

Ellen G. White Estate

TESTIMONY FOR THE CHURCH. — NO. 24

ELLEN G. WHITE

**TESTIMONY FOR
THE CHURCH. — No.
24**

Ellen G. White

1875

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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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TESTIMONY FOR THE CHURCH. — No.24

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The Great Rebellion.

KORAH, Dathan, and Abiram, rebelled against Moses and Aaron, and so against the Lord. The Lord had placed special responsibilities upon Moses and Aaron in selecting them for the priesthood, and in conferring upon them the dignity and authority of leading the congregation of Israel. Moses was afflicted by the continual rebellion of the Hebrews. As God's appointed, visible leader, he had been connected with the Israelites through seasons of peril, and had borne with their discontent, their jealousies, and murmurings, without retaliation, or seeking to be released from his trying position.

When the Hebrews were brought into scenes of danger, and where their appetite was restricted, instead of their trusting in God, who had done wondrous things for them, they murmured against Moses. The Son of God was the leader of the Israelites, although invisible to the congregation. His presence went before them, and [4] conducted all their travels, while Moses was their visible leader, receiving his direction from the angel, who was Jesus Christ.

BASE IDOLATRY.

In the absence of Moses the congregation demanded of Aaron to make them gods to go before them and lead them back into Egypt, it was an insult to their chief leader, the Son of the Infinite God. They had only a few weeks before stood trembling with awe and terror before the mount, listening to the words of the Lord, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." The glory which sanctified the mount when the voice was heard which shook the mountain to its foundation still hovered over it in sight of the congregation; but the Hebrews turned away their eyes and asked for other gods. Moses, their visible leader, was in converse with God in the mount.

They forgot the promise and the warning of God, “Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions; for my name is in him.”

The Hebrews were cruelly unbelieving and basely ungrateful in their impious request, “Make us gods to go before us.” If Moses was absent, the presence of the Lord remained. They were not forsaken. The manna continued to fall, and they were fed by a divine hand morning and evening. The cloudy pillar by day and the pillar of fire by night signified the presence of God, which was a living memorial before them. The divine presence was not dependent upon the presence of Moses. But at the very time that he was pleading with the Lord in the mount in their behalf, they were rushing into shameful errors, in transgression of the law so recently given in grandeur. [5]

We see the weakness of Aaron. Had he stood with true moral courage, and in boldness rebuked the leaders in this shameful request, his timely words would have saved that terrible apostasy. But his desire to be popular with the congregation, and his fear of incurring their displeasure, led him to cowardly sacrifice the allegiance of the Hebrews in that decisive moment. He raised an altar, and made a graven image, and proclaimed a day to consecrate that image as an object of worship, and to proclaim before all Israel, These be the gods which led you out of Egypt. He calmly witnesses the merriment and dancing to this senseless image, while the top of the mount is still illuminated with the glory of God. Moses is sent down from the mount by the Lord to rebuke the people. But He would not consent to leave the mount until his pleadings in behalf of Israel is heard and his request granted that God would pardon them. [6]

THE TABLES OF THE LAW BROKEN.

Moses came from the mount with the precious record in his hands, a pledge of God to man on condition of obedience. Moses was the meekest man upon the earth; but when he viewed the apostasy of Israel, he was angry and jealous for the glory of God. In his indignation he casts to the ground the precious pledge of God, which

was more dear to his soul than his life. He sees the law broken by the Hebrews, and in his zeal for God to deface the idol they were worshiping, he sacrificed the tables of stone. Aaron stood by, calmly, patiently bearing the severe censure of Moses. All this might have been prevented by a word from Aaron at the right time. True, noble decision for the right in the hour of Israel's peril, would have balanced their minds in the right direction.

[7] Does God condemn Moses ? No, no; the great goodness of God pardons the rashness and zeal of Moses because it was all on account of his fidelity, and his disappointment and grief at the sight of his eyes in the evidence of Israel's apostasy. The man who might have saved the Hebrews in the hour of their peril is calm. He does not show indignation because of the sins of the people, neither does he reproach himself and manifest remorse under the sense of his wrongs, but seeks to justify his course in a grievous sin. He makes the people accountable for his weakness in yielding to their request. He was unwilling to bear the murmuring of Israel, to stand under the pressure of their clamors and unreasonable wishes as Moses had done. He entered into the spirit and feelings of the people without remonstrance, and then sought to make them responsible. The congregation of Israel thought Aaron a much more pleasant leader than Moses. He was not so unyielding. They thought Moses showed a very bad spirit, and their sympathies were with Aaron, whom Moses so severely censured. But God pardoned the indiscretion of honest zeal in Moses, while he held Aaron accountable for his sinful weakness and lack of integrity under a pressure of circumstances. Aaron, in order to save himself, sacrificed thousands of the Israelites. The Hebrews felt the punishment of God for this act of apostasy; but in a short time they are again full of discontent and rebellion.

THE PEOPLE MURMUR.

[8] When the armies of Israel prospered, they took all the glory to themselves. When they were tested and proved by hunger, or warfare, they charged all their hardships to Moses. The power of God which was manifested in a remarkable manner in their deliverance from Egypt, and seen from time to time all through their journeyings, should have inspired them with faith, and forever closed their mouths

from one expression of ingratitude. But the least apprehension of want, the least fear of danger from any cause, over-balanced the benefits in their favor, and caused them to overlook the blessings received in their times of greatest danger. The experience they passed through in the matter of worshiping the golden calf, should have made so deep an impression upon their minds as never to be effaced. But, although the marks of God's displeasure were fresh before them in their broken ranks and missing numbers because of their repeated offenses against the angel who was leading them, they did not take these lessons to their hearts, and by faithful obedience redeem their past failure, and again they are overcome by the temptations of Satan. The best efforts of the meekest man upon the earth could not quell their insubordination. The unselfish interest of Moses was rewarded with jealousy, suspicion, and calumny. His humble shepherd's life was far more peaceful and happy than his present position as pastor to that vast congregation of turbulent spirits. Their unreasonable jealousies were more difficult to manage than the fierce wolves of the wilderness. Moses dared not choose his own course and do as best pleased himself. He had left his shepherd's crook at God's express command, and in its place had been given him a rod of power. He dared not lay down this scepter and resign his position, till God should dismiss him. [9]

Satan's work is to tempt minds. He will insinuate his wily suggestions, and stir up doubting, questioning, unbelief, and distrust of the words and acts of the one who stands under responsibilities, who is seeking to carry out the mind of God in his labors. It is the special purpose of Satan to pour in upon and around the servants of God's choice, troubles, perplexities, and opposition, that shall hinder him in his work, and, if possible, discourage his heart. Jealousies, strife, and evil surmising, will counteract, in a great measure, the very best efforts God's servants appointed to a special work may be able to perform.

Satan's plan is to drive them from the post of duty by working through agents. All whom he can excite to distrust and suspicion he will use as his instruments. The position of Moses in carrying the burdens he bore for the Israel of God was not appreciated. There is in the nature of man, when not under the direct influence of the Spirit of God, a disposition to envy, jealousy, and cruel distrust, which, if [10]

not subdued, lead to a desire to undermine and tear down, while selfish spirits will seek to build themselves up upon their ruins.

[11] Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, were men who, by God's appointment, had been intrusted with special honors. They had been of that number who went up, with the seventy of the elders, with Moses into the mount, and beheld the glory of God. They saw the glorious light which covered the divine form of Jesus Christ. The bottom of this cloud was in appearance "like the paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness." These men were in the presence of the glory of the Lord, and did eat and drink without being destroyed by the purity and unsurpassed glory that was reflected upon them. But a change had come. A temptation, slight at first, had been harbored and strengthened as it was encouraged, until the imagination was controlled by the power of Satan. These men upon the most frivolous pretense ventured upon their work of disaffection. They hinted and expressed doubts at first which took with many minds so readily that they ventured still farther, being more and more confirmed in their sus- pisions by a word from one and another, each expressing what they thought of certain things which had come under their notice, until these deceived, deluded souls really thought that they had a zeal for the Lord in this matter, and that they would not be excusable unless they carried out to the full their purpose of making Moses see and feel the preposterous position he was standing in toward Israel. A little leaven of dis-trust, and of dissension, envy, and jealousy, was leavening the camp of Israel.

Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, first commenced their cruel work upon the men to whom God had intrusted sacred responsibilities. They were successful in alienating two hundred and fifty princes, famous in the congregation, men of renown. With these strong and influential men in their cause, they felt sure of making a radical change in the order of things. They thought they could transform the government of Israel, and greatly improve it from its present administration.

Korah was not satisfied with his position. He was connected with the service of the tabernacle, yet he desired to be exalted to the priesthood. God had established Moses as chief governor, and the priesthood was given to Aaron and his sons. Korah determined to

compel Moses to change the order of things, whereby he should be raised to the dignity of the priesthood. To be more sure of accomplishing his purpose, he drew Dathan and Abiram, the descendants of Reuben, into his rebellion. [12]

They reasoned that, being descendants from the eldest sons of Jacob, the chief authority which Moses usurped belonged to them, and, with Korah, they were resolved to obtain the office of the priesthood. These three became very zealous in an evil work. They influenced two hundred and fifty men of renown to join them, who were also determined to have a share in the priesthood and government. God had honored the Levites to do service in the tabernacle, because they took no part in making and worshiping the golden calf, and because of their faithfulness in executing the order of God upon the idolaters.

To the Levites was assigned the office of erecting the tabernacle, and encamping around about it, while the hosts of Israel pitched their tents at a distance from the tabernacle. And when they journeyed, the Levites took down the tabernacle, and bore it, and the ark, and all the sacred articles of furniture. Because God thus honored the Levites, they became ambitious for still higher office, that they might obtain greater influence with the congregation. “And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them; wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord ?” [13]

FALSE SYMPATHY.

There is nothing which will please the people better than to be praised and flattered when they are in wrong and darkness and deserve reproof. Korah gained the ears of the people, and next their sympathies, by representing Moses as an overbearing leader. He said he was too harsh, too exacting, too dictatorial, and that he reproved the people as though they were sinners when they were a holy people, sanctified to the Lord, and the Lord was among them. Korah rehearsed the incidents in their experience in their travels through the wilderness, where they had been brought into straight places and where many of them had died, because of murmuring

and disobedience, and with their perverted senses they thought they saw very clearly that all their trouble might have been saved if Moses had pursued a different course. He was too unyielding, too exacting, and they decided that all their disasters in the wilderness [14] were chargeable to Moses. Korah, the leading spirit, professed great wisdom in discerning the true reason for their trials and affliction.

In this work of disaffection there was greater harmony and union between these discordant elements, in their feelings and views, than had ever been known to exist before. Korah's success in gaining the larger part of the congregation of Israel on his side, led him to feel confident that he was wise and correct in judgment, and that Moses was indeed usurping authority that threatened the prosperity and salvation of Israel. He claimed that God had opened the matter to him, and laid upon him the burden of changing the government of Israel just before it was too late. He stated that the congregation was not at fault; they were righteous. This great cry about the murmuring of the congregation bringing upon them the wrath of God was all a mistake. The people only wanted to have their rights; they wanted individual independence. As the sense of the self-sacrificing patience of Moses would force itself upon their memories, and as his disinterested efforts in their behalf while they were in the bondage of slavery, would come before them, their consciences would be somewhat disturbed. Some were not wholly with Korah in his views of Moses, and sought to speak in his behalf. [15] The men, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, must assign some reason before the people for Moses' doing as he has done in showing so great an interest from the first for the congregation of Israel. Their selfish minds which have been debased as Satan's instruments, suggest that they have at last found out the object of Moses' apparent interest. He had designed to keep them wandering in the wilderness until they all, or nearly all, should perish, and he should come into possession of their property.

Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and two hundred and fifty princes who had joined them, first became jealous, then envious, and next rebellious. They had talked in regard to Moses' position as ruler of the people, until they imagined that it was a very enviable position, which any of them could fill as well as Moses. And they gave themselves up to discontent until they really deceived themselves and

one another, in thinking that Moses and Aaron had placed themselves in the position which they occupied to Israel. They said that Moses and Aaron exalted themselves above the congregation of the Lord, in taking upon them the priesthood and government, and that this office should not be conferred on their house alone. They said that it was sufficient for them if they were on a level with their brethren; for they were no more holy than the people, who were equally favored with God's peculiar presence and protection. [16]

CHARACTER TESTED.

As Moses listened to the words of Korah, he was filled with anguish, and fell upon his face before the people. "And he spake unto Korah and unto all his company, saying, Even to-morrow the Lord will show who are his, and who is holy; and will cause him to come near unto him, even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him. This do; take you censers, Korah, and all his company; and put fire therein, and put incense in them before the Lord to-morrow; and it shall be that the man whom the Lord doth choose, he shall be holy; ye take too much upon you, ye sons of Levi. And Moses said unto Korah Hear, I pray you, ye sons of Levi. Seemeth it but a small thing unto you, that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to himself to do the service of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them? And he hath brought thee near to him, and all thy brethren the sons of Levi with thee; and seek ye the priesthood also? For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the Lord; and what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?" Moses told them that Aaron had assumed no office of himself; that God had placed him in the sacred office. [17]

Dathan and Abiram said, "Is it a small thing that thou hast brought us up out of the land that floweth with milk and honey, to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us? Moreover, thou hast not brought us into a land that floweth with milk and honey, or given us inheritance of fields and vineyards; wilt thou put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up."

They accused Moses of being the cause of their not entering the promised land. They said that God had not dealt with them thus. He had not said that they should die in the wilderness. They would never believe that he had thus said; but that it was Moses who had said this, not the Lord; and that it was all arranged by Moses to never bring them to the land of Canaan. They spoke of his leading them from a land that flowed with milk and honey. They forgot in their blind rebellion their sufferings in the land of Egypt, and the desolating plagues brought upon that land. But they now accuse Moses of bringing them from a good land, to kill them in the wilderness, that [18] he might be made rich with their possessions. They inquired of Moses, in an insolent manner, if he thought that none of all the host of Israel were wise enough to understand his motives, and discover his imposture; or if he thought they would all submit to have him lead them about like blind men as he pleased, sometimes toward Canaan, then back again toward the Red Sea and Egypt. These words they spoke before the congregation, and they utterly refused any longer to acknowledge the authority of Moses and Aaron.

Moses was greatly moved at these unjust accusations. He appealed to God before the people whether he had ever acted arbitrarily, and implored him to be his judge. The people in general were disaffected, and influenced by the misrepresentation of Korah. “And Moses said unto Korah, Be thou and all thy company before the Lord, thou, and they, and Aaron, to-morrow; and take every man his censer, and put incense in them, and bring ye before the Lord every man his censer, two hundred and fifty censers. thou also, and Aaron, each of you his censer. And they took every man his censer, and put fire in them, and laid incense thereon, and stood in the door of the tabernacle of the congregation with Moses and Aaron.”

[19] Korah and his company who aspired to the priesthood in their self-confidence, even took the censers and stood in the door of the tabernacle with Moses. Korah had cherished his envy and rebellion until he was self-deceived, and he really thought that the congregation was a very righteous people, and that Moses was a tyrannical ruler, continually dwelling upon the necessity of the congregation’s being holy, when there was no need of it, for they were holy.

These rebellious ones had flattered the people in general to believe that they were right, and that all their troubles arose from

Moses, their ruler, who was continually reminding them of their sins. The people thought if Korah could lead them, and encourage them, and dwell upon their righteous acts, instead of reminding them of their failures, they would have a very peaceful, prosperous journey, and he would without doubt lead them, not back and forward in the wilderness, but into the promised land. They said that it was Moses who had told them that they could not go into the land, and that the Lord had not thus said.

THE REBELS PERISH.

Korah, in his exalted self-confidence, gathered all the congregation of Israel against Moses and Aaron, “unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And the glory of the Lord appeared [20] unto all the congregation. And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment. And they fell upon their faces, and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation? And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the congregation, saying, Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. And Moses rose up and went unto Dathan and Abiram; and the elders of Israel followed him. And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins. So they gat up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, on every side; and Dathan and Abiram came out, and stood in the door of their tents, and their wives, and their sons, and their little children. And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the Lord hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind. If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the Lord hath not sent me. But if the Lord make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they [21] go down quick into the pit, then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the Lord.”

As soon as Moses ceased speaking, the earth opened and swallowed them up, and their tents, and all that pertained unto them.

They went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the congregation.

And as the children of Israel heard the cry of the perishing ones, they fled at a great distance from them. They knew that they were in a measure guilty, for they had received the accusations against Moses and Aaron, and they were afraid that they should also perish with them. The judgment of God was not yet finished. A fire came from the cloud of glory and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense.

[22] These were princes; that is, men generally of good judgment, and of influence in the congregation, men of renown. They were highly esteemed, and their judgment had often been sought in difficult matters. But they were affected by a wrong influence, and became envious, jealous, and rebellious. They perished not with Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, because they were not the first in rebellion. They were to see their end first, and have an opportunity of repenting of their crime. But they were not reconciled to the destruction of those wicked men, and the wrath of God came upon them, and destroyed them also.

“And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, that he take up the censers out of the burning, and scatter thou the fire yonder; for they are hallowed. The censers of these sinners against their own souls, let them make them broad plates for a covering of the altar; for they offered them before the Lord, therefore they are hallowed; and they shall be a sign unto the children of Israel.”

THE REBELLION NOT CURED.

After this terrific exhibition of God’s judgment, the people returned to their tents, but not humbled. They were terrified. They had been deeply influenced by the spirit of rebellion, and had been flattered by Korah and his company to believe that they were a very good people, and that they had been wronged and abused by Moses. They had their mind so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of those who had perished that it was difficult to free themselves of their blind prejudice. If they should admit that Korah and his company were all wicked, and Moses righteous, then they would be compelled

to receive as the word of God, that which they were unwilling to believe, that they should certainly all die in the wilderness. They were not willing to submit to this, and tried to believe that it was all imposture, and that Moses had deceived them. The men who had perished, had spoken pleasant words to them, and manifested especial interest and love for them, and they thought Moses a designing man. They decided that they could not be wrong; that, after all, those men who had perished were good men, and Moses had by some means been the cause of their destruction. [23]

Satan can lead deceived souls to great lengths. He can pervert their judgment, their sight, and their hearing. It was so in the case of the Israelites. “But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord.” The people were disappointed in the matter, resulting as it did in favor of Moses and Aaron. The appearance of Korah and his company, all impiously exercising the priests’ office with their censers, struck the people with admiration. They did not see that these men were offering a daring affront to the divine Majesty. When they were destroyed, the people were terrified; but after a short time all came in a tumultuous manner to Moses and Aaron, and charged them with the blood of those men who had perished by the hand of God. [24]

“And it came to pass, when the congregation was gathered against Moses and against Aaron, that they looked toward the tabernacle of the congregation; and, behold, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord appeared. And Moses and Aaron came before the tabernacle of the congregation. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Get you up from among this congregation, that I may consume them as in a moment. And they fell upon their faces.” Notwithstanding the rebellion of Israel, and their cruel conduct to Moses, yet he manifested for them the same interest as before. He fell upon his face before the Lord, and implored him to spare the people.

While Moses was praying before the Lord to pardon the sins of his people, he requested Aaron to make an atonement for their sin, while he remained before the Lord, that his prayers might ascend with the incense and be acceptable to God, that all the congregation might not perish in their rebellion. “And Moses said unto Aaron,

Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them; for there is wrath gone out from the Lord. The plague [25] is begun. And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people. And he put on incense, and made an atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed. Now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, besides them that died about the matter of Korah. And Aaron returned unto Moses unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the plague was stayed.”

THE SUBJECT APPLIED.

In the case of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, we have a lesson of warning lest we follow their example. “Neither let us tempt Christ as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”

We have evidences in God’s word of the liability of the people of God being greatly deceived. There are many instances where what may seem to be a sincere zeal for the honor of God has its origin [26] in leaving the soul unguarded for the enemy to tempt and impress the mind with a perverted sense of the real state of things. And we may expect just such things in these last days; for Satan is just as busy now as he was with the congregation of Israel. The cruelty and strength of prejudice are not understood. After the congregation had the evidences before their sight of the destruction of these leaders in rebellion, the power of suspicion and distrust which had been let into their souls was not removed. They saw the earth open and the leaders in rebellion go down into the bowels of the earth. This fearful exhibition before them surely ought to have cured them, and led them to the deepest repentance for their abuse of Moses.

Here God gave all Israel an opportunity to see and to feel the sinfulness of their course which should have led them to repentance and confession. He gave the deceived ones overwhelming evidence

that they were sinners, and that his servant Moses was right. They had an opportunity to pass one night in reflection upon the fearful visitation of Heaven which they had witnessed. But reason was perverted. Korah had instigated the rebellion. Two hundred and fifty princes joined him and spread the dis-affection. All the congregation were, to a greater or less degree, affected with the prevailing jealousy, surmisings, and hatred, against Moses, which had brought the displeasure of God in a fearfully marked manner. Yet our gracious God shows himself a God of justice and mercy. He made a distinction between the instigators—the leaders in the rebellion—and those who had been deceived or led by them. He pitied the ignorance and folly of those who had been deceived. [27]

God spoke by Moses to bid the congregation to leave the tents of the men whom they had chosen in the place of Moses. The very men whose destruction they premeditated were the instruments in the hands of God of saving their lives upon that occasion. Said Moses, “Get you up from the tabernacle of Korah.” They were in alarming danger of being also destroyed by the wrath of God in their sins; for they were sharers in the crimes of the men to whom they had given their sympathy, and with whom they had associated.

While Moses was trying the test before the congregation of Israel, if these men who had started the rebellion had repented and sought forgiveness of God and of his injured servant, the vengeance of God would even then have been stayed. But there stood Korah, the instigator of the rebellion, and his sympathizers boldly in their tents, as if in defiance of God’s wrath, as though God had never wrought through his servant Moses. And much less do these rebellious ones act as though they were men who had been so recently honored of God by being brought almost directly with Moses into his presence, beholding his unsurpassed glory. These men saw Moses come down from the mount after he had received the second tables of stone, while his face was resplendent with the glory of God, so that the people would not approach him but fled from him. He called to them; but they seemed terrified. He presented the tables of stone. He said, I plead in your behalf. I have turned the wrath of God from you. I have urged that if God forsake and destroy his congregation that my name may be blotted from his book. Lo, God has answered [28]

me, and here these tables of stone I hold in my hand are the pledge given me of his reconciliation with his people.

[29] The people perceive that it is the voice of Moses, that although he is transformed and glorified, he is yet Moses. They tell Moses that they cannot look into his face; for the radiant light in his countenance is exceedingly painful to them. His face is like the sun. They cannot look upon it. When Moses finds out the difficulty, he covers his face with a vail. He did not plead that the light and glory upon his face was the reflection of God's glory that he placed upon him, and the people must bear it; but he covers his glory. The sinfulness of the people made it painful to behold his glorified face. Just so will it be when the saints of God are glorified, just previous to the second appearing of our Lord. The wicked will retire and shrink away from the sight; for the glory in the countenances of the saints will pain them. But all this glory upon Moses, all this divine stamp seen upon God's humble servant, is forgotten.

SLIGHTED MERCY.

[30] The Hebrews had an opportunity to reflect upon the scene they had witnessed in the visitation of God's wrath upon the most prominent ones in this great rebellion. The goodness and mercy of God was displayed in not completely exterminating this ungrateful people when his wrath was kindled against the most responsible ones. God gave the congregation who had permitted themselves to be deceived space for repentance. The fact that the Lord, their invisible leader, showed so much longsuffering and mercy in this instance, is distinctly recorded as evidence of his willingness to forgive the most grievous offenders, when they should have a sense of their sin and return unto the Lord with repentance and humiliation. The congregation had been arrested in their presumptuous course by the display of the Lord's vengeance; but they were not convinced that they were great sinners against the Lord, deserving his wrath for their rebellious course.

It is hardly possible for men to offer a greater insult to God than to despise and reject the instrumentalities he has appointed to lead them. They had not only done this, but purposed to put both Moses and Aaron to death. These men fled from the tents of Korah,

Dathan, and Abiram, through fear of destruction; but their rebellion was not cured. They were not in grief and despair because of their guilt. They felt not the effect of an awakened, convicted conscience because they had abused their most precious privileges, and sinned against light and knowledge. We may here learn precious lessons of the longsuffering of Jesus, the angel who went before the Hebrews in the wilderness.

Their invisible Leader would save them from a disgraceful destruction. Forgiveness is lingering for them. It is possible for them to find pardon if they will even now repent. The vengeance of God has now come near to them and appealed to them to repent. A special, irresistible interference from Heaven has arrested their presumptuous rebellion. Now if they respond to the interposition of God's providence they may be saved. [31]

The repentance and humiliation of the congregation of Israel is required to be proportionate to their transgression. The signal power of God revealed has placed them beyond uncertainty. They may have a knowledge of the true position and holy calling of Moses and Aaron if they will accept it. But the neglect of the Hebrews to regard the evidences God had given them was fatal to them. They did not realize the importance of immediate action on their part to seek pardon of God for their grievous sins.

That night of probation to the Hebrews was not passed by them in confessing and repenting of their sins, but in devising some way to resist the evidences which showed them to be the greatest of sinners. They still held their jealous hatred of the men of God's appointment. They strengthened themselves in their mad course of resisting the authority of Moses and Aaron. Satan was at hand to pervert the judgment and lead them blindfolded to destruction. Their minds had been most thoroughly poisoned with disaffection, and they had the matter fixed beyond a question in their minds that Moses and Aaron were wicked men, and that they were responsible for the death of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, whom they thought would have been the saviours of the Hebrews by bringing in a better order of things, where praise would take the place of reproof, and peace the place of anxiety and conflict. [32]

The day before all Israel had fled in alarm at the cry of the doomed sinners who went down into the pit, for they said, "Lest the earth swallow us up also."

"But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord." In their indignation they were prepared to lay violent hands upon the men of God's appointment, whom they believed had done a great wrong in killing those who were good and holy.

The Lord's presence was manifested in his glory over the tabernacle, and rebellious Israel was arrested in their mad, presumptuous course. The voice of the Lord from his terrible glory speaks to Moses and Aaron in the same words which they were the day before commanded to address to the congregation of Israel, "Get you up from among this congregation that I may consume them as in a moment."

[33] Here we find a striking exhibition of the blindness that will compass human minds that turn from light and evidence. Here we see the strength of settled rebellion. Here we see how difficult is rebellion to be overcome. Surely, the Hebrews had the most convincing evidence in the destruction of the men who had deceived them. But they still stood forth boldly and defiantly, and accused Moses and Aaron of killing good and holy men. "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."

Moses did not feel the guilt of sin, and did not hasten away at the word of the Lord and leave the congregation to perish, as the Hebrews fled from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram the day before. Moses lingered; for he could not consent to give up all that vast multitude to perish, although he knew that they deserved the vengeance of God, for their persistent rebellion.

He prostrated himself before God, because the people felt no necessity for humiliation. He mediates for the people, because they feel no need of interceding in their own behalf. Moses here typifies Christ. In this critical crisis, Moses manifested the true shepherd's interest for the flock of his care. He pleads that the wrath of an offended God may not destroy utterly the people of his choice. He holds back by his intercession the arm of vengeance, that a full end shall not be made of disobedient, rebellious Israel. He directed

Aaron what course to pursue in that terrible crisis when the wrath of God had gone forth, and the plague had begun. Aaron stood with his censer waving it before the Lord while the intercessions of Moses ascended with the smoke of the incense. Moses dared not cease his entreaties. He took hold of the strength of the angel as did Jacob in his wrestling, and like Jacob he prevailed. Aaron was standing between the living and the dead, when the gracious answer came, I have heard thy prayer, I will not consume utterly. The very men whom the congregation despised and would have put to death, are the ones to plead in their behalf that the avenging sword of God might be sheathed and sinful Israel spared. [34]

NEW TESTAMENT APPLICATION.

The apostle plainly stated that the experience of the Israelites in their travels has been recorded for the benefit of those living in this age of the world, upon whom the ends of the world are come. We do not consider that our dangers are any less than those of the Hebrews, but greater. There will be temptations to jealousies and murmurings, and there will be outspoken rebellion, as is on record in regard to ancient Israel. There will ever be a spirit to rise up against the reproof of sins and wrongs. But shall the voice of re- proof be hushed because of this? If so, we shall be in no better situation than the various denominations in our land, who are afraid to touch the errors and prevailing sins of the people. [35]

Those whom God has set apart as ministers of righteousness have solemn responsibilities laid upon them to reprove the sins of the people. Paul commanded Titus, "These things speak and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee." There are ever those who will despise the one who dares to reprove sin. There are times when reproofs must be given. Paul directs Titus to rebuke a certain class sharply, that they may be sound in the faith. Men and women who are brought together, with their different organizations, in church capacity, have peculiarities and faults. As these will be developed, they will require reproof. If those who are placed in important positions never reprove, never rebuke, there would soon be a demoralized condition of things that would greatly dishonor God. But how shall the reproof be given? Let the apostle answer:

“With all long-suffering and doctrine.” Principle should be brought to bear upon the one who needs reproof. But never should the wrongs of God’s people be passed by indifferently.

- [36] There will be men and women who despise reproof, and who will ever in their feelings rise up against it. It is not pleasant to be told of our wrongs. In almost every case where there is a necessity of reproof, there will be some who entirely overlook the fact that the Spirit of the Lord has been grieved, and his cause reproached. These will pity those who deserved reproof because personal feelings have been hurt. All this unsanctified sympathy places the sympathizers where they are sharers in the guilt of the one reproofed. In nine cases out of ten, if the one reproofed had been left under a sense of his wrongs, he might have been helped to see them, and thereby have been reformed. But meddling, unsanctified sympathizers place altogether a wrong construction upon the motives and nature of the reproof given, and by their sympathizing with the one reproofed lead him to feel that he has been really abused, and their feelings rise up in rebellion against the one who has only done his duty. Those who faithfully discharge their unpleasant duties under a sense of their accountability to God, will receive his blessing. God requires his servants to be always in earnest to do his will. In the apostle’s charge to Timothy, he exhorts him to “preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.”
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The Hebrews were not willing to submit to the directions and restrictions of the Lord. They simply wanted their own way, to follow the leadings of their own mind, and be controlled by their own judgment. Could they have been left free to do this, there would have been no complaints made of Moses. They were restless under restraint.

God would have his people disciplined and brought into harmony of action, that they may see eye to eye, and be of the same mind, and of the same judgment. In order to bring about this state of things there is much to be done. The carnal heart must be subdued, and transformed. God designs that there should ever be a living testimony in the church. There will be a necessity of reproofs and exhortations, and some will need to be rebuked sharply as the case demands. We hear the plea, Oh ! I am so sensitive, I cannot bear the

least reflection. If these would state the case correctly, they would say, I am so self-willed, so self-sufficient, so proud spirited, I will not be dictated; I will not be reproved; I claim the right of individual judgment; I have a right to believe and talk as I please. God would not have us yield up our individuality. But what man is a proper judge of how far this matter of individual independence should be carried. [38]

Peter exhorts his brethren: "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble." The apostle Paul, also, exhorted his Philippian brethren to unity and humility as follows: "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Paul exhorts his brethren, "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another." He wrote to the Ephesians, "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

The history of the Israelites presents before us the great danger of deception. Many do not have a sense of the sinfulness of their own natures, nor of the grace of forgiveness. They are in nature's darkness, subject to temptations and to great deception. They are far from God; yet they have great satisfaction in their lives when their conduct is abhorred of God. This class will ever be at war with the leadings of the Spirit of God, especially against reproof. They do not wish to be disturbed. They have occasionally selfish fears, occasionally good purposes, some anxious thoughts and convictions. But they have not a depth of experience, because they are not rivited to the Eternal Rock. This class never see the necessity of the plain testimony. Sin does not appear so exceedingly sinful, for the very reason they are not walking in the light, as Christ is in the light. [39]

There is still another class who have had great light, and special conviction, and a genuine experience in the workings of the Spirit of God; but the manifold temptations of Satan have overcome them. They do not appreciate the light that God has given them. They do not heed the warnings and reproofs from the Spirit of God. They are under condemnation. These will ever be at variance with the straight testimony, because it condemns them.

[40] God designs that his people shall be a unit; that they shall see eye to eye, and be of the same mind and of the same judgment. This cannot be accomplished without a clear, pointed, living testimony in the church. The prayer of Christ was that his disciples might be one as he was one with his Father. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

E. G. W.

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Appeal to the Young.

[41] DEAR YOUTH : The Lord has given me, from time to time, testimonies of warning for you. He has given you encouragement if you would yield your hearts' best and holiest affections to him. As these warnings revive distinctly before me, I feel a sense of your danger that I know you do not feel. The school located in Battle Creek brings many young people together of different mental organizations. If these youth are not consecrated to God, and humbly walking in the way of his commandments, obedient to his will, the location of a school in Battle Creek will prove a means of great discouragement to the church.

This school may be made a blessing or a curse. I entreat of you who have ever named the name of Christ to depart from all iniquity, and develop characters that God can approve.

I inquire, Do you believe the testimonies of reproof which have been given you are of God? If you really believe that the voice of God has spoken to you, pointing out your dangers, do you heed the counsels given? Do you keep fresh in your minds these testimonies of warning by often reading them with a prayerful heart?

The Lord has spoken to you, children and youth, again and again. And you have been slow to heed the warnings given you. If you have not rebelliously braced your hearts against the views God has given of your characters, your dangers, and the course marked out for you to pursue, some of you have been inattentive in regard to the things required of you, that you might gain spiritual strength and be a blessing in the school, in the church, and to all with whom you associate.

Young men and women, you are accountable to God for the light he has given you. This light and these warnings, if not heeded, will rise up in judgment against you. You have your dangers plainly stated. You are cautioned and guarded on every side and hedged in with warnings. And in the house of God you have listened to the most solemn, heart searching truths presented by the servants of God in demonstration of the Spirit. What weight have these solemn appeals upon your hearts? And what influence do they have upon your characters? You will be held responsible for every one of these appeals and warnings. They will rise up in judgment to condemn those who pursue a life of vanity, levity, and pride. [42]

Dear young friends, that which you sow, you will also reap. Now for you is the sowing time. What will the harvest be? What are you sowing? Every word you utter and every act of your life is a seed which will bear good or evil fruit, and will result in joy or sorrow to the sower of the seed. As is the seed sown, so will be the crop. God has given you great light and many privileges.

After this light has been given, and after your dangers have been plainly presented before you, the responsibility becomes yours. The manner in which you treat the light God gives you will turn the scale for happiness or woe. You are shaping your destinies for yourselves. You all have an influence for good or for evil on the minds and characters of others. And just the influence which you exert is written in the book of records in Heaven. An angel is attending you, and taking record of your words and actions. When [43]

you arise in the morning, do you feel your helplessness and your need of strength from God ? And do you humbly, with your heart, make known your wants to your Heavenly Father? If you do, angels mark your prayers, and if these prayers have not gone forth out of feigned lips, when you are in danger of unconsciously doing wrong, and exerting an influence which will lead others to do wrong, your guardian angel will be by your side, prompting you to a better course, choosing your words for you, and influencing your actions.

If you feel in no danger, and if you offer no prayer for help and strength to resist temptations, you will be sure to go astray. And your neglect of duty is marked in the book of God in Heaven. You will be found wanting in the trying day.

[44] There are those around you who have been religiously instructed, and some have been indulged, petted, flattered, and praised, until they have been literally spoiled for practical life. I am speaking in regard to persona I know. Their characters are warped by indulgence, flattery, and indolence, so that for this life they are useless. And if useless so far as this life is concerned, what may we hope for that life where all is purity and holiness, and where all have harmonious characters. I have prayed for these persons. I have personally addressed them. I could see the influence they would exert over other minds, in leading them to vanity, love of dress, and carelessness in regard to their eternal interests. The only hope for this class is for them to take heed to their ways, and humble their proud, vain hearts before God, make confession of their sins, and be converted.

Vanity in dress is a great temptation for the youth, as well as love of amusement. The sacred claims that God has upon us all are, the whole heart, the whole soul, the whole affections. The answer some make to this statement is, Oh! I do not profess to be a Christian. What if they do not? Has not God the same claims upon them that he has upon the one who professes to be his child? Because they are bold in their careless disregard of sacred things, is their sin of neglect and rebellion passed over by the Lord?

[45] Every day that you disregard the claims of God, every opportunity of offered mercy you slight, is charged to your account, and will swell the list of sins against you in the day when the accounts of every soul will be investigated. I address you, young men and women, professor or unprofessor. God calls for your affections, your

devotion, and your cheerful obedience to him. You have now a short time of probation, and you may now improve this opportunity to make an unconditional surrender to God.

Obedience and submission to God's requirements are the conditions given us by the inspired apostle, by which we become children of God, members of the royal family. Every child and youth, and every man and woman, has Jesus rescued by his own blood from the abyss of ruin to which Satan was compelling them to go. Because sinners will not accept of the salvation freely offered to them, are they released from their obligations ? Their choosing to remain in sin and bold transgression does not lessen their guilt. Jesus paid a price for them, and they belong to him. They are his property, and if they will not yield obedience to Him who has given his life for them, and if they will devote their time and strength and talents to the service of Satan, they are earning their wages, which is death. Immortal glory and eternal life our Redeemer offers as a reward to those who will be obedient to him. He has made it possible for them to perfect Christian character through his name, and overcome on their own account as he has overcome in their behalf. He has given them an example in his own life, showing them how they may overcome. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

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The claims of God are equally upon all. Those who choose to neglect the great salvation offered to them freely, and choose to serve themselves and remain enemies to God, enemies to the self-sacrificing Redeemer, are earning their wages. They are sowing to the flesh, and will of the flesh reap corruption.

Those who have put on Christ by baptism, and have by this act shown their separation from the world, and have covenanted to walk in newness of life, should not set up idols in their hearts. Those who have once rejoiced in the evidence of sins forgiven, who have tasted of a Saviour's love, and then persist in uniting with the foes of Christ, and reject the perfect righteousness Jesus offers them, and choose the ways that he has condemned, will be more severely judged than heathen who have never had the light and never known God or his law. Those who refuse to follow the light God has given them, and choose the amusements, vanities, and follies, of the world, and refuse to conform their conduct to the just and holy requirements

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of God's law, are guilty of sins the most aggravating in the sight of God. Their guilt and their wages will be proportionate to the light and the privileges they have had.

We see the world absorbed in their own amusements. The first and highest thoughts of the larger portion, especially of females, are for display. Love of dress and pleasures is wrecking the happiness of thousands. And some of those who profess to love and keep the commandments of God are coming as near to aping this class as possible, and retain the name of Christians. And some of the young are so eager for display that they are willing to give up even the name of Christian, if they can only follow out their inclination for vanity of dress and love of pleasure. Self-denial in dress is a part of our Christian duty. To dress plainly, and abstain from display of jewelry and ornaments of every kind is in keeping with our faith. Are we of that number who see the folly of the worldlings in indulging in extravagance in dress, as well as in love of amusements? If so, we should be of that class who will shun everything that gives sanction to this spirit which takes possession of the minds and hearts of those who live only for this world, and who have no thought or care for the next.

[48] Christian youth, I have seen in some of you a love for dress and display which has pained me. In some who have been well instructed, and have had religious privileges from their babyhood, who have put on Christ by baptism, thus professing to be dead to the world, I have seen a vanity in dress and a levity in conduct that has grieved the dear Saviour, and has been a reproach to the cause of God. I have marked with pain your religious declension and your disposition to ornament and trim your apparel. Some have been so unfortunate as to come into possession of a gold chain or pin, or both, and have shown bad taste in exhibiting these things, making them conspicuous, to attract attention. I can but associate these characters with the vain peacock who will display his gorgeous feathers for admiration. It is all this poor bird has to attract attention. His voice and form are anything but attractive.

The young may endeavor to excel in seeking for the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is a jewel of inestimable value that may be worn with heavenly grace. This adorning will possess attraction for many in this world, and will be esteemed of great price

by the heavenly angels, and above all by our Heavenly Father, and will fit them to be welcome guests in the heavenly courts.

The youth have faculties that, with proper cultivation, would qualify them for almost any position of trust. If they had made it their object in obtaining an education to bring into exercise and develop the powers God has given them for usefulness, that they might prove a blessing to others, their minds would not be dwarfed to an inferior standard. They would show depth of thought and firm principle, and would command influence and respect. They might have an elevating influence upon others which would lead souls to see and acknowledge the power of an intelligent Christian life. Those who have greater care to ornament their person for display than to form the mind for the purpose of exercising their powers for the greatest usefulness, that they may glorify God, do not realize their accountability to God. They will be inclined to be superficial in all they undertake. They will narrow their usefulness, and dwarf their intellect. [49]

But I feel deeply pained at heart for the fathers and mothers of these youth, as well as for the children. There has been a lack in the training of these children which leaves a heavy responsibility somewhere. Parents who have petted and indulged their children in the place of judiciously, from principle, restraining them, can see the character they have formed. As the training has been, so the character inclines. [50]

FAITHFUL ABRAHAM.

My mind goes back to faithful Abraham pursuing his journey with Isaac by his side in obedience to the divine command given him in the night vision at Beersheba. He sees before him the mountain God had told him he would signalize as the one upon which he was to sacrifice. He removes the wood from the shoulder of his servant and lays it upon Isaac, the one to be offered. He girds up his soul with firmness and agonizing sternness, ready for the work which God required him to do. With a breaking heart and unnerved hand, he takes the fire, while Isaac inquires, Father, here is the fire and the wood; but where is the offering? Oh! Abraham cannot tell him now. Father and son build the altar, and the terrible moment comes for

Abraham to make known to Isaac that which has agonized his soul all that long journey, that Isaac himself is the victim. Isaac is not a lad; he is a full-grown young man. He could have refused to submit to his father's design, if he chose. He does not accuse his father of insanity. He does not seek to change his purpose even. He submits. He believes in the love of his father, and that he would not make this [51] terrible sacrifice of his only son, if God had not bidden him to do so, Isaac was bound by the trembling, loving hands of his pitying father, because God had said it. The son submitted to the sacrifice, because he believed in the integrity of his father. And when everything was ready when the faith of the father and the submission of the son were fully tested, the angel of God stays the uplifted hand of Abraham that was about to slay his son. He tells him it is enough. "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me."

This act of faith in Abraham is recorded for our benefit. It teaches us the great lesson of confidence in the requirements of God, however close and cutting. It teaches children perfect submission to their parents and to God. We are taught in Abraham's obedience that nothing is too precious for us to give to God.

Isaac was the figure of the Son of God who was offered a sacrifice for the sins of the world. God would impress upon Abraham the gospel of salvation to man. In order to do this, and make the truth to him a reality, as well as to test his faith, he required of him to slay his darling Isaac. All the sorrows and agony Abraham endured through this dark and fearful trial were for the purpose of deeply impressing [52] up- on his understanding the plan of redemption for fallen man. He was made to understand in his own experience how unutterable was the self-denial of the infinite God in giving his own Son to die to rescue man from utter ruin. No mental torture to Abraham could be equal to that he endured in obeying the divine command to sacrifice his son.

God gave his Son to a life of humiliation, self-denial, poverty, toil, reproach, and the agonizing death of the crucifixion. But there was no angel to bear the joyful commission, It is enough, you need not die, my well-beloved Son. Legions of angels were sorrowfully waiting, hoping that, as in the case of Isaac, God would at the last

moment prevent his shameful death. But angels were not permitted to bear any such message to God's dear Son.

The humiliation in the judgment hall, on the way to Calvary went on. He was mocked, derided, and spit upon. He endured the jeers, taunts, and revilings, of those who hated him, until upon the cross he bowed his head and died.

Could God give to us any greater proof of his love than this that he gave his Son to pass through this scene of suffering? And as the gift of God to man was a free gift, his love is infinite. The claims of God upon our confidence, our obedience, our whole heart, and the wealth of our affections, correspond with the infinite gift. He requires all that is possible for man to give. The submission on our part must be proportionate to the gift of God. It must be complete, and wanting in nothing. We are all debtors to God. He has claims upon us that we cannot meet without giving ourselves a full and willing sacrifice. Prompt and willing obedience God claims, and nothing short of this will he accept. We have opportunity now to secure the love and favor of God. This year of 1875 may be the last year of some who may read this. Is there any among the youth who shall read this appeal who would choose the pleasure of the world before that peace which Christ gives the earnest seeker and the cheerful doer of his will? [53]

God is weighing our characters, our conduct, and our motives, in the balances of the sanctuary. It will be a fearful thing to be pronounced wanting in love and obedience by our Redeemer, who died upon the cross to draw our hearts unto him. God has bestowed upon us great and precious gifts. He has given us light and a knowledge of his will that we need not err or walk in darkness. To be weighed in the balance and found wanting in the day of final settlement and rewards will be a fearful thing, a terrible mistake which can never be corrected. Shall the book of God be searched in vain for your names, young friends ? [54]

God has appointed you a work to do for him which will make you a co-laborer with him. There are souls to save around you. There will be those whom you can encourage and bless by your earnest efforts. You may turn souls from sin to righteousness. When you have a sense of your accountability to God, you will feel your need of faithfulness in prayer, and faithfulness in watching against

the temptations of Satan. You will, if you are indeed Christians, feel more like mourning over the moral darkness in the world than indulging in levity and pride of dress. You will be among those who are sighing and crying for the abominations that are done in the land. You will resist the temptations of Satan to indulge in vanity and in trimmings and ornaments for display. The mind is narrowed and the intellect dwarfed that can be gratified with these frivolous things to the neglect of high responsibilities. The youth in our day may be workers with Christ if they will, and in working, their faith will strengthen and their knowledge of the divine will increase. Every true purpose and every act of right doing will be recorded in the book [55] of life. I wish I could arouse the youth to see and feel the sinfulness of living for their own gratification and dwarfing their intellect to the cheap, vain things of this life. If they would elevate their thoughts and words above the frivolous attractions of this world, and make it their aim to glorify God, his peace which passeth all understanding would be theirs.

HUMILIATION OF CHRIST.

Did not our Exemplar tread a hard, self-denying, self-sacrificing, humble path, on our account, in order to save us? He encountered difficulties. He experienced disappointment and suffered reproach and affliction in his work of saving us. And shall we refuse to follow where the King of glory has led the way? Shall we complain of hardship and trial in the work of overcoming on our account, when we remember the suffering of our Redeemer in the wilderness of temptation, and in the garden of Gethsemane, and on Calvary? All these were endured to show us the way, and bring us the divine help we must have or perish. If the youth would win eternal life, they need not expect that they can follow their own inclinations. The prize will cost them something, yes, everything. They can now have Jesus or the world. How many dear youth will Buffer privation, weariness, [56] toil, and anxiety, in order to serve themselves, and gain an object in this life? They do not think of complaining of the hardships and difficulties they encounter in order to serve their own interest. Why then should the youth shrink from conflict, self-denial, or from any sacrifice, for eternal life ?

Christ came from the courts of glory to this sin-polluted world and humbled himself to humanity. He identified himself with our weaknesses. He was tempted in all points like as we are. Christ perfected a righteous character here upon the earth, not on his own account; for his character was pure and spotless, but for fallen man. His character he offers to man if he will accept it. The sinner, through repentance of his sins, and faith in Jesus Christ, and obedience to the perfect law of God, has the righteousness of Christ imputed to him, and it becomes his righteousness, and his name is recorded in the Lamb's book of life. He becomes a child of God, a member of the royal family.

Jesus paid an infinite price to redeem the world, and the race was given into his hands. They became his property. He sacrificed his honor, his riches, and his glorious home in the royal courts, and became the son of Joseph and Mary. Joseph was one of the humblest day laborers, and Jesus worked, and lived a life of hard ship and toil. [57] When his ministry commenced, after his baptism, he endured nearly six weeks of agonizing fast. It was not merely the gnawing pangs of hunger which made his sufferings inexpressibly severe, but it was the guilt of the sins of the world which pressed so heavily upon him. He who knew no sin was made sin for us. With this terrible weight of guilt upon him because of our sins he withstood the fearful test upon appetite, love of the world, love of honor, and pride of display which leads to presumption. These three great leading temptations, Christ endured, and overcame in behalf of man, working out for him a righteous character because he knew man could not do this of himself. He knew that upon these three points Satan was to assail the race. He had overcome Adam, and designed to carry forward his work to completion in the ruin of man. Christ entered the field in man's behalf to conquer Satan for him because he saw man could not overcome on his own account. Christ prepared the way for the ransom of man by his own life of suffering, self-denial, self sacrifice, his humiliation, and, finally, his death. He has brought help to man that he may, in following his example, overcome on his own account, as Christ has overcome for him.

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your [58]

body, and in your spirit, which are God's." "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

[59] How graciously and tenderly our Heavenly Father deals with his children. He preserves them from a thousand dangers to them unseen. He guards them from the subtle arts of Satan, lest they should be destroyed. Because the protecting care of God through his angels is not seen by our dull vision, we do not try to contemplate and appreciate the ever-watchful interest our kind and benevolent Creator has over the work of his hands; and we are not grateful for the multitude of mercies he daily bestows upon us.

The young are ignorant of the many dangers to which they are daily exposed. They can never fully know them all; but if they are watchful and prayerful, God will keep their consciences sensitive and their perceptions clear, that they may discern the workings of the enemy, and be fortified against his attacks. But many of the youth have so long followed their own inclination that duty is a meaningless word to them. High and holy duties which they may have to do for the benefit of others and to glorify God, they do not sense, and they utterly neglect to perform them.

[60] If the youth could only be awake, and deeply feel their need of strength from God to resist the temptations of Satan, precious victories would be theirs, and they would obtain a valuable experience in the Christian warfare. How few of the young think of the inspired apostle's exhortation, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist steadfast in the faith." In the vision given to

John, he saw the power of Satan over men, and exclaimed, “Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.”

The only safety for the young is in unceasing watchfulness and humble prayer. They need not flatter themselves that they can be Christians without these. Satan conceals his temptations and his devices under a cover of light, as when he approached Christ in the wilderness, he was in appearance as one of the heavenly angels. The adversary of our souls will approach us as a heavenly guest; and sobriety and vigilance the apostle recommends as our only safety. The young who indulge in carelessness, in levity, and neglect of Christian duties, are continually falling under the temptations of the enemy, instead of overcoming as Christ overcame.

The service of Christ is not drudgery to the fully consecrated soul. Obedience to our Saviour does not detract from our happiness and true pleasure in this life, but has a refining, elevating power upon our characters. The daily study of the precious words of life found in our Bibles strengthens the intellect, and furnishes knowledge of the grand and glorious works of God in nature. Through study of the Scriptures, a correct knowledge is obtained in regard to the way to live in order to enjoy the greatest amount of unalloyed happiness. The Bible student is also furnished with Scripture arguments to meet the doubts of unbelievers and remove them by the clear light of truth. Those who have searched the Scriptures may ever be fortified against the temptations of Satan, and may be thoroughly furnished to every good work, and prepared to give to every man that asketh them a reason of the hope that is within them. [61]

The impression is too frequently left upon minds that religion is degrading, and that it is a condescension for sinners to accept of the Bible standard as their rule of life. They think its requirements are unrefined, and they must relinquish all their tastes and happy enjoyments of all that is beautiful, and accept of humiliation and degradation. Satan never fastens a greater deception upon minds than this. The pure religion of Jesus requires of its followers the simplicity of natural beauty, and the polish of natural refinement and elevated purity rather than the artificial and false.

[62] While pure religion is looked upon as exacting in its demands, and, with the young especially, is unfavorably contrasted with the false glitter and tinsel of the world, they regard the Bible requirements as a humiliating, self-denying test, which takes from them all the enjoyment of life. But the religion of the Bible ever has a tendency to elevate and refine. And had the professed followers of Jesus Christ carried out the principles of pure religion in their lives, the religion of Jesus Christ would be acceptable to more refined minds. The religion of the Bible has nothing in it which would jar upon the finest feelings. It is, in all its precepts and requirements, pure as the character of God, and as elevated as his throne.

The Redeemer of the world warns us against the pride of life, but not against its grace and natural beauty. He pointed to the glowing beauty of the flowers of the field, and to the lily reposing in its spotless purity upon the bosom of the lake, and said, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Here he shows that notwithstanding men and women may have so great care, and toil with weariness to make themselves objects of admiration by outward decorations, all their artificial adornments, which they value, will not bear comparison with the simple flowers of the field for natural loveliness. Even these simple flowers, with God's adornment, would outvie in loveliness [63] the gorgeous apparel of Solomon. Even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Here is an important lesson for every follower of Christ. The Redeemer of the world speaks to the youth. Will you listen to his words of heavenly instruction? He presents before you themes for thought that will ennoble, elevate, refine, and purify, but never degrade or dwarf the intellect. His voice is speaking to you. "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." If the light of God be in you, it will shine forth to others. It can never be concealed.

Dear youth, a disposition in you to follow fashion in your dress, and to wear lace, and gold, and artificials, for display, will not recommend your religion and the truth you profess to others. People of discernment will look upon your attempts to beautify the external, as

proof of weak minds and proud hearts. Simple, plain, unpretending dress will be a recommendation to my youthful sisters. In no better way can you let your light shine to others than in your simplicity of dress and deportment. You may show to all that you place a proper estimate upon the things of this life in comparison with eternal considerations. [64]

Now is your golden opportunity to form pure and holy characters for Heaven. You cannot afford to devote these precious moments to trimming and ruffling, to beautify the external to the neglect of the inward adorning. “Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.”

God, who created everything lovely and beautiful that the eye rests upon, is a lover of the beautiful. He shows you how he estimates true beauty. The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit is in his sight of *great price*. That which God estimates as valuable above costly dress, or pearls, or gold, shall we not seek earnestly to gain? The inward adorning, the grace of meekness, a spirit in harmony with the heavenly angels, will not lessen true dignity of character, or make us less lovely here in this world.

PURE RELIGION.

Religion, pure and undefiled, ennobles its possessor. You will ever find with the true Christian a marked cheerfulness, a holy, happy confidence in God, a submission to his providences that is refreshing to the soul. To the Christian, God’s love and benevolence can be seen in every bounty he receives. The beauties in nature are a theme for contemplation. In studying the natural loveliness surrounding us, the mind is carried up through nature to the Author of all that is lovely. All the works of God are speaking to our senses, magnifying his power, exalting his wisdom. Every created thing has in it charms which interest the child of God, and mold his taste to these precious evidences of God’s love above the work of human skill. [65]

The prophet, in words of glowing fervor, magnifies God in his created works: “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy

fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?" "O Lord God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will show forth all thy marvelous works."

[66] It is absence of religion that makes the path of so many professors of religion shadowy. There are those who may pass for Christians, but they are unworthy the name. They have not Christian character. When their Christianity is put to the test, its falsity is too evident. True religion is seen in the daily deportment. The life of the Christian is characterized by earnest, unselfish working to do others good and to glorify God. Their path is not dark and gloomy.

An inspired writer has said, "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is as darkness; they know not at what they stumble."

[67] And shall the young live vain and thoughtless lives of fashion and frivolity, dwarfing their intellect to the matter of dress, and consume their time in sensual pleasure? When they are all unready, God may say to them, This night thy folly shall end. He may permit mortal sickness to come upon those who have borne no fruit to his glory. While facing the realities of eternity, they may begin to realize the value of time and the life they have lost. They may then have some sense of the worth of the soul. They see that their lives have not glorified God in lighting the path of others to Heaven. They have lived to glorify self. And when racked with pain and with anguish of soul, they cannot have clear conceptions of eternal things. They may review their past lives, and in the remorse cry out, I have done nothing for Jesus who has done everything for me. My life has been a terrible failure.

While you pray, dear youth, that you may not be led into temptation, remember that your work does not end with the prayer. You want then to answer your own prayer, as far as possible, by resisting temptation, and leave that which you cannot do for Jesus to do for you. You cannot be too guarded in your words and in your deportment lest you invite the enemy to tempt you. Many of our youth open the door wide for Satan to come in by their careless disregard of the warnings and re-proofs given them.

With God's word for our guide, and Jesus as our heavenly teacher, we need not be ignorant of his requirements or of Satan's devices, and be overcome by his temptations. It will be no unpleasant task to be obedient to the will of God, when we yield ourselves fully to be directed by his Spirit.

Now is the time to work. If we are children of God, as long as we live in the world God will give us our work. We can never say we have nothing to do so long as there remains a work undone.

I wish all youth could see as I have seen the work that they can do, and which God will hold them responsible for, because they do not do it. The greatest work that was ever accomplished in the world, was by Him who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. [68] A frivolous-minded person will never accomplish good.

The spiritual weakness of many young men and women in this age is deplorable because they could be powerful agents for good if they were consecrated to God. I mourn greatly the lack of stability with the young. This we should all deplore. There seems to be a lack of power to do right, a lack of earnest effort to obey the calls of duty rather than of inclination. There seems to be with some but little strength to resist temptation. The reason of their being dwarfs in spiritual things is because they do not by exercise grow spiritually strong. They stand still when they should be going forward. Every step in the life of faith and duty is a step toward Heaven. I want greatly to hear of a reformation in many respects such as the young have never heretofore realized. Every inducement that Satan can invent is pressed upon them to make them indifferent and careless in regard to eternal things. I suggest that there be special efforts made by the youth to help each other to live faithful to their baptismal vows, and pledge themselves solemnly before God to withdraw their affections from the love of dress and display.

I would remind youth who wear feathers upon their hats and ornament their persons that because of their sins our Saviour's head [69] wore the shameful crown of thorns. When you devote precious time to trimming your apparel, remember the King of glory wore a plain, seamless coat. You who weary yourselves in decorating your persons, please bear in mind that Jesus was often weary from incessant toil and self-denial and self-sacrifice to bless the suffering and needy. He spent whole nights in prayer upon the lonely mountains. Not

because of his weakness and his necessities, but he saw, he felt, the weakness of your natures to resist the temptations of the enemy upon the very points where you are now overcome. He knew that you would be indifferent in regard to your dangers and would not feel your need of prayer. It was on our account, he poured out his prayers to his Father with strong cries and tears. It was to save us from the very pride and love of vanity and pleasure that we now indulge which crowds out the love of Jesus, that caused those tears, and marred our Saviour's visage with sorrow and anguish more than any of the sons of men.

[70] Will you, young friends, arise and shake off this dreadful indifference and stupor which has conformed you to the world? Will you heed the voice of warning which tells you destruction lies in the path of those who are at ease in this hour of danger. God's patience will not always wait for you, poor trifling souls. God, who holds our destinies in his hands, will not always be trifled with. Jesus declares to us that there is a greater sin than that which caused the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. It is the sin of those who have the great light of the truth in these days and who are not moved to repentance. It is the sin of rejecting the light of the most solemn message of mercy to the world. It is the sin of those who see Jesus in the wilderness of temptation, bowed down as with mortal agony because of the sins of the world, and yet are not moved to thorough repentance. He fasted nearly six weeks to overcome, in behalf of men, the indulgence of appetite, their vanity, display, and worldly honor. He has shown them how they may overcome on their own account as he overcame, but it is not pleasant to their natures to endure conflict and reproach, derision and shame, for his dear sake. It is not agreeable to deny self and to ever be seeking to do good to others. It is not pleasant to overcome as Christ overcame, so they turn from the pattern which is plainly given them to copy, and refuse to imitate the example that the Saviour came from the heavenly courts to leave them.

[71] It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of Judgment than for those who have had the privileges and the great light which shines in our day, and who neglect to follow the light, and give their hearts fully to God.

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Tithes and Offerings.

THE mission of the church of Jesus Christ is to save perishing sinners. It is to make known the love of God to men, and to win them to Christ by the efficacy of that love. The truth for this time must be carried into the dark corners of the earth. And this work may begin at home. The followers of Christ should not live selfish lives. But imbued with the spirit of Christ, they should work in harmony with Christ.

There are causes for the present coldness and unbelief. The love of the world, the cares of life, separate the soul from God. The water of life must be in us, and flowing out from us, springing up into everlasting life. We must work out what God works in. If the Christian would enjoy the light of life, he must increase his efforts to bring others to the knowledge of the truth. His life must be characterized by exertion and sacrifices to do others good. And then there will be no complaints of lack of enjoyment.

Angels are ever engaged in working for us, and is blessed him- [72]
self in a still greater degree. God could have reached his object in [73]
saving sinners without the aid of man; but he knew that he could not [74]
be happy without acting a part in the great work in which he should
be cultivating self-denial and benevolence.

That man might not lose the blessed results of benevolence, our Redeemer formed the plan of enlisting him as his co-worker. By a chain of circumstances which would call forth his charities, he brings man under the best means of cultivating benevolence, and keeps him habitually giving to help the poor, and to advance his cause. He sends his poor as the representatives of himself. A ruined world is drawing forth from us by their necessities talents of means and of influence to present to them the truth, of which they are in perishing need. And as we heed these calls, by labor and acts of benevolence, we are assimilated into the image of him who for our sakes became poor. In bestowing, we bless others, and thus accumulate the true riches.

There has been a great lack of Christian benevolence in the church. Those who were the best able to do in the cause of God for its advancement have done but little.

[75] God has mercifully brought a class to the knowledge of the truth, that they might appreciate its priceless value in comparison with earthly treasures. Jesus has said to these, "Follow me." He is testing them with the invitation to the supper which he has prepared. He is watching to see what characters they will develop, whether their own selfish interests will be considered of greater value than eternal riches. Many of these dear brethren are now by their actions framing the excuses mentioned in the parable.

"Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many; and sent his servant at supper-time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind."

[76] This parable correctly represents the condition of many professing to believe the present truth. The Lord has sent them an invitation to come to the supper which he has prepared for them at great cost to himself; but worldly interests look to them of greater importance than the heavenly treasure. They are invited to take part in the things of eternal value; but their farms, their cattle, and their home interest, seem of so much greater importance than obedience to the heavenly invitation that they overpower every divine attraction, and these earthly things are made the excuse for their disobedience to the heavenly command, "Come; for all things are now ready." These brethren are blindly following the example of those represented in the parable. They look at their worldly possessions, and say, No, Lord, I cannot follow thee, "I pray thee have me excused."

The very blessings which God has given to these men, to prove them, to see if they will render "unto God the things that are God's,"

they use as an excuse that they cannot obey the claims of truth. They have grasped their earthly treasure in their arms, and say, I must take care of these things; I must not neglect the things of this life; these things are mine. Thus the hearts of these men have become as unimpressible as the beaten highway. They close the door of their hearts to the heavenly messenger, who says, "Come; for all things are now ready," and throw it open, inviting the passage of the world's burden and business cares, and Jesus knocks in vain for admittance. [77]

Their hearts are so overgrown with thorns and cares of this life that heavenly things can find no place. Jesus invites the weary and heavy laden, with promises of rest if they will come to him. He invites them to exchange the galling yoke of selfishness and covetousness, which makes them slaves to mammon, for his yoke, which he declares is easy, and his burden, which is light.

He says, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." He would have them lay aside the heavy burdens of worldly cares and perplexities, and take his yoke, which is self-denial and sacrifice for others. This burden will prove to be light. Those who refuse to accept the relief Christ offers them, and will continue to wear the galling yoke of selfishness, tasking their souls to the utmost in plans to accumulate money for selfish gratification, have not experienced the peace and rest found in bearing the yoke of Christ, and lifting the burdens of self-denial and disinterested benevolence which Christ has borne in their behalf.

When the love of the world takes possession of the heart, and becomes a ruling passion, there is left no room for adoration to God; for the higher powers of the mind; submit to the slavery of mammon, and cannot retain thoughts of God and of Heaven. The mind loses its remembrance of God, and is narrowed and dwarfed to the accumulation of money. [78]

Through selfishness and love of the world, these men have been passing on with less and less sense of the magnitude of the work for these last days. They have not educated their minds to make a business of serving God. They have not an experience in that direction. Their property has absorbed their affections and eclipsed the magnitude of the plan of salvation. While they are improving and enlarging their worldly plans they see no necessity for the enlargement and extension of the work of God. They invest their means in

temporal things, but not in the eternal. Their hearts are ambitious for more means. God has made them the depositaries of his law, that they might let the light so graciously given them shine forth to others. But they have so increased their cares and anxieties that they have no time to bless others with their influence, to converse with their neighbors, to pray with them, and for them, and to seek to bring them to the knowledge of the truth.

[79] These men are responsible for the good they might do, but from which they excuse themselves because of worldly cares and burdens, which engross their minds and absorb their affections. Souls for whom Christ died might be saved by their personal effort and godly example. Precious souls are perishing for the light which God has given to men to be reflected upon the pathway of others. But the precious light is hid under a bushel and it gives no light to those who are in the house. Every man is a steward of God. To each the Master has committed his means which man claims as his own. He says, "Occupy till I come." A time is coming when Christ will require his own with usury. He will say to his stewards, "Give an account of thy stewardship." Those who have hid their Lord's money in a napkin in the earth, instead of putting it out to the exchangers, or those who have squandered their Lord's money by expending it for needless things, instead of putting it out to usury by investing it in his cause, will receive no approval of the Master, but decided condemnation. The unprofitable servant in the parable brought back the one talent to God, and said, "I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not sowed; and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast that is thine." His Lord takes up his words: "Thou wicked and [80] 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."

This unprofitable servant was not ignorant of God's plans, but he set himself firmly to thwart the purpose of God, charging him with unfairness in requiring improvement upon the money intrusted to him. This very complaint and murmuring is made by a large class of wealthy men, professing to believe the truth. They are, like the unfaithful servant, afraid that the increase of the talents God has

lent them will be called for to advance the spread of truth; therefore they tie it up, by investing it in earthly treasures, and burying it in the world, thus making it so fast that they have nothing, or next to nothing, to invest in the cause of God. They have buried it, fearing that God would call for some of the principal or increase. When at the demand of their Lord they bring the amount given them, they come with ungrateful excuses why they have not put the means, lent them by God, out to the exchangers, by investing it in his cause, to carry on his work.

He who embezzles his Lord's goods not only loses the talent lent him of God, but loses eternal life. Of him it is said, "Cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness." The faithful servant who invests his money in the cause of God to save souls, employs his means to the glory of God, and will receive the commendation of the Master, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

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What will be this joy of our Lord? It will be in seeing souls saved in the kingdom of glory. "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 idea of stewardship should have a practical bearing upon all the people of God. This parable of the talents rightly understood will bar out covetousness, which God calls idolatry. Practical benevolence will give spiritual life to thousands of nominal professors of the truth who now mourn over their darkness. It will transform them from selfish, covetous worshipers of mammon, to earnest, faithful co-workers with Christ in the salvation of sinners.

The foundation of the plan of salvation was laid in a *sacrifice*. Jesus left the royal courts, and became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. Everyone who will share this salvation, purchased for them by such an infinite sacrifice by the Son of God, will follow the example of the True Pattern. Jesus Christ was the chief corner stone, and we must build upon this foundation. Each must have a spirit of self-denial and self-sacrifice. The life of Christ upon earth was unselfish, marked with humiliation and sacrifice. And shall men, partakers of the great salvation which Jesus came from Heaven to bring them, refuse to follow their Lord, and to share in his self-denial and sacrifice? Says Christ, "I am the vine, ye are

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the branches. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away. And every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit." The very vital principle, the sap which flows through the vine, nourishes the branches, that they may flourish and bear fruit. Is the servant greater than his Lord? Shall the world's Redeemer practice self-denial and sacrifice on our account, and the members of Christ's body practice self-indulgence? Self-denial is an essential condition of discipleship.

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." I lead the way in the path of self-denial. I require nothing of you, my followers, but that of which I your Lord give you an example in my own life.

[83] The Saviour of the world conquered Satan in the wilderness of temptation. He overcame to show man how he may overcome. He announced in the synagogue of Nazareth, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

The great work which Jesus announced that he came to do was intrusted to his followers upon the earth. Christ as our head leads out in the great work of salvation, and bids us follow his example. He has given us a world-wide message. This truth must be extended to all nations, tongues, and people. Satan's power was to be contested and he was to be overcome by Christ and also by his followers.

An extensive war was to be maintained against the powers of darkness. And in order to do this work successfully, means were required. God does not propose to send means direct from Heaven, but he gives into the hands of his followers talents of means to use for the very purpose of sustaining this warfare.

[84] He has given his people a plan for raising sums sufficient to make the enterprise self-sustaining. God's plan in the tithing system is beautiful in its simplicity and equality. All may take hold of it in faith and courage, for it is divine in its origin. Here are simplicity and utility combined, which it requires not depth of learning to understand and execute. All may feel that they can act a part in

carrying forward the precious work of salvation. Every man, and woman, and youth, may become a treasurer for the Lord. They may be agents to meet the demands upon the treasury. Says the apostle, "Let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him."

Great objects are accomplished by this system ; for if one and all accept it, each is made a vigilant and faithful treasurer for God; and there would be no want of means to carry forward the great work of sounding the last message of warning to the world. The treasury will be full if all adopt this system, and the contributors will not be left the poorer. Through every investment made, they will become more wedded to the cause of present truth. They will be "laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life."

As the persevering, systematic workers see that the tendency of their benevolent efforts is to nourish love to God and their fellow-men, and that their personal efforts are extending their sphere of usefulness. they will realize that it is a great blessing to be co-workers with Jesus Christ. The Christian church as a general thing are disowning the claims of God upon them to give alms of the things which they possess to Support the warfare against the moral darkness which is flooding the world. Never can the work of God advance as it should until the followers of Christ become active, zealous workers.

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Every individual of the church should feel that the truth which they profess is a reality, and they should be disinterested workers. Some rich men feel like murmuring because the work of God is extending, and there is a demand for money. They say there is no end of the calls for means. One object after another is continually rising, demanding help. We would say to such that we hope the cause of God will so extend that there will be greater occasion, and more frequent and urgent calls for supplies from the treasury to prosecute the work.

If the plan of systematic benevolence was fully adopted and carried out to a man, there would be a constant supply in the treasury. The income would flow in like a steady stream constantly supplied by overflowing springs of benevolence.

[86] Almsgiving is a part of gospel religion. Does not the consideration of the infinite price paid for our redemption leave upon us solemn obligations pecuniarily, as well as lay claim upon all our power to be devoted to the work of the Master ?

We shall have a debt to settle with the Master by-and-by, when he shall say, Give an account of thy stewardship. If men prefer to set aside the claims of God and grasp and selfishly retain all that he gives them, he will hold his peace at present, and continue frequently to test them by increasing his bounties, and by letting his blessings flow on, and these men pass on receiving honor of men, and without censure in the church, but by-and-by he will say, "Give an account of thy stewardship." Says Christ, "Inasmuch as ye did not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price," and are under obligation to glorify God with your means as well as in your body, and in your spirit, which are his.

"Ye are bought with a *price*," not "with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ." He asks the return of the gifts he has intrusted to us, to aid in the salvation of souls. He has given his blood; he asks our silver.

It is through his poverty that we are made rich, and yet, will we refuse to give back to him his own gifts ?

[87] God is not dependent upon man for the support of his cause. He could have sent means direct from Heaven to supply his treasury, if his providence had seen that this was the best for man. He might have devised means whereby angels would have been sent to publish the truth to the world without the agency of men. He might have written the truth upon the heavens, and let that declare to the world his requirements in living characters. God is not dependent upon any man's gold or silver. He says, "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof." Whatever necessity there is for our agency in the advancement of the cause of God, he has purposely arranged for our good. He has honored us by making us co-workers with him. He has ordained that there should be a necessity for the co-operation of men, that they may keep in exercise their benevolent affections.

God has in his wise providence placed the poor always with us, that while we shall witness the various forms of suffering and of necessity in the world, we should be tested and proved, and brought into positions to develop Christian character. The poor God has placed among us to call out from us Christian sympathy and love.

Sinners, who are perishing for lack of knowledge, must be left in ignorance and darkness, unless men shall carry to them the light of truth. God will not send angels from Heaven to do the work which he has left for man. He has given all a work to do, for the very reason that he might prove them, and that they might reveal their true character. Christ places the poor in our midst as his representatives. "I was an hungered," he says, "and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink." Christ identifies himself with suffering humanity in the persons of the suffering children of men. He makes their necessities his own, and takes to his bosom the woes of the children of men. [88]

The moral darkness of a ruined world pleads to Christian men and women to put forth individual effort, to give of their means, and of their influence, that they may be assimilated into the image of Him who, though he possessed infinite riches, yet for our sakes became poor. The Spirit of God cannot abide with those to whom he has sent the message of his truth, who need to be urged before they can have any sense of their duty to be co-workers with Christ. The apostle enforces the duty of giving from higher grounds than merely human sympathy, because the feelings are moved. He enforces the principle that we should labor unselfishly with an eye single to the glory of God. [89]

Christians are required by the Scriptures to enter upon a plan of active benevolence which will keep in constant exercise an interest in the salvation of their fellow-men. The moral law enjoined the observance of the Sabbath which was not a burden, except when that law was transgressed, and they were bound by the penalties involved in breaking it. The tithing system was no burden to those who did not depart from the plan. The system enjoined upon the Hebrews has not been repealed or relaxed by the One who originated this plan. Far from its being of no force now, it was to be more fully carried out, and more extended, as salvation through Christ alone should be more fully brought to light in the Christian age.

[90] Jesus made known to the lawyer that the condition of his having eternal life was to carry out in his life the special requirement of the law, which consisted in his loving God with all his heart, and all his soul, and all his mind and strength, and his neighbor as himself. When the typical sacrifices ceased at the death of Christ, the original law, engraved in tables of stone, stood immutable, holding its claims upon man in all ages. And in the Christian age the duty of man was not limited, but more especially defined and simply expressed.

The gospel, extending and widening, required greater provisions to sustain the warfare since the death of Christ, and this made the law of almsgiving a more urgent necessity than under the Hebrew government. Now God requires, not less gifts, but greater than at any other period of the world. The principle laid down by Christ is that the gifts and offerings should be in proportion to the light and blessings enjoyed. He has said, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."

[91] The blessings of the Christian age were responded to by the first disciples in works of charity and benevolence. The outpouring of the Spirit of God, after Christ left his disciples and ascended to Heaven, led to self-denial, and self-sacrifice for the salvation of others. When the poor saints at Jerusalem were in distress, Paul writes to the Gentile Christians in regard to works of benevolence, and says, "Therefore, as ye abound in everything, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also," Here benevolence is placed by the side of faith, love, and Christian diligence. Those who think that they can be good Christians, and close their ears and hearts to the calls of God for their liberalities, are in a fearful deception. There are those who abound in a profession of great love for the truth, and as far as words are concerned, have an interest to see the truth advance, but do nothing for its advancement. The faith of such is dead, not being made perfect by works. The Lord never made such a mistake as to convert a soul, and leave it under the power of covetousness.

The tithing system reaches back beyond the days of Moses. Men were required to offer to God gifts for religious purposes before the definite system was given to Moses, even as far back as the days of Adam. In complying with God's requirements they were to manifest in offerings their appreciation of his mercies and blessings to them.

This was continued through successive generations, and was carried out by Abraham, who gave tithes to Melchisedek, the priest of the most high God. The same principle existed in the days of Job. Jacob, when at Bethel, an exile and penniless wanderer, lay down at night solitary and alone with a rock for his pillow, and there promised the Lord, "Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." God does not compel men to give. All that they give must be voluntary. He will not have his treasury replenished with unwilling offerings.

God designed to bring man into close relationship with himself, and in sympathy and love with his fellow-men, by placing upon him responsibilities in deeds that would counteract selfishness, and strengthen his love for God and man. The plan of system in benevolence God designed for the good of man, who was inclined to be selfish, and close his heart to generous deeds and actions. The Lord required gifts to be made at stated times, being so arranged that giving would become habit, and benevolence felt to be a Christian duty. The heart opened by one gift was not to have time to become selfishly cold, and to close, before it bestowed the next. The stream was to be continually flowing, thus keeping open the channel by acts of benevolence. [92]

As to the amount required, God has specified one-tenth of the increase. This is left to the conscience and benevolence of men, whose judgment in this tithing system should have free play. And while it is left free to the conscience, a plan has been laid out definite enough for all. No compulsion is required.

God called for men in the Mosaic dispensation to give the tenth of all their increase. He committed to their trust the things of this life, talents to be improved and returned to him again. He has required a tenth, and this he claims as the very least that man should return to him. He says, I give you nine-tenths, while I require one-tenth ; that is mine. When men withhold the one-tenth they rob God. Sin offerings, peace offerings, and thank offerings, were also required in addition to the tenth of the increase. [93]

All that is withheld of the tenth which God claims of the increase is recorded in the books of Heaven as robbery against God. Such defraud their Creator, and when this sin of neglect shall be brought before them, it is not enough to change their course and begin to

work from that time upon the right principle. This will not correct the figures in the heavenly record for embezzling the property committed to them in trust to be returned to the lender. Repentance for unfaithful dealing with God, and for base ingratitude, is required.

“Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, 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.”

[94] A promise is here given, if all the tithes shall be brought into the store-house a blessing from God will be poured upon the obedient.

“And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed; for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts.” If all who profess the truth will come up to the claims of God, in giving the tenth, which God says is his, the treasury will be abundantly supplied with means to carry forward the great work of the salvation of man.

God gives man nine-tenths, while he has claimed one tenth for sacred purposes, as he has given man six days for his own work, and has reserved and set apart the seventh day to himself. For, like the Sabbath, a tenth of the increase is sacred. God has reserved it for himself. He will carry forward his work upon the earth with the increase of means he has intrusted to man.

God required of his ancient people three yearly gatherings. “Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the Lord empty. Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee.” No less than one-third of their income was devoted for sacred and religious purposes.

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Whenever God’s people, in any period of the world, have cheerfully and willingly carried out his plan in systematic benevolence, and in gifts and offerings, there has been a standing promise that

prosperity should attend all their labors just in proportion as they obeyed his requirements. When they acknowledged the claims of God, and complied with his requirements, honoring him with their substance, their barns were filled with plenty. But when they robbed God in tithes and in offerings they were made to realize that they were not only robbing him but themselves; for God limited his blessings to them, just in proportion as they limited their offerings to him.

Some will pronounce this as one of the rigorous laws binding upon the Hebrews. But this was not a burden to the willing heart that loved God. It was only when their selfish natures strengthened by withholding, that men have lost sight of eternal considerations, and valued their earthly treasures above that of souls. There are even more urgent necessities upon the Israel of God in these last days than were upon ancient Israel. There is a great and important work to be accomplished in a very short time, and God never designed that the law of the tithing system should be of no account among his people, but that instead of this, the spirit of sacrifice should widen and deepen for the closing work. [96]

Systematic Benevolence should not be made systematic compulsion. It is free-will offerings that are acceptable to God. True Christian benevolence springs from the principle of grateful love. Love to Christ cannot exist without corresponding love to those whom he came into the world to redeem. Love to Christ must be the ruling principle of the being, controlling all its emotions and directing all its energies. Redeeming love should awaken all that tender affection and self-sacrificing devotion that is possible to exist in the heart of man. When this is the case, no heart-stirring appeals will be needed to break through their selfish-ness and awaken their dormant sympathies, to call forth benevolent offerings for the precious cause of truth.

Jesus has purchased us at an infinite sacrifice. All our capabilities and all our influence are indeed our Saviour's, and should be dedicated to his service. By doing this, we show our gratitude that we have been ransomed from the slavery of sin by the precious blood of Christ. Our Saviour is ever working for us. He has ascended up on high and pleads in behalf of the purchase of his blood. He pleads before his Father the agonies of the crucifixion. He raises his [97]

wounded hands and intercedes for his church, that they may be kept from falling under temptation.

If our senses could be quickened to take in this wonderful work of our Saviour for our salvation, love, deep and ardent, would burn in our hearts. Our apathy and cold indifference would then alarm us. Entire devotion and benevolence, prompted by grateful love, will impart to the smallest offering and willing sacrifice a divine fragrance, making the gift of priceless value. But, after all that we can bestow is yielded willingly to our Redeemer, be it ever so valuable to us, if we view the debt of gratitude we owe to God as it really is, all we may offer will seem to us very insufficient and meager. But the angels take these offerings, which to us seem poor, and present them as a fragrant offering before the throne, and they are accepted.

[98] We do not, as followers of Christ, realize our true position. We do not have correct views of our responsibilities as hired servants of Christ. He has advanced us the wages in his suffering life and his spilled blood, to bind us in willing servitude to himself. All the good things we have are a loan from our Saviour. He has made us stewards. Our smallest offerings, our humblest services, presented in faith and love, may be consecrated gifts to win souls to the service of the Master, to promote his glory. The interest and prosperity of Christ's kingdom should be paramount to every other consideration. Those who make their pleasure and selfish interest the chief objects of their lives are not faithful stewards.

Those who deny self to do others good, and devote themselves and all they have to Christ's service, will realize the happiness which the selfish man seeks for in vain. Said our Saviour, "Whosoever forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be my disciple." "Charity seeketh not her own." This is the fruit of that disinterested love and benevolence which characterized the life of Christ. The law of God, in our hearts, will bring our own interests in subordination to high and eternal considerations. We are enjoined by Christ to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. This is our first and highest duty. Our Master expressly warned his servants not to lay up treasures upon the earth, for in doing so their hearts would be upon earthly, rather than heavenly, things. Here is where many poor souls have made shipwreck of faith. They have gone directly

contrary to the express injunction of our Lord, and have allowed the love of money to become the ruling passion of their lives. They are intemperate in their efforts to acquire means. They are as much intoxicated with their insane desire for riches as the inebriate for his liquor.

Christians forget that they are servants of the Master, that they themselves, their time, and all that they have, belong to him. Many are tempted, and the majority are overcome, by the delusive inducements which Satan presents to invest their money where it will yield them the greatest profit in dollars and cents. There are but few who consider the binding claims that God has upon them to make it their first business to meet the necessities of his cause, and let their own desires be served last. There are but few who invest in God's cause in proportion to their means. Many have fastened their money in property which they must sell before they can invest it in the cause of God, and thus put it to a practical use. They make this an excuse for doing but little in their Redeemer's cause. They have as effectually buried their money in the earth as the man in the parable. They rob God of the tenth which he claims as his own, and in robbing him they rob themselves of the heavenly treasure.

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The plan of systematic benevolence does not press heavily upon any one man. "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." The poor are not excluded from the privilege of giving. They may act a part in this work, as well as the wealthy. The lesson Christ gave in regard to the widow's two mites shows us that the smallest willing offerings of the poor, if given from a heart of love, are as acceptable as the largest donations of the rich.

In the balances of the sanctuary, the gifts of the poor, made from love to Christ, are not estimated according to the amount given, but according to the love which prompts the sacrifice. The promises of Jesus will as has but little to offer, but who gives that little freely, as by the wealthy man who gives of his abundance. The poor man makes a sacrifice of his little which he really feels. He really denies himself of some things that he needs for his own comfort, while the wealthy man gives of his abundance, and feels no want, and denies

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himself nothing that he really needs. Therefore, there is a sacredness in the poor man's offering that is not found in the rich man's gift; for the rich give of their abundance. God's providence has arranged the entire plan of systematic benevolence for the benefit of man. His providence never stands still. If God's servants follow his opening providence all will be active workers.

[101] Those who withhold from the treasury of God, and hoard their means for their children, endanger the spiritual interest of their children. They place their property, which is a stumbling block to themselves, in the pathway of their children, that they may stumble over it to perdition. Many are making a great mistake in regard to the things of this life. They economize, withholding from themselves and others the good they might receive from a right use of the means which God has lent them, and become selfish, and avaricious. They neglect their spiritual interests, and become dwarfs in religious growth, all for the sake of accumulating wealth which they cannot use. They leave their property to their children, and nine times out of ten it is even a greater curse to their heirs than it has been to themselves. Children relying upon the property of their parents, often fail to make a success of this life, and generally utterly fail to secure the life to come. The very best legacy parents can leave their children is a knowledge of useful labor and the example of a life characterized by disinterested benevolence, showing by their works that the true value of money is only to be appreciated in the good that it will accomplish in relieving their own wants, the necessities of others, and in advancing the cause of God.

Some are willing to give according to what they have, and feel that God has no further claims upon them, because they have not a great amount of means. They have no income that they can spare from the necessities of their families. But there are many of this class who might ask themselves the question; am I giving according to what I might have had? God designed that their powers of body and mind should be put to use. Some have not improved to the best account the ability that God has given them. Labor is apportioned to man. It was connected with the curse, because made necessary by sin. The physical, mental, and moral well-being of man makes a life of useful labor necessary. "Be not slothful in business," is the injunction of the inspired apostle.

No person, whether rich or poor, can glorify God by a life of indolence. All the capital that many poor men have is time and physical strength, and this is so frequently wasted in love of ease, and in careless indolence, that they have nothing to bring to their Lord in tithes and in offerings. If Christian men lack wisdom to labor to the best account, and to make a judicious appropriation of their physical and mental powers, they should have meekness and lowliness of mind to receive advice and counsel of their brethren, that their better judgment may supply their own deficiencies. Many poor men who are now content to do nothing for the good of their fellow-men, and for the advancement of the cause of God, might do much if they would. They are as accountable to God for their capital of physical strength as is the rich man for his capital of money. [102]

Some who ought to put means into the treasury of God will be receivers from it. There are those who are now poor who might improve their condition by a judicious use of their time, by avoiding patent rights, and restraining their inclination to engage in speculations in order to obtain means in some easier way than by patient, persevering labor.

If those who have not made life a success were willing to be instructed, they could train themselves to habits of self-denial and strict economy, and have the satisfaction of being distributors, rather than receivers, of charity. There are many slothful servants. If they would do what it is in their power to do, they would experience so great a blessing in helping others that they would indeed realize that it is “more blessed to give than to receive.”

Rightly directed benevolence draws upon the mental and moral energies of men, and excites them to most healthful action in blessing the needy and in advancing the cause of God. If those who have means should realize that they are accountable to God for every dollar that they expend, their supposed wants would be much less. If conscience was alive, she would testify of needless appropriations in the gratification of the appetite, and in ministering to pride, to vanity, and to amusements, and report the squandering of their Lord’s money, which should have been devoted to his cause. Those who waste their Lord’s goods will have to give an account of it to the Master, by-and-by. [103]

If professed Christians would use less of their wealth in the adorning of the body, and in beautifying their own houses, and would consume less in the extravagant, health-destroying luxuries upon their tables, they could place much larger sums into the treasury of God. They would thus imitate their Redeemer, who left Heaven, his riches, and his glory, and for our sakes became poor, that we might have eternal riches. If we are too poor to faithfully render to God in the tithes and offerings as he requires, we are certainly too poor to dress expensively; and to eat luxuriously; for we are wasting our Lord's money in hurtful indulgences to please and glorify ourselves. We should inquire diligently of ourselves, What treasure have we secured in the kingdom of God? Are we rich toward God?

[104] Jesus gave his disciples a lesson upon covetousness. "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."

The length and happiness of life consist not in the amount of our earthly possessions. This foolish rich man in his supreme selfishness had laid up for himself treasures that he could not use. He had lived only for himself. He had overreached in trade, had made sharp bargains, and had not been exercised by mercy or the love of God. He had robbed the fatherless and widow, and defrauded his fellow-men to add to his increasing stock of worldly possessions. He might have laid up his treasure in Heaven in bags that was not old. Through his covetousness he lost both worlds.

Those who humbly use to the glory of God the means that he has intrusted to them, will receive their treasure by-and-by from the Master's hand with the benediction, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

When we consider the infinite sacrifice made for the salvation of men, we are lost in amazement. When selfishness clamors for

the victory in the hearts of men, and they are tempted to withhold [105] their due proportion in any good work, they should strengthen their principles of right by the thought that he who was rich in Heaven's priceless treasure turned away from it all, and became poor. He had not where to lay his head. And all this sacrifice was in our behalf, that we might have eternal riches.

Christ set his own feet in the path of self-denial and sacrifice, which all his disciples must travel, if they would be exalted with him at last. He took to his own heart the sorrows which man must suffer. The minds of worldly men frequently become gross. They can only see earthly things, which eclipse the glory and value of the heavenly. Men will compass land and sea for earthly gain, and endure privation and suffering to obtain their object, yet will turn away from Heaven's attractions, and not regard eternal riches. Men who are in comparative poverty are usually the ones who do the most to sustain the cause of God. They are generous with their little. They have strengthened their generous impulses by continual liberalities. When their expenditures pressed close upon the income, their passion for earthly riches had no room or chance to strengthen. But many, when they begin to gather earthly riches, commence to calculate how long it will be before they can be in possession of a certain sum. In their anxiety to amass wealth for themselves, they fail to become rich toward God. Their benevolence does not keep pace with their accumulation. As their passion for riches increases, their affections are bound up with their treasure. The increase of their properly strengthens the eager desire for more, until their giving [106] to the Lord a tenth is considered by some a severe and unjust tax. Inspiration has said, "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them." Many have said, "If I were as rich as such an one, I would multiply my gifts in the treasury of God. I would do nothing else with my wealth but use it in the advancement of the cause of God." God has tested some of these by giving them riches; but with the riches came the fiercer temptation, and their benevolence was far less than in the days of their poverty. A grasping desire for greater riches absorbed their minds and hearts, and they committed idolatry.

He who presents to men infinite riches, and an eternal life of blessedness in his kingdom as the reward of faithful obedience, will not accept a divided heart. We are living amid the perils of the

last days, where there is everything to divert the mind and allure the affections from God. Our duty will only be discerned, and appreciated when viewed in the light which shines from the life of Christ. As the sun rises in the east and passes toward the west, filling the world with light, so the true follower of Christ will be a light unto the world. He will go forth into the world as a bright and shining light, that those who are in darkness may be lightened and warmed by the rays shining forth from him. Christ says of his followers, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid."

[107] Our great Exemplar was self-denying, and shall the course of his professed followers be in such marked contrast to his ? The Saviour gave all for a perishing world, not withholding even himself. The church of God are asleep. They are enfeebled by inaction. Voices come to us from every part of the world, "Come over and help us;" but there is no answering movement. There is a feeble effort now and then; a few show that they would be co workers with their Master; but such are frequently left to toil almost alone. There is but one missionary from our people in all the wide field in foreign countries.

The truth is mighty, but it is not carried into practice. Money alone is not sufficient to be laid upon the altar. God calls for men, volunteers, to carry the truth to other nations, and tongues, and people. It is not our numbers or our wealth that will give us a signal victory; but it is devotion to the work, moral courage, ardent love for souls, and untiring zeal, that never flags.

There are many who have looked upon the Jewish nation as a people to be pitied, because they were constantly taxed for the support of their religion; but God, who created man and provided him with all the blessings he enjoys, knew what was for his best good. And he has, through his blessing, made their nine-tenths worth more to them than the entire amount without his blessing. If any through their selfishness robbed God or brought to him an offering not perfect, disaster and loss were sure to follow them. God reads the motives of the heart. He is acquainted with the purposes of men, and will mete out to them in his own good time as they have merited.

[108] The special system of tithing was founded upon a principle which was as enduring as the law of God. This system of tithing was a blessing to the Jews, else God would not have given it them. So also will it be a blessing to those who carry it out to the end of time. Our

Heavenly Father did not originate the plan of systematic benevolence to enrich himself, but to be a great blessing to man. He saw that this system of beneficence was just what man needed.

Those churches who are the most systematic and liberal in sustaining the cause of God, are the most prosperous spiritually. True liberality in the follower of Christ identifies his interest with that of his Master. In God's dealing with the Jews and his people to the end of time, he requires systematic benevolence proportionate to their income. The plan of salvation was laid by the infinite sacrifice of the Son of God. The light of the gospel shining from the cross of Christ rebukes selfishness, and encourages liberality and benevolence. It is not to be a lamented fact that there are increasing calls to give. God, in his providence, is calling his people out from their limited sphere of action, to enter upon greater enterprises. Unlimited effort is demanded at this time when moral darkness is covering the world. Worldliness and covetousness are eating out the vitals of God's people. They should understand that it is his mercy which multiplies the demands for their means. The angel of God places benevolent acts close beside prayer. He said to Cornelious, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God." In the teachings of Christ, he said, "If ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches ?" The spiritual health and prosperity of the church is dependent in a great degree upon her systematic benevolence. It is like the life blood which must flow through the whole being, vitalizing every member of the body. It increases love for the souls of our fellow-men; for by self-denial and self-sacrifice we are brought into a closer relation to Jesus Christ, who for our sakes became poor. [109]

The more we invest in the cause of God to aid in the salvation of souls, the closer to our hearts they will be brought. Were our numbers half as large, and all of these devoted workers, we should have a power that would make the world tremble. To the active workers, Christ has addressed these words, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

We shall meet opposition arising from selfish motives and from bigotry and prejudice, yet with undaunted courage and living faith, we should sow beside all waters. The agents of Satan are formidable; we shall meet them and must combat them. Our labors are not

[110] to be confined to our own country. The field is the world; the harvest is ripe. The command given the disciples just before he ascended was, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." We feel pained beyond measure to see some of our ministers hovering about the churches, apparently putting forth some little effort, but having next to nothing to show for their labors. The field is the world. Let them go out to the unbelieving world and labor to convert souls to the truth. We refer our brethren and sisters to the example of Abraham going up to Mount Moriah to offer his only son at the command of God. Here was obedience and sacrifice. Moses was in king's courts, and a prospective crown was before him. But he turned away from the tempting bribe and "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt."

The apostles counted not their lives dear unto themselves, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ. Paul and Silas suffered the loss of all things. They suffered scourging, and were in no gentle manner thrown upon the cold floor of a dungeon in a most painful position, their feet elevated and fastened in the stocks. Then did repinings and complaints reach the ear of the jailor? Oh! no. From the inner prison, voices broke the silence of midnight with songs of joy and praise to God. Deep and earnest love for the cause of their Redeemer, for which Paul and Silas suffered, cheered them.

And as the truth of God fills our hearts, absorbs our affections, and controls our lives, we also shall count it joy to suffer for the truth's sake. No prison walls, no martyr's stake, can then daunt or hinder us in the great work.

"Come, O my soul, to Calvary."

[111] Mark the humble life of the Son of God. He was a "man of sorrow and acquainted with grief." Behold his ignominy, his agony in Gethsemane, and learn what self-denial is. Are we suffering want? so was Christ, the majesty of Heaven. But his poverty was for our sakes. Are we ranked among the rich? so was he. But he consented

“for our sakes to become poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich.” In Christ we have self-denial exemplified. The sacrifice of Christ consisted, not merely in leaving the royal courts of Heaven, and in being tried by wicked men as a criminal and pronounced guilty, and being delivered up to die as a malefactor, but in bearing the weight of the sins of the world. The life of Christ rebukes our indifference and coldness. We are near the close of time, when Satan has come down, having great wrath, knowing that his time is short. He is working with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them which perish. The warfare has been left in our hands by our great Leader for us to carry forward with vigor. We are not doing a twentieth part of what we might do if we were awake. The work is retarded by love of ease and a lack of the self-denying spirit of which our Saviour has given us an example in his life.

Co-workers with Christ, men who feel the need of extended effort, are wanted. The work of our presses should not be lessened, but doubled. Schools should be established in different places to educate our youth preparatory to their laboring to advance the truth.

Already a great deal of time has been wasted, and angels bear to Heaven the record of our neglects. Our sleepy and unconsecrated condition has lost to us precious opportunities which God has sent to us in the persons of those who were qualified to help us in our present need. Oh! how much we need our Hannah More to aid us at this time in reaching those of other nations. Her extensive knowledge of missionary fields would give us access to those of other tongues that now we cannot approach. God brought this gift among us to meet our present emergency; but we prized not the gift, and he took her from us. She is at rest from her labors, but her self-denying works follow her. It is to be deplored that our missionary work should be retarded for the want of knowledge how to gain access to the different nations and localities in the great harvest field.

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We feel anguish of spirit because some gifts are lost to us that we might now have if we had only been awake. Laborers have been kept back from the whitening harvest. It becomes the people of God to humble their hearts before him, and in the deepest humiliation to pray the Lord to pardon our apathy and selfish indulgence, and to blot out the shameful record of duties neglected, and privileges unimproved. In contemplation of the cross of Calvary the true

Christian will abandon the thought of restricting his offerings to that which costs him nothing, and will hear in trumpet tones,

“Go, labor in ray vineyard,
There’s resting by-and-by.”

[113] When Jesus was about to ascend on high, he pointed to the harvest fields, and said to his followers, “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel.” “Freely ye have received, freely give.” Shall we deny self that the wasting harvest may be gathered ?

God calls for talents of influence and of means. Shall we refuse to obey? Our Heavenly Father bestows gifts and solicits a portion back, that he may test us whether we are worthy to have the gift of everlasting life.

E. G. W.

* * * * *

Systematic Benevolence.

Should all whom God has prospered with earthly riches carry out his plan in faithfully giving a tenth of all their increase, and if they should not withhold their trespass offerings and their thank offerings, the treasury would be constantly replenished. The simplicity of the plan of systematic benevolence does not detract from its merits, but extols the wisdom of God in its arrangement. Everything bearing the divine stamp unites simplicity with utility.

If systematic benevolence was universally adopted, according to God’s plan, and the tithing system carried out as faithfully by the wealthy as it is by the poorer classes, there would be no need of repeated and urgent calls for means at our large religious gatherings. There has been a neglect, in the several churches, of keeping up the plan of systematic benevolence, and the result has been an impoverished treasury and a backslidden church.

[114] ” Will a man rob God ? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine

house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed; for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts.”

God has been robbed in tithes and in offerings. It is a fearful thing be guilty of withholding from the treasury, or of robbing God. Ministers who preach the word at our large gatherings feel the sinfulness of neglecting to render to God the things that are his. They know that God will not bless his people while disregarding his plan of benevolence. They seek to arouse the people to their duty by pointed, practical discourses, showing the danger and sinfulness of selfishness and covetousness. Conviction fastens upon minds, and the icy chill of selfishness is broken. And when the call is made for donations to the cause of God, some, under the stirring influence of the meetings, are aroused to give who otherwise would do nothing. As far as this class is concerned, good results have been realized. But under pressing calls many feel the deepest who have not had their hearts frozen up with selfishness. They have conscientiously kept their means flowing out to advance the cause of God. Their whole being is stirred by the earnest appeals made, and the very ones respond who may have given all their circumstances in life would justify.

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But these whole-hearted, liberal believers, prompted by their zealous love for the cause, in their desire to do promptly for the cause, judge themselves capable of doing more than God requires them to do, for their usefulness is crippled in other directions. These willing ones sometimes pledge to raise sums when they know not from what source they are coming, and some are placed in distressing circumstances to meet their pledges. Some are obliged to sell their produce at great disadvantage. Some have actually suffered for the conveniences and necessities of life, in order to meet their pledges.

There was a time at the commencement of our work when such sacrifice would have been justified, when God would have blessed all who thus ventured out to do for his cause. The friends of truth were few, and means were very limited. But the work has been

widening and strengthening until there are means enough in the hands of believers to amply sustain the work in all its departments without embarrassing any, if all would bear their proportional part. The cause of God need not be crippled in the slightest degree. The precious truth has been made so plain that many have taken hold of it, who have in their hands means which God has intrusted to them for the purpose of using to advance the interests of the truth. If these

[116] men of means do their duty, there need not be a pressure brought upon the poorer brethren.

We are in a world of plenty. If the gifts and offerings were proportionate to the means which each has received of God, there would be no need of the urgent call for means at these large gatherings. I am fully convinced it is not the best plan to bring a pressure upon the point of means at our camp-meetings. Men and women who love the cause of God as they do their lives will pledge upon these occasions when their families must suffer for the very means that they have promised to give to advance the cause. Our God is not a taskmaster, requiring the poor man to give means to the cause that belong to his family to keep them in comfort and above pinching want.

The call for means at our large camp-meetings has been attended hitherto with apparently good results so far as the wealthy are concerned. But we fear the result of the continued effort to thus replenish the treasury. There will be, we fear, a re action. Greater effort should be put forth, by responsible men in the different churches, to have all follow the plan of God's arrangement. If systematic benevolence is carried out, the urgent calls for means at the camp-meetings for various enterprises will not be necessary.

God has devised a plan by which all may give as he has prospered them, and which will make giving a habit without waiting for special calls. Those who can do this, and will not because of their selfishness, are robbing their Creator, who has bestowed upon them means to

[117] invest in his cause to advance its interests. Until all shall carry out the plan of systematic benevolence, there will be a failure in coming up to the apostolic rule. Those who minister in word and doctrine should be men of discrimination. They should, while they make general appeals, become acquainted with the ability of those who respond to their appeals, and should not allow the poor to pay large

pledges. After a man has once consecrated a certain sum to the Lord, he feels that it is sacred and consecrated to a holy use. This is true, and therefore our preaching brethren should be well informed of whom they accept pledges.

Each member of the different families in our churches who believe the truth may act a part in its advancement by cheerfully adopting systematic benevolence. "Let every one of you lay by him in store [margin, by himself at home], . . . that there be no gatherings when I come." The burden of urging and pressing individuals to give of their means was not designed to be the work of God's ministers. The responsibility should rest upon every individual who enjoys the belief of the truth. "Let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him." Every member of the family, from the oldest down to the youngest, may take part in this work of benevolence.

The offerings of little children may be acceptable and pleasing to God. In accordance with the spirit that prompts the gifts will be the value of the offering. The poor, by following the rule of the apostle in laying by every week a small sum, help to swell the treasury, and the gifts are wholly acceptable with God; for they are making just as great, and even greater, sacrifices than their more wealthy brethren. The plan of systematic benevolence will prove a safeguard to every family against temptations to spend means for needless things, and especially will it prove a blessing to the rich in guarding them from indulging in extravagances.

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Every week the demands of God upon each family are brought to mind by each of its members fully carrying out the plan, and as its members have denied themselves some superfluity in order to have means to put into the treasury, lessons of value in self-denial for the glory of God have been impressed upon the heart. Once a week, each is brought face to face with the doings of the past week—the income that he might have had if he had been economical, and the means he has not because of indulgence. His conscience is reined up, as it were, before God, and either commends or accuses him. He learns that if he retains peace of mind and the favor of God, he must eat, and drink, and dress, to his glory.

Systematic action in giving in accordance with the plan keeps open the channel of the heart in liberal gifts. We place ourselves in connection with God, that he may use us as channels that his

[119] gifts may flow through us to others. The poor will not complain of systematic benevolence; for it touches them lightly. They are not neglected and passed by, but are favored with acting a part in being co-workers with Christ, and will receive the blessing of God as well as the wealthy. In the very process of laying aside the littles as they can spare them, they are denying self and cultivating liberality of heart. They are educating themselves to good works, and are meeting the design of God in the plan of systematic benevolence as effectually as the more wealthy who give of their abundance.

In the days of the apostles, men went everywhere preaching the word. New churches were raised up. Their love and zeal for Christ led them to acts of great denial and sacrifice. Many of these Gentile churches were very poor; yet the apostle declares that their deep poverty abounded to the riches of their liberality. Their gifts were extended beyond their power. Men periled their lives and suffered the loss of all things for the truth's sake.

The apostle suggests the first day of the week as a proper time to review the course of Providence and the prosperity experienced, and in the fear of God, with true gratitude of heart for the blessings he has bestowed, decide how much, according to his own devised plan, shall be rendered back to him.

[120] God has designed that the exercise of benevolence should be purely voluntary, not having recourse even to eloquent appeals to excite sympathy. "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." He is not pleased to have his treasury replenished with forced supplies. The loyal hearts of the people of God, rejoicing in the saving truth for this time, will, through love and gratitude to him for this precious light, be earnest and anxious to aid with their means in sending the truth to others. The very best manner to give expression to our love for our Redeemer, is to give and make offerings to bring souls to the knowledge of the truth.

The plan of redemption was entirely voluntary on the part of our Redeemer, and it is the purpose of Christ that all our benevolence should be free-will offerings.

E. G. W.

Epistle No. 1.

DEAR BRO. : My mind is exercised in regard to your case. Some things I have written you which have been shown me in regard to your past, present, and future course. I feel anxious for you, because your dangers were shown me. Your former experience in spiritualism exposes you to temptations and severe conflicts.

When once the mind has been yielded to the direct control of the enemy through evil angel, that person should be very distrustful of impressions and feelings which would lead him on an independent track, away from the church of Christ. The first step that such a one would take independently of the church should be regarded a device of the enemy to deceive and destroy. God has made his church a channel of light. Through his church he communicates his purposes and his will. He does not give one an experience independently of the church. He does not give one man a knowledge of his will for the entire church, while the church, Christ's body, is left in darkness.

Bro. —, you need to watch with the greatest care how you build. There is a storm coming which will test your hope to the utmost. You should dig deep and lay your foundation sure. "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock."

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Steadily the builder places one stone upon another until the structure rises stone upon stone. The gospel builder frequently carries on his work in tears and amid trials, storms of persecution, bitter opposition, and unjust reproach; but he feels deeply in earnest, for he is building for eternity. Be careful, Bro. —, that your foundation is solid rock, and that you are riveted upon it, Christ being that rock.

You have a strong, set will, a very independent spirit, which you feel that you must preserve at all hazards. And you have carried this same spirit into your religious experience and life. You have not always been in harmony with the work of God, as carried on by your American brethren. You have not seen as they see, nor been in union with their manner of proceeding. You have had but very little acquaintance with the work in its different departments. You

have not felt very anxious to become acquainted with the various branches of the work. You have looked with suspicion and distrust upon the work, and upon God's chosen leaders to carry it forward. You have been more ready to question, and surmise, and be jealous of those upon whom God has laid the heavier responsibilities of his work, than to investigate, and place yourself in connection with the work, to become ac- quainted with the workings and advancement of the cause of God.

God saw that you were not fitted to be a shepherd, a minister of righteousness to proclaim the truth to others, until you should be a thoroughly transformed man. He permitted you to pass through real trials, and feel privation and want, that you might know how to exercise pity and sympathy, and tender love for the unfortunate, and for the oppressed, and those borne down with want and passing through trial and affliction.

While you prayed in your affliction for peace in Christ, a cloud of darkness seemed to blacken across your mind. The rest and peace did not come as you expected. Your faith, at times, seemed to be tested to the uttermost. As you looked back to your past life, you saw sorrow and disappointment. As you viewed the future, all was uncertainty. The divine handled you wondrously to bring you to the cross, and to teach you that God was indeed a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. Those who ask aright will receive. He that seeketh in faith shall find. The experience gained in the furnace of trial and affliction is worth more than all the inconvenience and painful experience it costs.

The prayers you offered in your loneliness, in your weariness and trial, God answered, not always according to your expectations, but for your good. You did not have clear and correct views of your brethren. Neither did you see yourself in a correct light. But in the providence of God he has been at work to answer the prayers you have offered in your distress, in a way to save you and glorify his own name. In your ignorance of yourself you asked for things which were not the best for you. God hears your prayers of sincerity; but the blessing granted is something very different from your expectations. God designed to place you in his providence, in connection with his church, more directly, that your confidence might be less in yourself, and greater in others whom he is leading out to advance his work.

God hears every sincere prayer. He would place you in connection with his work that he may more directly bring you to the light. And, unless you should seal your vision against evidence and light, you would be persuaded that, if you were more distrustful of yourself, and less distrustful of your brethren, you would be more prosperous in God. It is God who has led you through straight places. He had a purpose in this, that tribulation might work in you patience, and patience experience, and experience hope. The trials he permitted to come upon you were, that through the exercise of them you might experience the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

Peter denied the Man of Sorrows in his acquaintance with grief in the hour of his humiliation. But he was afterward repentant, and reconverted. He had true contrition of soul, and gave himself afresh to his Saviour. With blinding tears he makes his way to the solitudes of the garden of Gethsemane, and there prostrates himself where he saw his Saviour's prostrate form, when the bloody sweat was forced from his pores by his great agony. Peter remembered with remorse that he was asleep when Jesus prayed during those fearful hours. His proud heart breaks, and penitential tears moisten the sods so recently stained with the bloody sweat drops of God's dear Son. He left that garden a converted man. He was ready then to pity the tempted. He was humbled, and could then sympathize with the weak and erring. He could caution and warn the presumptuous, and was fully fitted to strengthen his brethren. [124]

God would lead you through affliction and trials that you might have more perfect trust and confidence in him, and that you might think less of your own judgment. You can bear adversity better than prosperity. The all-seeing eye of Jehovah detected in you much dross that you considered gold, and too valuable to throw away. The enemy's power over you had at times been direct and very strong. The delusions of spiritualism had entangled your faith, and perverted your judgment, and confused your experience.

God in his providence would try you, to purify you, as the sons of Levi, that you might offer to him an offering in righteousness. Self is mingled too much with all your labors. Your will must be molded by God's will, or you will fall into grievous temptations.

I saw that when you labored in God, putting self out of sight, you would realize a strength from him which would give you access

to hearts. Angels of God will work with your efforts when you are humble and little in your own eyes. But when you think you know more than those whom God has been leading for years, and
[125] in-structing in the truth, and fitting for the extension of his work, you are self-exalted, and will fall into temptations.

You need to cultivate kindness and tenderness. You need to be pitiful and courteous. Your labors savor too much of severity and an exacting, dictatorial, and overbearing spirit. You are not always kindly considerate of the feelings of others, and you create trials and dissatisfaction all needlessly. More love in your labors, and more kindly sympathy would give you access to hearts, and win souls to Christ and the truth.

You are constantly inclined to individual independence. You do not realize that independence is a poor thing when it leads you to have more confidence in yourself, and to trust to your own judgment rather than to respect the counsel and highly estimate the judgment of your brethren, especially those in the offices which God has appointed for the saving of his people.

God has invested his church with special authority and power which no one can be justified in disregarding and despising; for in thus doing he despises the voice of God. It is not safe for you to trust to impressions and feelings. It has been your misfortune to come under the power of that satanic delusion, spiritualism. This pall of death has covered you, and your imagination and nerves have been under the control of demons, and when you become self-confident and do not cling with unwavering confidence to God, you are in positive danger. You may, and frequently do, let down the bars and
[126] invite the enemy in, and he controls your thoughts and actions, while you are really deceived and flatter yourself that you are in favor with God.

Satan has tried to hold you from having confidence in your American brethren. You have regarded them and their moves and experience with suspicion, when they are the very ones who could help you, and would be a blessing to you. It will be Satan's studied effort to separate you from those who are as channels of light, through whom God has communicated his will, and through whom he has wrought in building up and extending his work. Your views

and your feelings and experience are altogether too narrow, and your labors are of the same character.

In order to be a blessing to your people, you need to improve in many things. You should cultivate courtesy. You should cherish a tender sympathy for all. You should have the crowning grace of God, which is love. You criticise too much, and are not so forbearing as you must be if you win souls. You could have much more influence if you were less formal and less rigid and were actuated more by the Holy Spirit. Your fear of being led by men is too great. God uses men as his instruments, and will use them as long as the world shall stand.

The angels who fell were anxious to become independent of God. They were very beautiful, very glorious, but dependent on God for their happiness, and for the light and intelligence they enjoyed. They fell from their high estate through insubordination. Christ and his church are inseparable. To neglect or despise those whom God has appointed to lead out, and bear the responsibilities connected with his work, and the advancement and spread of the truth, is to reject the means God has ordained for the help and encouragement and strength of his people. To pass these by, and think your light must come through no other channel than directly from God, places you in a position where you are liable to deception, and to be overthrown. [127]

God has placed you in connection with his appointed help in his church that you might be helped by them. Your former connection with spiritualism makes your danger greater than it otherwise would be, because your judgment, wisdom, and discrimination, have been perverted. You cannot always of yourself tell or discern the spirits; for Satan is very wily. God has placed you in connection with his church that they may help you.

You are sometimes too formal, cold, and unsympathizing. You must meet the people where they are, and not place yourself too far above them, and require too much of them. You need to be all softened and subdued by the Spirit of God, while you preach to the people. You should educate yourself as to the best manner of laboring to secure the desired end. Your labor must be characterized by the love of Jesus abounding in your heart, softening your words, molding your temperament, and elevating your soul.

[128] You frequently talk too long, when you do not have the vitalizing influence of the Spirit of Heaven. You weary those who hear you. It is a mistake that many make in preaching, that they do not stop at the time while the interest is up. They go on speechifying until the interest has risen in the minds of the hearers and died out, and where the people are really wearied with words of no special weight or burden of interest. Stop before you get here. Stop when you have no special matter of importance to say. Do not go on with dry words that only excite prejudice, and do not soften the heart. You want to be so united to Jesus Christ that your words will melt and burn their way to the soul. Mere prosy talk is insufficient for this time. Arguments are good; but there may be too much of the argumentative, and too little of the spirit and life from God.

Without the special power of God working with your efforts, your spirit subdued, your heart softened, your words flowing from a heart of love, your spirit humbled in God, your labors will be wearing to yourself, and not productive of blessed results. There is a point where the minister of Christ reaches, beyond which human knowledge and skill are powerless. We are struggling with giant errors, and evils which we are impotent to remedy, and arouse the people to see and understand; for we cannot change the heart. We cannot quicken the soul to discern the sinfulness of sin, and to feel the need of a Saviour. But if our labors bear the impress of the Spirit of God, if a higher and divine power attends our efforts in sowing the gospel seed, we shall see fruits of our labors to the glory of God. He alone can water the seed sown.

[129] Thus with you, Bro. ——. You must not get in too great a hurry, and expect too much of darkened minds. You must cherish humble hope that God will graciously impart the mysterious quickening influence of his Spirit, by which alone your labors will not be in vain in the Lord. You need to cling to God by living faith, every moment realizing your dangers, and sensing your weakness, constantly seeking strength and power which God alone can give. Try the best you may, you of yourself can do nothing.

You need to educate yourself, that you may have wisdom to deal with minds. You should with some have compassion, making a difference, while others you may save with fear, pulling them out of the fire. Our Heavenly Father frequently leaves us in uncertainty in

regard to our efforts. We are to sow beside all waters, not knowing which shall prosper, this or that. We may stimulate our faith and energy from the Source of our strength, and lean with full and entire dependence upon him.

Bro. —, you need to work with the utmost diligence to control self and develop a character according to the principles of the word of God. You need to educate and train yourself, in order to become a successful shepherd. You need to cultivate a good temper—kindly, cheerful, buoyant, generous, pitiful, courteous, com-passionate traits of character. You should overcome a morose, bigoted, narrow, fault-finding, overbearing spirit. If you are connected with the work of God, you need to battle with yourself vigorously, and form your character after the divine Model.

Without constant effort on your part, some development, under the influence of a corrupt mind, will appear and block up your way, which hindrance you will be inclined to charge to some other than the true cause. Self-discipline you need. Our piety should not appear sour, and cold, and morose, but lovable and teachable. A censorious spirit will hedge up your way, and close hearts against you. You will, if not humbly dependant on God, frequently close your own path with obstacles, and charge the same to the course of others. [130]

You need to stand guard over yourself, that you do not teach the truth, or perform duties, in a bigoted spirit that will excite prejudice. You need to study how you may show yourself approved unto God, a workman who needeth not to be ashamed. Inquire of yourself what your natural disposition is—what character you have developed. It should be the study of yourself, as well as of every minister of Christ, to exercise the greatest watchfulness that you do not cherish habits of action, or mental and moral tendencies, which you would not wish to see appear among those you bring out upon the truth.

Ministers of Christ are enjoined to be examples to the flock of God. The influence of a minister can do much toward molding the character of his people. If the minister is indolent, if he is not pure in heart and life, and if he is sharp, critical, and fault-finding, selfish, independent, and lacking self-control, he will have these same unpleasant elements in a large degree to meet and deal with among his people; and it is hard work to set things in order where wrong influences have made confusion. It will make a great

[131] difference with the people in regard to the development of Christian virtue in them, by what is seen in their minister. If his life is a combination of excellencies, those whom he brings to the knowledge of the truth through his labors will, to a great degree, if they truly love God, reflect his example and influence; for he is a representative of Jesus Christ. Thus the minister should feel his responsibility to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

The highest efforts of the gospel minister should be to devote all his talents to the work of saving souls, then he will be successful. Wise and watchful discipline is necessary for every one who names the name of Christ, but in a much higher sense is it essential for a gospel minister, who is a representative of Jesus Christ.

Our Saviour awed men by his purity and elevated morality, while his love and gentle benignity inspired them with enthusiasm. The poorest and humblest were not afraid to approach him; even little children were attracted to him. They loved to climb upon his lap and to kiss that pensive face, benignant with love. This loving tenderness you need. You should cultivate love. Expressions of sympathy, and acts of courtesy and respect for others, would not detract from your dignity one particle, but would open to you many hearts that are now closed against you.

[132] Christ was just what every minister should strive to be. We should learn to imitate the character of Christ, and combine strict justice, purity, integrity, love, and noble generosity. A pleasant face, where love is reflected, with kind and courteous manners, will do more, aside from pulpit efforts, than the labor in the desk with the absence of this. It becomes us to cultivate a deference to other people's judgments, when we are absolutely dependent, to a greater or less extent, upon them. We should cultivate true Christian courtesy and tender sympathy, even for the roughest, hardest cases of humanity. Jesus came from the pure courts of Heaven to save just such. You close your heart too readily to many who have apparently no interest in the message you bear, but who are still subjects of grace, and precious in the sight of the Lord. "He that winneth souls is wise." You must be in the position that Paul was, to become all things to all men, if by all means ye may save some. You must bend from your independence. You lack humbleness of mind. You need the softening influence of the grace of God upon your heart, that you

may not irritate, but melt your way to the hearts of men, although these hearts may be affected by prejudice.

The cause of God needs earnest men very much, who abound in zeal, hope, faith, and courage. It is not self-willed men who can meet the demands for this time, but men who are in earnest. We have too many sensitive ministers, who are feeble in experience, and deficient in the Christian graces, and lacking in consecration, and are easily discouraged; who are earnest to gratify their own wills, and are persevering in their efforts to accomplish their own selfish purposes; such men will not fill the demands for this time. We need men in these last days who are ever awake. Minute men are wanted, who are sincere in their love for the truth, willing to labor at a sacrifice, if they can advance the cause of God and save precious souls. Men are wanted in this work, who will not murmur or complain at hardships or trials, knowing that this is a part of the legacy Jesus has left them. They should be willing to go without the camp, and suffer the reproach, and bear burdens, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. They will bear the cross of Christ without complaint, without murmuring or fretfulness, and will be patient in tribulation.

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The solemn, testing truth for these last days is committed to us, and we should make the truth a reality. Bro. —, you should avoid making yourself a criterion. Avoid, I entreat of you, appealing to your own sympathies. All that we can, and ever may be called to suffer for the truth's sake, will be incomparably small to what our Saviour endured for us sinners. You need not expect always to be correctly judged or correctly represented. Christ says, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but in me ye shall have peace."

You have cultivated a combative spirit. When your track is crossed, you immediately throw yourself into a defensive position, and, although you may be among your brethren, who love the truth and have given their lives to the cause of God, you will criticise and justify yourself, and become jealous of their words, suspicious of their motives, and lose great blessings that it is your privilege to gain through the experience of your brethren.

You have loved to debate the truth, and loved discussions; but these contests have been unfavorable for you to form a harmonious Christian character; for in this is a favorable opportunity for the exhibition of the very traits of character you must overcome if you

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ever enter Heaven. Discussions cannot always be avoided. In some cases the circumstances are such that of the two evils the choice must be made of the least, which is discussion. But whenever they can be avoided they should be; for the result is seldom honoring to God.

The people who love to see opponents combat, may clamor for discussion. Others, who have a desire to hear the evidences on both sides, may urge a discussion in all honesty of motives; but whenever discussions can be avoided they should be. Discussions generally strengthen combativeness, and weaken that pure love and sacred sympathy which should ever exist in the hearts of Christians, although they may differ in opinions.

Discussions in this age of the world are not real evidences of earnest desire on the part of the people to investigate the truth, but come through the love of novelty and the excitement which generally attends discussions. God is seldom glorified or the truth advanced in these combats. Truth is too solemn, too momentous in its results, to make it a small matter whether it is received or rejected. To discuss truth for the sake of showing opponents the skill of the combatants is ever poor policy, for it does but very little to advance the truth.

Opponents to truth will show skill in misstating their opponent. They will make the most solemn, sacred truths subjects of ridicule. [135] They will generally sport and deride and place the truth, precious, sacred truth, in so false a light before the people, that minds that are darkened by error and polluted by sin, do not discern the motives and objects of these designing men to thus cover up and falsify precious and important truth. There are but few discussions, because of the men who engage in them, that it is possible to conduct upon right principles. Sharp thrusts are too frequently given by both parties, personalities are indulged, and frequently both parties descend to sarcasm and witticism, The love of souls is lost in the greater desire for the mastery. Prejudice, deep and bitter, is often the result of discussions.

I have beheld angels grieved as the most precious jewels of truth have been brought before men utterly incapable of appreciating the evidences in favor of the truth. Their entire being was at war with the principles of truth. Their natures were at enmity with the truth. Their object in discussing was not for the sake of getting bold

of the evidences of the truth themselves, or that the people might have a fair un-derstanding of our true position but that they might confuse the understanding by placing the truth in a perverted light before the people. There are men who have educated themselves as combatants. It is their policy to misstate an opponent, and cover up clear arguments with dishonest quibbles. They have devoted their Godgiven powers to this dishonest work, for there is nothing in their hearts in harmony with the pure principles of truth. They seize any argument they can get to tear down the advocates of truth when they themselves do not believe the things they urge against them. They bolster themselves up in their chosen position irrespective of justice and truth. They do not consider that before them is the Judgment, and that then their ill gotten triumph, with all its disastrous results, will appear in its true character. Error, with all its deceptive policies, its windings and twistings and turnings to change the truth into a lie, will then appear in all its deformity. No victory will stand in the day of God except that which truth, pure, elevated, sacred truth, shall win to the glory of God.

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Angels weep to see the precious truth of heavenly origin cast before swine, to be seized by them and trampled with the mire and dirt. “Cast not your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.” These are the words of the world’s Redeemer.

God’s ministers should not count the opportunity of engaging in discussion a great privilege. All points of our faith are not to be borne to the front and presented before the prejudiced crowds. Jesus spoke before the Pharisees and Sadducees in parables, hiding the clearness of truth under symbols and figures, because they would make a wrong use of the truths he presented before them. But to his disciples he spoke plainly. We should learn from Christ’s method of teaching, and be careful not to cut off the ears of the people by presenting truths which, not fully explained, they are in no way prepared to receive.

The truths we hold in common should be first dwelt upon, and the confidence of the hearers obtained; then we can advance slowly as the people can be brought along with the matter presented. Great wisdom is needed to present unpopular truth before a prejudiced people in the most cautious manner, that they may gain access to their

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hearts. Discussions place before the people, who are unenlightened in regard to our position and who are ignorant of Bible truth, a set of arguments, skillfully gotten up and carefully arranged, to cover over the clear points of truth. Some men have made it their business to cover up plain statements of facts in the word of God by their deceptive theories which they make plausible to those who have not investigated for themselves.

These agents of Satan are hard to meet, and it is difficult to have patience with them. But calmness patience and self-control, are elements which every minister of Christ should cultivate. The combatants of the truth have educated themselves for intellectual battle. They are prepared to present on the surface sophistry and assertions as the word of God. They confuse unsuspecting minds, and place the truth in obscurity, while pleasing fables are presented to the people in the place of pure Bible truth.

Many choose darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. But there are those who, if the truth could have been presented in a different manner, under different circumstances, giving them a fair chance to weigh the arguments for themselves, and to compare scripture with scripture, would have been charmed by its clearness and would have taken hold upon it.

[138] It has been very indiscreet for our minister to publish to the world the wily sophistry of error, furnished by designing men to cover up and make of none effect the solemn, sacred truth of Jehovah. These crafty men who lie in wait to deceive the unwary give their strength of intellect to pervert the word of God. The inexperienced and unsuspecting are deceived to their ruin. It has been a great error to publish to all, and furnish every class of minds with the arguments of opponents wherewith to battle the truth of God, which many had never thought of. Some one must render an account for this unwise generalship.

Arguments against the sacred truth, subtle in their influence, affect minds that are not well informed in regard to the strength of the truth. The moral sensibilities of the community at large are blunted by familiarity with sin. Selfishness, dishonesty, and the varied sins which prevail in this degenerate age, have blunted the senses to eternal things, so that God's truth is not discerned. In giving publicity to the erroneous arguments of our opponents, truth

and error are placed upon a level in their minds, when if they could have the truth before them in its clearness long enough to see and sense its sacredness and importance, they would be convinced of the strong arguments in its favor, and could then be prepared to meet the arguments urged by opposers.

Those who are seeking to know the truth and to understand the will of God, who are faithful to the light, and zealous in the performance of their daily duties, will surely know of the doctrine; for they will be guided into all truth. God does not promise by the masterly acts of his providence irresistibly to bring men to the knowledge of his truth when they do not seek for truth and have no desire to know the truth. [139]

Men have the power to quench the Spirit of God. The power of choosing is left, with men. They are allowed freedom of action. They may be obedient through the name and grace of our Redeemer, or they may be disobedient, and realize the consequences. Man is responsible for receiving or rejecting sacred and eternal truth. The Spirit of God is continually convicting, and souls are deciding for or against the truth. The deportment, the words, the actions, of the minister of Christ, may balance a soul for or against the truth. How important that every act of the life be such that it needeth not to be repented of, especially among the ambassadors of Christ, who are acting in the place of Christ.

The world's Redeemer has invested great power with his church. He states the rules to be applied in cases of trial with Us members. After he has given explicit directions as to the course to be pursued, he says "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever [in church discipline] ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in Heaven." Thus even the heavenly authority ratifies the discipline of the church in regard to its members, when the Bible rule has been followed.

The word of God does not give license for one man to set up his judgment in opposition to the judgment of the church, neither is he allowed to urge his opinions against the opinions of the church. Unless there were church discipline and government, the church would go to fragments; it could not hold together as a body. [140]

There have ever been individuals of independent minds, who have claimed that they were right, that God had especially taught,

impressed, and led them. Each has a theory of his own, or views peculiar to himself, and each claims that his views are in accordance with the word of God. Each one has a different theory and faith, yet each claims special light from God. These draw away from the body, and each one is a separate church of himself. All of these cannot be right, yet they all claim to be led of the Lord. The word of inspiration is not yea and nay, but yea and amen in Christ Jesus.

Our Saviour follows his lessons of instruction with a promise that if two or three should be united in asking anything of God it should be given them. Christ here shows that there must be union with others, even in our desires for a given object. Great importance is attached to the united prayer, the union of purpose.

God hear³ the prayers of individuals, but on this occasion Jesus was giving especial and important lessons that were to have an especial bearing upon his newly organized church on the earth. There must be an agreement in the things which they desire, and for which they pray. It was not merely the thoughts and exercises of one mind, liable to deception; but the petition was to be the earnest desire of several minds centered to the same point.

[141] In the wonderful conversion of Paul we see the miraculous power of God. A brightness above the glory of the midday sun shone around about him. Jesus, whose name of all others he most hated and despised, revealed himself to Paul for the purpose of arresting his mad, yet honest, career, that he might make this most unpromising instrument a chosen vessel to bear the gospel to the Gentiles. He had conscientiously done many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. In his zeal he was a persevering, earnest persecutor of the church of Christ. His convictions of his duty to exterminate this alarming doctrine, which was prevailing everywhere, that Jesus was the Prince of Life, were deep and strong.

Paul verily believed that faith in Jesus made of none effect the law of God, and the religious service of sacrificial offerings, and the rite of circumcision, which had in all past ages received the full sanction of God. But the miraculous revelation of Christ brings light into the darkened chambers of his mind. The Jesus of Nazareth whom he is arrayed against is indeed the Redeemer of the world.

Paul sees his mistaken zeal, and cries out, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Jesus did not tell him, as he might have done,

then and there, the work he had assigned him. Paul must receive instruction in the Christian faith, and move understandingly. Christ sends him to the very disciples he had been so bitterly persecuting to learn of them. The light of heavenly illumination had taken away the eyesight of Paul, but Jesus, the great healer of the blind, does not restore it. He answers the question of Paul in these words, "Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do." [142]

Jesus could not only have healed Paul of his blindness, but he could have forgiven his sins and told him his duty in marking out his future course. From Christ, all power and mercies were to flow; but he did not give Paul an experience, in his conversion to truth, independent of his church recently organized upon the earth.

The marvelous light given Paul upon that occasion astonished and confounded him. He was wholly subdued. This part of the work man could not do for Paul, but there was a work still to be accomplished which the servants of Christ could do. Jesus directs him to his agents in the church for a further knowledge of duty. Thus he gives authority and sanction to his organized church. The work of revelation and conviction Christ had done, and now he was in a condition to learn of those whom God had ordained to teach the truth. Christ directs Paul to his chosen servants, thus placing him in connection with his church.

The very men whom Paul was purposing to destroy, were to be his instructors in the very religion he had despised and persecuted. He passed three days without food or sight, making his way to the men whom in his blind zeal he was purposing to destroy. Here Jesus places Paul in connection with his representatives upon the earth. The Lord gave Ananias a vision to go up to a certain house in Damascus and call for Saul of Tarsus; "for behold he prayeth."

After Saul was directed to go to Damascus, he was led by the men who accompanied him, to help him bring the disciples bound to Jerusalem to be tried and put to death. Saul is tarrying with Judas at Damascus devoting the time to fasting and prayer. Here the faith of Saul was tested. Three days he was in darkness of mind in regard to what was required of him, and three days he was without sight. He had been directed to go to Damascus; for it should there be told him what he should do. He was in uncertainty, and he cries earnestly to God. An angel is sent to Ananias, directing him to go to a certain [143]

house where Saul is praying to be instructed in what he was to do next. Paul's pride is gone. A little before he was self-confident, thinking he was engaged in a good work for which he should receive a reward; but all is now changed, He is bowed down and humbled to the dust in penitence and shame, and his supplications are fervent for pardon. Saith the Lord through his angel to Ananias, "Behold he prayeth." The angel informed the servant of God that he had revealed to Saul in vision a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him that he might receive his sight. Ananias could scarcely credit the words of the angel, and repeats what he has heard of Saul's bitter persecution of the saints at Jerusalem. But the command to Ananias is imperative, "Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."

[144] Ananias was obedient to the direction of the angel. He laid his hands upon the man who so recently was exercised with a spirit of the deepest hatred, breathing out threatnings against all who believed on his name. Ananias said to Saul, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou earnest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost;" and immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales, and he received his sight forth with, and arose and was baptized.

Jesus might have done all this work for Saul, directly, but this was not his plan. Paul has something to do in the line of confession to the men whose destruction he had premeditated, and God had a responsible work for the men to do whom he had ordained to act in his stead. Paul was to take those steps necessary in conversion. He is required to unite himself to the very people he had persecuted for their religion. Christ here gives all his people an example of the manner of his working for the salvation of men. The Son of God identified himself with the office and authority of his organized church. His blessings were to come through the agencies he has ordained, thus connecting man with the channel through which his blessings come. Paul's being strictly conscientious in his work of persecuting the saints does not make him guiltless when the knowledge of his cruel work is impressed upon him by the Spirit of God. He is to become a learner of the disciples.

He learns that Jesus, whom in his blindness he considered an imposter, is indeed the author and foundation of all the religion of God's chosen people from Adam's day, and the finisher of the faith, now so clear to his enlightened vision. Christ he saw as the vindicator of truth, the fulfiller of all prophecies. Christ had been regarded as making of none effect the law of God; but when his spiritual vision was touched by the finger of God, he learned of the disciples that Christ was the originator and foundation of the entire Jewish system of sacrifices, that in the death of Christ, type met antitype, that Christ came into the world for the express purpose of vindicating his Father's law. [145]

In the light of the law, Saul saw himself a sinner. That very law which he thought he had been keeping so zealously, he finds he has transgressed. He dies to sin, becomes obedient to the claims of God's law, repents of his sins and has faith in Jesus Christ as his Saviour, is baptized, and preaches Jesus as earnestly and as zealously as he once condemned him. In the conversion of Paul are given us important principles which we should ever bear in mind. The Redeemer of the world does not sanction the experience and exercise in religious matters independent of his organized and acknowledged church, where he has a church.

Many have the idea that they are responsible to Christ alone for their light and experience, independent of his acknowledged followers in the world. But this is condemned by Jesus in his teachings and in his examples of facts given for our instruction. Here was Paul directly brought into the presence of Christ, one whom Christ was to fit for a most important work, one who was to be a chosen vessel unto him, yet he does not teach him the lessons of truth. He arrests his course and convicts him; and when he asks Christ, "What wilt thou have me to do the Saviour does not tell him directly, but places him in connection with his church. They will tell thee what thou must do. Jesus was the sinners' friend, his heart was ever open, ever touched with human woe, he has all power, both in Heaven and upon earth; but he respects the means which he has ordained for the enlightenment and salvation of men. He directs Saul to the church, thus acknowledging the power he has invested in it as a channel of light to the world. It is Christ's organized body upon the earth, and respect was required to be paid to his ordinances. Ananias represents [146]

Christ in the case of Saul, and he also represents Christ's ministers upon the earth who are appointed to act in Christ's stead.

Saul was a learned teacher in Israel, but while under the influence of blind error and prejudice Christ reveals himself to him and then places him in communication with his church who are the light of the world. They were to instruct this educated, popular orator in the Christian religion. In Christ's stead Ananias touches his eyes that they may receive sight; in Christ's stead he lays his hands upon him, and praying in Christ's name Saul receives the Holy Ghost. All is done in the name and authority of Christ. Christ is the fountain. The church is the channel of communication. Those who boast of personal independence need to be brought into closer relation to Christ by connection with his church upon the earth.

[147] Bro. —, God loves you and desires to save you and bring you into working order. If you will be humble and teachable and be molded by his Spirit, he will be your strength, your righteousness, and your exceeding great reward. You may accomplish much for your brethren if you will hide in God and let his Spirit soften your spirit. You have a hard class to meet. They are filled with bitter prejudice; but no more so than was Saul. God can work mightily for your brethren, if you do not allow yourself to get in the way and hedge up your own path. Let melting love, pity, and tenderness, dwell in your heart while you labor. You may break down the iron walls of prejudice if you are only clinging to Jesus Christ and are ready to be counseled by your more experienced brethren.

You must not, as God's servant, be too easily discouraged at difficulties or the fiercest opposition. Go forth, not in your own name, but in the might and power of Israel's God. Endure hardness as a good soldier of the cross of Christ. Jesus endured the contradiction of sinners against himself. Consider the life of Christ and take courage, and press on in faith, courage and hope.

E. G. W.

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Epistle No. 2.

IN my last vision, I was shown the introduction of the truth and the progress of the cause of God upon the Pacific Coast. I saw that a good work had been wrought for many in California, but that there were many who professed the truth that were unready to take hold of the work of God at the right time, and move as the opening providence of God indicates their duty. There may be a great work done on this Coast in bringing souls to the knowledge of the truth if there is united action. [148]

If all who have influence would feel the necessity of co-operation, and would seek to answer the prayer of Christ, that they may be one as he was one with the Father, the cause of present truth would be a power upon this Coast. But the people of God are asleep and do not see the wants of the cause for this time. They do not feel the importance of concentrated action. Satan is ever seeking to divide the faith and hearts of God's people. He well knows that union is their strength, and division their weakness. It is important and essential that all of Christ's followers understand his devices, and with a united front meet his attacks and vanquished him. They need to make continual efforts to press together even if it be at some sacrifice to themselves.

The people of God, with various temperaments and organizations, are brought together in church capacity. The truth of God, received in the heart will do its work of refining, elevating, and sanctifying the life, and overcoming the peculiar views and prejudices of each. All should labor to come as near to one another as possible. All who love God and keep his commandments in truth, will have influence with unbelievers, and will win souls to Christ, to swell the glad songs of triumph and victory before the great white throne. Selfishness will be overcome, and the overflowing love for Christ will be manifested in the burden they feel to save souls for whom Christ died.

I was shown many families who are not living as Jesus would have them; they have a work to do at home before they can make advancement in the divine life. I was shown the case of Bro. — —, and was pointed back to the time when he first accepted the truth. It then had a transforming influence upon his life. Self was [149]

in a measure lost in the interest he felt for the truth. He sought to show his faith by his works, and his personal interests were made secondary. He loved the work of the Lord, and cheerfully sought to advance the interest of his cause, and the Lord accepted Lis efforts to serve him, and the hand of the Lord prospered him.

I was shown that Bro. —— displeased God and brought great darkness upon himself when he set up his judgment in opposition to his brethren in regard to the true way to observe the Sabbath. Bro. ——'s interest was at stake and he refused to see the correct bearing of the question under consideration. He never would have taken the course he did when he returned from the East if he had been in the light. I was then carried to another point in his history, and saw him journeying. While among unbelievers he did not let his light so shine before men that they by seeing his good works would glorify our Father which is in Heaven. He was forgetful of God and of his duty to rightly represent his Saviour in every place and upon all occasions.

[150] Bro. —— is especially weak upon some points ; he loves praise and flattery; he loves pleasure and distinction. He exalted himself, he talked much and prayed little, and God left him to his own weakness; for he did not bear fruit to the glory of God. On that journey he had an opportunity to do a great amount of good, but he did not realize that he was accountable to God for his talents, and that as a steward of God he would be called to an account, whether he had used his ability to please himself or to glorify God. If Bro. —— had felt the power of the love of Christ in his own heart, he would have felt an interest for the salvation of those with whom he was brought in contact, that he might speak words to them which would cause them to reflect in regard to their eternal interest.

He had an opportunity to sow the seed of truth which he did not improve as he should. He should have carried his religion with him while among his relatives. His holy profession and the truth of God should have blended with all his thoughts, feelings, words, and actions. Christ commands his followers to walk in the light. Walking means moving onward, exerting ourselves, exercising our ability, being actively engaged. Unless we exercise ourselves in the good work to which our Saviour has called us, and feel the importance of personal effort in this work, we shall have a sickly, stunted religion.

We gain new victories by our experience in working. We shall gain activity and strength by walking in the light, that we may have energy to run in the way of God's commandments. We may gain an increase of strength every step we advance heavenward. God will only bless his people when they try to be a blessing to others. Our graces are matured and developed by exercise.

I was shown that Bro. — while he was at Battle Greek was weak in moral power. He had not been seeking to cling to God and preserve his soul in purity of thoughts and actions, and he was left to follow his own mind, and to receive impressions that were detrimental to his spiritual interest. He met those who perverted the truth and was led by them to believe things which were untrue, and as he had opened the door to the enemy and received him as an angel of light, he was readily overcome by temptations. [151]

He became wickedly prejudiced and was suspicious of the very ones in whom God would have him have confidence. He saw things in a perverted light, and the meetings, which should have been to him a great strength, were an injury. This was just as Satan would have it, that Bro. — might lose confidence in the men whom God appointed to lead out in this work. He became at variance with them and with the heart of the work. He was like a vessel at sea, without an anchor or a rudder. If he could not have confidence in those at the head of the work he would have confidence in no one.

Bro. — has but little reverence or respect for his brethren; he thinks that his judgment, and his knowledge and abilities are superior to theirs, therefore he will not receive anything from them, nor trust to their judgment nor seek to counsel with them unless he can lead and teach them. He will act according to his own judgment irrespective of his brethren's feelings, their griefs or entreaties, and when he separated his confidence from the heart of the work, Satan knew that he was sure of him, unless this confidence could be restored. Bro. —'s eternal interest depends upon his accepting and respecting the helps and governments which God has been pleased to place in the church. If he follows a course of his own choosing, he will eventually find out that he has been altogether upon a wrong track, and that he has deceived himself to his ruin. He will take first one turning, then another, and yet after all, miss the true and only path which leads to Heaven. [152]

There are thousands who are traveling the road of darkness and error, the broad road which leads to death, who flatter themselves that they are in the path of happiness and of Heaven, but they never find the one or reach the other. Bro. — needs the helps God has placed in the church; for he cannot constitute a church of himself, and yet his course shows that he would be satisfied to be a complete church, subject to none. Bro. — long since lost his consecration to God; he did not guard the avenues of his soul against the suggestions of Satan. I saw that angels of God were writing his words and actions. He was going farther and farther from the light of Heaven. When the grace of God does not especially control you, Bro. —, you are a hard man to connect with. You have great self-confidence and firmness, which are felt in your family, and in the church. You have but little reverence and respect for any one—you do not possess the grace of humility.

[153] Bro. — returned to this Coast in great darkness; he had lost his love for the truth, and his love for God. His natural feelings controlled him, and he was proud. He loved himself, and he loved money better than he loved the truth and his Redeemer. I was shown that his course after he returned to the Coast was a dishonor to the name of a Christian. I saw him joining hands with the gay lovers of pleasure. He grieved his brethren, and wounded his Saviour, and put him to open shame before unbelievers. I saw that from this time he did not take pleasure in the service of God, or enjoy the advancement of the truth. He seemed to possess a zeal to search the Scriptures and different authors, not that he might become established upon important points of present truth which the providence of God had furnished him through men of his choice, but to find a new position, and to advance new views in opposition to the established faith of the body. His researches have not been for the glory of God, but to promote himself.

When Bro. — once takes a position on the wrong side, it is not according to his nature to see his error and confess his wrong, but to fight it out till the last, whatever may be the consequences. This spirit is ruinous to the church, and ruinous in his family. He needs to soften his heart, and let in tenderness, humility, and love. He needs benevolence and noble generosity. In short, he needs a thorough conversion, to be a new man in Christ Jesus. Then his

influence in the church will be all right, and he will be just the help they need. He will have the respect and love of his family, and will command his household after him. Duty and love, like twin sisters, will be his helps in the management of his children.

I saw that sister —— had much to grieve over is the course her husband had pursued toward her, that her life had been very sad when he was able to make it happy. She seemed to be dispirited, and to keenly feel that she was neglected and unloved by her husband. In his absence, at times she felt nearly distracted, and became jealous and distrustful in regard to him. Satan was present with his temptations, and she looked upon some things in an exaggerated light. All this might have been saved had Bro. —— preserved his consecration to God. I was carried on still farther, and saw that he was walking in unbelief and darkness, while he was flattering himself that he alone had the true light. The farther he separated from God, the less love did he have for his brethren and the truth. [154]

I was shown Bro. —— questioning one after another of our points of faith, which had brought us out from the world, and made us a separate and distinct people, looking for the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. His unbelief and darkness have not moved the main pillars of our faith. The truth of God is not made of none effect by him. It remains the truth still; but he has had some influence upon the minds of his brethren. His reports of lying lips in regard to my husband and myself, which he brought from the East, had their influence in casting suspicions and doubts in the minds of others. Those unacquainted with us could not stand in our defense. The church in ——, I saw, might have numbered three times as many as it now does, and might have had ten- fold greater strength, had not Bro. —— played himself into the hands of the enemy. In his blind unbelief, he has done all that he could to discourage and scatter the believers in the truth. He has not realized in his blindness that his course was grievous in the sight of God. The discouragement and darkness which he has caused have made the labors of Bro. —— doubly hard; for his influence has not only been felt in ——, but by other churches. [155]

Bro. —— has strengthened unbelief, and an opposing influence which Bro. has had to meet. I saw that we should meet the same,

and that it would take time to eradicate the old root of bitterness whereby many have been defiled; that there was a time to speak, and a time to keep silent; that when God should lay upon us the burden to speak we should not hesitate, whether men would hear or whether they would forbear; and that we should press the matter through if it left some outside the church and outside the truth. God has a great and important work for somebody to do in —, and at the right time it will be done, and truth will triumph.

[156] Those of our brethren who had not obtained an experience for themselves in present truth could not answer the arguments of Bro. —, and although they could not receive the views advocated by him, they were more or less affected by his talk and reasoning. Some have felt no spirit of freedom when they met for worship. They were afraid upon the Sabbath to speak out their real feelings and their faith, expecting that he would criticise what they would say. There has been death in the meetings, and but little freedom.

Bro. — desires that others should look up to him as a man that can explain the Scriptures; but I was shown that ho was deceived and did not understand them. He has started upon a wrong track in seeking to get up a new faith, an original theory of faith. He would uproot and misplace those waymarks which show us our correct bearings, that we are near the close of this earth's history. He may flatter himself that he is being led of the Lord, but it is surely another spirit. Unless he changes his course entirely, and is willing to be led and to learn, ho will be left to follow his own ways and make entire shipwreck of faith.

Some have been so blinded by their own unbelief, that they could not discern the spirit of Bro. —. They might have been helped by him if he had been standing in the counsel of God. He could have led them to the light instead of increasing their confusion of faith, and their perplexities. Bro. — has been a stumbling-block, a blind leader of the blind. Had he made straight paths for his feet, the lame would not have been turned out of the way, but would have been healed. He refused to walk in the light of truth which God had given his people, and those who would walk in the light he hindered.

He feels that it is an honor to suggest doubts and unbelief in regard to the established faith of God's commandment-keeping people. The truth that he once rejoiced in, is now darkness, and he will fall

back with a mixture of faith held by the different denominations, but agreeing in the whole with none of them, he will unless he changes his course, be a distinct church of himself, but not under the control of the great Head of the church. [157]

In bringing his views in opposition to the faith of the body, Bro. — is disheartening and discouraging the church. He sees that if the body of Sabbath-keepers have the truth, he is in darkness, and this he cannot admit. The truth condemns him, and instead of seeking to bring his soul in harmony with it, surrendering to its claims, and dying to self, he is seeking a position where he will not be under condemnation.

I was shown that if he continues in his present course blinded to his real condition, he will be glad after a while to find some pretext for giving up the Sabbath. Satan is surely leading him, as he has many others leading them away from the body in a course of deception and error. How much safer for Bro. — to bring his soul into harmony with the truth, than to misinterpret Scripture, to bring it into harmony with his ideas and actions. If he would bring his actions in harmony with the principles of God's law, he has a job on his hands that he has scarcely dreamed of. The carnal heart is at enmity with God. It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

The insinuations and open speech of those who are our enemies in Battle Creek, were received by Bro. — while on his journey East, and he returned with bitter and wicked feelings in his heart against those at the heart of the work, and especially against me and my work. He had no good reason for the feelings he cherished, and the views he expressed of my labors and testimonies. The unbelief and prejudice which had corrupted his own soul, he sought to instill into others' minds. He did this with considerable effect. At first, many were influenced by his sophistry and darkness, for he can make assertions and draw inferences as though he were handling positive facts. He knows how to press matters, and is of ready speech. His words had influence with some who were unconsecrated, and wished to have it just as he represented in regard to our work and our calling. He had influence and excited prejudice in the minds of some whom we could have helped, had not he closed our way, that we could get no access to them. Of this class were Bro. and sister —. [158]

In this Bro. ——— may see the fruits of his course, and there are others who were influenced in the same way, with the same results, as far as their faith and confidence in the truth are concerned. As soon as Bro. ——— or any others, shall decide that the men who have had the most to do in bringing the cause of present truth up to its present condition, are not led of God, but are scheming and designing men deceiving the people, then the course for them to pursue in order to be consistent is to renounce the entire work as a delusion, a fraud. In order to be consistent, they must throw all overboard. This Bro. ——— has almost impreceptably to himself been doing, and this others have done. He will at some future time, if not now, review his work with different feelings than he has. He [159] will see the work which he has been doing during the few years past, as God secs it, and will not view it with the satisfaction he now feels. When he sees the miserable work he has been engaged in for a few years past, his proud boasting of wisdom and superior knowledge will have an end, and he will repent in bitterness of soul, for the blood of souls is in his garments.

If Bro. ——— had wanted to view things correctly, and feel the possibility of being deceived, he would have come to Bro. and sister White with the reports injurious to their reputation, and given them an opportunity to speak for themselves. The reports which he brought away across the plains, to the Pacific Coast, bear false witness, thus breaking the law of God. He will one day meet the hard speeches, as well as the deceptive sophistry, instigated by Satan, which he has instilled into minds, to injure the influence of my husband and myself. This matter lies not between Bro. ——— and myself, but between him and God.

God has given us our work, and if God has given us a message to bear to his people, those who would hinder us in the work, and weaken the faith of the people in its truth and verity, are not fighting against the instrument, but against God ; and must answer to him for the result of their words and actions. All who have spiritual discernment may judge of the tree by its fruits. Bro. ——— stands forth as one enlightened by God to undeceive the people in regard to our work and mission. All may see, if they will, the fruit growing upon this tree. Bro. ———, is it to eternal life, or is it to death ? After [160] he received this special knowledge from Battle Creek, which lei him

to take a course to belittle our work and mission, he felt at liberty to join with the unbelieving in the dissipation of pleasure, and by his levity of conduct he brought reproach upon the cause of Christ, and great suffering upon his wife.

Was Bro. — so blinded that he had no conviction that he was seeking to tear down what God was building up? Had he no thoughts that he might be fighting against God? The work he has been doing, angels have recorded in Heaven, and he will have to answer for it when every work shall be brought into judgment, and bear the inspection of the infinite God. In his blindness, Bro. — has been lifting his puny arm to fight against God, flattering his deceived soul that he was doing God service. Every man's work is to be tried by the fire of the last day, and only gold, silver, and precious stones will stand the test.

God will not be trifled with. He may bear long with men, but he will visit their transgressions, and render to every man as his works have been. Although men may talk boastingly, and pride themselves upon their wisdom, one breath from the lips of God can bring their honor and glorying to the dust. I was shown that Bro. — will be inexcusable in the day of God, when every case is weighed in the balances of the sanctuary. He knows better than to do as he has done. He has had sufficient evidence to determine the character of the work which God has committed to us. He has the fruits of this work before him, which he can see and understand if he will.

Bro. —'s self-confidence is most wonderful and is a fearful [161] snare to him. If he does not overcome this dangerous trait in his character, it will prove his ruin. He is in his natural element when he is battling, and controverting points of doctrine; he will question, and quibble, and be at variance with his brethren, until Satan so controls his mind that he really thinks that he has the truth and his brethren are in error. He does not stand in the light, and has not the blessing of God; for it constitutes a part of his religion to oppose the settled points of God's commandment keeping people. Are all these deceived? and is Bro. — the only man to whom God has given correct truth? Is not God just as willing to give his devoted self-sacrificing servants the correct understanding of the Scriptures, as to give it to Bro. — for them ?

Does Bro. —— try his course by this simple test? “Does this knowledge and light that I have found, and which places me at variance with my brethren, draw me more closely to Christ? does it make my Saviour more precious to me, and make my character more closely resemble his?” It is a natural, but not a pleasing, trait in our character to be keen in our perceptions and tenacious in our remembrance of the faults and failings of others.

Bro. —— does not try to be in union with his brethren; his self-confidence has led him to feel no especial necessity for union. He feels that their minds have been cast in a mold inferior to his own, and that to receive their opinions and counsel as worthy of attention [162] would be a great condescension. This self-confidence has shut him away from the love, sympathy, and union of his brethren. He feels that he is too wise and experienced to need the precautions which are indispensable to many. He has so high an opinion of his own abilities and such a reliance upon his own attainments that he believes himself prepared for any emergency. Said the heavenly angels, pointing to Bro. ——, “Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed, lest he fall.” Self-confidence leads to unwatchfulness and neglect of humble, penitential prayer. There are outward temptations to be shunned, and inward foes and perplexities to be overcome; for Satan adapts his temptations to the different characters and temperaments of individuals.

The church of Christ is in constant peril. Satan is seeking to destroy the people of God, and one man’s mind, and one man’s judgment, are not sufficient to be trusted. Christ would have his followers brought together in church capacity, observing order, having rules and discipline, and all subject one to another, esteeming others better than themselves. Union and confidence are essential to the prosperity of the church. If each member of the church feels at liberty to move independently of the others, taking his own peculiar course, how can the church be in any safety in the hour of danger and peril? The prosperity and very existence of a church depend upon the prompt, united action and mutual confidence of its members. When, at a critical time, one shall sound the alarm of danger, there is need of prompt and active work, without stopping to question [163] and canvass the whole subject from end to end, and thus letting the

enemy gain every advantage by delay, when united action might have saved many souls from perdition.

God wants his people to be united in the closest bonds of Christian fellowship; confidence in our brethren is essential to the prosperity of the church; union of action is important in a religious crisis. One imprudent step, one careless action, may plunge the church into difficulties and trials from which it may not recover for years. One member of the church filled with unbelief, may give an advantage to the great foe that will affect the prosperity of the entire church, and many souls may be lost as the result. Jesus would have his followers subject one to another; then God can use them as instruments to save one another; for one may not discern the dangers which another's eye is quick to perceive; but if the undiscerning will in confidence obey the warning, he may be saved great perplexities and trials.

As Jesus was about to leave his disciples, he prayed for them in a most touching, solemn manner, that they all might be one "as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." The apostle in the first epistle to the Corinthians exhorts them to unity. "Now I beseech [164] you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you ; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

God is leading a people out from the world upon the exalted platform of eternal truth—the commandments of God and faith of Jesus. He will discipline and fit up his people. They will not be at variance, one believing one thing, and another having faith and views entirely opposite, each moving independently of the body. Through the diversity of the gifts and governments he has placed in the church, they will all come to the unity of the faith. If one man takes his views of Bible truth without regard for the opinions of his brethren, and justifies his course, alleging that he has a right to his own peculiar views, and then presses them upon others, how can he be fulfilling the prayer of Christ? and if another, and still another,

arises, asserting his right to believe and talk what he pleases without reference to the faith of the body, where will be the harmony that Christ prayed might exist with his brethren that existed between him and his Father?

God is leading out a people and establishing them upon the one great platform of faith, the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus. He has given his people a straight chain of Bible truth, clear and connected. This truth is of heavenly origin, and has been searched for as for hidden treasure. It has been dug out through careful searching of the Scriptures and through much prayer.

[165] Bro. — is doubting point after point of our faith. If he is right in his new theories, the body of Sabbath-keepers is wrong. Shall the established faith in the strong points of our position, which has led us out from the world and united us a distinct and peculiar people, be given up as erroneous? Shall we receive the faith of this one man, with the evidences he gives us of the fruits of his religious character? or will Bro. — yield his judgment and opinions and come to the body? If he had not blinded his soul by receiving prejudice, and cherishing his wicked opposition to the work of God, he would not have been left to such darkness and deception.

He is a ready talker and will persistently urge his opinions, and will not yield to the weight of evidence against him. It is cruel for him to stand in the way of the prosperity of the church, as he has done. The world is large; he has all the privileges he can ask of going out among un-believers and converting them to his theories; and when he can present a well-organized body that he has been the means of converting from sin to righteousness, then, and not before, should he press his peculiar views upon the church of God, which is pained and disheartened with his darkness and error. He has no right to build upon another man's foundation his hay, wood, and stubble, to be consumed by the fires of the last day.

[166] I was shown that (the only safe position for Bro. — was to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn the way of life more perfectly. His doctrine shall drop as the rain, and his speech shall distill as the dew upon the heart of the humble and teachable. Bro. — must obtain a teachable disposition. He is not to sit as a judge, but as a learner, not to cavil, but to believe, not to question and find fault and oppose, but to listen. Pride must give way to humility, and

prejudice must be exchanged for candor, or the gracious words of Christ will be in vain to him. You may reason, my brother, until the day of God, with your blind judgment and unsanctified mind, and advance not a step toward Heaven; you may debate and investigate and search learned authors, and even the Scriptures, and grow more and more self-deceived, and become darker and darker, as did the Jews in reference to Christ. What was their fault? They rejected the light which God had already given them, and were seeking for some new light by which they might so interpret Scriptures as to sustain their actions.

You are doing the same; you pass over the light God has seen fit to give you in the publications upon present truth, and in his word, and are seeking doctrines of your own, theories which cannot be sustained by the word of God. When you become as a little child, willing to be led, and with your understanding sanctified, and your will and prejudices surrendered, such a light will then be shed abroad in your heart, as will illumine the Scriptures, and show you present truth in its beautiful harmony. It will appear like a golden chain, link joined to link in a perfect whole. "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of 'Heaven.'" "Learn of me," says Christ, "for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

If you have, indeed, entered the school of Christ, he expects you to manifest in your character and deportment the lowliness which is so beautifully exemplified in his character. Christ will not undertake to teach the self-righteous, self-conceited, and self-willed. If such come to him with the inquiry, What is truth? he gives them no answer. It is only the meek he will guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way. Solomon was naturally endowed with good judgment and large reasoning powers; but he acknowledged himself before God as a little child. He sought for wisdom from God with humility, and he sought not in vain. If you really search for the truth with the right motive, you will come with the body, for they have the truth. If you are searching the Scriptures and different authors, that you may find doctrines which will coincide with your own preconceived opinions, and if you have already settled your faith, then you will be boastful, self-confident, and unyielding. [167]

Bro. —, with your present self-willed, stubborn spirit, you will go farther and farther from the truth; and unless you are converted, you will prove to be a great hindrance to the cause of God in any place where you have any influence. You are persistent to carry your points. Your self-sufficient spirit must be yielded, before you can see anything clearly. You have led your wife to think that you knew the truth better than any of our ministers; you have taken the key of knowledge in your own hands, so far as she is concerned, and have kept her in darkness. God has given his church men of judgment, experience, and faith. They know the way of truth, and of salvation, for they have searched for it while in agony of spirit, because of the opposition they had to meet from men who turned the truth of God into a lie; and the benefit of the labor of these faithful servants of God is given to the world.

There are but very few who realize the exalted nature of the work of God in comparison with the temporal business cares of life. Jesus the heavenly teacher, has given us lessons of instruction through his disciples. When he sent out his twelve disciples, he instructed them that into whatever city or town they should enter, they must inquire who in it was worthy of their attention and visits; and if a suitable place was found where the people would esteem the blessings sent them in being privileged to entertain the messengers of Christ, there they were to abide and there let their peace rest until they left that city. They were not instructed to visit any and every house indiscriminately, urging their presence upon the people, whether they were welcome or not; but if they were not welcomed, if their peace could not rest in the house, they were to leave it, and seek a house where the members were worthy, and where their spirit could rest.

When the messengers of Christ, who go forth to teach the truth to others, are rejected, and their words find no place in the heart, Christ is rejected, and his word despised in the messengers of truth whom he has chosen and sent. This applies just as fully in this age of the world as when Christ gave the instruction to his chosen messengers.

When Christ was upon the earth, there were men who had no respect or reverence for God's messengers, and no more regard for their warning than for their own judgment; also in this age of the world there are those who will not respect the testimony of God's

chosen servants, so highly as their own opinions. Such cannot be benefited by the labors of God's servants, and time should not be lost in degrading the work of God to meet such minds. Christ said to the servants whom he sent forth, "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."

Christ gives power to the voice of the church. "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven. There is no such thing countenanced as one man's starting out upon his own individual responsibility, and advocating what views he chooses, irrespective of the judgment of the church. The highest power under heaven God has bestowed upon his church. It is the voice of God in his united people in church capacity which is to be respected.

God has given to his church men who have an experience, those who have fasted, and wept, and prayed, even through the entire night, for the Lord to open the Scriptures to their minds. These men in humility have given the benefits of their mature experience to the world. Is this light of Heaven, or of men? Is it of any value, or is it worthless? Bro. — is doing a work in disseminating erroneous views of Bible truth that he will wish one day to undo; but it will be in vain. He may repent, he may yet be saved as by fire; but oh! how much precious time will have been lost that never can be redeemed! How much seed has he sown that has borne only briars and thorns! How many souls lost that might have been saved had he tried as earnestly to let the true light shine as he has to scatter his darkness!

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What might he not have done had he been consecrated, sanctified through the truth? Bro. — feels too self-sufficient, too rich and increased with goods, to see his need of anything; while the True Witness pointed to him and said, Unless ye become converted as a little child, ye cannot see the kingdom of Heaven. The light of truth so carefully brought out in books and papers he does not respect; but exalts his own judgment above the most precious light, and this light will rise up in the Judgment to condemn him.

I saw that he would question the men upon whom God has seen fit to lay the responsibility of his work. He would exalt his own opinions and views above the light God had given through them,

[171] and he would boast of his knowledge, and would be an accuser of his brethren, not excepting the ambassadors of Christ. All this overbearing influence to belittle the judgment of the servants of God, and to accuse them of weaknesses and errors, exalting his own opinions above theirs, if not repented of, will be found written against him in the books, which he will see with shame in the day of God.

God will hold up his servants, will preserve his favored ones; but woe unto him who would make of none effect the words of Christ's ambassadors, who receive the word from the mouth of God to speak to the people; who would tell the people that the sword is coming, and warn them to prepare for the great day of God. Bro. — will find that it is no light or trivial work that he has been engaged in; it is a work which will roll back upon his soul with crushing weight. He has brought his spirit in opposition to God. He has a hard work before him. Said Christ, "It must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh!"

Bro. —, the course that you have been pursuing was shown me three years ago. I saw that you were wrong in almost every action, and yet you tried to gauge the truth to them instead of gauging your actions to the truth. You were not a light to the people of God, but a terrible burden. You will not lift when there is lifting to be done, and you discourage others from union of action. You talk of your brethren, ever finding fault; and while you have been questioning the course of others, a rank growth of poisonous weeds has flourished and taken deep root in your own heart. These roots of bitterness springing up have defiled many, and will defile many more unless you see them and root them out.

I was shown that a harsh, Pharisaical spirit would grow upon Bro. — and control him unless he sees the terrible defects in his character, and obtains grace from God to correct the evil.

[172] Before Bro. — embraced the truth, his hand seemed to be against every one, his combative spirit would strengthen at any provocation, and his self-esteem would be injured: he was a hard man, getting into and making trouble. The truth of God wrought a reformation in him. God accepted him, and his hand held him up. But since Bro. — lost the spirit of consecration, is old, turbulent spirit, at variance with others, has been strengthening, and seeking

to gain the mastery. when he dies to self, and humbles his proud heart before God, he will find how weak is his strength; he will feel the need of heavenly succor, and will cry, Unclean, unclean, before thee, O God. All his proud boasting in self will have an end.

Life in this stormy world where moral darkness triumphs over truth and virtue, will be to the Christian a continual conflict; and he will find that he must keep the armor on, for he will have to fight against forces that never tire, and foes that never sleep. We shall find ourselves beset with countless temptations, and we must find strength in Christ to overcome them or he overcome by them, and lose our souls. We have a great and solemn work to do, and how terrible will be our loss if we fail. If the work which our Master has left us be found undone, we cannot have a second probation granted us. It must remain undone forever.

I was shown your life in your family, Bro. —, and angels wept as they viewed your course at home. Angels wept as they viewed the unloved wife who receives no respect from her husband whose duty it, was to love and cherish her as his own body, even as Christ has loved and cherished the church. You take pains to make her defects apparent, and to exalt your own wisdom and judgment. You make her feel her inferiority in company and alone. [173]

Notwithstanding she is illiterate, her spirit is far more acceptable to God than the spirit of her husband. God looks upon sister — with feelings of the deepest pity. She lives out the principles of truth, as far as she has light, much better than her husband. She will not be answerable for the light and knowledge her husband has had, which she has not had. He could be a light and comfort and blessing to her; but his influence is used in a wrong way. He reads to her what he pleases, that which will give strength to his views and his ideas, while he keeps back essential light which he does not want her to hear.

He does not respect his wife, and allows his children to show her disrespect. These children are left to come up as Eli allowed his sons. They are not restrained, and all this neglect will have a rebound to it by-and-by. That which Bro. — is now sowing he will most assuredly reap. Sister —, in many respects, is nearer the kingdom of Heaven than her husband. These unruly, disobedient children, that are not educated to self-control, will plant thorns in

[174] the hearts of their parents that they cannot prevent, and then in the Judgment God will call the parents to account for bringing children into the world and letting them come up untrained, unloving, and unloved. These children cannot be saved in the kingdom of Heaven without a great change in their characters.

Bro. — seeks to have his wife believe all that he believes, and that all which he does is right; and that he knows more than any of the ministers, and is wise above all men. I was shown that in his boasted wisdom, he is dealing with the bodies of his children as he is with the soul of his wife. He has been following a course according to his own wisdom, which is ruining the health of his child. The poison he has introduced into her system, he flatters himself, keeps her alive. What a mistake! He should reason how much better she might have been had he let her alone and not abused nature. This child can never have a sound constitution, for her bones and the current of blood in her veins, have been poisoned, and aches and distressing pains in the shattered constitution of his children will cry out against his boasted wisdom, which is folly.

But what is more deplorable than all the rest is, that he has left the door, as it were, to perdition wide open for his children to enter and be lost. The natures of his children will have to be changed, their characters transformed and made over new, or there can be no hope for them. Can angels look lovingly upon your family? Can they delight to dwell in your house? The building is good, but the house does not make the happiness within. Those who live within the walls make it a Heaven or a hell. You do not respect the mother of your children. You permit in them disobedience and disrespect.

[175] You may say, "Why does sister White come to me with this? I have no faith in the visions." I knew this before I attempted to write, but I feel that the time has come for me to set these things before you. I must tell you the truth, for I expect to meet in the Judgment what I have here imperfectly written. I have waited, hoping that I might say something that would reach your heart, and soften it for the very words I have here written. But I lost all hope in that direction, for you were fortified with an armor as impenetrable as steel. You will not accept of anything that does not meet your mind. I was shown that it would have been better for the cause of present

truth if you had never embraced the Sabbath. Your conscience is not a very sensitive one—you are blinded by the enemy.

I gave up all hope of doing anything for the church in —— while you were as a stumbling-block to them. You once loved the truth, and had you followed on in the pathway of truth and holiness, you would have now been an ambassador for Christ. You will have a fearful account to give in the great day of God for your talents which have been unimproved. You had good abilities. God lent these talents to you for you to put to a good account, but you have abused these gifts. Had you used the ability God has given you on the right side, you would have done much in winning souls to Christ; and you would see in the kingdom of Heaven souls saved through your instrumentality. But you have scattered abroad, instead of gathering with Christ. Your brethren have been discouraged from trying to rise and advance; because you, like an opposing body, counteract the good they would do. [176]

The heart, of God never yearned toward his earthly children with a deeper love and more compassionate tenderness than now. There never was a time when God was waiting and ready to do more for his people than now. And he will instruct and save all, who will choose to be saved, in his appointed way. Those who are spiritual can discern spiritual things, and see tokens of the presence and work of God everywhere. Satan, by his skillful and wicked strategy, led our first parents from the garden of Eden—from their innocence and purity, into sin and unspeakable wretchedness. He has not ceased to destroy—all the forces he can command are diligently employed by him in these last days to compass the ruin of souls. Every artifice he can use he seizes to deceive, perplex, and confuse the people of God.

He has used you as his agent to scatter darkness and confusion, and he finds that you work admirably in his hands. You are the very instrument he can handle with good effect, to hurt, discourage, and tear down. You are not zealous in putting your shoulder under the load, with the people of God; but when they would move, you throw yourself as an additional load, to prevent them from doing what they might do in advancing in the right direction. Satan is at work upon those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. The most bitter hatred exists within him against all who

[177] are loyal to God, obeying his commandments. He sleeps not; he does not abate his vigilance for one moment. Would that God's professed followers were half as wise, diligent, and persevering, in the work of God as is Satan in his work.

Had you, Bro. —, followed on when you first set your hand to the plow, and not looked back, you would now have been a messenger of light, to bear the truth to those in darkness. But God could not use you to his glory until you should learn to counsel with your brethren, and not to think you knew all that was worth knowing. Satan has succeeded in keeping you from doing good. You did run well for a season, but Satan's temptations overcame you. You loved to be first and to be flattered. You loved the power which money gives. Satan understands the weakness of men. He has the knowledge which he has accumulated for ages, and is an experienced hand at his work. His cunning and devices are well matured, and are too often successful, because God's people are not as wise as serpents.

[178] Satan will frequently appear as an angel of light, arrayed in the livery of Heaven; he will assume friendly airs, manifesting great sanctity of character and high regard for his victims, the souls he means to deceive and destroy. Perils lie in the path which he invites souls to travel, but he succeeds in concealing these, and presents the attractions only. The great Captain of your salvation has conquered in your behalf, that through him you might conquer, if you would, on your own behalf. But Christ saves none against their choice; he compels none to obedience. He has made the infinite sacrifice that they may overcome in his name, and his righteousness he imparted unto them,

But in order for you to be saved you must accept the yoke of Christ, and lay off the yoke you have fashioned for your neck. The victory Jesus gained in the wilderness, is a pledge to you of the victory you may gain through his name. Your only hope and salvation is in overcoming as Christ overcame. The wrath of God now hangs over you. You love the attractions of the world above the heavenly treasure. The lust of the eye and the pride of life have separated you from God. Your confidence in your own poor, weak, faulty self, must be broken. You must feel your weakness before you will drop,

with your burden, into the hands of God. The soul that trusts fully and entirely in God will never be confounded.

God would not have us consult our own convenience in obeying him. Christ pleased not himself when he was a man among men. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The Majesty of Heaven had not where to lay his head, no place that he could claim as his own. He became poor for our sakes, that through him we might be rich indeed. Let us not talk of sacrifice; for we know not what it is to sacrifice for the truth. As yet, we have scarcely lifted the cross for Christ's dear sake. Let us not seek for a way which is easier than the path our Redeemer has traveled before us. How incompetent are you, with all your boasted wisdom, to guide yourself. How liable are you to follow the dictates of a deceived conscience, to run in the way of error and drag others with you.

Your natural temperament is such that submission and obedience to God's requirements are very hard. Your unbounded self-confidence, your prejudices, and your feelings, easily lead you to choose a wrong path. Christ will be to you an infallible guide, if you will choose him before your own blind judgment. You have not, in your business, had an eye single to the glory of God. You have had many perplexities, many difficulties to encounter, and if you had trusted to the True Counselor, instead of to your own judgment, you would ever have been guided out of your perplexities in your business transactions.

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You have an important work before you which you can never do without the especial help of God. You are capable of securing the companionship of angels, and of being the heir of God, and joint-heir with Jesus Christ, and for you to labor to confine the range of hope and desire within the narrow compass of your own convenience would be a life-long mistake. It is a terrible mistake to live only for this world. You look back and feel the condemnation of your own wrong course, and seek to justify yourself by finding fault with others. Whatever course others may pursue, or however wrong they may be, their errors will never cover one of your mistakes; and you will not dare to plead this as a palliation for your neglect of duty, before God in the day of final reckoning.

God makes a proposition to you to accept you as his child, and make you a member of the royal family, a child of the Heavenly

[180] King, upon the conditions that you come out from the world, and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing. The Monarch of Heaven would have you possess and enjoy all that can ennoble, expand, and exalt your being, and fit you to dwell with him forever, your existence measuring with the life of God. What a prospect is the life which is to come! What charms it possesses ! How broad and deep and measureless is the love of God manifested to man ! No words can describe this love; it surpasses all thought and imagination, but it is a reality that you may learn by experience; you may rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

And with such a prospect before you, how can you narrow your mind to the compass of worldly thoughts, and to the range of worldly occupations, seeking gain and yielding one point after another of present truth. Truth, principle, and conscience, are desirable for you to retain. The favor of God is better than houses of silver and of gold. The deepest joy of the heart comes from the deepest humiliation. Trust and submission to God work out strength and nobleness of character. Tears are not in every case evidences of weakness. In order for you to build up a character which is symmetrical in the sight of a pure and holy God, you must begin at the foundation. The heart must be broken before God, and true repentance for sin must be shown, till you meet the demands of truth and duty as they are. Then you will have true respect for yourself, and true confidence in God. You will have a tenderness of feeling. All that braggadocio

[181] spirit will be gone. In the place of harshness will be great tenderness blended with firmness of purpose to stand for the truth at all events. You will see much in the world and in your own heart to make you weep.

E, G. W.

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Epistle, No. 3.

BRO. — : I have designed to write to you for some time past, but have not found an opportunity to do so until now. While speaking to the people last Sabbath, I felt so clearly impressed with

your case, that I could with difficulty refrain from calling your name in public. I will get this burden off my mind by writing to you. In my last vision I was shown the deficiencies of those who professed to labor in word and in doctrine. I saw that you had not been improving your abilities, but had been growing less and less efficient to teach the truth. You need a thorough conversion. You have a strong, set will, even to stubbornness. You might now have been fitted for the solemn work of bearing the message of truth to others, had you been less self-confident, and more humble and meek in spirit.

You do not love close application, nor the taxation of a continued effort. You have not been a persevering student of the word of God, neither have you been a zealous worker in the cause of God. Your life has been far from rep-resenting the life of Christ. You are not discriminating. You are not a judicious and wise worker. You do not study to win souls to Christ, as every minister of Christ should.

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You have a set track, a standard of your own, to which you wish to bring the people, but you fail to do this, because they will not accept your standard. You are bigoted, and frequently carry things to extremes, and thereby seriously hurt the cause of God, and turn souls from the truth, instead of winning them to it.

I was shown that you had spoiled several good openings by your injudicious manner of laboring; and what shall I say to you in regard to this matter? Souls have been lost through your lack of wisdom in presenting the truth, and your failure to adorn your calling as a gospel minister by courteousness, kindness, and long-suffering. True Christian politeness should characterize all the actions of a minister of Christ. Oh! how poorly have you represented our pitiful, compassionate Redeemer, whose life was the embodiment of goodness and true purity.

You have turned souls from the truth by a harsh, censorious, and overbearing spirit. Your words have not been in the gentleness of Christ, but in the spirit of —— ———. Your nature is naturally coarse and unrefined, and because you have never felt the necessity of true refinement and Christian politeness, your life has not been elevated as it might have been.

You have remained in the rut of habit. Your education and training have not been correct, and, therefore, your efforts should have been the more earnest to improve, to reform, and make decided

[183] and thorough changes. Unless you realize a decided and thorough conversion in almost every respect, you are entirely unfitted to preach the truth; and unless you can have a proper and becoming elevation of character, manners, and address, you will do greater harm than you can do good. You have not done much in advancing the truth, for you have lingered about the churches too much, when you could not do them good, but only injury. Your ways and manners need refining and sanctifying. You should no longer mar the work of God by your deficiencies, since you have shown no decided improvement in becoming a workman in the cause of God.

It is impossible for you to bring others up to any higher standard than that to which you yourself attain. If you do not advance, how can you lead the church of God forward to a higher standard of piety and holiness? All such ministers as you have been for several years are more of a curse than a blessing to the cause of God, and the fewer we have of such ministers, the more prosperous will be the cause of present truth.

You are not elevated in your ideas, or aspiring in your labors. You are content to be commonplace, and to make a cheap minister. You do not aspire to perfection of Christian character, and to that position in the work that Christ requires every one of his chosen ministers to attain. No one professing to bear the truth to others is fitted for the responsible work unless he is making advancement in knowledge, and in consecration to the work, and is improving his manners and temper, and growing in true wisdom from day to day.

[184] Close communion with God is necessary for every man who would guide souls into the truth.

It should ever be borne in mind by those who take upon themselves the burden of guiding souls out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light that they themselves must be advancing in that light, else how can they lead others? If they are walking in darkness themselves, it is a most fearful responsibility which they assumed in pretending to teach others the way.

You have engaged in labor in places where you were not competent to do justice to the work which you undertook. You did not labor judiciously. You sought to make up for your lack of real knowledge by hard censure upon other denominations, running down others, and making hard and bitter criticisms upon their course and condition.

Had your heart been all aglow with the spirit of truth, had you been sanctified to God, and walking in the light as Christ is in the light, you would have moved in wisdom, and would have had enough ways and means at your command to maintain an interest, without going out of your way, and aside from your specific work, to rail out against others who profess to be Christians.

Unbelievers have been disgusted, for they think that Seventh-day Adventists have been fairly represented by you, and they have decided that it is enough, and that they want no more of such doctrines. Our faith is unpopular at best, and is in wide contrast to the faith and practices of other denominations. In order to reach men and women who are in the darkness of false theories and, errors, we must approach them with the utmost caution, and with the greatest wisdom, agreeing with them on every point that we conscientiously can. [185]

All consideration should be shown for those in error, and all just credit given them for honesty. We should come as near the people as possible, and then the light and truth we have may benefit them. But Bro. —, and many of our ministers, commence a warfare at once against the errors that others cherish, and thus raise their combativeness and their set will, which hold them encased in an armor of selfish prejudice, which no amount of evidence can remove.

Who but yourself will be responsible for the souls you have turned away from the truth by your unsanctified labors? Who can break down the walls of prejudice which your injudicious labor has built up? I know of no greater crime against God than for men to engage in the ministry who labor in self, and not in Christ.

They are looked up to as the representatives of Christ, when they do not represent the spirit of Christ in any of their labors. They do not see or realize the dangers attending the efforts made by men unconsecrated and unconverted. They move on like blind men, deficient in al-most everything, and yet self-confident and self-sufficient, themselves walking in darkness, and stumbling at every step. They are bodies of darkness.

Bro. —, you have narrow ideas, and your labor has a tendency to lower rather than to elevate the truth. This is not because you have no ability. You could have made a good workman, but you were too indolent to make the effort necessary to attain the object. You would [186]

rather come down upon those who differ with you, in a harsh and overbearing manner, than to take the trouble to elevate your tone of labor.

You take positions, and then when they are questioned, you are not humble enough to yield your ideas and notions, though shown to be wrong, but stand up in your independence, and firmly hold to your ideas, when concession on your part is essential, and is required of you as a duty. You have stubbornly and unyieldingly held to your own judgment and opinions, to the sacrifice of souls.

Bro. —, your set positions, and strong, determined will, to carry out your points at all hazards, were felt and deplored by your wife, and her health suffered in consequence. You were not gentle and tender to this sensitive child of God; your strong spirit overbore her gentler disposition. She grieved over many things. You could have made her life happier had you tried; but you sought to have her see things as you saw them, and instead of trying to assimilate yourself to her refined temperament, you tried to mold her to your coarser nature and your extreme ideas. She was warped in her nature, and could not act out herself. She withered like a plant transplanted to an uncongenial soil.

[187] You should not seek to mold minds and characters after your pattern, but should allow your own character to be molded after the divine pattern. If this world was composed of men like yourself in character and temperament, woe be to it! As like would meet like, whichever way you might turn, you would be disgusted with your fellow-associates, the exact pattern of yourself, and would wish to be out of the world.

You boast and glory in yourself. But, oh! how improper is this for any man, even if he have the finest qualities of mind, and the most extended influence. Men of fine qualities have the greatest influence, because they do not know their worth and how much good they do accomplish in the world. But for men of your stamp of character to be lifted up, and boastful in yourself, is all out of place.

In your labors, you frequently start out well, and raise an interest, and conviction is upon minds that the arguments used cannot be controverted; but just at the time when souls are balancing in favor of the truth, — — appears so plainly, that all which might have

been gained, had Jesus shone forth in your words and deportment, is lost, because self is prominent.

You lack the very graces which are essential to win souls to Christ and the truth. You can argue well, but have not an experimental knowledge of the divine will; and for want of a religious experience yourself, you are unable to lead others to the fountain of living waters. Your own soul is not in communion with God, but is in darkness; and nothing can supply the deficiency realized by souls groping their way in the dark, except the light of truth.

Unless you are thoroughly converted, your efforts to convert others might as well cease now as for you to labor longer, mangling and per-verting the religious standard by your narrow and bigoted ideas. You have not an experimental knowledge of the divine will, but your own righteousness seems to you to be of value, when it is valueless. You need to be transformed before you can be of use in the cause of God. When you are converted, then you can labor to acceptance. [188]

You do not possess the religion of Jesus Christ. You must soften your heart and die to self, and Christ must live in you; then you will walk in the light as he is in the light, and you will leave a bright track heavenward to lighten the pathway of others. You have felt too well satisfied with yourself. You should educate yourself and overcome your bigoted and faultfinding spirit. You need to keep the body under, and bring it in subjection, lest, after you have preached to others, you yourself should be a castaway.

You take small views of matters, pick at straws, find fault, and question the course of others, when you might far better be overcoming the defects in your own character and life, working from a Christian standpoint, seeking light from God, and preparing to unite with pure angels in the kingdom of Heaven. As you are, you would mar all Heaven. You are uncultivated, unrefined, and unsanctified. There is no place in Heaven for such a character as you now possess.

You may overcome the deficiencies in your character which disqualify you for laboring in the cause of God, if you will take hold of the work earnestly, and without making any apology for sin, will condemn sin in the flesh, and reach up in faith and hope for divine grace and right judgment. You have not advanced or improved for many years. You are farther to-day from the standard [189]

of Christian perfection, and the qualifications which should be found in the minister of the gospel, than you were a few months after you had received the truth.

God is displeased with those who are not intelligent in regard to the Christian religion, and yet are trying to lead others. You have been correctly represented by the figure of the man seeking to pull out a mote from his brother's eye, when a beam was in his own eye. First, set your heart in order, and reform your character; obtain a connection with God, and gain a daily Christian experience; then you may bear the burden for souls who are out of Christ.

There are but few of the brethren that have taken more time to read different authors than yourself, and yet you are very deficient in the qualifications for a minister teaching the truth. You fail to quote, or even read, the Scriptures correctly. This should not be. You have not advanced in mental culture, and in securing growth of grace in the soul, which would shine out in your words and deportment. You have not felt the necessity of reaching up for higher and holier attainments.

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For you to chase through books superficially clogs the mind, and you become a mental dyspeptic. You cannot digest and use one-half you read. If you should read with the one object in view to improve the mind, and read only as much as the mind can comprehend and digest, such a course of reading, patiently persevered in, would accomplish some good results. You, as well as other ministers, need to attend school, and commence like a child to master the first branches of knowledge. You can neither read, spell, nor pronounce correctly, and yet there are but few who have had less taxations and less burdens of responsibility to bear than yourself.

The position of our ministers calls for health of body and discipline of mind. Good sound sense, strong nerves, and a cheerful temper, will recommend the gospel minister anywhere. This should be sought for, and perseveringly cultivated.

Your life thus far has been unprofitable. You have some very good ideas, but the Spirit of God does not dwell in your heart. You are not quickened by his power, and you have not genuine faith, hope and love. The Spirit of Christ dwelling in you will enable you to take of the things of God and reveal them to others. You can be of no benefit to the cause of God till the work of a faithful minister

of Christ is more exalted in your mind. You want a purpose in your life to do good as did Jesus. The self-denial and love you manifest in this work will tell upon the lives and characters of others.

You should get rid as soon as possible of your cold, frozen formality. You need to cultivate feelings of tenderness and friendliness in your every-day life. You should exhibit true courteousness and Christian politeness. The heart that really loves Jesus, loves those for whom he died. Just as truly as the needle points to the pole, so will the true follower of Christ, with a spirit of earnest labor, seek to save souls for whom Christ has given his life. Working for the salvation of sinners will keep the love of Christ warm in the heart, and will give that love a proper growth and development. Without a correct knowledge of the divine will, there will be a lack of harmonious development in the Christian character.

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I beseech you, my brother, to become acquainted with God. "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord." Ministering angels mark every step of our progress; but your will is not surrendered to God. Your thoughts are not holy. You go on, stumbling your way in darkness, not knowing where to place your feet. The Lord reveals his will to those who are earnest and anxious to be guided. The reason of your inefficiency is, you have given up the idea of knowing the will of God, and doing it, therefore, you do not know anything positively. Though blind yourself, you attempt to lead the blind.

Oh ! what a position are you and many other ministers in. Having forsaken God, the fountain of living waters, you and they have hewn out to yourselves broken cisterns that can hold no water. I entreat of you to be alarmed and turn to the Lord with that deep and earnest repentance which will secure to you his forgiveness, and the enduring strength of his might, that you may indeed be filled with all the fullness of God. God frowns upon your course, for you have been as a stumbling-block to souls. You have depended on your own works and righteousness for success, and have not a knowledge of the divine will.

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May the Lord reveal to you your true character, and let you see your real deficiencies. When you are enlightened by the Spirit of God to understand this, you will have such a sense of your sinful neglect and unimproved life as will strike terror to your soul, and

cause you sorrow that will lead to repentance that needeth not to be repented of.

E. G. W.

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