they were as large as our bodies. Here we were for a time thrown into perplexity and distress. We inquired in fearful whispers, "To what is the cord attached ?"

My husband was just before me. The large drops of sweat were falling from his brow. The veins in his neck and temples were increased to double their usual size, and suppressed, agonizing groans came from his lips. The sweat was dropping from my face, and I felt such anguish as I had never felt before. A fearful struggle was before us. If we fail here, all the difficulties of our journey had been experienced for naught. Before us, on the other side of the chasm, was a beautiful field of green grass, about six inches high. I could not see the sun, but bright, soft beams of light, resembling

fine gold and silver, were resting on this field. Nothing I had seen upon earth could compare in beauty and glory with this field.

[32] But could we succeed in reaching it ? was the anxious inquiry. Should the cord break, we must perish. Again, in whispered anguish, the words were breathed, "What holds the cord?" For a moment we hesitated to venture. Then we exclaimed, "Our only hope is to trust wholly to the cord. It has been our dependence all the difficult way. It will not fail us now." Still we were hesitating and distressed. The words were then spoken, "God holds the cord. We need not fear." These words were then repeated by those behind us, accompanied with, "He will not fail us now. He has brought us thus far in safety."

My husband then swung himself over the fearful abyss into the beautiful field beyond. I immediately followed. And oh, what a sense of relief and gratitude to God we felt! I heard voices raised in triumphant praise to God. I was happy, perfectly happy.

I awoke, and found that from the anxiety I had experienced in passing over the difficult route, every nerve in my body seemed to be in a tremor. This dream needs no comment. It made such an impression upon my mind that probably every item in it will be vivid before me while my memory shall continue.

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Camp Meetings.

[33] There can be no influence so detrimental to a camp-meeting, or any gathering for religious worship, as much visiting and careless conversation. Frequently men and women assemble in companies, and engage in conversation upon common subjects, which do not relate to the meeting. Some have brought their farms with them, and others their houses, laying their plans for building. Some are dissecting the characters of others, and have no time or disposition to search their own hearts, to discover the defects in their own characters, that they may correct their wrongs, and perfect holiness in the fear of God. If all who profess to be followers of Christ, would improve the time out of meeting in conversing upon the truth, in dwelling upon the Christian's hope, in searching their own hearts, and in earnest prayer before God, pleading for his blessing, there

would be a much greater work accomplished than we have yet seen. Unbelievers, who falsely accuse those who believe the truth, would be convinced, because “of their good conversation in Christ.” “The words and actions are the fruit which we bear: “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

God gave direction to the Israelites to assemble before him in the place which he should choose, and observe special days, at set periods, wherein no unnecessary work was to be done; but the time was to be devoted to a consideration of the blessings of God bestowed upon them. At these special seasons they were to bring gifts, free-will offerings, and thank-offerings, unto the Lord, according as the Lord had blessed them. They were directed to rejoice—the man-servant and maidservant, the stranger, the fatherless and widow—that God had by his own wonderful power brought them from servile bondage to the enjoyment of freedom. And they were commanded not to appear before the Lord empty. They were to bring tokens of their gratitude to God for his continual mercies and blessings bestowed upon them. These offerings were varied according to the estimate which the donors placed upon the blessings they were privileged to enjoy. Thus the characters of the people were plainly developed. Those who placed a high value upon the blessings God bestowed upon them, brought offerings in accordance with their appreciation of his blessings. Those whose moral powers were stupefied and benumbed by selfishness and idolatrous love of the favors received, rather than of fervent love for their bountiful Benefactor, brought meager offerings. Thus their hearts were revealed. Besides these special religious feast-days of gladness and rejoicing, the yearly passover was to be commemorated by the Jewish nation. The Lord covenanted that, if they were faithful in the observance of his requirements, he would bless them in all their increase, and in all the works of their hands.

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God requires no less of his people in these last days, in sacrifices and offerings, than he did of the Jewish nation. Those whom God has blessed with a competency, also the widow and the fatherless, should not be unmindful of his blessings. Especially should those whom he has prospered render to God the things that are God's. They should appear before him with a spirit of self-sacrifice, and bring their offerings in accordance with the blessings he has bestowed upon

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them. But many whom God prospers manifest base ingratitude to him. If his blessings rest upon them, and he increases their substance, they make these bounties as cords to bind them to the love of their possessions; and they allow worldly business to take possession of their affections, and their entire being, and neglect devotion and religious privileges. They cannot afford to leave their business cares, and come before God, even once a year. They turn the blessings of God into a curse. They serve their own temporal interests, at the neglect of his requirements.

[36] Men with their thousands remain at home, year after year, engrossed in their worldly cares and interests, and feel that they cannot afford to make the small sacrifice of attending the yearly gatherings to worship God. He has blessed them in basket and in store, and surrounded them with his benefits on the right hand and on the left; yet they withhold from God the small offerings he has required of them. They love to serve themselves. Their souls will be like the unrefreshed desert without the dew or rain of heaven. The Lord has brought to them the precious blessing of his grace. He has delivered them from the slavery of sin, and the bondage of error, and has opened to their darkened understandings the glorious light of present truth. And shall these evidences of God's love and mercy call forth no gratitude in return? Will those who profess to believe that the end of all things is at hand be blind to their own spiritual interest, and live for this world and this life alone? Do they expect their eternal interest will take care of itself? Spiritual strength will not come without an effort on their part.

Many who profess to be looking for the appearing of our Lord, are anxious, burdened gain-seekers for this world. They are blind to their eternal interest. They labor for that which satisfieth not. They spend their money for that which is not bread. They strive to content themselves with the treasures they have laid up upon the earth, which must perish. And they neglect the preparation for eternity, which should be the first and only real work of their lives.

[37] Let us all who possibly can, attend these yearly gatherings. All should feel that God requires this of them. If they do not avail themselves of the privileges God has provided for them to become strong in him, and in the power of his grace, they will grow weaker and weaker, and have less and less desire to consecrate all to him.

Come, brethren and sisters, to these sacred convocation meetings, to find Jesus. He will come up to the feast. He will be present, and he will do for you that which you need most to have done. Your farms should not be considered of greater value than the higher interests of the soul. All the treasures you possess, be they ever so valuable, would not be rich enough to buy you peace and hope, which would be infinite gain, if it cost you all you have, and the toils and sufferings of a lifetime. To have a strong, clear sense of eternal things, and a heart of willing obedience to yield all to Christ, are blessings of more value than all the riches, and pleasures, and glories, of this world.

These camp-meetings are of importance. They cost something. The servants of God are wearing out their lives to help the people, while many of them appear as if they did not want help. For fear of losing a little of this world's gain, some let these precious privileges come and go, as though they were of but little importance. Let all who profess to believe the truth, respect every privilege that God offers them to obtain clearer views of his truth, and his requirements, and the necessary preparation for his coming. A calm, cheerful, and obedient, trust in God is what he requires. [38]

You need not weary yourselves with busy anxieties and needless cares. Work on for the day, faithfully doing the work which God's providence assigns you, and he will have a care for you. Jesus will deepen and widen your blessings. You must make efforts if you have salvation at last. Come to these meetings prepared to work. Leave your home cares, and come to find Jesus, and he will be found of you. Come with your offerings as God has blessed you. Show your gratitude to your Creator, the giver of all your benefits, by a free-will offering. Let none who are able come empty-handed. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

The objects of camp-meetings are to separate from business cares, and burdens, and devote a few days of time exclusively to seeking the Lord. The time should be occupied in self-examination, close searching of heart, and penitential confession of sins, and renewing our vows to the most high God. If any come to these meet-

[39] ings for less worthy objects, we hope the character of the meeting will be such as to bring the minds of all to the proper objects of the meetings.

Some are sufferers through extra labor in preparing for camp-meeting. They are liberal-souled people, and want nothing done with stinginess. Some make large provisions ; and are thoroughly wearied out when they come to the meeting, and as soon as they are released from the pressure of work, exhausted nature causes them to feel that she has been abused. Some of these persons may never have attended a camp-meeting before, and are not informed in regard to what preparations they are required to make. They lose some of the precious meetings they had purposed to attend. Now these make a mistake in making so large preparation. Nothing should be cooked, or taken to the camp-meeting, unless it be the most healthful articles, cooked in a simple manner, free from all spices and grease.

[40] I am well convinced that none need to make themselves sick preparing for camp-meeting, if they observe the laws of health in their cooking. If they make no cake, or pies, but cook simple graham bread, and depend on fruit, canned or dried, they need not get sick in preparing for the meeting, and they need not be sick while at the meeting. None should go through the entire meeting without some warm food. There are always cook-stoves upon the ground where this may be obtained.

Brethren and sisters must not be sick upon the encampment. If they clothe themselves properly in the chill of morning, and at night, and are particular to vary their clothing according to the changing weather, so as to preserve proper circulation, and strictly observe regularity in sleeping, and in eating of simple food, and eat nothing between meals, they need not be sick. They may be well during the meeting, and be able to appreciate, with clear minds, the truth, and may return to their homes refreshed in body and in spirit. Those who have been engaged in hard labor from day to day now cease their exercise, therefore should not eat their average amount of food. If they do, their stomachs will be overtaxed. It is the brain power we wish to be especially vigorous at these meetings, and in the most healthy condition to hear the truth, and to appreciate it, and to retain it, that all may practice it after their return from the meeting. If the stomach is burdened with too much food, even of a simple

character, the brain force will be called to the aid of the digestive organs. There is a benumbed sensation experienced upon the brain. There is an almost impossibility of keeping the eyes open. The very truths which should be heard, understood, and practiced, by them, they lose entirely through indisposition, or because the brain is almost paralyzed in consequence of the amount of food taken into the stomach. [41]

I would recommend all to take something warm into the stomach, every morning at least. You can do this without much labor. You can make graham gruel. If the graham meal is too coarse, you can sift it. While the gruel is hot, you can add milk. This will make a most palatable and healthful dish for the camp-ground. And if your bread is dry, you can crumb it into your gruel, and it will be enjoyed. I do not approve of eating much cold food, for the reason that the vitality must be drawn from the system to warm the food until it becomes of the same temperature as the stomach before the work of digestion can be carried on.

Another very simple yet wholesome dish, is beans boiled and baked. A portion of them may be diluted with water, add milk or cream and make a broth; the bread can be used the same as in the graham gruel.

I am gratified to see the progress many have made in the health reform, yet am sorry to see so many behind. If any become sick upon our encampments, inquiry should be made as to the cause, and note should be taken of the case. I am not willing the reputation of our camp-meetings shall suffer by being reported as the cause of making people sick. These meetings can be made a blessing to the bodily health, as well as to increase the health of the soul, if a proper course be pursued at these important gatherings. [42]

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A. Solemn Dream.

The night of April 30, 1871, I retired to rest much depressed in spirits. I had been in a state of great discouragement for three months. I had prayed frequently in anguish of spirit for relief. I had implored for help and strength from God, that I might rise above

the heavy discouragements that were paralyzing my faith and hope, and unfitting me for usefulness. That night I had a dream which made a very happy impression upon my mind. I dreamed that I was attending an important meeting. A large company were assembled. Many of that company were bowed before God in earnest prayer, and they seemed to be burdened. They were importuning the Lord for special light. A few of the company seemed to be in agony of spirit. Their feelings were intense. They were crying aloud with tears for help and light. Our most prominent brethren were engaged in this most impressive scene. Bro. Cornell was one who was apparently in deep distress. He was prostrated upon the floor. His wife was sitting [43] among a company of indifferent scorers. She looked as though she desired all to understand that she scorned those who were thus humiliating themselves.

I dreamed that the Spirit of the Lord came upon me, and I arose amid cries and prayers, and said, The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me. I feel urged to say to you that you must commence to work individually for yourselves. You are looking and desiring that God should do the work for you which he has left you to do. If you will do the work for yourselves which you know that you ought to do, then God will help you when you need his help. You have left undone the very things God has left you to do. And you have been calling upon God to do your work. Had you followed the light God has given you, then he would cause more light to shine upon you; but while you have neglected the counsels, and warnings, and reproofs, that have been given, how can you expect God to give you more light and blessings for you to neglect and despise ? God is not as man. He will not be trifled with. I took the precious Bible, and surrounded it with the several Testimonies to the church, given for the people of God. Here, said I, the cases of nearly all are met. The sins they are to shun are pointed out. The counsel that they desire can be found here, which has been given for other cases similarly situated [44] as themselves. God has been pleased to give you line upon line, and precept upon precept. But there are not many of you that really know what is contained in the Testimonies. You are not familiar with the Scriptures. If you had made God's word your study, with a desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection, you would not have needed the Testimonies.

It is because you have neglected to acquaint yourselves with God's inspired Book that he has sought to reach you by simple, direct testimonies, calling your attention to the words of inspiration you had neglected to obey, and urging you to fashion your lives in accordance with its pure and elevated teachings. The Lord deigns to warn you, to reprove, to counsel, through the testimonies given, and to impress your minds with the importance of the truth of his word. The written testimonies are not to give new light; but to impress with vividness upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed. Man's duty to God and to his fellow-man has been distinctly specified in God's word; yet but few of you are obedient to the light given. Additional truth is not brought out; but God has through the testimonies simplified the great truths already given, and in his own chosen way brought them before the people, to awaken and impress the mind with them, that all may be left without excuse.

Pride, self-love, selfishness, hatred, envy, and jealousy, has beclouded the perceptive powers; and the truth, which would make you wise unto salvation, has lost its power to charm and control the mind. The very essential principles of godliness are not understood; because there is not a hungering and thirsting for Bible knowledge, purity of heart, and holiness of life. The Testimonies are not to belittle the word of God; but to exalt it, and attract minds to it, that the beautiful simplicity of truth may impress all. [45]

I further stated that as the word of God is walled in with these books and pamphlets, so has God walled you in with reproofs, counsel, warnings, and encouragements. Here you are crying before God, in the anguish of your souls, for more light. I am authorized from God to tell you that not another ray of light through the testimonies will shine upon your pathway, until you make a practical use of the light the Lord has already given. He has walled you about with light; but you have not appreciated the light. You have trampled upon it. While some have despised the light, others have neglected it, or followed it but indifferently. A few have set their hearts to obey the light God has been pleased to give them. Some that have received special warnings through testimony have forgotten in a few weeks the reproof given.

The testimonies have been to some several times repeated; but they have not felt that they were of sufficient importance to [46]

be careful to heed them. They have been to them like idle tales. Had they regarded the light given, they would have avoided losses and trials which they think are hard and severe. They have only themselves to censure. It is not the yoke Christ has bound upon them. They have placed a yoke upon their own necks which they find is grievous to be borne. God's care and love was exercised in their behalf; but their selfish, evil, unbelieving souls could not discern the goodness and mercy of God. They rush on in their own wisdom, until, overwhelmed with trials and confused with perplexity, they are ensnared by Satan. When you gather up the rays of light God has given in the past, then will he give an increase of light.

I referred them to ancient Israel. God gave them his law; but they would not obey it. He then gave them ceremonies and ordinances, that in the performance of these, God might be kept in remembrance. They were so prone to forget him, and the claims he had upon them, that it was necessary to keep their minds stirred up to realize their obligations to be obedient to, and honor, their Creator. Had they been obedient, and loved to keep God's commandments, the multitude of ceremonies and ordinances would not have been required.

[47] If the people of God who now profess to be his peculiar treasure would obey his requirements, as specified in his word, special testimonies would not be given to awaken them to their duty, and impress upon them their sinfulness and fearful danger in neglecting to obey the word of God. Consciences have been blunted, because light has been set aside, neglected, and despised. And God will remove them away from the people, and will deprive them of strength, and humble them.

I dreamed that, as I was speaking, the power of God fell upon me in a most remarkable manner, and I was deprived of all strength, yet I had no vision. I thought my husband stood up before the people, and exclaimed, "This is the wonderful power of God. He has made the testimonies a powerful means of reaching souls, and he will work yet more mightily through them than he has hitherto done. Who will be on the Lord's Bide?"

I dreamed that quite a number sprang upon their feet instantly, and responded to the call. Others sat sullen, and some manifested derision and scorn, and a few seemed wholly unmoved. One stood by my side, and said, God has raised you up, and has given you

words to speak to the people and reach hearts, that he has given to no other one. He has shaped your testimonies to meet cases that are in need of help. You must be unmoved by scorn, derision, reproach, and censure. In order to be God's special instrument, you should lean to no one, but hang upon him alone, and, like the clinging vine, let your tendrils entwine about him. He will make you a means through which to communicate his light to the people. You must gather strength from God daily, in order to be fortified, that your surroundings may not dim or eclipse the light that he has permitted to shine upon his people through you. It is Satan's special object to prevent this light from coming to the people of God, who so greatly need it amid the perils of these last days. [48]

Your success is in your simplicity. As soon as you depart from this, and fashion your testimony to meet the minds of any, your power is gone. Almost everything in this age is glossed and unreal. The world abounds in testimonies given to please and charm for the moment, and to exalt self. Your testimony is of a different character. It is to come down to the minutiae of life, keeping the feeble faith from dying, and pressing home upon believers the necessity of shining as lights in the world.

Your testimony God has given you, to set before the backslider and the sinner his true condition, and the immense loss he is sustaining by continuing a life of sin. God has impressed this upon you by opening it before your vision as he has to no one now living, and, according to the light he has given you, will he hold you responsible. Not by might, nor by power ; but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Lift up your voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions, and the house of Israel their sins. [49]

This dream had a powerful influence upon me. When I awoke, my depression was gone, my spirits were cheerful, and I realized great peace. Infirmities, that had unfitted me for labor, were removed, and I realized a strength and vigor that I had been a stranger to for months. It seemed to me that the angels of God had been commissioned to bring relief to me. Unspeakable gratitude filled my heart for this great change from despondency, to light and happiness. I knew that help had come from God. This manifestation appeared to me like a miracle of mercy from God, and I will not be ungrateful for his loving-kindness.

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Address to ministers.

Eph 3:6, 7: “That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel; whereof I was made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God, given unto me by the effectual working of his power.”

[50] “Whereof I am made a minister:” not merely to present the truth to the people, but to carry it out in your lives.

“And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the be-ginning of the world hath been hid in God.” Verse 9. It is not merely the words that roll off your tongue, it is not merely to be eloquent in speaking and praying, but it is to make known Christ, to have Christ in you, and make him known to those that hear.

“Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom,” not novices, not in ignorance, “that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.” Col. 1: 28, 29. It is the work of God, the grace from God, that is to be realized and felt, that is to grace the life and actions, which is to make a sensible impression upon those that hear.

[51] But it is not this only. There are other things that are to be considered; in which some have been negligent, which are of consequence, in the light they have been presented before me. Impressions are made upon the people by the deportment of the speaker in the desk, by his attitude, and by his manner of speaking. If these things are as God would have them, the impression they make will be in favor of the truth, espe- cially will that class be favorably impressed who have been listening to fables. It is important that your manner be modest and dignified, in keeping with the holy, elevating truth you teach, that a favorable impression may be made upon those who are not naturally inclined to religion.

Carefulness in dress is an important item. There has been a lack here with ministers who believe present truth. The dress of some has been allowed to be even untidy. Not only has there been a lack of taste, and a lack of order to arrange the dress in a becoming manner

upon the person, and to have the color suitable and becoming for a minister of Christ, but the apparel has been with some, even slovenly and untidy. Some ministers wear a vest of a light color, while their pants are dark, or the vest dark and pants light, with no taste or orderly arrangement of the dress upon the person in coming before the people. These things are preaching to the people. They give them an example of order and set before them the propriety of neatness and taste in their apparel, or they give them lessons in lack of taste and slack-ness which they will be in danger of following.

I was pointed back to the children of Israel anciently, and was shown that God had given specific directions in regard to the material and manner of the dress those ministering before him should wear. [52] The God of Heaven, whose arm moves the world, who sustains us, and gives us life and health, has given us evidence that he could be honored or dishonored by the apparel of those who officiated before him. He gave especial directions to Moses in regard to everything connected with his service. He gave instruction even in regard to the arrangements of their houses, and specified the dress those should wear who were to minister in his service. They were to maintain order in everything, and especially to practice cleanliness. Read the directions that were given to Moses to make known to the children of Israel, as God was about to come down upon the mount, to speak in their hearing his holy law. What did he command Moses to have the people do? To be ready against the third day; for on the third day, said he, the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people, upon the mount. They were to set bounds about the mount. "And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes."

That great and mighty God who created the beautiful Eden, and everything lovely in it, is a God of order; and he wants order and cleanliness with his people. That mighty God spoke to Moses to tell the people to wash their clothes, lest there should be impurity in their clothing and about their persons, as they came up before the Lord. [53] And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and they washed their clothes, according to the command of God.

And to show the carefulness they were to observe in regard to being cleanly, Moses was to put a laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, "and put water therein to wash withal."

And Moses and Aaron that ministered before the Lord, and Aaron's sons, were to wash their hands and their feet thereat when they went into the tent of the congregation, and when they went in before the Lord.

[54] Here was the commandment of the great and mighty God. There was to be nothing slack and untidy about those who appeared before him, when they should come into his holy presence. And what was this for? What was the object of all this carefulness? Was it merely to recommend the people to God? Was it merely to gain his approbation? The reason that was given me was this: that a right impression might be made upon the people. If those who ministered in the sacred office should fail to manifest care and reverence for God in their apparel and their deportment, the people would lose their awe and reverence for God and his sacred service. If the priests showed great reverence for God, by being very careful and very particular as they came into his presence, it gave the people an exalted idea of God and his requirements. It showed them that God was holy, that his work was sacred, and that everything in connection with the work of God must be holy; that it must be free from everything like impurity and uncleanness; and that all defilement must be put away from those that approach nigh to God. From the light that has been given me, there has been a carelessness in this respect. I might speak of it, as Paul presents it. It is carried out in will-worship and neglecting of the body. But this voluntary humility, this will-worship and neglecting of the body, is not the humility that savors of Heaven. That humility that savors of Heaven will be particular to have the person, and actions, and apparel, of all who preach the holy truth of God, right, and perfectly proper, so that every item connected with us will recommend our holy religion. The very dress will be a recommendation of the truth to unbelievers. It will be a sermon in itself.

[55] But things that transpire in the sacred desk are often wrong. One minister conversing with another in the desk before the congregation, laughing and appearing to have no burden of the work, or lacking a solemn sense of their sacred calling, dishonors the truth, and brings the sacred down upon a low level with common things. The example is to remove the fear of God from the people, and to detract from the sacred dignity of the gospel Christ died to magnify. According to the

light that has been given me, it would be pleasing to God for them to bow down as soon as they step into the pulpit, and solemnly ask help from God. What kind of an impression would that make ? There would be a solemnity and awe upon the people. Why, their minister is communing with God. Their minister is committing himself to God before he dares to venture to stand before the people. Solemnity rests down upon the people, and angels of God are brought very near. Ministers should look to God the first thing as they come into the desk, thus saying to all, God is the source of my strength. A minister negligent of his apparel often wounds those of refined sensibilities and good taste. Those who are backward in this respect, should correct their errors and be more circumspect. The loss of some souls at last will be traced to the untidiness of the minister. The first appearance affected the people unfavorably because they could not link his appearance in any way with the truths he presented. His dress was against him; and the impression given, was, that they were a careless set anyhow; we see that they do not care anything about their dress, and we do not want anything to do with such a class of people.

Here, according to the light that has been given me, there has been a manifest neglect among our people. Ministers sometimes stand in the desk with their hair in disorder, and looking as if it had been untouched by comb and brush for a week. God is dishonored when they engage in his sacred service so neglectful of their appearance. Anciently the priests were required to have their garments in a particular style to do service in the holy place, and minister in the priest's office. They were to have garments in accordance with their work, and God distinctly specified what these should be. This laver was placed between the altar and the congregation, that before they came into the presence of God, in the sight of the congregation, they might wash their hands and their feet. What impression was this to make upon the people ? It was to show them that every particle of dust must be put away before they could go into the presence of God ; for he was so high and holy that unless they did comply with these conditions, death would follow.

But look at the manner and style of dress as worn by some of our ministers at the present day. Some who minister in sacred things so arrange their dress upon their persons that it destroys to some extent,

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[57] to say the least, the influence of their labor. There is an apparent lack of taste in color and neatness of fit. What is the impression given by such a manner of dress ? Why, it is, that the work in which they are engaged is considered no more sacred or elevated than common labor, as plowing in the field. The minister, by his example, brings down the sacred upon a level with common things.

The influence of such preachers upon the people is not pleasing to God. If any are brought out to receive the truth from their labors, they frequently imitate their preachers, and come down to the same low level with them. It will be more difficult to remodel and bring such into a right position, and teach them true order, and love for discipline, than to labor to convert to the truth, men and women out of the world who have never heard it. The Lord requires of his ministers to be pure and holy, and to rightly represent the principles of truth in their own lives, and by their example bring them up upon a high level.

[58] God requires of all who profess to be his chosen people if they are not teachers of the truth, to be careful to preserve cleanliness and purity of their bodies, also cleanliness and order in their houses and upon their premises. We are examples to the world, living epistles known and read of all men. God requires of all who profess godliness, and especially those who teach the truth to others, to abstain from all appearance of evil.

Dark or black material is more becoming a minister in the desk, and will make a better impression upon the people than to have his apparel of two or three different colors.

From the light I have had, the ministry is a sacred and exalted office, and those who accept this position should have Christ in their hearts, and manifest an earnest desire to have him worthily represented before the people, in all their acts, in their dress, in their speaking, and even in their *manner* of speaking.

They should speak with reverence. Some destroy the solemn impression they may have made upon the people, by raising their voices to a very high pitch, and hallooing and screaming out the truth. Truth loses two-thirds or three-quarters of its sweetness, its force, and solemnity, by being presented in this manner. But if the voice is toned right, if it has in it solemnity, and is so modulated as to be even pathetic, it will have a much better impression. This was the

tone in which Christ taught his disciples. He impressed them with solemnity. He spoke in a pathetic manner. But this loud hallooing—what does it do ? It does not give them any more exalted views of the truth. It does not impress people any more deeply, but causes a disagreeable sensation to the hearers, and is only wearing out the vocal organs of the speaker. [59]

The tones of the voice have much to do in affecting the hearts of those that hear. And many who might be useful men, are using up their vital forces, and destroying their lungs and vocal organs, by the manner of their speaking. Some ministers have acquired a habit of hurriedly rattling off what they have to say, as though they had a lesson to repeat and were hastening through it as fast as possible. This is not the best manner of speaking. Every minister can educate himself, by using proper care to speak distinctly and impressively, and not hurriedly crowd the words together without taking time to breathe. He should speak in a moderate manner that the people can get the ideas fastened in their minds as he passes along. But when the matter is rushed through so rapidly, the people cannot get the points in their minds, and they do not have time to get the impression that it is important for them to have; nor is there time for the truth to affect them, as it otherwise would.

Speaking from the throat, letting the words come out from the upper extremity of the vocal organs, all the time fretting and irritating them, is not the best way to preserve health or to increase the efficiency of those organs. You should take a full inspiration and let the action come from the abdominal muscles. Let the lungs be only the channel, but do not depend upon them to do the work. If you let your words come from deep down, exercising the abdominal muscles, you can speak to thousands with just as much ease as you can speak to ten. [60]

Some of our preachers are killing themselves by long, tedious praying, and loudly exercising the voice, when a lower tone would make a better impression, and save their own strength. Now while you go on regardless of the laws of life and health, and follow the impulse of the moment, do n't lay it to God if you break down. Many of you waste time and strength as you commence to speak in long preliminaries and excuses. You should commence your labor as though God had something for you to say to the people, instead

of apologizing because you are about to address them. Some use up nearly half an hour in making apologies; and time is frittered away; and when they get to their subject where they are desirous to fasten the points of truth, the people are wearied out and cannot see their force or be impressed with them. You should make the essential points of present truth as distinct as mile-posts so that the people will understand them. They will then see the arguments you want to present, and the positions you want to sustain.

[61] There is another class that address the people in a whining tone, not with hearts softened by the Spirit of God; but they think they must make an impression by the appearance of humility. Such a course does not exalt the gospel ministry. It brings it down and degrades it, instead of elevating and exalting it. Ministers should present the truth warm from glory. They should speak in such a manner as to rightly represent Christ, and preserve the dignity becoming his ministers.

The long prayers made by some ministers have been a great failure. Praying to great length, as some do, is all out of place. They injure the throat and vocal organs, and then talk of breaking down by their hard labor. They injure themselves when it is not called for. Many feel that praying injures their vocal organs more than talking. This is in consequence of the unnatural position of the body, and the manner they hold the head. You can stand and talk, and not feel injured. The position in praying should be a perfectly natural one. Long praying wearies, and is not in accordance with the gospel of Christ. Praying a half or a quarter of an hour is altogether too long. A few minutes' time is long enough to bring your case before God, telling him what you want; and you can take the people with you, and not weary them out, and lessen their interest for devo- tion and prayer. They may be refreshed and strengthened, instead of exhausted.

[62] There has been a mistake made by many in then religious exercises—in long praying, in long preaching, upon a high key, with a forced voice, in an unnatural strain and an unnatural tone. The minister has needlessly wearied himself, and really distressed the people, by the hard, labored exercise, which is all unnecessary. Ministers should speak in a manner to reach and impress the people. The teachings of Christ were impressive and solemn. His voice was

melodious. And should not we, as well as Christ, study to have melody in our voices? He was a man that had a mighty influence—the Son of God. We are so far beneath him and so far deficient that, do the very best we can, our efforts will be poor. We cannot gain and possess the influence that Christ had; but then, I ask you why we should not educate ourselves and bring ourselves just as near to the Pattern as it is possible for us to do, that we may have the greatest possible influence upon the people. Our words, our actions, our deportment, our dress, everything, should preach. Not only with our words should we speak to the people, but everything pertaining to our person should be a sermon to them, that right impressions may be made upon them, and that the truth spoken may be taken by them to their homes; and thus our faith will stand in a better light before the community. [63]

I never realized more than I do to-day, the exalted character of the work, its sacredness and holiness, and how important that we should be fit for the work. I see it in myself. I must have a new fitting up, a holy unction, or I cannot go any further to instruct others. I must know that I am walking with God. I must know that I understand the mystery of godliness. I must know that the grace of God is in my own heart; that my own life is in accordance with his will; that I am walking in his footsteps. Then my words will be true, my actions will be right.

But there is a word more I had almost forgotten. It is in regard to the influence the minister should exert in his preaching. It is not merely to stand in the desk. His work is but just begun there. It is to enter into the different families, and carry Christ there; to carry his sermons there; to carry them out in his actions and his words. As he visits a family, he should inquire into the condition of that family. Is he the shepherd of the flock? The work of a shepherd is not all done in the desk. He should talk with all the members of the flock; with the parents, to learn their standing; and with the children, to learn theirs. A minister should feed the flock over which God has made him overseer. It would be agreeable to go into the house and study. But if you do this, to the neglect of the work God has commissioned you to perform, you do wrong. Never enter a family without inviting them together, and bowing down and praying with them before you leave. Inquire into the health of their souls. What [64]

does a skillful physician do ? He inquires into the particulars of the case, then seeks to administer remedies. Just so the physician of the soul should inquire into the spiritual maladies with which the members of his flock are afflicted, then go to work to administer the proper remedies, and ask the great Physician to come to his aid. But give them the help that they need. Such ministers will receive all that respect and honor which is due them, as ministers of Jesus Christ. And in doing this, their own souls will be kept alive. They must be drawing strength from God in order to impart strength to those they shall minister to.

May the Lord help us to seek him with all the heart. I want to know that I daily gather the divine rays from glory, that emanate from the throne of God, and shine from the face of Jesus Christ, and scatter them in the pathway around me, and be all light in the Lord.

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Epistle Number One.

DEAR Bro. —: I have twice commenced a testimony to you, but have been unable to complete it for want of time. I must delay no longer, for I feel sadly burdened over your case. I have written a testimony for several of the ministers, and as their cases revive to my mind, I fully realize that their condition is deplorable. Your case is not an exception. The love of gain, the love of means, is becoming prominent with many of our ministers who profess to be representatives of Jesus Christ. The example of some of our ministers is such that the people are becoming discouraged.

Some of our ministers are standing directly in the way of the advancement of the work of God, and the people who take them for examples are backsliding from God. I was shown about two years ago, the dangers of our ministers, and the result of their course upon the cause of God. I have spoken in reference to these things in general terms, but those most at fault are the last to apply the testimonies to themselves. Some are so blinded by their own selfish interest that they lose sight of the exalted character of the work of God.

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Bro. —, your life has been almost a failure. You had talents of influence, but you have not improved them to the best account. You have failed in your family. You have let things go at loose ends

there, and the same deficiencies are felt in the church. The Lord has given you light in regard to the neglect of your duty in your family, and the course which you should pursue to redeem the past. Your deficiencies were pointed out, but you did not feel the sinfulness of bringing children into the world, to come up without proper training. You have excused their errors, their sins, and their wayward, reckless course, and have flattered yourself that they would come out right by-and-by.

Eli exactly represents your case. You have occasionally remonstrated with your children, and said, Why do ye so wickedly ? But you have not exercised your authority as a father, as a priest of the household, to command, and have your words as law in your family. Your mistaken fondness, and also that of your wife, for your children, have led you to neglect the solemn obligation devolving upon you as parents.

And doubly so upon you, Bro. —, as a minister of God, to rule well your own house, and bring your children into subjection. You have been pleased with their aptness, and excused their faults. Sin in them did not appear very sinful. You have displeased God, and nearly ruined your children, by your neglect of duty; and you have continued this neglect, after the Lord had re- proved and counseled you. Your influence as a family in the different places where you have lived, has been a greater injury to the cause of God than you have accomplished good. You have been blinded and deceived by Satan in regard to your family. You and your wife have made your children your equals. They have done about as they pleased. This has been a sad drawback to you in your work as a minister of Christ, and the neglect of your duty to bring your children into subjection has led to a still greater evil, which threatens to destroy your usefulness. You have been serving the cause of God, apparently, while you have been serving yourself more. The cause of God has languished, but you have been earnestly figuring and planning how to advantage yourself, and souls have been lost through your neglect of duty. Had you been one who had, during your ministry, occupied a position in this work and cause to build it up, and to be an example to serve the cause of God irrespective of your own interest, and had worn, through your devotion to it, your course would be more excusable; but even then, not approved of God. But when your deficiencies

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have been so apparent in some things, and the cause of God has suffered greatly because of the example you have given of your neglect of duty in your family, it is grievous in the sight of God for you to be professedly serving the cause, yet making your own selfish interest prominent. In your labors, you have frequently commenced an interest, and at the very point when you could work to the best advantage, home interests have drawn you away from the work of God. In many cases you have not been persevering and kept up the effort commenced until you were satisfied that all had decided for, or against, the truth.

It is not wise generalship to commence a war-fare against the powers of Satan, and at the height of the conflict to ingloriously leave the field, for Satan to bind more securely men and women who were upon the point of leaving his ranks, and taking their position on the side of Christ. That interest, once broken, can never again be raised. A few may be reached, but the greater portion can never be affected, and their hearts softened by the presentation of the truth.

Eld. — lost his influence, and the power of the truth, by engaging in speculations, and that out of his brethren. This was peculiarly offensive to God in a minister of Christ. But you have done the same. You have made Eld. —'s course an excuse for your love of traffic. You have justified your course of advantaging yourself, because other ministers have pursued this course. Other ministers are no criterion for you. If they pursue a course to injure their influence, and deprive themselves of the approbation of God, and the confidence of their brethren, their course should be shunned. Christ is your example; and you have no excuse for taking the course of erring men for example, unless their lives are in accordance with the life of Christ. Your influence will be dead to the cause of God, if you continue to pursue the course you have for a few years in the past. Your trafficking, and trading, and gathering up means from your brethren that you have not earned, is a great sin in the sight of God.

Some have really deprived themselves of means necessary for the comfort of their families, and some have deprived themselves of even the necessaries of life, to help you, and you have received it. Paul writes to his Philippian brethren, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." "Look not every man on his own

things, but every man also on the things of others.” He also writes to his Corinthian brethren, “Let no man seek his own, but every man another’s wealth.” The apostle mournfully says, “For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s.” Your cherishing a spirit to look out for your selfish interest is increasing upon you, and your conversation has been with covetousness.

The Apostle Paul admonishes his Hebrew brethren, “Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have; for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” You are sacrificing your reputation and your influence to an avaricious spirit. God’s precious cause is being reproached, because of this spirit that has taken hold of its ministers. You are blinded. You do not see how peculiarly offensive these things are to God. If you have decided to go in to get all of the world you can, do so; but do not do it under a covert of preaching Jesus Christ. Your time is either devoted to the cause of God, or it is not. Your own interest has been paramount. Your time that you should devote to the cause of God, is devoted too much to your own personal concerns, and you receive, from the treasury of God, means you do not earn. You are willing to receive means from those who are not as comfortable as yourself. You do not look on their side, and have bowels of compassion and sympathy. You do not closely investigate whether those who help you can afford to do so. Frequently, it would be more in place for you to help those whom you receive help from. You need to be a transformed man, before the work of God can prosper in your hands. Your home, farm cares have occupied your mind. You have not given yourself to the work. You have made an excuse for your being so much at home, that your children needed your presence and care, in order for you to carry out the light given you in vision. But, Bro. —, have you done it? You excuse yourself that your children are now beyond your control, too old for you to command. In this you mistake. There are none of your children too old to respect your authority and obey your commands while they have the shelter of your roof. How old were Eli’s sons? They were married men; and Eli, as a father, and a priest of God, was required to restrain them. [70]

But allowing that the two eldest are now beyond your control, they were not when God sent you the light that you were indulging [71]

them to their ruin—that you should discipline them. But you have three younger children who are walking in the way of sinners, disobedient, unthankful, unholy, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. Your youngest son is following in the footsteps of his brother. What course are you pursuing toward him ? Do you discipline him to habits of industry and usefulness? Are you taking up your fearfully neglected work, and redeeming the past ? Do you tremble at the word of God ?

[72] Your neglect at home is wonderful, for a man that has God's written word, and also testimonies borne especially to you of your neglect. Your boy does as he pleases. You do not restrain him. You have not educated and trained him to bear his share of the burdens of life. He is a bad boy because of your neglect. His life is a reproach to his father. Ye knew your duty, but ye did it not. He has no convictions of the truth. He knows he can have his own way, and Satan controls his mind. You have made your children an excuse to keep you at home; but, Bro. — the things of this world have come first. The cause of God does not lie near your soul, and the example you have given the people of God is not worthy of their imitation. In Minnesota they need laborers; not merely ministers who go from place to place, when it is convenient. God's cause must have minute-men, who will not be hindered from the work of God, or the call of duty, by any selfish or worldly interest. Minnesota is a large field, and many there are susceptible of the influence of the truth churches be brought into working order, thoroughly disciplined, a light would shine forth from them, that would tell all through the State. You might have done tenfold more in Minnesota than you have done. But the world has come in between you and the work of God, and divided your interest. Selfish interest has come into your heart, and the power of the truth has been going out. You need a great change accomplished for you in order for you to be brought into working

[73] order. But little labor, earnest labor, have you accomplished. Yet you have been in earnest to obtain all the means you could as your right. And you have overreached. You have looked out for your own interest, and have advantaged yourself at the disadvantage of others. You have been, for some time, going in this direction; and unless checked, your influence is at an end. Moses Hull went in this direction. His conversation was with covetousness, and he gathered

all that he could obtain of means. His hold of the truth was not strong enough to overcome his selfishness.

When B. F. Snook embraced the truth, he was very destitute. Liberal souls deprived themselves of conveniences, and even some of the necessaries of life, to help this minister, whom they believed to be a faithful servant of Christ. They helped him, as they would have helped their Saviour. They did all this in good faith. But it was the means of ruining the man. His heart was not right with God. He lacked principle. The more he received, the greater desire he had for means. He was not a truly converted man. He gathered all he could from his brethren, until he had been helped, through their liberalities, to a valuable home; then he apostatized, and was the bitterest enemy to the very ones who had been the most liberal to him. This man will have to render an account for the means that he has taken from true-hearted believers in the truth. He did not rob [74] them, but the treasury of God. We wish him no evil, for "God will bring every work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." He has walked in the ways of his own heart, and in the sight of his eyes; but for all these things God will bring him into Judgment. All the hidden things of darkness will then be brought to light, and the secret counsels of the heart shall be manifested.

Bro. —, you are not as these men We would not compare you to them ; hut we would say, Beware of walking in their footsteps, and of having your conversation with covetousness. This desire to obtain means for selfish purposes, by ministers, is a snare to them, which if they continue in, will prove their overthrow. As they get their eyes upon self, their interest in the prosperity of God's cause, and their love for poor souls, become less and less. They do not lose their love for, and interest in, the truth at once. It is a gradual work. Their departure from the cause of right is gradual and imperceptible, so much so that it is frequently difficult to tell the time when the change in them took place. I think your course highly dangerous. You have not felt the necessity of heeding the light God has given you, and arousing yourself to save your household, and acquitting [75] yourself as a father and priest of your household. You did not deny the light given you. You did not rise up against it. But you neglected to carry it out, because it was not convenient, and agreeable to your

feelings, to do this. Therefore you were like Meroz. You came not up to the help of the Lord, although the matter was of such vital consequence as to effect the eternal interests of your children. You neglected your duty. You were in this respect a slothful servant. You have but little sense of how God regards the neglect of parents to discipline their children. Had you reformed here, you would have seen the necessity of the same effort to maintain discipline and order in the church. Your slackness, that has been manifested in your family, has been seen in your labors in the church. You cannot build up the church until you are a transformed man. The neglect of the light that God has given you, has, in a degree, made you captive; subject to Saan's devices ; therefore a door has been left open for him to gain access to you in other directions, and make you a weak man. Satan sees he has made a success of blinding your eyes to the interests of your family, in leading you to neglect the light the Lord has given. Satan has beset you in another direction. He has excited your love of traffic, your love of gain; and by doing this, your interest has been divided from the cause and work of God. The love of God and the truth is gradually becoming of less importance. Souls for whom Christ died are of less value to you than your temporal interests. If you pursue the course you have, you will soon become jealous, and sensitive, and envious, and will go away from the truth as others have gone.

You are anxious to obtain labor in your locality, hoping that something can be said or done to awaken your children. You have neglected your duty. When you take up the long-neglected work the Lord has left you to do; when you, with the spirit of Christ, arouse yourself resolutely to set your house in order, then you may hope that God will aid your efforts, and impress the hearts of your family. While you have made your children an excuse to detain you at home, you have not done the work for which you plead your stay at home. You have not disciplined your children. Your wife is deficient in this respect, therefore the greater need of your being in a position to do your duty. Her love is of that kind which will lead her to indulge them in doing as they please, and in choosing their own society, which will lead to their ruin. Your presence at home, while yet you allow your children to do as they please, is worse for your family than if you were away from your children; and has a worse influence upon

the cause of truth. God calls for earnest, unselfish, dis-interested laborers in his cause, who will keep up the various branches of the work; such as obtaining subscribers for the periodicals, teaching them promptness in paying their dues, and encouraging brethren to keep up their Systematic Benevolence. Sacrifice, self-denial, toil, and disinterested benevolence, characterized the life of Christ, who is our example in all things. The work and character of a true minister will be in accordance with the life of Christ. He laid aside, and turned from, his glory, his high command, his honor, and his riches, and humbled himself to our necessities. We cannot equal the example, but we should copy it. Love for souls, for whom Christ made this great sacrifice, should stimulate every minister of Christ to exertion, to self-denial and persevering effort, that they may be co-workers with Christ in the salvation of souls. Then will the works of God's servants be fruitful; for they will indeed be his instruments. The power of God will be seen upon them in the gracious influences of his Spirit. God would have you arouse, and not be easily discouraged, but possessing strength to surmount obstacles; if need be, laboring as did the apostle Paul, in weariness, in painfulness, in watching, forgetting infirmities in the deep interest that is felt for souls for whom Christ died.

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Some of our ministers are taking advantage of the liberalities of our brethren, to advantage themselves; and in thus doing, they are gradually losing their influence, and destroying, by their example in these things, the confidence of their brethren in them. And they are effectually closing the door, so that those who really need help, and are worthy of it, cannot obtain it. They also shut the door whereby help may be expected to sustain the cause. The people are, many of them, becoming disheartened, as they see the little interest some of the ministers they employ manifest for the prosperity of the cause of God. They do not see a devotion to the work. The people are neglected, and the cause is languishing, because of the lack of well-directed and efficient labor. They have a right to expect this from their ministers.

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Some of the brethren, in their disappointment, give up to a feeling of impatience and desperation, as they see the selfishness and covetousness manifested by their teachers. The people are in advance of many of their ministers. If the ministers manifest a spirit

of self-sacrifice and a love for souls, means will not be withheld from the cause. Let the ministers come up to the exalted standard as representatives of Jesus Christ, and we shall see the glory of God attending the presentation of truth, and souls being constrained to [79] acknowledge its clearness and power. The cause of God must be made primary.

My brother, you could do a good work. You have a knowledge of the truth, and could be a great blessing to the cause of present truth, if you were consecrated and sanctified to the work, having no selfish interest aside from the work. God has committed to you a sacred trust, precious talents; and if you are found faithful to your trust, faithfully improving your talents, you will not be ashamed when the Master shall come, requiring both the principal and interest. It is not safe to slight, or in any sense disregard, the light God has been pleased to give. You have something to do to bring yourself into a position where God can especially work for you.

The prosperity of the cause of God in Minnesota is due more to the labors of Bro. Pierce, than to your own efforts. His labors have been a special blessing to Minnesota. He is a man of fine conscience. The fear of God is before him. Infirmities have weighed heavily upon him, which has opened the way for him to question whether he was in the way of his duty, and he has feared that God was not favoring his efforts. God loves Bro. Pierce. He has but little self-esteem, and is fearing, and doubting, and dreading labor; for the thought is constantly upon his mind that he is not worthy or [80] capable to help others. If he would overcome timidity, and possess more confidence that God would be with him and strengthen him, he would be much more happy, and a greater blessing to others. There has been a failure, in the life of Bro. Pierce, to read character. He believed others to be as honest as himself; and he has been deceived in some cases. He has not the discernment that some have. You have also failed, in your life, to read character. You have spoken peace to those against whom God has declared evil. In Bro. Pierces' feebleness and age, he may be imposed upon; yet all should esteem Bro. Pierce highly for his works' sake. He commands the love and tenderest sympathy of his brethren; for he is a conscientious, God-fearing man.

God loves Sr. Pierce. She is one of the timid, fearing ones, conscientious in the performance of her duty; and she will receive a reward when Jesus comes, if she is faithful to the end. She has not made a display of her virtues. She has been retiring, and one of the more silent ones; yet her life has been useful. She has blessed many by her influence. Sr. Pierce has not much self-esteem and self-confidence. She has many fears, yet does not come under the head of the fearful and unbelieving, who will find no place in the kingdom of God. Those outside of the city are among the most confident boasters, and apparently zealous ones, who love in word, but not in deed and in truth. Their hearts are not right with God. The fear of God is not before them. The fearful and unbelieving, who are punished with the second death, are of that class who are ashamed of Christ in this world. They are fearful, afraid to do right and follow Christ, lest they should meet with pecuniary loss. They neglect their duty, to avoid reproach and trials, and to escape dangers. Those who dare not do right because they will thus ex-pose themselves to trials, persecution, loss, and suffering, are cowards, and are ripening, with idolaters, and liars, and all sinners, for the second death. [81]

Christ's sermon on the mount declares who are the truly blessed: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, [those who are not self-exalted, but candid, and of humble disposition, not too proud to be taught, not vain and ambitious for the honors of the world,] for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, [those who are penitential, submissive, and who grieve over their failures and errors, because the Spirit of God is grieved,] for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, [those who are gentle and forgiving, who, when reviled, will not revile again, but manifest a teachable spirit, and are not holding themselves in high esteem,] for they shall inherit the earth." Those who possess the qualifications here enumerated, will not only be blessed of God here in this life, but will be crowned with glory, honor, and immortality, in the kingdom of God. [82]

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Epistle Number Two.

I HAVE been shown that the disciples of Christ are his representatives upon the earth ; and God designs that they shall be lights in the moral darkness of this world, dotted all over the country, in the towns, villages, and cities, “a spectacle unto the world, to angels, and to men.” If they obey the teachings of Christ in his sermon on the mount, they will be seeking continually for perfection of Christian character, and will be truly the light of the world—channels through which God will communicate his divine will, the truth of heavenly origin, to those who sit in darkness, and who have no knowledge of the way of life and salvation.

[83] God cannot display the knowledge of his will, and the wonders of his grace, among the unbelieving world, unless he has witnesses scattered all over the earth. This is God’s plan: that men and women who are partakers of this great salvation through Jesus Christ, should be his missionaries, bodies of light throughout the world, to be as signs to the people—living epistles, known and read of all men; their faith and works testifying to the near approach of the coming Saviour, and that they have not received the grace of God in vain. The people must be warned to prepare for the coming Judgment. To those who have been listening only to fables, God will give an opportunity to hear the sure word of prophecy, whereunto they do well that they take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. God will present the sure word of truth to the understanding of all who will take heed, that they may contrast truth with the fables which have been presented to them by men who claim to understand the word of God, and profess to be qualified to instruct those in darkness.

In order to increase numbers at Bordoville, brethren have left the places they moved from destitute of strength and influence to sustain meetings. This has pleased the enemies of God and the truth. These should have remained as faithful witnesses, their good works testifying to the genuineness of their faith, by exemplifying in their lives the purity and power of the truth. Their influence would convict and convert, or con-demn.

[84] Every follower of Jesus has his or her work to do as missionaries of Christ, in their families, in their neighborhoods, and in the towns and cities where they live. If they are consecrated to God, they are

channels of light. God makes them instruments of righteousness to communicate the light of truth, the riches of his grace, to others. Unbelievers may appear indifferent and careless ; yet God is impressing and convicting their hearts that there is a reality in the truth. But when men leave the field, give up the contest, and allow the cause of God to languish before God says, "Let them alone," they will only be a burden to any church where they may move. Those they have left, who were convicted, have frequently quieted their consciences with thinking that, after all, they were needlessly anxious; they decide that there is no reality in the profession made by Seventh-day Adventists.

Satan triumphs to see the vine of God's planting either entirely uprooted or left to languish. It is not the purpose of God that his people should cluster together and concentrate their influence in a special locality.

The Brn. ———'s efforts to encourage brethren to move to their place, were made in good faith, yet not according to the mind of God. God's ways are not as our ways. He seeth not as man seeth. Their object was good; but, in thus doing, the purposes of God in regard to the salvation of men and women could not be carried out.

God designs that his people shall be the light of the world, the salt of the earth. The plan of gathering together in large numbers, to compose a large church, has contracted their influence, and narrowed down their sphere of usefulness, and is literally putting their light under a bushel. It is God's design that the knowledge of the truth should come to all, that none may be left ignorant of its principles, and remain in darkness; but that all should be tested upon it, and decide for or against it; that all may be warned, and left without excuse. The plan of colonizing, or moving from different localities where there is but little strength or influence, and concentrating the influence of many in one locality, is removing the light away from places where God would have it shine.

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The followers of Jesus Christ, scattered throughout the world, do not have a high sense of their responsibility, and the obligation resting upon them to let their light shine forth to others. If there are but one or two in a place, they can, although few in number, so conduct before the world as to have an influence which will impress the unbeliever with the sincerity of their faith. The followers of

Jesus are not meeting the mind and will of God, if they are content to remain in ignorance of his word. All should become Bible students. Christ commanded his followers, "Search the Scriptures; for in them [86] ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." Peter exhorts us, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and 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."

Many who profess to believe the truth for these last days, will be found wanting. They have neglected the weightier matters. Their conversion is superficial; not deep, earnest, and thorough. They do not know why they believe the truth, only because others have done so, and they take it for granted it must be so. They can give no intelligent reason why they believe. Many have allowed their minds to be filled with things of minor importance, and their eternal interest is made secondary. Their own souls are dwarfed and crippled in spiritual growth. Others are not enlightened or edified by their experience, and the knowledge it was their privilege and duty to obtain. Strength and stability lie with true-hearted professors. Christ and him crucified should become the theme of our thoughts, and stir the deepest emotions of our souls. The true follower of Christ will appreciate the great salvation he has wrought for them; and wherever he leads the way, they will follow. They will consider it a privilege to bear whatever burdens Christ may lay upon them. It is through [87] the cross alone that we can estimate the worth of the human soul.

Such is the value of men for whom Christ died, that the Father is satisfied with the infinite price which he pays for the salvation of man in yielding up his own Son to die for their redemption. What wisdom, and mercy, and love, in its fullness, are here manifested. The worth of man is only known by going to Calvary. In the mystery of the cross of Christ, we can place an estimate upon man.

What a responsible position, to unite with the Redeemer of the world in the salvation of men ! This work calls for self-denial, sacrifice, and benevolence ; for perseverance, courage, and faith. Why there are so little results seen of those who minister in word and doctrine, is, they have not the fruit of the grace of God in their hearts and lives. They have not faith. Many who profess to be ministers of Jesus Christ, manifest a wonderful submission in seeing the unconverted all around them going to perdition. A minister

of Christ has no right to be at ease, and sit down submissively to the fact that the truth is powerless, and souls are not stirred by its presentation. They should resort to prayer, and should work and pray without ceasing. Those who submit to remain destitute of spiritual blessings, without an earnest wrestling for those blessings, consent to have Satan triumph. Persistent, prevailing faith is necessary. God's ministers must come into closer companionship with Christ, and follow his example in all things—in purity of life, in self-denial, in benevolence, in diligence, in perseverance. They should remember that a record will one day appear in evidence against them for the least omission of duty. [88]

Bro. ——— did not discern that thus encouraging brethren to move to his place was bringing burdens upon himself, and into the church, as it would require much time and labor to keep them in a condition where they could be a help instead of a hindrance. He thought if he could collect families to his place, they would help compose a church, and relieve him of care and burdens. But, at Bordoville, it has proved as at Battle Creek : the more the brethren moved into Battle Creek, the heavier were the burdens which fell upon the laborers who had the cause of God at heart. Men and women of varied minds and different organizations, clustering together, could live in sweet harmony, if they would esteem others better than themselves, and if they loved their neighbors as themselves, as Christ enjoined upon them.

It is most difficult to deal with human minds that are not under the especial control of the Spirit of God, and are exposed to the control of Satan. Selfishness so possesses the hearts of men and women, and iniquity is so cherished by even some professing godliness, that a large company's clustering together should be avoided; for they will not thus be the most happy. [89]

Those whom you really desired to have come to Bordoville, were those you considered the best of society, capable of exerting a good influence. Just such men and women are wanted to be stationed over the world as faithful sentinels, that those who are without God may be convinced that there is a power in the religion of Christ. Men of influence are the salt of the earth in verity and truth. God would not be pleased to have such men congregate together, and narrow down their sphere of usefulness. Such men, who are reliable, are

very scarce, for the reason that the hearts of men are so devoted to their own selfish interest that they know no other interest but that which concerns themselves.

[90] If a number of picked men could be at the important post at Battle Creek, God would be pleased; and if they would make a sacrifice of their own selfish interest for the suffering cause, they would only be following in the footsteps of their Redeemer, who left his glory, his majesty and high command, and, for our sakes, became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich. Christ sacrificed for man; but man, in his turn, will not willingly and cheerfully sacrifice for the sake of Christ. If a number of responsible, true-hearted, burden-bearing men and women who could be depended upon as minute-men, and who would promptly respond to the call for help when help was needed, would move to Battle Creek, God would be glorified. God wants men at Battle Creek who can be depended upon; who will ever be found on the right side in times of danger; who will faithfully war against the enemy, instead of taking their position with those who trouble the Israel of God, and who are standing in the defense of those who are weakening the hands of God's servants, and turning their weapons against the very ones whom God enjoins upon them to sustain. Every church, in order to prosper, must have men upon whom it can rely in times of peril—men who are as true as steel—unselfish men, having the interest of God's cause lying nearer their hearts than anything which concerns their own opinions or their worldly interests.

[91] Churches are not composed of all pure, sincere Christians. Not all the names that stand registered upon the church books are worthy to be there. The life and character of some, compared with others, is as gold with worthless dross. It need not be so. Those who are valuable in life and influence have felt the importance of following Jesus closely, and making the life of Christ their study and example. This will require effort, meditation, and earnest prayer. It requires exertion to obtain the victory over selfishness, and to make the interest of God's cause primary. Men have made the effort, and practiced close discipline of self, and they have gained precious victories. Those who consider their own interest primary, live for self. Their character in the sight of God is as worthless dross.

Bro. —— has had more than one man should do in working for the interest of the church in his place. If he absented himself for a short time to labor for others, when he would return home, heavier and greater burdens were all ready to be laid upon him. He has permitted them to rest upon his shoulders; and he has bowed, groaning under the load. The Brn. —— have been in danger of being too exacting, and of presenting their lives and example as a criterion. Self has not been lost sight of in Christ. These brethren should have but little to say about self, hut exalt Christ. They should hide behind Jesus, and he alone appear as the perfect pattern which all should seek to copy.

Where were the men to be depended upon in times of trial and danger ? Where were the God-fearing men to rally around the standard when the foe was seeking an advantage ? Some, who should have been at their post, were unfaithful when their help was most needed. Their course showed that they had no special interest in the advancement of the work and cause of God. Some thought too much was expected of them; and instead of cheerfully moving forward to do what they could, they sat down in Satan's easy chair, and refused to do anything. [92]

Some were ever jealous. Bro. —— was of this class. He has a peculiar stubbornness in his organization, that leads him to persist in a wrong course because he thinks it will please and gratify his brethren for him to change and take an opposite course. At times, when he feels just like it, he is ready to do anything in his power to advance the cause of God. But he loves to have his own way so well that he will let the precious cause of God suffer rather than to give up his will and his way. Bro. is not a dependence man. He is subject to the temptations of Satan, and is frequently under his control. He is fitful, impulsive. He has a selfish, unsubdued heart. He has, at times, been jealous, envious, and very selfish. He is, at times, kind, then hating, then loving. He cannot perfect Christian character until he resists temptation, and subdues his own stubborn will, and cherishes a spirit of humility, willing to see and confess his errors. He has been, at times, true and earnest. Then a wave would waft him in an opposite direction, and he would cherish jealousy, envy, and distrust. [93] Self and selfish interest were paramount, and he, full of fault-finding. He was suspicious that others did not appreciate him, but wished to

injure him. Bro. ——— needs a thorough conversion. It is not enough for men to profess the truth. They may acknowledge the whole truth, and yet know nothing, by experimental knowledge in their daily life, of the sanctifying influence of the truth upon the heart and life, and experience not the power of true godliness.

The truth is holy and powerful, and will effect a thorough reformation in the hearts and lives of those who are sanctified by it. Bro. ——— is capable of exerting an influence for good. He can, if he subdues self and humbles his heart before God, become a true bearer of the yoke of Christ. He can be a help to his family, and to others, instead of a hindrance. He weakens the cause of God in Bordoville, because of the defects in his Christian character. If Bro. ——— lives according to the light he has received, he will work out his salvation with fear and trembling, and, in thus doing, will let a bright light shine upon the pathway of others, and will glorify God. The case of Bro. represents others in the church, who need the same work of transformation in their hearts in order to be right.

[94] Bro. ——— can be more useful in his life than he now is, or has ever been. God has not called him to the work especially to minister in word and doctrine. He is not qualified for this position ; yet he can do errands j for the Lord, and be a help in the meetings.

If he lives in the light himself, he can ref fleet light to others. He can be a blessing to others; he can speak words of comfort and encouragement to the desponding. But in order to do this, he should encourage a more hopeful, cheerful spirit himself, refusing to look upon the dark side, or talk unbelief. He should throw cheerfulness, and hope, and courage, in his words, and even in the tones of his voice.

Sr. ——— has infirmities ; yet she does not make the best of her case. She increases her difficulties by an unsubmitive spirit. She permits the enemy to control her mind. She suffers with bodily infirmities, and should have sympathy; but restlessness, peevishness, complaints, murmuring, and useless regrets, do not alleviate her sufferings or bring happiness to her, but only aggravate the difficulty.

The world is full of dissatisfied spirits, who overlook the happiness and blessings within their reach, and are seeking continually for happiness and satisfaction that they do not realize. They are on the stretch constantly for some expectant, far-off good, greater

than they possess, and are ever in a state of disappointment. They cherish unbelief and ingratitude, in that they overlook the blessings right in their pathway. The common, every-day blessings of life are unwelcome to them, as was the manna to the children of Israel. [95]

Sr. — is addressed by Christ: “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 of heart: and ye shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

The words, the deportment and general example, of Sr. —, teach an entirely different lesson from that of our Lord. Sr. — loses much in overlooking the present blessings within her grasp, and uneasily searching for happiness. Her efforts are unrewarded, and her fruitless search makes a great deal of unhappiness for herself and all who associate with her. Her unrest, her anxious, troubled spirit, is expressed in her countenance, and casts a shadow. This gloom, and unbelief, and discontent, encourage the temptations of the enemy. By her continual distrust, and borrowing trouble, she casts a shadow instead of shedding a sunbeam.

Bro. — should be patient and forbearing, and carefully shield her from unnecessary burdens; for she is not prepared to bear them. She, in her turn, should watch against the incoming foe, and should take up her life-burdens uncomplainingly, and bear them with cheerfulness, sweetening them all with gratitude because they are no heavier. [96]

Bro. — is prone to look upon the dark side. He should hold himself in readiness to do the will of God, and use the influence God has given him to the very best advantage. He should cheerfully perform the duties of to-day, and not borrow to-morrow's trouble to make himself miserable over. He has not to perform the duties of next week, but the work and duties the day brings.

Bro. and Sr. — should unite their influence together in saying, “Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” It is a misfortune to borrow the trouble of next week, with which to embitter the present week. When real trouble comes, God will fit every meek and lowly one to bear it. When his providence permits it to come, he will provide help to endure it. Fretting and murmuring cloud and stain the soul, and shut out the bright sunlight from the pathway of others.

[97] Bro. ——— might have pursued a course toward Bro. ——— to have helped him, and at the same time helped himself; but selfishness deprived Bro. ——— of advantages, and Bro. ——— himself was disadvantaged, fearing that he would advantage others. Bro. ——— has not loved his neighbor as himself; and his supreme selfishness in many things has deprived him of good, and shut away from him the blessing of God. It does not profit any man, in the end, to be selfish ; for God marks it all, and will render to every man according as his works have been. “Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” “He which soweth sparingly, shall also reap sparingly.”

These persons I have mentioned to represent the true state of many, in the church at Bordoville, whose cases are similar. The many congregated at that place have brought burdens and cares upon Bro. ——— ———to keep them straight. Had they been free from jealousy, and kept themselves in the love of God, they would have stayed up his hands, comforted his heart, and sent him forth to labor for the salvation of souls, while their prayers would have followed him as sharp sickles in the harvest field. Their lack of consecration and devotion to God has weakened their own faith, weakened the hands of Bro. ———, destroyed his courage, and made his labors in the gospel field nearly useless. Church trials at home have crippled his efforts, both at home and abroad, and kept his labors confined, [98] in a great measure, to the locality of his place. This confining the labor mostly to one locality, has a withering influence upon the spiritual interest and zeal of a minister of Christ.

In order for laborers to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the truth, they must have a varied experience, which will be best acquired in extended labor in new fields, in different localities, coming in contact with all classes of people, and with all varieties of minds, calling into exercise various kinds of labor to meet the wants of many and varied minds. This drives the true laborer to God and the Bible for light, and strength, and knowledge, in order to be fully qualified to meet the wants of the people. They should heed the exhortation given to Timothy: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” “Who, then, is that faithful and wise steward, whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them

their portion of meat in due season?" Wisdom is needed to discern the most appropriate subject for the occasion.

Bro. ——— has not been growing up into a successful workman. He has become dwarfed. His mind has been narrowed down, and his spiritual strength has been waning. He should now be a successful laborer, a thorough workman. Instead of giving himself wholly to the work, he has been serving tables. Paul exhorted Timothy, "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them ; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine ; continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

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Bro. ——— is active and willing to do—willing to bear burdens that are not connected with his calling; and he has had his mind and time too much engrossed in temporal things. Some ministers maintain a certain dignity not in accordance with the life of Christ, and are unwilling to make themselves useful by engaging in physical labor, as the occasion may require, to lighten the burdens of those whose hospitalities they share, and relieve them of care. Physical exercise will prove a blessing to themselves, rather than an injury. In helping others, they advantage themselves. But some go to the other extreme. When their time and strength are all required in the work and cause of God, they are willing to engage in labor, and become servants of all, even in temporal things; and they really rob God of the service he requires of them. Precious time is thus taken up in trivial matters, which should be devoted to the interests of God's cause.

[100]

Bro. J. N. A. has erred here. He has devoted time and strength to correspondence with his brethren, answering their private letters of inquiry, which time and strength should have been given to the especial interests of the work of God at large.

There are but few who realize the responsibilities resting upon the few ministers in this cause who bear the burdens of the work. The brethren frequently call these men from their work to attend to their little matters, or to settle some church trial, which they can and

should attend to themselves. “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. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering.” He must be earnest and persevering. If he is irresolute, doubting continually whether the Lord will indeed do as he has promised, he will receive nothing.

[101] Many seem to think it a cheaper way to have their ministers bring the light from God to them, rather than to be to the trouble of going to God for it themselves. Such lose much. They might be obtaining a valuable experience in daily following Christ, and obtaining a clear knowledge of his will by making him their guide and counsellor. For want of this very experience, brethren professing the truth walk in the sparks of others’ kindling, and are unacquainted with the Spirit of God and the knowledge of his will, and are therefore easily moved from their faith. They are unstable, because they trusted in others to obtain an experience for them. Ample provisions have been made for every son and daughter of Adam to obtain for themselves a knowledge of the divine will, and to perfect Christian character, and be purified through the truth. God is dishonored by that class who profess to be followers of Christ, and yet have no experimental knowledge of the divine will, or the mystery of godliness.

[102] Bro. ——— has had a multiplicity of home cares. The increase of numbers in the church has not lessened his burdens. The increase of numbers in his family has been too heavy a tax upon himself and his family, and these things have been a hinderance to his becoming a successful laborer. He has become rusty in the work of God, and needs burnishing. His testimony needs to be vitalized by the Spirit and power of God. His brethren in Bordoville, who have not a special work to do in laboring in word and doctrine, should be awake to see where others need help, and should help them. Many close their eyes to the good they have opportunity to do for others, and thereby lose, by their neglect, the blessing they might obtain. Bro. ——— has been left to bear burdens that his brethren should have considered it their duty and privilege to bear.

Our work in this world is to benefit others, to live for others’ good, to bless others, to be hospitable ; and frequently it may be at our inconvenience to entertain those who really need our care, and the benefit of our society, and our homes. There is, by some, an

avoiding of these necessary burdens. Some one must bear these; and because churches generally do not share equally in these Christian duties, and are not lovers of hospitality, a few, who have willing hearts, and who cheerfully make the cases of those who need help their own, are burdened. Especially should a church relieve its ministers of extra burdens in this direction. The ministers who are actively engaged in the cause of God, laboring for the salvation of souls, have continual sacrifices to make.

Bro. ———'s testimony needs to be enlivened by the grace of God. He needs a new anointing, that he may be able to comprehend the magnitude of the work, and devote his entire being to the advancement of the cause of God. The Lord has work enough to employ all his followers. They can show forth his glory, if they will. The majority refuse to do this. They profess faith, but have not works. Their faith is dead, being alone. They shun responsibilities and burdens, and will be rewarded as their works have been. Because some do not do the work they might do, and will not lift the burdens they could lift, the work is too great for the few who will engage in it. They see so much to do that they overtax their strength, and are fast wearing out. [103]

God calls at this time for laborers whose whole interests are identified with his work and his cause. The ministers engaged in this work must be energized by the spirit and power of the truths they preach, and then they will have influence. The people will seldom rise higher than their minister. A world-loving spirit in them has a tremendous influence upon others. The people make the deficiencies of the minister an excuse to cover their own world-loving spirit. They quiet their consciences, thinking that they may be free to love the things of this life, and be indifferent to spiritual things, because their ministers are so. They deceive their own souls, and remain in friendship with the world, which the apostle declares to be enmity with God.

The ministers should be examples to the flock. They should manifest an undying love for souls, and the same devotion to the work and cause, which they desire to see in the people. With the ministers in Vermont there has been a mistake in their labor. They have passed over the same ground again and again, to help the churches, when frequently they needed labor bestowed upon themselves, to bring [104]

them into a position where God could bless, and make their labors fruitful. There has not been one efficient, thorough laborer, fully qualified to keep up all parts of the work in Vermont.

Bro. and Sr. — are invalids. God does not lay very heavy responsibilities upon them. They need to watch closely, lest they narrow down their influence. They have no children of their own, to call into exercise parental love and care, and are in danger of selfishness, and of becoming narrow in their views and feelings. They are in danger of becoming notional. All these things have a bad influence upon the cause of God. They should labor to keep their minds elevated above themselves. They should not make themselves a criterion for others. Those who have no children of their own to share their thoughts, and to call into exercise, labor, forbearance, patience, and love, should guard themselves, lest their thoughts and labor center upon themselves. Those who have no children are poorly qualified to instruct those who have children, how to train them, for they have not had experience in this work. In very many cases, those who have no children are the most ready to instruct those who have children, when, at the same time, they make children of themselves in many respects. They cannot be turned out of a certain course; and they require as much, and even more, patience exercised toward them, than children do. It is selfishness to have a certain course marked out, and pursue this course at the inconvenience of others.

It is little things which test the character. It is the unpretending acts of daily self-denial, with cheerfulness and gentleness, that God smiles upon. We should not be living for ourselves, but for others. We should bless others by our forgetfulness of self, and thoughtfulness of others. We should cherish love, forbearance and fortitude. Very few realize the benefits of the care, responsibility and experience, that children bring to the family.

Many have large families coming up without discipline. The parents are neglecting a precious trust and sacred duty, which, if faithfully performed in the fear of God, would be obtaining, not only for their children, but for themselves, a fitness for the kingdom of Heaven. But a childless house is a desolate place. The hearts of the inmates are in danger of becoming selfish, and cherishing a love for their own ease, their own way, and consulting their own desires and

conveniences. They gather sympathy to themselves, but have a small stock to bestow upon others. The care and affection for dependent children remove the roughness from our natures, make us tender and sympathetic, and have an influence to develop the nobler elements of our character. Many are diseased physically, mentally and morally, because their attention is turned almost exclusively to themselves. They might be saved from stagnation by the healthy vitality which springs from younger and varying minds, and by the restless energy of children

Bro. — is aged. No weighty responsibility should now rest upon him. He has displeased God in his misapplied love for his children. He has had too much anxiety to help his children pecuniarily, that he might not offend them. In order to please them, he has injured them. They are not wise and faithful in the management of means, even viewing the matter from the worldling's stand-point. Viewing the matter from a religious standpoint, they are very deficient. They have not conscientious scruples in regard to religious things. They do not adorn society, or the cause of God, by position and influence in the world, or by pure Christian morals and virtuous actions in the service of Christ. They have not been trained to habits of self-denial and self-reliance as their safeguards in life. Here is the great sin resting upon parents. They do not discipline their children. They do not train them up for God. They do not teach them self-government, stability of character, and the necessity of a resolute, well-directed will. Most children, in this age, are left to come up. They are not taught the necessity of developing their physical and mental powers for some good purpose, to bless society with their influence, and be well qualified to adorn the Christian life, and to perfect holiness in the fear of God. [107]

Bro. — has erred by intrusting his property to his children. He has laid upon them responsibilities they were not qualified to bear. He placed his means out of his control, and has gathered up means from his brethren for his feeble labors. God has not been glorified by the course Bro. — has pursued in regard to his means. He has excused a wrong course pursued by his children, which is not in keeping with our faith, or the Bible standard. He has virtually said to the wicked, It shall be well with thee; when God has plainly declared it shall be ill with him.

[108] These errors upon the part of Bro. — show a great lack of heavenly wisdom, and have, in a great degree, disqualified him for the solemn work resting upon the faithful minister of Christ. What can Bro. — plead before God when the Master shall bid him give an account of his stewardship? Bro. — has been moving like a blind man. He has been led by the unconsecrated minds of his children. He has not felt the necessity of seeking for counsel and advice from God's servants who were standing in the light. He has been led by a perverted sympathy, and has failed in judgment. His course has injured himself and the cause of God.

It is not preachers merely, to go among the churches and pray and exhort occasionally, that Vermont needs. A cry could be consistently raised among God's people in Vermont, for laborers. Earnest, zealous workmen are needed to strengthen the things that remain, by administering to their spiritual wants. The cause of God everywhere, but especially in Vermont, needs burden bearers. Men go over and over on the same ground, but accomplish but very little, if anything. They have a very good visit with their brethren, and this is frequently all that is accomplished; and yet these men expect to be remunerated for their time.

[109] The case of Bro. and Sr. — comes before me as I write. They have not practiced caring for others. They have not felt the responsibility resting upon them to be burden-bearers. Bro. — was shown me among others who have felt that they had a work to do for the Lord. He indeed has, and so have very many others, if they will do it. There are thorough workmen in the cause of God, who have an experience in the work, and who devote their time and strength to the service of God, who should be liberally sustained. But those who are merely starting out to visit the churches occasionally, should not draw upon the treasury of the Lord, especially those who have no family to provide for, and have a competency themselves.

Bro. and Sr. — have neither of them an experience in sacrificing for the truth, and in being rich in good works, laying up their treasures in Heaven. Their sympathy, care and patience, have not been called into exercise by dependent, loving children. They have consulted their own selfish convenience. Their hearts have not been a wellspring sending forth the living streams of tenderness and affection. In blessing others by kindly words of love, and acts of mercy

and benevolence, they would realize a blessing themselves. They have been too narrow in their sphere of usefulness. Such cannot become qualified to be thorough, efficient workmen in the Redeemer's cause, unless there is a transformation of their mind and being, and they become renewed by the Spirit of Christ. His life is the example for Christians. Self-sacrifice and disinterested benevolence should characterize their lives. Selfinterest is too prominent. Oh! how little does Bro. — know of what it is to labor for God—to lift the cross of Christ, and walk in the footsteps of the self-denying Redeemer. [110]

A minister of Jesus Christ, a teacher of the truth, a true shepherd, is in one sense a servant of all, anticipating the wants of those who need help, and knowing how to be useful, here and there, in the great work of saving souls. For a man professing to teach the truth to go just where he pleases, and work when, and how, he pleases, yet shunning responsibilities, is not bearing the cross alter Christ, nor fulfilling the commission of a gospel minister. But few know by experience what it is to suffer for Christ's sake. They desire to be like Christ, but wish to avoid poverty and crucifixion. They would gladly be with him in glory, but do not love to come to him through much self-denial and tribulation.

It has not cost Bro. — hard effort to search out the truth, for chosen men of God have prepared arguments to his hand, clear, plain and convincing. Difficult points of present truth have been reached by the earnest efforts of a few who had a devotion to the work. Fervent prayer, and fasting before God, have moved the Lord to unlock his treasuries of truth to their understanding. Wily opponents and boasting Goliaths have had to be met, sometimes face to face, but more frequently with the pen. Satan was urging on men to fierce opposition, to blind the eyes and darken the understanding of the people. The few who had the interests of the cause of God and the truth at heart, were aroused to its defense. They did not seek for ease, but were willing to venture even their lives for the truth's sake. [111]

These zealous searchers after truth risked their capital of strength, and their all, in the work of defending the truth and spreading the light. Link after link of the precious chain of truth has been searched out, until it stands forth in beautiful harmony, uniting in a perfect chain. Arguments have been brought out by these men of investigating minds, and made so plain that a school-boy may understand

them. How easy now for men to become teachers of the truth, while they shun self-sacrifice and self-denial.

[112] Those who were searchers for truth, and have suffered for the truth, know what it cost. They can value the truth. They feel the most intense interest in its advancement. Selfdenial and the cross lie directly in the pathway of every follower of Christ. The cross is that which crosses the natural affections and the will. If the heart is not wholly sanctified to God, if the will, and affections, and thoughts, are not brought into subjection to the will of God, there will be a failure to carry out the principles of true religion, and to exemplify in the life, the life of Christ. There will not be a true desire to sacrifice ease and self-love; and the carnal mind will not be crucified, to work the works of Christ.

[113] There is a work to be accomplished for many who live at Bordoville. I saw that the enemy was busily at work to carry his points. Men, to whom God has intrusted talents of means, have shifted the responsibility which Heaven has appointed them, of being stewards for God, upon their children. Instead of their rendering to God the things that are God's, they claim all that they have as their own, as though by their own might, and power, and wisdom, they had obtained their possessions. Who gave them power and wisdom to obtain an earthly treasure? Who watered their lands with the dew of heaven, and with the showers of rain? Who gave them the sun to warm the earth and awaken into life the things of nature, causing them to flourish for the benefit of man? Men, whom God has blessed with his bounties, grasp their arms about their earthly treasure, and make the bounties and blessings God has graciously given them, a curse, by filling their hearts with selfishness and distrust of him. They accept the goods lent them, yet claim them as their own, and forget that the Master has any claim upon them, and refuse to yield to him even the interest he demands. Riches cause the professed followers of Christ many perplexities, and pierce them through with many sorrows, because they will forget God, and love and worship mammon. They allow worldly treasures to imbitter their lives, and prevent them from perfecting Christian character. And, as though this were not enough, they transmit to their children, to curse them, that which has proved the bane of their lives. God has intrusted men with means, to prove them, to see if they are willing to acknowledge

him in his gifts, and use these talents to advance his glory upon the earth.

The earth is the Lord's, and all the treasures it contains. The cattle upon a thousand hills are his. The gold and silver all belong to him. He has intrusted his treasures to stewards, that with them they may advance his cause and glorify his name. He did not intrust these treasures to men, that with them they might exalt and glorify them-selves, and have power to oppress those who were poor in this world's treasure. God does not receive the offerings of any because he needs them, and cannot have glory and riches without them, but because it is for the interest of his servants to render to God the things which are God's. The free-will offerings of the humble, contrite heart, he will receive, and reward the giver with the richest blessings. He receives them as the sacrifice of grateful obedience. [114] He requires and accepts our gold and silver as an evidence that all we have and are, belong to him. He claims and accepts the improvement of our time and of our talents, as the fruit of his love existing in our hearts. To obey is better than sacrifice. Without pure love, the most expensive offering is too poor for God to accept.

Many have their hearts so fixed upon their earthly treasure that they do not discern the advantage of laying up for themselves treasures in Heaven. They do not realize that their free-will offerings to God are not enriching him, but themselves. Christ counsels us to lay up treasures in Heaven. For whom ? For God, that he may be enriched? Oh ! no. The treasures of the entire world are his, and the indescribable glory and priceless treasures of Heaven are all his own, to give them to whom he will. "Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven." Men, whom God has made stewards, are so infatuated by the riches of this world that they do not discern that by their selfishness they are not only robbing the Lord in tithes and offerings, but robbing themselves, by their covetousness and selfishness, of eternal riches. They could be daily adding to their heavenly treasure by doing the very work the Lord has left them to do, and intrusted them with means to carry out. The Master would have them watch [115] for opportunities to do good, and apply their means themselves, while they live, to aid in the salvation of their fellow-men, and in the advancement of his cause in its various branches. In thus doing, they only do that which God requires of them—they render to God the

things that are God's. Many willingly close their eyes and hearts lest they should see and feel the wants of the Lord's cause, and should lessen their increase by detracting from the interest or principal by helping in its advancement. Some feel that what they give to advance the cause of God, is really lost. They consider so many dollars gone, and feel dissatisfied unless they can be immediately replaced, that their earthly treasure may not decrease. They exercise closeness, and even sharpness, in dealing with their brethren, and also worldlings. Some do not scruple to overreach in their dealing with others, to advantage themselves and gain a few dollars. Some neglect prayer and the assembling of themselves together for the worship of God, that they may have more time to devote to their farms or their business, fearing they should suffer some loss of their earthly treasure. They show by their works which world they place the highest estimate upon. They sacrifice religious privileges, which are essential to their spiritual advancement, for the things of this life.

[116] They fail to obtain a knowledge of the divine will. They come short of perfecting Christian character, and do not meet the measurement of God. Their temporal, worldly interests, they make first, and they rob God of the time they should devote to his service. Such, God marks. Such will receive a curse, rather than a blessing. Some put their means beyond their control, into the hands of their children. Their secret motives are, to place themselves in a position where they will not feel responsible to give of their property to spread the truth. These love in word, but not in deed and in truth. It is the Lord's money they are handling, not their own. They do not see this.

Many would love to see souls converted if it could be done without any sacrifice on their part; but if their means is touched, they draw back. Their property is of more value to them than the souls of men and women for whom Christ died. If those to whom God has intrusted means would understand their responsibilities as his stewards, they would retain in their own hands that which God has lent them, that they might faithfully perform the duty devolving upon them in doing their part to help carry forward the work of God. If all could comprehend the plan of salvation, and the worth of even one soul purchased by the blood of Christ, they would make every other interest of minor consequence.

[117] Parents should have great fear in intrusting children with the

talents of means that God has placed in their hands, unless they have the surest evidence that their interest in, and love for, and devotion to, the cause of God is greater than that which they, themselves, possess, and that these children will be more earnest and zealous in forwarding the work of God, and be more benevolent than themselves in carrying forward the various enterprises in connection with the work which calls for means. But many place their means in the hands of their children, thus throwing upon them the responsibility of their own stewardship, because Satan prompts them to do it. In doing this, many have placed means effectually in the enemy's ranks. Satan has worked the matter to suit his own purpose, to keep from the cause of God means which it needed that it might be abundantly sustained. Not a fiftieth part is now being done that might be, in extending the truth by scattering publications on present truth, and in bringing friends, and all that can be induced, within the sound of the truth. The efforts made in getting the truth before the people are not half as thorough and extensive as they should be.

The probation of many is closing. Satan is daily gathering his harvest of souls. Some are making final decisions against the truth, and many are dying without a knowledge of the truth. Their minds are unenlightened, and their sins unrepented of; and yet, men professing godliness are hoarding up their earthly treasures, and their efforts are directed to the object of gaining more. They are insensible to the condition of men and women, within the sphere of their influence, who are perishing for want of knowledge. [118]

Well-directed labor, in love and humility, would do much to enlighten and convert their fellow-men; but the example of many of those who might do great good is virtually saying, Your souls are of less value to me than my worldly interests.

Many love the truth a little, but they love this world more. "By their fruits ye shall know them. Spiritual things are sacrificed for temporal. The fruit such bear is not unto holiness, and their example will not be such as to convict and convert sinners from the errors of their ways to the truth. They allow souls to go to perdition, when they might save them if they would make as earnest efforts in their behalf as they have made to obtain and secure the treasures of this life. For the things of the world, that many do not really need, they peril health and spiritual enjoyment, the peace, the comfort and happiness,

[119] of their families, and go upon the highpressure plan, to get more of the world's treasures, which is increasing their responsibility and condemnation. They let souls go to perdition around them, because they fear it will require a little of their time and means to save them. Money, money, is their god. They decide that it will not pay to sacrifice their means to save souls.

The one to whom is intrusted one talent is not required to be responsible for five, or two, talents, but for the one. Many neglect to lay up for themselves a treasure in Heaven, by doing good with the means God has lent them. They distrust God, and have a thousand fears in regard to the future. They have evil hearts of unbelief, like the children of Israel. God provided them with abundance, as their needs required; but they borrowed trouble for the future. They complained and murmured in their travels, that Moses had led them out to kill them and their children with hunger. Imaginary wants closed their eyes and hearts from seeing the goodness and mercies of God in their journeyings, and they were ungrateful for all his bounties; so also are the distrustful, professed people of God, in this age of unbelief and degeneracy. They fear that they may come to want, or their children may become needy, or their grandchildren will be destitute. They dare not trust God. They have no genuine faith in Him who has intrusted them with blessings, and the bounties of life, and has given them talents to use in his cause, to advance his glory. Very many have a constant care for themselves, and give God no opportunity to care for them. If they should be a little short at times, and brought into strait places, it would be the best thing for their faith. If they would calmly trust in God, and wait for him to work for them, their necessity would be God's opportunity; and the blessing of God in their emergency would increase their love for him, and lead them to prize their temporal blessings in a higher sense than they have ever done before. Their faith would increase; their hope would brighten ; and cheerfulness would take the place of gloom, and doubts, and murmuring. The faith of very many does not grow for want of exercise. And that which is eating out the vitals of God's people, is the love of money, and friendship with the world. It is the privilege of God's people to be bright and shining lights in the world, to increase in the knowledge of God, and to have a clear understanding of his will.

But the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the seed sown in their hearts, and they bear no fruit to the glory of God. They profess faith, but it is not a living faith, because it is not sustained by works. Faith without works is dead, being alone. Those who profess great faith yet have not works, will not be saved by their faith. Satan believes the truth, and trembles ; yet this kind of faith possesses no virtue. Many who have made a high profession of faith, are deficient in good works. If they should show their faith by their works, they could exert a powerful influence on the side of truth. But they do not improve upon their talents of means lent them of God. Those who think to ease their consciences by willing their means to their children, or by withholding from God's cause, and suffering their means to pass into the hands of unbelieving, reckless children, for them to squander, or hoard up and worship, will have to render an account to God, because they are unfaithful stewards of their Lord's money. They allow Satan to outgeneral them through these children whose minds are controlled by the power of Satan. Satan's purposes are accomplished in many ways, while the stewards of God are stupefied, and seem paralyzed, and do not realize their great responsibility, and the reckoning which must shortly come. [121]

Those who have means, whose minds are darkened by the god of this world, if they have true, believing children, and also children whose affections are wholly upon the things of the world, in making a transfer of their means to their children, seem to be controlled, in the disposal of their means, by Satan. They will most generally give a larger amount of means to their children who do not love God, and who are serving the enemy of all righteousness, than to those who are serving God. [122]

They place in the hands of the unfaithful children the very things that will prove a snare to them, and that will be obstacles in the way of their making a surrender to God. While they make large presents to the unbelieving, they make very stinted offerings to their children who are of the same faith with themselves. This very fact should startle the men of means, who have pursued this course. They should see that the deceitfulness of riches had perverted their judgment. If they could see the influence operating upon their minds, they would understand that Satan has these matters very much according to his own purposes and plans. Instead of God's controlling the mind,

and sanctifying the judgment, it is exactly the opposite. The ones who have been with them in the faith, they sometimes even neglect, and are frequently very close and exacting in all their deal with them, while they have an open hand to the unbelieving, world-loving children, who they know will not use the means they have placed in their hands to advance the cause of God. God requires those who have talents of means, to make a right use of the means he has lent them, having the advancement of his cause prominent. Every other consideration should be inferior.

[123] The talents of means, be they five, two, or one, are to be improved. Those who have a large amount of means, are responsible for a large number of talents. But the comparatively poor men are not released from responsibility. The one talent represents those who have but little of this world. Yet they are in just as great danger of having that little in their hearts, and of selfishly retaining it from the cause of God, as the more wealthy. They do not sense their danger. They apply the stirring reproofs in the word of God, addressed to the lovers of this world, to the rich alone, while they themselves may be in even greater danger than the more wealthy. All are required, have they much or little, to put their talents of means out to the exchangers, that when the Master comes, he may receive his own with usury. They are required to maintain a consecration to God, and an unselfish interest in his cause and his work ; seeking first the kingdom of Heaven, and his righteousness, and believing the promise of God, that all things shall be added. The salvation of the souls of their fellow-men should be above every other interest. Every other consideration, in comparison with this important work, should be inferior; but it is generally primary. If there is a neglect anywhere,

[124] it is the cause of God that must suffer. God has lent men talents, not to foster pride, or to excite envy, but to use to his glory. He has made these men agents to disperse means to carry forward the work of the salvation of men. Christ has given them an example in his life. He left all his heavenly riches and splendor, and for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich. It is not the plan of God to rain down means from Heaven, in order that his cause may be sustained. He has intrusted, or deposited, ample means with men, that there should be no lack in any department of his work. He proves those who profess to love him, by placing means in their

hands. He tries them, to see if they love his gift better than the Giver. God will reveal, in time, the true feelings of the heart.

In order to advance the cause of God, means is necessary. God has provided it, and placed it in abundance in the hands of his agents, to use in any department of the work where it may be required in the labor of saving souls. Every soul saved, is a talent gained. The one brought to a knowledge of the truth, if truly converted, will, in his turn, use the talents of influence and of means which God has given him, and will work for the salvation of his fellow-men. He will engage with earnestness in the great work of enlightening those who are in darkness and error. He will be instrumental in saving souls. And thus the talents of influence and means are continually exchanging, and constantly increasing. When the Master comes, the faithful servant is prepared to return him both principal and interest. By his fruits he can show the increase of talents he has gained to return to the Master. The faithful servant has then done his work, and the Master, whose reward is with him to give every man according as his work shall be, returns back both principal and interest to his faithful servants. [125]

God has revealed his will plainly, in his word, to those who have riches. Because his direct commands have been slighted, he mercifully presents their dangers before them, through the testimonies. He does not give new light, but calls their attention to the light that has already been revealed in his word. If those who profess to love the truth are holding on to their riches, and do not obey the word of God, and seek opportunities to do good with the means he has intrusted to them, he will come closer, and will scatter their means. He will come near to them with judgments. He will, in various ways, scatter their idols. Many losses will be sustained, and the souls of the selfish shall be unblest. Those who honor God, he will honor. "The liberal soul shall be made fat."

The Lord made a covenant with Israel, that if they would obey his commandments, he would give them rain in due season, and the land should yield her increase, and the trees of the field should yield their fruit. He promised that their threshing should reach unto the vintage, and the vintage unto the sowing-time, and they should eat their bread to the full, and dwell in their land safely. He would make their enemies to perish. He would not abhor them, but would [126]

walk with them, and would be their God, and they should be his people. But if they disregarded his requirements, he would deal with them entirely contrary to all this. His curse should rest upon them in the place of his blessing. He would break their pride of power, and would make the heavens over them as iron, and the earth as brass. “Your strength shall be spent in vain; for the land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits.”

“And if ye walk contrary unto me, then will I also walk contrary unto you.”

Those who are selfishly withholding their means, need not be surprised if God’s hand scatters. A reckless son may be intrusted with means which was withheld from the cause of God, and he may recklessly squander that which should have been devoted to the advancement of the work and cause of God. A fine horse, the pride of a vain heart, may be found dead in the stable. Occasionally a cow may die. Losses of crops, and of fruit, may come. God can scatter the means he has lent to his stewards, if they refuse to use it to his glory. Some, I saw, may have no reminders of their remissness in duty, by any of these losses, but their cases may be the more hopeless.

Jesus warned the people, “Take heed, and beware of coveteousness; for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, the ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully; and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits ? And 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. But 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.” He then addressed his disciples, “Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.”

These warnings are given for the benefit of all. Will they be benefited ? Will they improve the warnings given? Will they regard

these striking illustrations of our Saviour? and shun the example of the foolish rich man? He had abundance; so have many who profess to believe the truth, and they are acting over the case of the poor, foolish, rich man. Oh! that they would be wise, and feel the obligations resting upon them to use the blessings God has given them in blessing others, instead of turning these blessings into a curse. God will say to all such, as to the foolish rich man, "Thou fool." Men act as though they were bereft of their reasons. They are buried up in the cares of this life. They have no time to devote to God, no time to serve him. Work, work, work, is the order of the day. All about them are required to go upon the high-pressure plan; to take care of large farms. To tear down and build greater is their ambition, that they may have wherewith to bestow their goods. Yet, these very men who are weighed down with their riches pass for Christ's followers. They have the name of believing that Christ is soon to come, that the end of all things is at hand; yet they have no spirit of sacrifice. They are plunging deeper and deeper into the world. They allow themselves but little time to study the word of life, and to meditate and pray. Neither do they give others in their family, or those who serve them, this privilege. Yet these men profess to believe that this world is not their home—that they are merely pilgrims and strangers upon the earth, preparing to move to a better country. The example and influence of all such is a curse to the cause of God. Hollow hypocrisy characterizes their professed Christian life. They love God and the truth just as much as their works show, and no more. A man will act out all the faith he has. "By their fruits ye shall know them." The heart is where the treasure is. Their treasure is upon this earth, and their hearts and interests are here.

[129]

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and hath not works? Can faith save him?" "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone." When those who profess the faith show their lives to be consistent with their faith, then we shall see a power attending the presentation of the truth, that will convict the sinner, and draw souls nigh to Christ.

A consistent faith is rare among rich men. Genuine faith, sustained by works, is rare. But all who possess this faith will be men who will not lack influence. They will copy after Christ in that

[130] disinterested benevolence, and interest in the work of saving souls, that he had. The followers of Christ should value souls as he valued them. Their sympathies should be with the work of their dear Redeemer, and they should labor to save the purchase of his blood, at any sacrifice. What are money, houses and lands, in comparison with even one soul?

Christ made a full and complete sacrifice, sufficient to save every son and daughter of Adam who should show repentance toward God, because they have transgressed his law, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Yet notwithstanding the sacrifice was ample, but few consent to a life of obedience, that they may have this great salvation. But few are willing to imitate his amazing privations, and endure his sufferings, and his persecutions, and share his exhausting labor to bring others to the light. But few will follow the example of our Saviour in earnest, frequent prayer to God, for strength to endure the trials, and perform the daily duties, of this life. Christ is the captain of our salvation, and by his own sufferings and sacrifice, has given an example to all his followers, that watchfulness and prayer, and persevering effort, were necessary on their part, if they would rightly represent the love which dwelt in his bosom for the fallen race.

[131] Men of property are dying spiritually because of their neglect to use the means God has placed in their hands to aid in saving their fellow-men. Some become aroused at times, and resolve that they will make to themselves friends with the unrighteous mammon, that they may finally be received into everlasting habitations. But their efforts in this direction are not thorough. They commence, but not being heartily, earnestly, and thoroughly, in the work, they make a failure. They are not rich in good works. While lingeringly retaining their love and grasp of their earthly treasures, Satan outgenerals them.

A flattering prospect may be presented in patent-rights, or some other supposed brilliant enterprise, and Satan throws around these a bewitching enchantment. The prospect of getting more money, fast, and easily, allures them. They reason that, although they resolved to put this means into the treasury of God, yet, they will use it in this instance, and will greatly increase it, and will then place a larger sum in the cause. No possibility can they see of a failure. Away goes the means out of their hands, and they soon learn, to their regret,

that they have made a mistake. The brilliant prospects have faded. Their expectations are not realized. They were deceived. Satan outgeneraled them. He was more shrewd than they; and he managed to get their means into his ranks, and to deprive the cause of God of the means that should have been used to sustain it, in extending the truth, and saving souls for whom Christ died. They lost all they had invested, and robbed God of that which they should have rendered to him. Some who have been intrusted with only one talent, excuse themselves because they have not as large a number of talents as those to whom are intrusted many talents. They, like the unfaithful steward, hide the one talent in the earth. They are afraid to render to God that which he has intrusted to them. They engage in worldly enterprises, but invest little, if anything, in the cause of God. They expect those who have large talents, to bear the burden of the work, while they feel that they are not responsible for its success and its advancement. [132]

When the Master comes to make an investigation of his servants, in confusion the unwise servants acknowledge, "I knew that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not sowed; and I was afraid [Afraid of what? That the Lord would claim some portion of the small talent intrusted to him.] and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine." His Lord answered, "Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not sowed; thou oughtest, therefore, to have put my money to the exchangers; and then, at my coming, I should have received mine own with usury. Take, therefore, the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents, For unto every one that hath, shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." [133]

Many who have but little of this world, are represented by the man with one talent. They are afraid to trust God. They are afraid that God will require something they claim to be their own. They hide their talent in the earth, fearing to invest it anywhere, lest they be called to give back the improvements to God. Instead of putting out the talent to the exchangers as God required, they bury

it, or hide it, where neither God nor man can be benefited with it. Many who are professing to love the truth, are doing this very work. They are deceiving their own souls, for Satan has blinded their eyes. In robbing God, they have robbed themselves more. They have deprived themselves of the heavenly treasure through their covetousness, and because of their evil heart of unbelief. Because they have but one talent, they are afraid to trust it with God, and they

[134] hide it in the earth. They feel relieved of responsibility. They love to see the truth progress, but do not think that they are called upon to practice self-denial, and aid in the work through their own individual effort, and with their means, although they have not a large amount.

All should do something. The case of the widow who cast in her two mites, is placed upon record for the benefit of others. Christ commended her for the sacrifice she made. He calls the attention of his disciples to the act of the widow; “Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury; for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.” Christ esteemed her gift more valuable than the large offerings of the wealthiest. They gave of their abundance. They would not feel the least privation because of their offerings. The widow had deprived herself of even the necessaries of life, to do her little. She could not see how her future wants were to be supplied. She had no husband to support her in want. She trusted God for the morrow. The value of the gift is not estimated so much by the amount, as by the proportion that is given, and the motive which prompts the gift. When Christ shall come, whose reward is with him, he will give every man according as his work shall be.

[135] All, both high and low, rich and poor, have been intrusted, by the Master, with talents; some more, and some less, according to their several ability. The blessing of God will rest upon the earnest, loving, diligent workers. Their investment will be successful, and will secure souls to the kingdom of God, and to themselves, an immortal treasure. All are moral agents, and are intrusted with the goods of Heaven. The amount of talents is proportioned according to the capabilities possessed by each.

God gives to every man his work, and he expects corresponding returns, according to their various trusts. He does not require the

increase of ten talents of the man to whom he has given only one talent. He does not expect the man of poverty to give alms as the man who has riches. He does not expect of the feeble and suffering, the activity and strength which the healthy man has. The one talent, used to the best account, God will accept, "according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."

God calls us servants, which implies that we are employed by him to do a certain work, and to bear responsibilities. He has lent us capital for investment. It is not our property, and we displease God if we hoard up, or spend as we please, our Lord's goods. We are responsible for the use or abuse of that which God has thus lent us. If this capital which the Lord has placed in our hands, lies dormant, or we bury it in the earth be it only one talent—we shall be called to an account by the Master. He requires, not ours, but his own, with usury. [136]

Every talent which returns to the Master, will be scrutinized. The doings and trusts of God's servants will not be considered an unimportant matter. Every individual will be dealt with personally, and will be required to give an account of the talents intrusted to him, whether he has improved or abused them. The reward bestowed will be proportionate to the talents improved. The punishment awarded will be according as the talents have been abused.

The inquiry of each one should be, What have I of my Lord's? and how shall I use it. to his glory? "Occupy," says Christ, till I come. The heavenly Master is on his journey. Our gracious opportunity is now. The talents are in our hands. Shall we use them to God's glory? or shall we abuse them? We may trade with them to-day; but tomorrow, our probation may end, and our account be forever fixed.

If our talents are invested for the salvation of our fellow men, God will be glorified. Pride and position are made apologies for extravagance, vain show, ambition, and profligate selfishness. The Lord's talents, lent to man as a precious blessing, will, if abused, reflect back upon him a terrible curse. Riches may be used by us to advance the cause of God, and to relieve the wants of the widow and the fatherless. In thus doing, we gather to ourselves rich blessings. Not only in expressions of gratitude from the recipients of our bounties, but the Lord himself, who has placed the means in our hands for this very purpose, will make our souls like a watered [137]

garden, whose waters fail not. When the reaping time shall come, who of us will have the inexpressible joy of seeing the sheaves we have gathered, as a recompense of our fidelity, and our unselfish use of the talents the Lord has placed in our hands, to use for his glory ?

[138] There has been a decided failure with many in Vermont, to come up to the requirements of God. Some have fallen into a cold and lifeless condition, spiritually, because they are unfaithful servants. The love of the world has so filled the hearts of some, that they have lost their relish for heavenly things, and they are dwarfs in spiritual attainments. The State has been deprived of the right kind of labor. Bordoville has been the center of attraction. All the large gatherings have been drawn to one locality, which has been like putting their light under a bushel. Its rays have not benefited the people of the State at large. Many are now in darkness, who might have been rejoicing in the knowledge of the truth. The talents and especial efforts, have been drawn to one locality. This is not as the Lord would have it. He designs that the warning, testing message should be given to the world, and that his people, who are the light of the world, should be interspersed among the moral darkness of the world, as witnesses; their lives, their testimonies, and example, to be a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death.

The Brn. — will need to be guarded, that they do not thwart the purposes of God, by plans of their own. They are in danger of narrowing down the work of God, which is broad, deep, and extended.

Bro. — — will be in danger of taking too narrow views of the work. God has given him an experience which is of value, if he makes the right use of it. But there is danger of his peculiarities' shaping that experience, and other minds becoming affected. Bro. —'s usefulness, as a laborer, is not what it otherwise would be, if he were not so prone to concentrate the strength of his mind upon one idea, He dwells, upon incidents, and upon thoughts that he has had, and repeats them at length, when they are unimportant to others.

[139] His mind was aroused in reference to the subject of his health. He concentrated the strength of his mind to this point. Himself and his symptoms, were the principal subjects of conversation. He was particular to go through with the course he had established in his

mind, and he has failed to consider, when he was seeking his own accommodation, how inconvenient he made it for others.

His mind has been, to a great extent, shut up to his own case. This was the burden of his thoughts, and the theme of conversation. In this precise, systematic course, he has failed to receive the benefit, in point of health, that he might have realized if he had been more forgetful of himself, and, from day to day, engaged in physical exercise, which would have diverted his mind from himself.

The same deficiencies have marked his labor in the gospel field. In speaking to the people, he has many apologies to make, and many preliminaries to repeat, and the congregation become wearied before he reaches his real subject. Ministers should avoid apologies and preliminaries, as far as possible.

Bro. —— is too specific. He dwells upon minutiae. He takes time to explain points which are really unimportant, and would be taken for granted without producing proofs; for they are self-evident. But the real, vital points should be made as forcible as language and proof can make them. They should stand forth as prominent as mile-posts. He should avoid many words over little particulars, which will weary the hearer before the important points are reached. [140]

Bro. —— has large concentrativeness. When he gets his mind in a certain direction, it is difficult for him to place it upon anything else; he lingers tediously upon one point. In conversation, he is in danger of wearying the listener. His writings lack a free, easy style. The habit of concentrating the mind upon one thing, to the exclusion of other things, is a misfortune. This should be understood by him, and he should labor to restrain and control this power of the mind, which is too active. The too great activity of one organ of the mind, strengthens that organ, to the enfeebling of other organs. Bro. —— should educate his mind, if he would make a successful laborer in the gospel field. The large development of this organ, impairs his health and his usefulness. There is a lack of harmony in the organization of his mind, and his body suffers in consequence.

It is greatly for the interest of Bro. —— to cultivate simplicity and ease in his writings. He needs to avoid dwelling at length upon any one point that is not of vital importance ; and even the most essential, manifest truths may be so covered up with words as to cloud and make indistinct that which is of itself plain and clear.

[141] Bro. ——— may be sound upon all points of present truth, and yet not be qualified in every respect to give the reasons of our hope, in writing, to the French people. He can aid in this work. The matter should be prepared by more than one or two minds, that it may not bear the stamp of their peculiarities. The chain of truth, reached and prepared by several minds, and brought out, link after link, in a connected chain, in God's time, by the earnest searchers of truth, should be given to the people, and will be adapted to meet many minds. Brevity should be studied, in order to interest minds. Lengthy, wordy articles are an injury to the truth which the writer aims to present.

Bro. ——— should have his mind less occupied with himself, and talk less of himself. He should keep himself out of sight, and, in conversation, avoid making reference to himself, and making his peculiarities of life a pattern for others to imitate. He should encourage genuine humility. He is in danger of thinking his life and his experience to be superior to that of others.

[142] Bro. ——— can be of value to the cause of God, if there is a harmony in the character of his labors. If he can see and correct the imperfections of his peculiar organization, which have a tendency to injure his usefulness, God can use him to acceptance. He should avoid lengthy preaching, and long prayers. These are no benefit to himself or to others. Lengthy and excited exercise of the vocal organs, has irritated the throat and lungs, and injured his general health, more than his precise round of rules for eating and resting have benefited him. Once allowing over-exertion or straining the vocal organs, may not soon be recovered from and may cost the life of the speaker. A calm, unhurried, yet earnest, manner of speaking, will have a better influence upon a congregation, than to let the feelings become excited, and control the voice and manners. The speaker should preserve, as far as possible, the natural tones of the voice. It is the truth that is presented that affects the Heart. If the speaker makes these truths a reality, he will, with the aid of the Spirit of God, impress the hearers that he is in earnest, without straining the fine organs of the throat or the lungs.

Bro. ———, in his domestic life, is deeply interested; yet there is danger, in his conversation, of cultivating the habit of concentrating his whole mind upon the things which especially interest him, but

cannot interest or profit others. He tries to maintain a system which, in itself, is correct; but here again, these things, useful of themselves, may become wearisome by dwelling too much upon them, and may become burdensome, in seeking to carry them out under all circumstances. There is danger of neglecting the weightier matters. [143]

The Bro. ——— should avoid being tedious in their labor. Their influence has been good in the main. Bro. ——— is naturally a good manager in temporal things. His instruction and example in this direction have helped those who were humble enough to be advised. But the jealousy, distrust, rebellion, complaining, and murmuring, which have existed in the church, have been disheartening. These brethren should guard against being too exacting.

In order to perfect Christian character, we should not cultivate merely a life of quiet, prayerful abstraction, nor all outward zeal and busy excitement, while personal piety is neglected. But the present time requires us to be waiting for the coming of the Lord, and vigilantly working for the salvation of our fellow-men. “Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.” God will not accept the most exalted services, unless they be first consecrated by the surrender of the soul to him and his love. There will be danger, with a certain class of minds, of systematizing away the Spirit of God, and the vitality of the religion of Christ, and preserving an exactness of a wearisome round of duties and ceremonies.

We are living in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, and our nice and exact plans cannot always be carried out for the advantage of all. If we stand back upon dignity, we shall fail to help those who need help the most. The servants of Jesus Christ should accommodate themselves to the varied conditions of the people. They cannot carry out exact rules, if they meet the cases of all. Labor will have to be varied to meet the people where they are. “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.” [144]

The apostle counsels his Corinthian brethren, “Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God. Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.”

[145] 1 Cor. 10:31—33. “For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.” 1 Cor. 9 :19. “To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.” Verse 22. “We then that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor, for his good, to edification. For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee, fell on me.” Rom. 15:1-3.

Bro. and Sr. —, of Canada, have been gradually losing their hold of God, and their love for heavenly and divine things, as they have been more earnestly grasping for worldly treasures. They have been relaxing their hold of Heaven, and fastening it more firmly to this world. A few years ago, they loved to have an interest in the advancement of the truth and the work of God. More recently, their love for gain has increased, and they have not felt interested to do their part to save their fellow-men. Self-denial and benevolence, for Christ’s sake, have not characterized their lives. They have done but little for the cause of God. What have they been doing with their talents ? They have been burying them in the earth, investing them in lands. They have not been putting them out to the exchangers, that when the Master comes, he may receive his own with usury.

[146] They have a work to do to set their hearts and house in order. “Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven.” Their hearts have been upon the things of this life, and eternal considerations have been made secondary. They should work earnestly to get the love of the world out of their hearts, and should place their affections upon things above, not upon things on the earth. If God’s servants would bear in mind that their work is to do all in their power, with their influence and their means, to save souls for whom Christ died, there would be more unselfish effort, unbelievers would be stirred, and would be convinced that there is a reality in the truth presented, and backed up by example.

Bro. and Sr. — should have confidence in the work for these last days, and should be perfecting Christian character, that they may receive the eternal reward when Jesus comes.

Bro. — is failing in physical and mental vigor. He is becoming incapable of bearing much responsibility. He should counsel with his brethren who are discreet and faithful.

Bro. — is a steward of God. He has been intrusted with means, and should be awake to his duty, and render to God the things that are God's. He should not fail to understand the claims that God has upon him. While he lives, and has his reasoning powers, he should improve the opportunity of appropriating his means, instead of leaving the means God has intrusted to him, for others to use and appropriate after the close of his life.

Satan is ever ready to take advantage of the infirmities and weaknesses of men, to suit his own purposes. He is a wily adversary, and has outgeneraled many whose purposes were good to benefit the cause of God with their means. Some have neglected the work that God has given them to do in appropriating their means. And while they are negligent to secure to the cause of God the means he has lent them, Satan comes in and turns the means into his own ranks. [147]

Bro. — should move more cautiously. Men who are not of our faith obtain means of him upon various pretenses. He trusts them, believing them to be honest. It will be impossible for him to get back all the means he has let Blip out of his hands into the enemy's ranks. Bro. — could make a safe investment of his means by aiding the cause of God, and laying up for himself treasures in Heaven. He is frequently crippled, and thus unable to help when he would, because he cannot command the means to do so. When the Lord calls for his means, it is frequently in the hands of those to whom he has lent, some of whom never design to pay, and others feel no anxiety in the matter. Satan will accomplish his purpose as thoroughly through dishonest borrowers, as in any other way. All that the adversary of truth and righteousness is working for, is to prevent the advancement of our Redeemer's kingdom. He works through agents to carry out his purposes. If he can prevent means from going into the treasury of God, his object is successful in one branch of his work. He has retained means in his ranks, to aid him in his work, which should have been used to aid in the great plan of saving souls. [148]

Bro. — should have his business all straight, and not left at loose ends. It is his privilege to be rich in good works, and to lay up

for himself a good foundation against the time to come, that he may lay hold on eternal life.

It is not safe for him to follow his failing judgment. He should counsel experienced brethren, and seek wisdom of God, that he may do up his work well. He should now be really in earnest, providing himself “bags which wax not old, a treasure in the Heavens that faileth not.”

Bro. — has made a mistake in his domestic life. He has not, in words, expressed that affection for his wife that it was his duty to express. He has failed to cultivate true Christian courtesy and politeness. He has failed to be as kind, at all times, and considerate of her wishes and comfort, as was his duty. Her not uniting in faith with him, has led to much unhappiness for both. Bro. — has not respected his wife’s judgment and counsel as he should. Her judgment and discernment is, in many respects, better than [149] her husband’s. She could, if consulted, help him essentially in his business matters, in dealing with his neighbors, by her clearer perception and keener discernment.

Bro. — should not stand back upon his dignity, feeling that he understands it all himself. If he would be advised by his wife, and would, by his kindly actions, show regard for her, and a desire to please her, he would be doing nothing less than his duty. If her advice conflicts with his duty to God, and the claims he has upon him, then he can choose to differ, and yet, in the quietest manner possible, giving his reasons, that he cannot sacrifice his faith or his principles. It would be for Bro. —’s interest, in temporal matters, to have his wife’s judgment and counsel.

He can have no influence to win his wife to the truth while he is harsh, and rough, and unaccommodating. He should reform. He needs to become softened, to be tender, gentle, and loving. He should let the sunshine of cheerfulness and happy contentment into his heart, and then let its beams shine in his family. He has brought those into his family whose influence would prove a curse to his wife, rather than a blessing. In thus doing, he has brought burdens upon her that might have been avoided. She should be consulted, and her wishes regarded as far as possible without compromising his faith.

[150] Bro. — has chosen his own way, and has had a set will, savor-

ing of stubbornness. He has frequently been unyielding. This should not be. He professes to believe the truth, which has a sanctifying, softening refining influence; his wife does not. He should show the power that the truth is exerting over his perverse nature—that it makes him patient, kind, forbearing, tender, affectionate, and forgiving. The best way for Bro. ——— to be a living missionary in his family, is by exemplifying, in his life, the life of our dear Redeemer.

E. G. W.

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Epistle Number Three.

DEAR BRO ——— I have felt very much burdened over your case since we met you at the Tipton Camp-meeting. I could scarcely refrain from addressing you personally while speaking to the people upon the words of Christ, “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; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

I recollected your countenance as one that had been shown me in vision some time ago. You were thinking you had a duty to preach the word to others; but your example, as you now are, would hinder more from embracing the truth than your preaching would convert to its belief. You profess to believe a most solemn, testing message; yet your faith has not been sustained by works, You have the truth in theory, but you have not been converted to the truth. The truth has not fully taken hold of your heart, and been carried out in your daily life.

[151]

You need to be converted, transformed by the renewing of your mind. When the truth takes hold of the heart, it works a reformation in the life. The unbelieving world will then be convinced that there is a power in the truth which has wrought so great a change for such a world-loving man as you have been. You love this world. Your treasures are here, and your heart is upon your treasures. And unless

the power of the truth shall separate your affections from your god, which is this world, you will perish with your treasures.

[152] You have had but little sense of the exalted character of the work for -these last days. You have not made sacrifices for the truth. You have a close, penurious spirit. You have closed your eyes to the wants of the needy and the distressed. Your com- passion has not been stirred to relieve the wants of the oppressed and really needy. You have had no heart to aid the cause of God, and with your means to distribute to the necessities of the needy and suffering Your heart is on your, earthly treasures. Unless you overcome your love of the things of the world, you will have no place in the Kingdom of Heaven.

The lawyer asked Jesus what he should do, that he might inherit eternal life. Jesus referred him to the commandments of his Father, telling him that obedience to God's commandments was necessary for his salvation. Christ told him that he knew the commandments, and that if he obeyed them, he should have life. Mark his answer: "Master, all these have I observed from my youth." Jesus looks upon this deceived young man with pity and love. He is about to reveal to him that there is a failure upon his part to keep the commandments from his heart, that he confidently asserted he was obeying. Jesus said unto him, "One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me."

[153] Jesus calls his attention directly to the defect in his character. He cites this young man to his own self-denying, cross-bearing life. He had left everything for the salva- tion of man. Christ entreated the young man to come and imitate his example, and he should have treasure in Heaven. Did the heart of the young man leap with joy at this assurance that he should indeed have treasures in Heaven ? Oh! no. His earthly treasures were his idol.

His earthly riches eclipsed the value of the eternal inheritance. He turns from the cross, turns from the self-sacrificing life of the Redeemer, to this world. He has a lingering desire for the heavenly inheritance, yet he reluctantly turns from the prospect. It cost a struggle to decide which he should choose; he finally decided to continue his love for his earthly treasures.

This young man had great possessions. His heart was set upon them. He could not consent to transfer his affections from them, by doing good with them—blessing the widow and fatherless, and thus, by being rich in good works, transfer his treasure to Heaven. The love of this young man for his earthly treasures was stronger than his love for his fellow-men and the immortal inheritance. His choice was made. The inducement presented by Christ, of securing a treasure in Heaven, was rejected; for he could not consent to comply with the conditions. The strength of his affection for his earthly riches triumphed, and Heaven, with all its attractive glory, was sacrificed for the treasures of the world. [154]

The young man was very sorrowful; for he wanted both worlds; but he sacrificed the heavenly for the earthly.

But few realize the strength of their love for riches until the test is brought to bear upon them. Many who profess to be Christ's followers, then show that they are unprepared for Heaven. Their works testify that they love riches more than their neighbor or their God. Like the rich young man, they inquire the way to life; but when the way is pointed out, and the cost is estimated, and they are convinced that they must sacrifice their earthly riches and become rich in good works, they decide that Heaven costs too much.

The greater the treasures laid up upon the earth, the more difficult for the possessor to realize that they are not his own, but lent him to use to God's glory. Jesus here improves the opportunity to give his disciples an impressive lesson: "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of Heaven." "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

Here the strength of riches is seen. The power of the love of riches over the human mind is almost paralyzing. Riches infatuate men and women, and make many of those who possess them act as though they were bereft of their reason. The more they have of this world, the more they desire. Their fears of coming to want increase with their riches. They have a disposition to hoard up means for the future. They are close and selfish, fearing that God will not provide for their future needs. This class is indeed poor toward God. They have, as their riches have accumulated, put their trust in them, and have not faith in God or his promises. [155]

The poor man, having faith and confidence in God, who trusts in his care and love, abounding in good works, judiciously using the little he has, in blessing others with his means, is rich toward God. He feels that his neighbor has claims upon him that he cannot disregard, and yet obey the commandment of God, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The salvation of his fellow-men is considered of greater importance, by the poor who are rich toward God, than all the gold and silver the world contains.

[156] Christ points out the way in which those who have worldly riches, and yet are not rich toward God, may secure the true riches. He says: Sell that ye have, and give alms; and lay up treasures in Heaven. The remedy he proposes for the wealthy, is a transfer of their affections from earthly riches to the eternal inheritance. By investing their means in the cause of God, to aid in the salvation of souls, and by blessing the needy with their means, they become rich in good works, and are "laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life." This will prove a safe investment. But many show by their works that they dare not trust in the bank of Heaven. They choose to trust their means in the earth, rather than to send it before them into Heaven, that their hearts may be upon their heavenly treasure.

You have, my brother, a work before you, to strive to overcome covetousness and love of worldly riches, and especially self-confidence, because you have had apparent success in securing the things of this world. Rich poor men, professing to serve God, are objects of pity. While they profess to know God, in works they deny him. How great is the darkness of such ! They profess faith in the truth, but their works do not correspond with their profession. The love of riches makes men selfish, exacting, and over-bearing. Wealth is power; and frequently the love of it depraves and paralyzes all that is noble and godlike in man.

[157] Riches bring with them great responsibilities. To obtain wealth by unjust dealing, by overreaching in trade, by oppressing the widow and the fatherless, or by hoarding up riches and neglecting the wants of the needy, will eventually bring the just retribution described by the inspired apostle: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered;

and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.”

The humblest and poorest of the true disciples of Christ, who are rich in good works, are more blessed and more precious in the sight of God than the men who boast of their great riches. They are more honorable in the courts of Heaven than the most exalted kings and nobles who are not rich toward God.

The apostle Paul exhorted Timothy to charge the rich. This admonition is applicable to you, Bro. ———, and to very many who profess to believe the truth for these last days. 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.” [158]

Those who hoard up means, or invest largely in lands, while they deprive their families of the comforts of life, act like insane men. They do not allow their families to enjoy the things God has richly given them. Notwithstanding they have large possessions, their families are frequently compelled to labor far beyond their strength, to save still more means to hoard up. Brain, bone, and muscle, are taxed to the utmost, to accumulate. Religion and Christian duties are neglected. Work, work, work, is the ambition, from morning until night.

Many do not manifest an earnest desire to learn the will of God, and to understand his claims upon them. Some who attempt to teach the truth to others, do not themselves obey the word of God. The more such teachers the cause of God has, the less prosperous will it be.

Many to whom God has intrusted riches, do not consider that they are working against their own eternal interest by selfishly retaining their riches. The apostle shows them that by being rich in good works, they are working for themselves. They are laying up in store [159]

for themselves, providing in Heaven an enduring treasure, that they may lay hold on eternal life. In distributing to the necessities of the cause, and helping the needy, they are faithfully doing the work that God has assigned them; and the memorial of their self-denial, and generous, loving acts, will be written in the book of Heaven. Every deed of righteousness will be immortalized, although the doer may not feel that he has done anything worthy of notice. If the daily walk of those who profess the truth were a living example of the life of Christ, a light would shine forth from them, which would lead others to the Redeemer. In Heaven alone will be fully estimated the blessed results, in the salvation of others, of a consistent, harmonious, godly life.

My brother, you have much to do in your family, to show them that the truth has wrought a good work for you, and that it has had a softening, refining, elevating, influence upon your life and character. You profess to believe that we are living in the last days, that we are giving the warning, testing message to the world; do you show this by your works? God is testing you, and he will reveal the true feelings of your heart.

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God has intrusted you with talents of means, to use in the advancement of his cause, to bless the needy, and to relieve the destitute. You can do a far greater amount of good with your means, than you can do in preaching while you retain your means. Have you put your talents of means to the exchangers, that when the Master comes, and shall say, "Give an account of thy stewardship," you can, without confusion, present to him the talents doubled, both principal and interest, because you have not hoarded them, have not buried them selfishly in the earth, but have put them to use? Look over the history of your past life. How many have you blessed with your means? How many hearts have you made grateful by your liberalities? Please read the 58th chapter of Isaiah. Have you loosed the bands of wickedness? Have you sought to undo the heavy burdens? and to let the oppressed go free? and to break every yoke? Have you dealt your bread to the hungry? and brought the poor that were cast out to your house? Have you covered the naked? If you have been rich in these good works, you may claim the promises given in this chapter: "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy

righteousness shall go before thee: the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer. Thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am.” “And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday. And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones, and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not.” But you are not now entitled to these promised blessings. You have not been engaged in this work. Look back at your past life, and consider how destitute is your life of good, noble, generous actions. You have served self faithfully. You have talked the truth; but you have not lived it. Your life has not been elevated and sanctified. Selfishness and stinginess have characterized your life. And it is now high time you were changing your course, and working diligently to secure the heavenly treasure. [161]

You have lost much that you can never regain. Opportunities for doing good you have not improved, and your unfaithfulness has been entered upon the books of Heaven. The life of Christ was characterized by self-denial, self-sacrifice, and disinterested benevolence. Your ideas are altogether too meager. You do not view the preparation necessary for the kingdom of God as it is. Talk is cheap stuff; it does not cost much. Works, fruits, will determine the character of the tree. What fruits have you borne? The apostle James exhorts his brethren, “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?” Your good wishes, my brother, will not supply the need. Works must testify to the sincerity of your sympathy and love. How many times have you carried the above representation out to the letter. [162]

You have a very good estimate of yourself; but you have a work to do that no other man can do for you. Your nature must be changed, and there must be a transformation of the entire being. You love the truth in word, but not in deed. You love the Lord a little, but your riches more. Would the Master say to you, if he should find you as you are at the present time, Well done, good and faithful

[163] servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord? What joy is here referred to? “Who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” The joy that was set before Jesus, was that of seeing souls redeemed by the sacrifice of his glory, his honor, his riches, and his own life. The salvation of man was his joy. When all the redeemed shall be gathered into the kingdom of God, he will see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.

Those who are co-workers with Christ, par-takers with him of his self-denial and his sacrifice, may be instrumental in bringing men and women to Christ, and seeing them saved, eternally saved, to praise God, and the Lamb who hath redeemed them.

E. G. W.

Pleasanton, Kansas, Oct. 15, 1870.

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Epistle Number Four.

Bro ——— : Your case presses upon my mind while writing out the dangers of others. For several months, I have been seeking an opportunity to write to you, and to others; but I have been hindered from writing out all the testimonies given me for individuals, by constant labor.

[164] Your case has frequently burdened my mind; but I have not felt clear to write to you. I have written out very many testimonies which have been given for others, some of which, in many particulars, would apply to you. The object of publishing the testimonies is, that those who are not singled out personally, yet are as much in fault as those who are reprov'd, may be warn'd through the reproofs given to others. I thought it would not be my duty to address you personally. Yet, as I write out individual testimonies to those who are in danger of neglecting their duty to the cause of God, and of sustaining an injury, a loss, to their own souls, by thus doing, I do not feel clear to leave your case without writing to you.

The last view given me, was above two years ago. I was then directed to bring out general principles, in speaking and in writing,

and at the same time specify the dangers, errors, and sins, of some individuals, that all might be warned, reprov'd, and counseled. I saw that all should search their own hearts and lives closely, to see if the mistakes for which others were corrected, and the warnings given for others, did not apply to their own cases. If so, they should feel that these reproofs were given especially for them, and should make a practical application of the reproofs and counsel given, as though they were especially addressed to them.

Those who have a natural love of the world, and have been remiss in their duty, can see their own faults specified in the cases of others who have been reprov'd. God designs to test the faith of all who claim to be followers of Christ. He will test the sincerity of the prayers of all those who claim to earnestly desire to know their duty. He will make duty plain. He will give all an ample opportunity to develop what is in their hearts. The conflict will be close between self and the grace of God. Self will strive for the mastery, and will be opposed to the work of bringing the life and thoughts, the will and affections, into subjection to the will of Christ. Self-denial and the cross stand all along in the pathway to eternal life; and because of this, "few there be that find it." [165]

God is testing the character of all. He is proving their love for his cause, and for the promulgation of the truth which they profess to consider of inestimable value. The Searcher of hearts is judging, by the fruits they bear, who are truly followers of Christ; who, like their divine Pattern, will renounce the honors and treasures of the world, and consent to be of no reputation, preferring the favor of God, and the cross of Christ, that they may, in the end, secure the true riches, the treasure laid up in Heaven, the recompense of reward-eternal glory.

Those who do not really wish to know themselves, will pass off the reproofs and warnings to others, and will not discern that their own cases are met, and their errors and dangers pointed out. Earthly and selfish motives blind the mind, and so operate upon the soul that it cannot be renewed in the divine image. All who do not, by their own perverse natures, resist His will, will not be left in darkness, but will be renewed in knowledge and true holiness, and even glory in the cross of Christ.

I have been shown that, at the right time, God would press [166]

the burden upon me to say to individuals, as Nathan said to David, "Thou art the man." Many apparently believe the testimonies borne to others, and, as did David, give judgment in reference to them; when they should be closely searching their own hearts, and analyzing their own lives, and making a practical application of the close reproofs and warnings given to others.

Bro. —, I have been shown that your affections are more upon your earthly treasure than you are sensible of. You have been confused in your perceptions of your duty. And when the Spirit of God operates upon your mind to do what is according to the will and requirements of God, other influences that are not in harmony with the work of God for this time, hinder you from obeying the promptings of the divine will; and the result is, your faith is not made perfect by works. Your affections should be withdrawn from your earthly treasure. You have seemed, at times, to be much perplexed and troubled, as means was passing from you into the enemy's ranks, contrary to your wishes and calculations, and was thus lost to the cause of God. The talents of means have been intrusted to you by the Master, for you to improve to his glory. You are God's steward. [167] You should be very cautious, lest you neglect your duty. You are naturally a world-loving man, and will be inclined to claim, as your own, the talents of means committed to your care. "Give an account of thy stewardship," will be heard by you by-and-by.

The children of God are wise, when they trust in that wisdom alone which comes from above, and when they have no strength but that which is from God. Separation from the friendship and spirit of the world is needful for us, if we would be united to the Lord, and abide in him. Our strength and our prosperity are in being connected with the Lord, chosen and accepted of him. There cannot be a union between light and darkness. God designs that his people should be a peculiar people, separate from the world, and be living examples of holiness; that the world may be enlightened, convicted, or condemned, according as they treat the light given them. The truth that has been brought before the understanding, the light that has shone upon the soul, will judge and condemn, if it be neglected or turned from.

In this degenerate age, error and darkness are preferred, rather than light and truth. The works of many of Christ's professed fol-

lowers will not bear the test when examined by the light that now shines upon them. For this cause, many do not come to the light, lest it shall be made manifest that their works are not wrought in God. Light makes manifest and discovers the evil hidden under darkness. The men of the world, and men who are Christ's servants indeed, may appear to be alike in outward resemblance; but they are servants of two masters, whose interests are in decided opposition to each other. The world does not understand or discern the difference; but there is an immense distance and separation between them. [168]

Says Christ, "Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world." The true followers of Christ cannot enjoy the friendship of the world, and at the same time have their life hid with Christ. The affections must be withdrawn from the treasures of earth, and transferred to the heavenly treasure. How difficult was it for the young man who had great possessions to withdraw his affections from his worldly treasure, even with the promise of eternal life before him as his reward!

When all that we have and are is not consecrated to God, selfish interests close our eyes to the importance of the work, and means that God calls for is withheld. He who has lent this means for the advancement of his cause, will withdraw his prospering hand and will frequently scatter, in some way, the means thus withheld. It will be lost to its possessor, and lost to the cause of God. It is not preserved in this world, nor in the world to come. God is robbed, and Satan triumphs. God would have you closely search your own heart, Bro. —, and get the love of the world out of it. Die to self, and live unto God. Then will you be of that number who are the light of the world. [169]

Bro. —, I have been shown that you were cherishing erroneous views in regard to the future, which are savoring of the pernicious sentiments of the Age to Come, You sometimes talk out these ideas to others. These views are not in harmony with the body. You do not make a right application of Scripture. When Jesus rises up in the most holy place, and lays off his mediatorial garments, and clothes himself with the garments of vengeance, in place of the priestly attire, the work for sinners will be done. The period of time has then come when the mandate goes forth, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; ... and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and

he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”

[170] God has given his word for all to investigate, that they may learn the way to life. None need to err, if they will submit to the conditions of salvation laid down in the word of God. Probation is granted for all, that all may form characters for eternal life. An opportunity will be given to all to decide for life or death. Men will be judged according to the measure of light given them. None will be accountable for their darkness and their errors, if the light has not been brought to them. They have not sinned in not accepting what has not been given them. All will be tested before Jesus leaves his position in the most holy place. The probation of all closes when the pleading for sinners is ended, and the garments of vengeance are put on.

Many entertain views that probation is granted after Jesus leaves his work as mediator in the most holy apartment. This is the sophistry of Satan. God tests and proves the world by the light he is pleased to give them previous to the coming of Christ. Characters are being formed for life or death. But the probation of those who choose to live a life of sin, and neglect the great salvation offered, closes when Christ's ministration ceases, just previous to his making his appearance in the clouds of heaven.

[171] Men and women who love the world, and whose minds are carnal and at enmity with God, will flatter themselves that a period of probation will be granted after Christ appears in the clouds of heaven. The carnal heart, which is so averse to submission and obedience, will be deceived with this pleasing view. Many will remain in carnal security, and continue in rebellion against God, flattering themselves that there is then to be a period of repentance of sin, and opportunity for them to accept the truth which now is unpopular and crossing to their natural inclination and desires. When they have nothing to venture, nothing to lose, by yielding obedience to Christ and the truth, they think they will take their chance for salvation.

There are some things in the Scriptures hard to be understood, and which, according to the language of Peter, the unlearned and unstable wrest unto their own destruction. We may not, in this life,

be able to explain the meaning of every passage of Scripture; but there are no vital points of practical truth that will be clouded in mystery. When the time shall come, in the providence of God, for the world to be tested upon the truth for that time, minds will be exercised by the Spirit of God to search the Scriptures, even with fasting and with prayer, until link after link is searched out, uniting in a perfect chain. Every fact which immediately concerns the salvation of men and women is made so clear that none need to err, or walk in darkness.

As we have followed down the chain of prophecy, revealed truth for our time has been clearly seen and explained. We are ac-countable for the privileges that we enjoy, and the light that shines upon our pathway. Those who lived in past generations were accountable for the light which was permitted to shine upon them. Their minds were exercised in regard to different points of Scripture which tested them. But they did not understand the truths which we do. They were not responsible for the light which they did not have. They had the Bible, as we have; but the time for the unfolding of special truth, in relation to the closing scenes of this earth's history, is during the last generations that shall live upon the earth.

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Special truths have been adapted to the conditions of the generations as they have existed. The present truth, which is a test to the people of this generation, was not a test to the people of generations far back. If the light in regard to the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, which now shines upon us, had been given to the generations in the past, God would have held them accountable for the light.

When the temple of God was opened in Heaven, John saw, in holy vision, a class of people whose attention was arrested, and who were looking with reverential awe at the ark containing the law of God. The special test upon the fourth commandment did not come until after the temple of God was opened in Heaven.

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Those who died before the light was given upon the law of God and the claims of the fourth commandment, were not guilty of the sin of violating the seventh-day Sabbath. The wisdom and mercy of God, in dispensing light and knowledge at the proper time as the people need it, is unsearchable. Previous to his coming to judge the world in righteousness, he sends forth a warning to arouse their attention to their neglect of the fourth commandment, that they

may be en-lightened, and may repent of their transgression of his law, and prove their allegiance to the great Lawgiver. He has made provision that all may be holy and happy if they choose. Sufficient light is given to this generation, that we may learn what our duty and privileges are, and enjoy the precious and solemn truths in their simplicity and power.

[174] We are only accountable for the light that shines upon us. The commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus are testing us. If faithful and obedient, God will delight in us and bless us as his own, chosen, peculiar people. When perfect faith, and perfect love and obedience, abound, working in the hearts of those who are Christ's followers, they will have a powerful influence. Light will emanate from them, dispelling the darkness around them, refining and elevating all within the sphere of their influence, and bringing to a knowledge of the truth all who are willing to be enlightened, and follow in the humble path of obedience.

Those who possess the carnal mind cannot comprehend the sacred force of vital truth upon which their salvation depends, because they will cherish pride of heart, love of the world, love of ease, selfishness, covetousness, envy, jealousy, lust, hatred, and every evil. If they would overcome these, they might be partakers of the divine nature. Many leave the plain truths of God's word, and neglect to follow the light that shines clearly upon their pathway; but are prying into secrets not plainly revealed, and are conjecturing, and talking, and disputing, in regard to questions they are not required to understand, for they have no special reference to their salvation. Thousands have been beguiled in this way by Satan. They have neglected present faith and present duty which were clear and comprehensive to all who have their reasoning powers; and they have dwelt upon doubtful theories, and scriptures which they could not comprehend, and have erred concerning the faith. They have a mixed faith.

[175] God would have all make a practical use of the plain teachings of his word in regard to the salvation of man. If they are doers of the word which is plain and powerful in its simplicity, they will not fail to perfect Christian character. They will be sanctified through the truth, and through humble obedience to the truth, will secure

everlasting life. God wants servants that are true, not only in word, but in deed. Their fruits will show the genuineness of their faith.

Bro. —, you will be subject to Satan's temptations if you cherish these views. Your faith will be a mixed faith, and you will be in danger of confusing the minds of others. God requires his people to be a unit. Your peculiar views will prove an injury to your influence; and if you cherish them and talk them, they will finally serve to separate you from your brethren. If God has light necessary for the salvation of his people, he will give it to them as he has other great and important truths. Here you should let the matter rest. Let God work in his own way, to accomplish his purposes in his own time and manner. May God enable you to walk in the light as he is in the light.

E. G. W.

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Epistle Number Five.

I WAS shown the case of Bro. —, that he had been standing for some time resisting the truth. His sin was not because he did not receive that which he sincerely believed to be error, but because he did not investigate diligently, and have a knowledge of what he was opposing. He took it for granted that Sabbath-keeping Adventists, as a body, were in error. This view was in harmony with his feelings, and he did not see the necessity of finding out for himself by diligently searching the Scriptures with earnest prayer. Had Bro. — pursued this course, he might now have been far in advance of his present position. He has been too slow to receive evidence, and neglectful in searching the Scriptures, to see if these things were so. Paul did not consider those worthy of commendation who resisted his teachings as long as they could, until compelled by overwhelming evidence to decide in favor of the doctrine he taught, which he had received of God.

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Paul and Silas left Thessalonica, where they had labored in the synagogue of the Jews with some success; but to the great dissatisfaction of the unbelieving Jews, who created a disturbance, and

[177] made a great uproar against Paul and Silas. These devoted apostles were obliged to leave under the cover of night, and go to Berea, where they were gladly welcomed. They speak in commendation of the Bereans thus: “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed.” Bro. — has failed to see the vital importance of the question. He did not feel the burden pressing him to diligent search, independent of any man, to find out what is truth. He has thought too much of Eld. —, and has not felt the necessity of learning of One who is meek and lowly of heart. He has not been teachable, but self-confident. Our Saviour has no words of commendation for those who are slow of heart to believe in these last days, any more than he had for a doubting Thomas, who boasted that he would not believe upon the evidence the disciples rehearsed, which they credited, that Christ had indeed risen and appeared to them. Said Thomas, “Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, *I will not believe.*” Christ granted Thomas the evidence he had declared he must have; but he reprovably said to him, “Be not faithless, but believing.” Thomas acknowledged himself convinced. Jesus said unto him, “Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”

[178] Bro. —’s position made him a weak man. He remained for quite a length of time warring against nearly everything but the Sabbath; fellowshiping commandment-breakers, he still being claimed by the Adventists who were in bitter opposition to the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. He was in no condition to help them, because he was in a state of indecision himself. His influence has rather confirmed many in their unbelief.

With all the help, evidences, and encouragement, Bro. — has had, his standing back has displeased the Lord, while it has strengthened the hands of those who were fighting against God by their opposition to the truth.

Bro. — might now be a strong man, possessing influence with God’s people in Maine, esteemed highly in love *for his works’ sake*. Bro. — would be inclined to the idea that his backwardness was a special virtue, rather than a sin which he must repent of. He has

been very slow to learn the lessons God has designed to teach him. He has not been an apt scholar, having a growth and an experience in present truth, which would qualify him to bear that weight of responsibility he might now bear, had he diligently improved all the light given. I was shown a time when Bro. — began to make an effort to subdue himself, and restrain his appetite; then he could the more easily be patient. He had been easily excited, passionate, irritable, depressed in spirit, and his eating and drinking had very much to do in keeping him in this state, where the lower organs bore sway and predominated over the higher powers of the mind. Temperance would do much for Bro. — ; and more physical exercise and labor is necessary for his health. As Bro. — made efforts to control himself, he began to grow, but did not receive that blessing in his efforts to improve that he would have done had these efforts been made at an earlier period. [179]

Instead of gathering with Christ into the truth, he too long drew back, would not advance, and stood directly in the way of the advancement of others, and so scattered abroad. His influence has stood directly in the way of the progress of the work which God sent his servants to do.

Bro. — 's ideas of order and organization have been in direct opposition to God's plan of order. God has order in Heaven to be imitated by those upon earth who are heirs of salvation. The nearer mortals attain to the order and arrangement of Heaven, the more closely are they brought into that acceptable state before God which will make them subjects of the heavenly kingdom, and give them that fitness for translation from earth to Heaven which Enoch possessed preparatory to his translation.

Bro. — should be guarded. There is a lack of order in his organization. His being has not been in harmony with that restraint, that care and diligence, necessary in order to preserve harmony and union of action. [180]

His education for years in his religious experience has been a great detriment to his dear children, and especially to God's people.

The obligations Heaven has imposed upon a father, and especially upon a minister, he has not realized. A man who has but a feeble sense of his responsibility as a father, to encourage and enforce order, discipline, and obedience, will fail as a minister and

as a shepherd of the flock. The same lack which characterizes his management at home in his family will be seen in a more public capacity in the church of God. Wrongs will exist uncorrected, because of the unpleasant results which attend reproof and earnest appeals.

[181] Bro. —'s family need a great reform. God is not pleased with their present state of disorder, having their own way and following their own course of action. This condition of things in his family is destined to counteract his influence where ho is known. It also has the effect to discourage those who have a will to help him in the support of his family. This lack is an injury to the cause. Bro. — does not restrain his children. God is not pleased with their disorderly, boisterous ways—their unrefined deportment. All this is the result of, or the curse which follows, the unabridged liberty which Adventists have claimed was their blessed privilege to enjoy. Bro. and Sr. — have desired the salvation of their children; but I saw that God would not work a miracle in the conversion of their children while there were duties resting upon the parents, of which they have but little sense. God has left a work for these parents to do, which they have thrown back upon God to do for them.

When Bro. and Sr. — feel the burden they ought to feel for their children, they will unite their efforts to establish order, discipline, and wholesome restraint, in their family. Bro. —, you have been slothful in bearing the burdens which every father should bear in the family; and as the result, very heavy has been the burden which has been left for the mother to bear. You have been too willing, Bro. —, to excuse yourself from care and burdens at home and abroad.

[182] When, in the fear of God, with solemnity of mind in view of the Judgment, he resolutely takes the burden Heaven has designed he should, and when he has done all that he can on his part, then can he offer the under standing prayer, with the Spirit, and in faith, for God to do that work for his children which is beyond the power of man to perform. There has been a lack of judiciously using means. Wise judgment has not influenced him as much as the voices and desires of his children. He does not place the estimate that he should upon means in his hands, and expend it cautiously for the most needful articles, the very things he must have for comfort and health. The entire family need to improve in this respect. Many things are needed

in his family for convenience and comfort. The lack of appreciating order and system in the family arrangement, leads to destructiveness and working to great disadvantage. All members of the family should realize that a responsibility rests upon them individually to do their part in adding to the comfort, order, and good regulations, in the family arrangement. One should not work against another. Each should unitedly engage in the good work of encouraging each other, exercising gentleness, forbearance, and patience, speaking in low, calm tones, shunning confusion, each doing their utmost to lighten the burdens of the mother. Things should no longer be left at loose ends, all excusing themselves from duty, leaving for another to do that which they can and should do themselves. These things may be trifles; but when all are put together, they make great disorder, and bring down the frown of God. It is the neglect of the littles, the trifles, which poisons life's happiness. A faithful performance of the littles, composes the sum of happiness to be realized in this life. He that is faithful in little, is faithful also in much. He that is unfaithful or unjust in small matters, will be in greater matters. All in the family arrangement should understand just the part they are expected to act in union with the family. All should understand that it is required of them to bear their share of life's burdens, from the child six years old and upward. [183]

There are important lessons for these children to learn ; and they can learn them better now than at a later period. God will work for these dear children in union with the efforts their parents make in a wise direction, and will bring them to become learners in the school of Christ. Jesus would have these children separate from the vanities of the world, leave the pleasures of sin, and choose the path of humble obedience. If they will now heed the gracious invitation and accept Jesus as their Saviour, he will cleanse them from their sins, and impart grace and strength to them, if they follow on to know the Lord.

Dear Bro. ———, your lessons, learned amid the distracting influences which have existed in Maine, have been exceedingly injurious to your family. You have not been as circumspect as God requires you to be in your conversation. You have not dwelt upon the truth in your family, diligently teaching the principles of the truth and the commandments of God unto your children, when you [184]

rise up, and when you sit down; when you go out, and when you come in. You have not appreciated your work as a father, or as a minister. There has not been that zealous performance of duty to your children.

In regard to *family prayer*, time has not been devoted to this duty, and you have not required the presence of the entire members of your household. The meaning of *husband is home-band*. All members of the family center in the father. He is the lawmaker, illustrating in his own manly bearing, sterner virtues, energy, integrity, honesty, patience, courage, diligence, and practical usefulness. The father is, in one sense, the priest of the household, laying upon the altar of God the morning and evening sacrifice. The wife and children should be encouraged to unite in this offering, and also engage in the song of praise to God. The father should, as priest of the household, confess, morning and evening, to God, the sins committed by himself and his children through the day, which have come to his knowledge, and also those sins which are secret, which God's eye alone has taken cognizance of. This rule of action, zealously carried out on the part of the father, when he is present, and the mother when the father is absent, will result in blessings to the family.

The reason why the youth of the present age are not more religiously inclined, is because of the defect in their education. It is not true love which is exercised toward children, to permit in them the indulgence of passion, or permit disobedience of your laws to go unpunished. As the twig is bent the tree is inclined. You love your ease too well. You are not painstaking enough. Constant effort is required; constant watchfulness, and earnest, fervent prayer; keeping the mind in a praying mood, uplifted to God; "not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." You have failed in your family to appreciate the sacredness of the Sabbath, and to teach it to your children, and enjoin upon them its sacredness, and the importance of keeping it according to the commandment. Your sensibilities are not clear and ready to discern the high standard we must reach in order to be commandment-keepers. God will assist you in your efforts, when you earnestly take hold of the work. You should possess perfect control over yourself; then you can have better success in controlling your children when they are unruly. A great work is before you to repair past neglects. You are not required

to perform it in your own strength. Ministering angels will aid you in this work. No throwing up of the work, or laying aside the burden. You should lay hold of it with a will, and repair your long neglect. You must have higher views of God's claims upon you in regard to his holy day. Everything that can, possibly, should be done on the six days which God has given to you. You should not rob God of one hour of holy time. Great blessings are promised to those who place a high estimate upon the Sabbath, and realize the obligations resting upon them in regard to its observance, "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, [from trampling upon it, setting it at naught,] from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

When the Sabbath is brought to us, we should, from its commencement, place a guard upon ourselves, upon our acts and our words, lest we rob God by appropriating that time which is strictly the Lord's, to our own use. We should not do, ourselves, or suffer our children to do, any manner of our own work for a livelihood, or that which could have been done on the six days. Friday is the day of preparation. Time can then be devoted to thinking, and doing, and conversing upon, things necessary in preparing for the Sabbath. Nothing should be left unsaid or undone, to be said or done upon the Sabbath, which will, in the sight of Heaven, be regarded as a violation of the holy Sabbath. God requires that we shall not only refrain from physical labor upon the Sabbath, but the mind must be disciplined to dwell upon sacred themes. The fourth commandment is virtually transgressed by conversing upon worldly things, or engaging in light and trifling conversation. Talking upon everything or anything which may come into the mind, is speaking our own words. Every deviation from right brings into bondage and condemnation.

Bro. —, you should discipline yourself to discern the sacredness of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, and labor to raise the standard in your family, and among God's people wherever you

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have, by example, lowered it. You should counteract the influence you have cast in this respect, by a change of words and actions.

[188] You have often forgotten, and have spoken your own words upon God's sanctified day. You have frequently failed to "remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy." You have been unguarded, and have, upon the Sabbath, joined with the unconsecrated in conversation upon the common topics of the day, such as gains and losses, stocks, crops, and provisions. In this, your example injures your influence. You should reform.

Those who are not fully converted to the truth, frequently let their minds freely run upon worldly business, although they may rest from physical toil upon the Sabbath, and their tongues speak out what is in their minds, hence these words concerning cattle, crops, losses, and gains. All this is Sabbath breaking. If the mind is running upon worldly matters, the tongue will reveal it; for, out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

The example of ministers especially, in this respect, should be circumspect. And they should conscientiously restrict themselves upon the Sabbath to conversation upon religious themes, present truth, present duty, the Christian's hopes and fears, trials, conflicts, and afflictions, overcoming at last, and the reward to be received.

[189] Ministers of Jesus should stand as reprovers to those who fail to remember the Sabbath to keep it holy. They should solemnly and kindly reprove those who engage in worldly conversation upon the Sabbath, and at the same time claim to be Sabbath keepers. They should encourage devotion to God upon his holy day.

None should feel at liberty to spend sanctified time in an unprofitable manner. It is displeasing to God for Sabbath-keepers to sleep during much of the Sabbath. They dishonor their Creator in doing this; and, by their example, say that the six days are too precious for them to spend in resting. They must make money, although it be by robbing themselves of needed sleep, which they make up by sleeping away holy time. They then excuse themselves by saying, The Sabbath was given for a day of rest. I will not deprive myself of rest to attend meeting; for I need rest.

Such make a wrong use of the sanctified day. They should, upon that day especially, interest their families in its observance, and should gather with the few or with the many, as the case may be.

They should devote their time and energies in spiritual exercises, that the divine influence resting upon the Sabbath may attend them through the week. Of all the days in the week, none are as favorable for devotional thoughts and feelings as the Sabbath. All Heaven was represented to me as beholding and watching those upon the Sabbath who acknowledge the claims of the fourth commandment upon them, and were observing the Sabbath. Angels were marking their interest in, and high regard for, this divine institution of God. Those who sanctified the Lord God in their hearts, by a strictly devotional frame of mind, and sought to improve the sacred hours in keeping the Sabbath to the best of their ability, to honor God by calling the Sabbath a delight, these the angels were specially blessing with light and health, and special strength was given them. But on the other hand, those who failed to appreciate the sacredness of God's sanctified day, the angels were turning from them, removing their light and their strength. I saw them overshadowed with a cloud, desponding, and frequently sad. They felt a lack of the Spirit of God. [190]

Dear Bro —, you should be circumspect in your conversation at all times. Has God called you to be a representative of Jesus Christ upon earth, in Christ's stead beseeching sinners to be reconciled to God? This is a solemn, exalted work. Bro. —, your work is but just begun when you cease speaking in the desk. You are not released from responsibilities when out of meeting. You are to be a living epistle, known and read of all men. You should maintain your consecration to the work of saving souls out of meeting. Ease is not to be consulted. Pleasure is not to be thought of. The salvation of souls is the all-important theme. For this work, the minister of the gospel of Christ is called. He must maintain good works out of meeting, and adorn his profession by his godly conversation and circumspect deportment. You have frequently, after your pulpit labor, around the fireside, in the company you are with, counteracted your efforts in the pulpit, by your unconsecrated conversation. You must live out what you preach to others as their duty, and take upon yourself, as you never yet have done, the burden of the work, the weight of responsibility, which should rest upon every minister of Christ. Confirm the labor bestowed in the desk by following it up in private effort. Judicious conversation upon present truth should be engaged in, candidly ascertaining the state of mind of those present, [191]

and in the fear of God, making a practical application of important truth to the cases of those with whom you associate. You have failed to be instant in season, out of season, to reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine. As a watchman upon the walls of Zion, constant watchfulness is necessary. Your vigilance must not abate. Educate yourself to be able to appeal to families around the fireside. You can accomplish even more in this direction than by your pulpit labors alone.

[192] Watch for souls as one that must give an account. Give no occasion for unbelievers to charge you with remissness in this duty, by neglecting to appeal to them personally. Talk with them faithfully, and beseech them to yield to the truth. “For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one, we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other, the savor of life unto life.” As the apostle views the magnitude of the work, and the weighty responsibilities resting upon the minister, he exclaims, “And who is sufficient for these things ?” “For we are not as many which corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speak we in Christ.” Those who corrupt the word, handing out wheat and chaff, or anything that they may deem gospel, while they oppose the commandments of God, cannot appreciate the feelings of the apostle while he trembled under the weight of the solemn work, and the responsibility resting upon him as a minister of Christ, having the destiny of souls, for whom Christ died, resting upon him.

[193] In the estimation of self-made ministers, it will take but a small pattern to fill the bill, and make a minister. The apostle had a high estimate of the qualifications necessary to make a minister. The deportment of a minister while in the desk, should be circumspect, not careless. He should not be negligent of his attitude. He should have refinement and order, in the highest sense, God requires of those who accept so responsible a work, to receive the words from his mouth and speak them to the people, warning and reproof, correcting and comforting, as the case may require. God’s representatives upon earth should be in daily communion with him. Their words should be select, their speech sound. The haphazard words frequently used by ministers who preach not the gospel in sincerity should be forever discarded.

I was shown, Bro. —, that you had been naturally irritable, easily provoked, jacking patience, and forbearance. If your course was questioned, or you urged to take your position upon the truth, you have felt too much that you would not be hurried. You would not move a step because others desired you to. You would take your time. Should your hearers pursue the same course, you would consider them blame worthy. If all should do as you have done, God's people would require a temporal millennium in which to make the needed preparations for the Judgment. God has mercifully borne with your back wardness. It will not answer for others to follow your example; for you are now weak, and deficient where you might be strong and well qualified for the work.

Bro. — could effect but little for you. He erred in especially [194] interesting himself for those who thought they should become teachers. His labors were unwisely directed. Had he not touched the case of a minister in Maine, and had he labored in new fields where there had been no Adventists, many would have been brought to the knowledge of the truth. Bro. — has been advancing slowly, and occupying a position more pleasing to God in regard to patience, forbearance, and endurance; and yet there is a much greater work to be done for him before he can make a successful minister in the cause, and advance the work of God.

You refused, Bro. —, to be helped by Bro. —. He zealously interested himself in your case. Time and strength was devoted to you; and matters were shaped for your special benefit, to remove your prejudice and win you to accept the truth, until your indolence and unbelief exhausted the patience of Bro. —. Then the character of his labor changed, and he pressed you to come to a decision and move out upon the light and evidence you had received. This earnest effort on his part, you termed crowding and jamming you; your mulish temperament was manifested. You rose up against this dealing and rejected the efforts he made to help you. Here you injured yourself and disheartened Bro. — Your course displeased God; your feelings toward Bro. — were not Christian. You gloried [195] in your resistance of his efforts in your behalf. The Lord blessed the labors of Bro. —, in raising up a people in the State of Maine. This labor was hard and trying, and you did your share in making it so. You have not realized how hard you was making the work for

those whom God had sent to present the truth to the people. They were exhausting their energies to bring the people to the point of decision in regard to the truth, while you and others of the ministers stood directly in their way. God was working through his ministers to draw to the truth; and Satan was working through you and other ministers to discourage and counteract their labor. The very men professing to be watchmen who, if they had stood in the counsel of God, would have first received the word of warning and given it to the people, were among the last to accept the truth. The people were in advance of their teachers. They received the warning even before the watchmen, because the watchmen were unfaithful and were sleeping at their post.

[196] Bro. —, you should have had feelings of brotherly sympathy and love for Bro. — ; for he deserved this from you rather than one word of censure. You should severely censure your own course, because you was found fighting against God. But you have amused yourself and others at the expense of Bro. —, by relating his efforts for you, and your resistance of his labors, and have enjoyed a hearty laugh over the matter.

[197] It becomes every minister of Jesus Christ to use sound speech, which cannot be condemned. I was shown that a solemn work is to be accomplished for the ministers of Christ. This cannot be done without effort on their part. They must feel that they have a work to do in their own cases, which no other one can do for them. They must seek to gain the qualifications necessary, in order to make able ministers of Jesus Christ, that in the day of God they may stand acquitted, free from the blood of souls, having done all their duty in the fear of God. As their reward the faithful under shepherds will hear from the chief Shepherd, "*Well done, good and faithful servant.*" He will then place the crown of glory upon their heads, and bid them enter into the joy of their Lord. What is that joy? It is beholding with him the redeemed saints, seeing with Christ the travail for souls, the self-denial, the self-sacrifice, the giving up of ease, of worldly gain, every earthly inducement, and choosing the reproach, the suffering, the self-abasement, the wearing labor, the anguish of spirit, as men oppose the counsel of God against their own souls, the chastening of the soul before God, the weeping between the porch and the altar, and the becoming a spectacle unto the world,

to angels, and to men. All this is then ended, and the fruits of the laborers are seen, as souls are saved through their efforts in Christ. The ministers who have been co-workers with Christ enter with him into the joy of their Lord, and are satisfied.

“Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.” Ministers are too forgetful of the Author of their salvation. They think they endure much, when they bear and suffer but little. God will work for ministers if they will let him work for them. If they feel that they are all right, and do not need a thorough *conversion*, and will not see themselves and come up to the measurement of God, he can do better without their labors than with them.

God requires ministers to fill the bill, to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed. If they refuse this strict discipline, God will release them, and select men who will not rest until they are thoroughly furnished unto all good works. [198]

Our hearts are naturally sinful, and slothful in the service of Christ; and we need to be guarded constantly, or we shall fail to endure hardness as good soldiers of Christ; and we shall not feel the necessity of aiming vigorous blows against besetting sins, but will readily yield to the suggestions of Satan, and raise a standard for ourselves, rather than accept the pure and elevated standard God has raised for us.

I saw that the Sabbath-keeping ministers of Maine have failed to become Bible students. They have not felt the necessity of a diligent study of the word of God themselves, that they might be thoroughly furnished unto all good works; neither have they felt the necessity of urging the close searching of the Scriptures upon their hearers. If there had not been one Seventh-day Adventist minister in Maine to oppose the counsel of God, all that has been accomplished might have been done with one-half the effort that has been made; and the people might have been brought into order from their distracted, confused state, and now have been strong enough to stand against

[199] opposing influences. Many places which have not yet been entered might have been visited, and successful labor bestowed, which would have brought many to a knowledge of the truth.

Much of the labor which has been spent in Maine has been for Seventh-day Adventist ministers to bring them into a right position. It has required hard labor to counteract their influence while they were opposing the counsel of God against their own souls, and standing in the way of sinners. They would not enter in themselves, and them that would, they hindered by precept and example. There has been a mistake in following into fields where there were Adventists who do not as a general thing feel any necessity of being helped. They think themselves in a good condition, and able to teach others. The laborers are few, and their labor must be spent to the best possible advantage. Much more can be done in the State of Maine, as a general thing, where there is not one Adventist. New fields should be entered, and the time that has hitherto been spent in wearing labor for Adventists who have no wish to learn, should be devoted to new fields, going out into the highways and hedges, and working for the conversion of unbelievers. If Adventists will hear, and come, let them come. Leave the way open for them to come if they choose.

E. G. W.

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